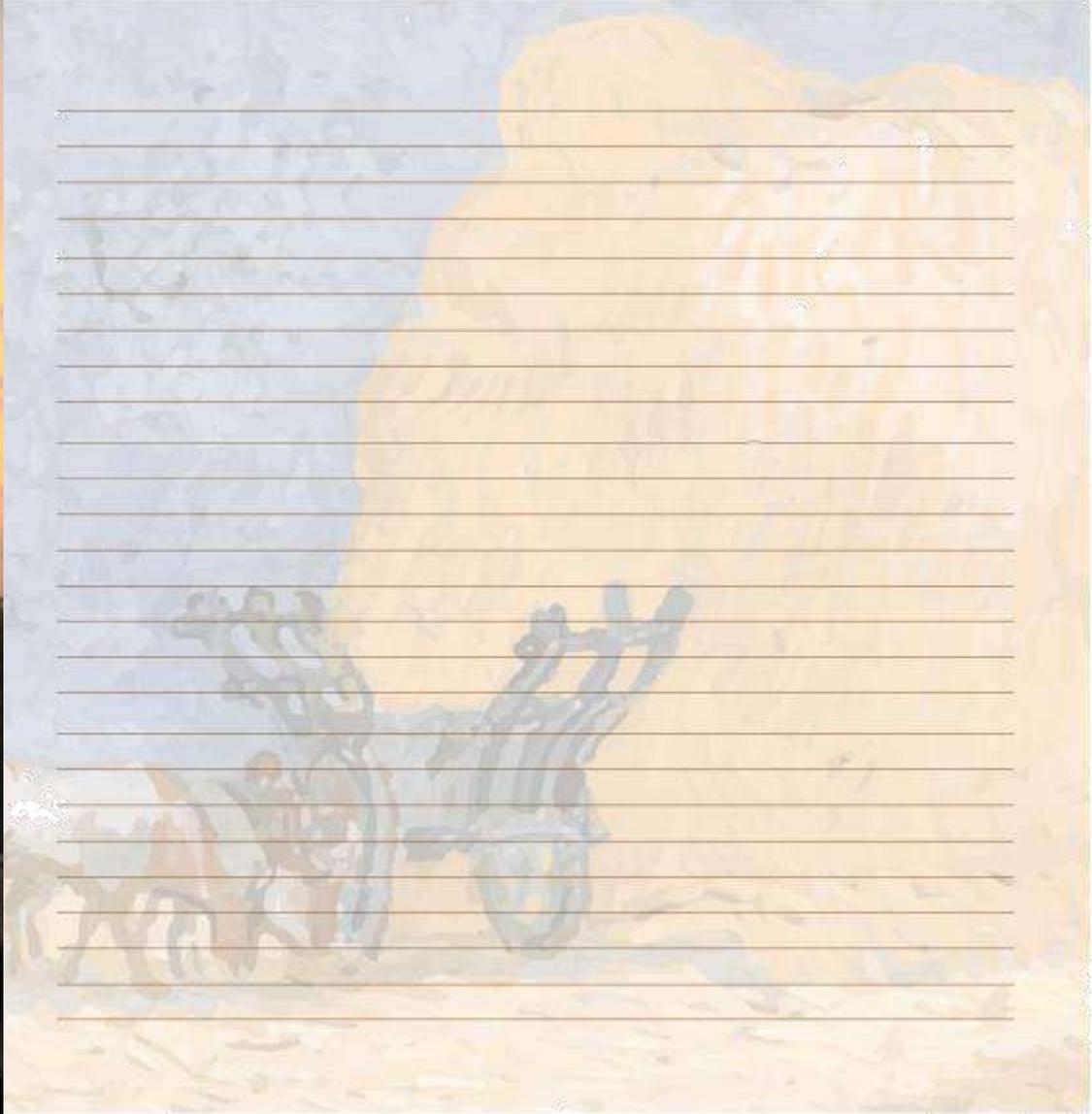
