

## CHAPTER DECREE:

### LOOK, I HAVE OPENED A DOOR BEFORE YOU ...

Through this door is our world, inviting us into its beauty and diversity, its suffering and need.

**We rejoice in all the love and service offered by FCJs throughout the Society** and we praise God for this while recognizing too, our fragility and disappointments.

Beyond the open door our attention is drawn to great gatherings of people, many of them impoverished, trafficked, marginalized, despairing or far from their own country. With them, we cry out for justice. We are aware too of so many, especially young adults, asking questions about faith and the meaning of their lives and looking for companions to walk with them. **Held in their gaze and sensing the gaze of God upon us, we desire to be the gentle human face of God among them. Dare we be women of outrageous hope?**

The confidence to dare rises from the heart of our charism of companionship: an amazing gift for our world today. **This companionship urges us to communion, embracing all persons and all things, excluding no one and no thing from our love and compassion.** It urges us to witness to gentleness and reconciliation in a growing culture of violence. It urges us to collaboration and mutuality.

Our governance is a ministry of service enabling us to grow in union of minds and hearts and to carry out our corporate mission as women of the Church. **The availability and discerning love of each member are crucial** to our effectiveness as a body of apostolic women sent on mission with Jesus.

In 2008 we have celebrated with joy, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Marie Madeleine's death and we have been affirmed in our vowed way of life. **We yearn to live more deeply what it means to be Faithful Companions of Jesus.** We know that the new understandings of God in Creation offer a source of enlightenment and wisdom. In the context of the developing theology of the cosmos, we are invited to read anew the Scriptures, our Constitutions, the Spiritual Exercises and the events in the world around us, so as better **'to run in the path of Christ our Lord'** who is the heart of our evolving universe, and in whose cross and resurrection the whole of Creation journeys into transformation.

We live in a world where gross inequalities exist and many struggle for survival. The authenticity of our FCJ way of life requires that **we earnestly and actively honour our commitment to simple living** so as to respond to the world's hunger, contribute in a real way to the sustainability of the planet and free resources for ministry.

We thank God for the gift of our Companions in Mission and the mutual enrichment we experience. This is a wonderful way for FCJ charism and mission to grow. Wherever the Companions in Mission live, they are united with the whole Society and **each one of us is called to commit herself to some form of support for their preservation and development.**

We rejoice in all the work that is being done to seek and invite new members for our Society. We believe that God is calling women to be Faithful Companions of Jesus and so **we commit ourselves to engage in this ministry with urgency and enthusiasm across our provinces, in community and personally.** We will encourage and nurture new life.

Marie Madeleine was led by the Spirit in ways she could not have imagined. Like her we too are **drawn irresistibly by our God** who is present and labouring in all of Creation. Together we go forward without hesitation and with great confidence.

*'... I THIRST'*