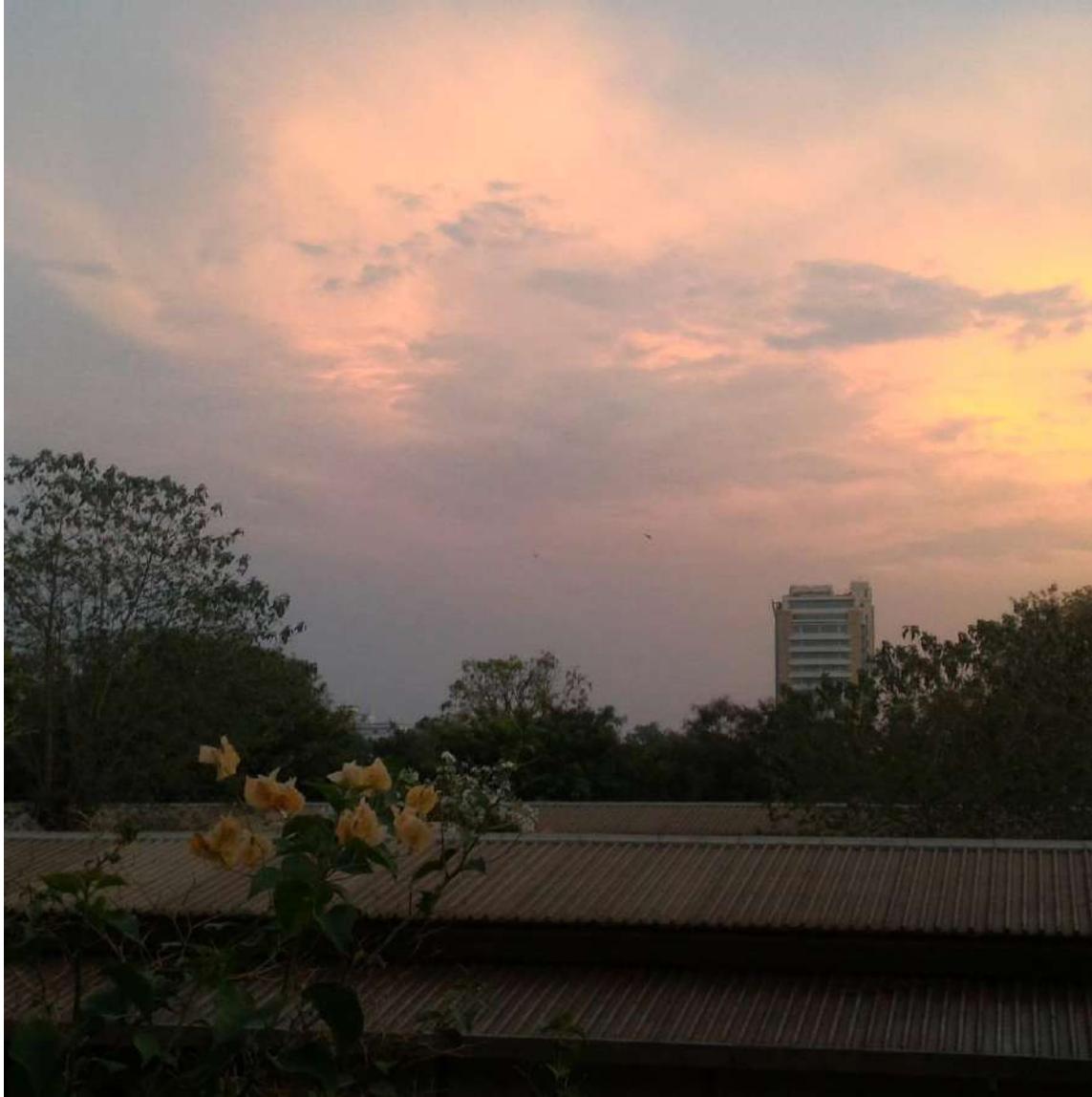


SECULAR
INSTITUTE

LITTLE
APOSTLES
of
CHARITY



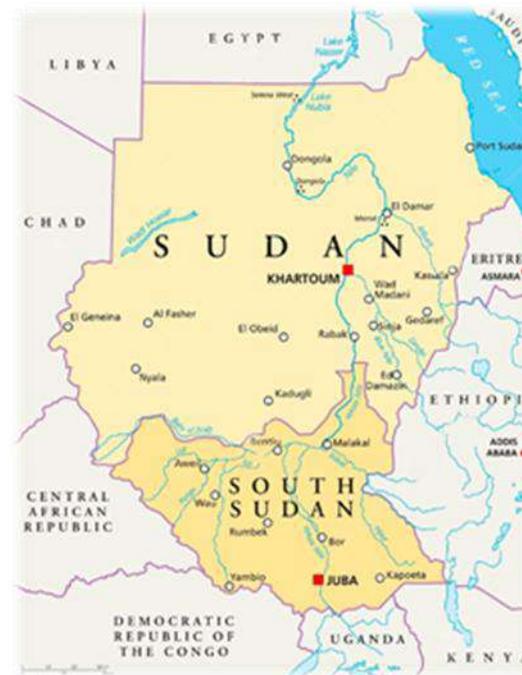


From the speech given by Pope Francis to participants in the General Assembly promoted by the Italian Conference of Secular Institutes, Rome, 10 May 2014:

I understand and value your vocation! It is one of the most recent forms of consecrated life the Church has recognised and approved, and maybe this is the reason why it is not yet fully understood. Do not be discouraged: you are part of that poor Church which goes out and which I dream of!

You are reach of the all encompassing experience of God's love and thus you are able to understand and share the difficulties of life in its many expressions, making grow them with the light and power of the Gospel.

Your vocation makes you interested in every man and in his deeper issues which are often left unexpressed or masked. By the strength of the love of God which you have encountered and come to know, you are able to be tender and sympathetic. Thus, you can be close enough to touch the other, his wounds and his expectations, his questions and his needs, with the tenderness that is an expression of care that erases all distances.



Secular Institute Little Apostles of Charity

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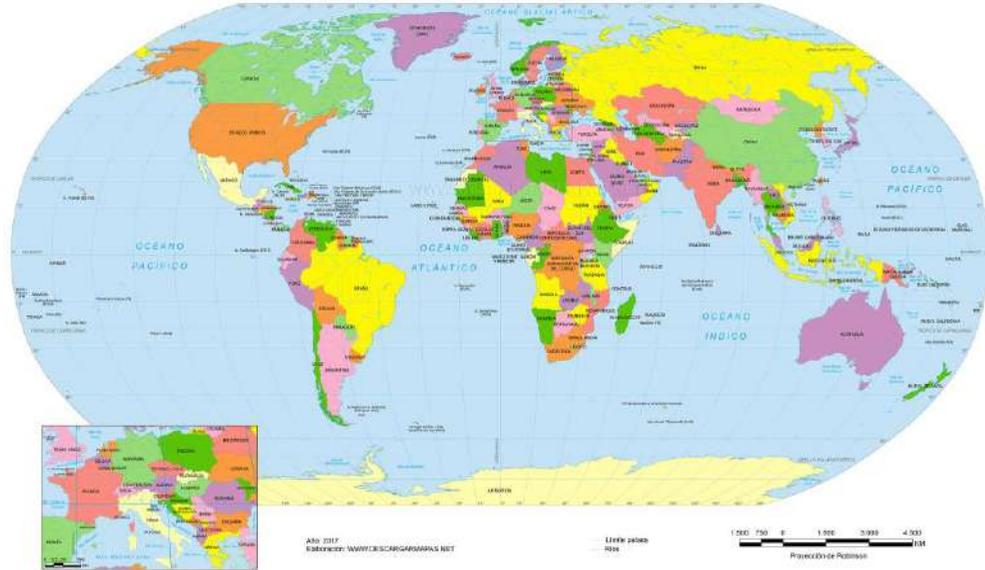
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“The whole earth is your place”
(blessed Luigi Monza)



Europe
Latin America

Africa
Asia

Italy
Brazil
Ecuador
Sudan and South Sudan
China



THE FOUNDER

Perfect love is in the Lord from whom all love comes.
(blessed Luigi Monza)

Luigi Monza was born into a peasant family in Cislago (Varese) on **June 22nd 1898**. Their only wealth was work, courage and faith. He entered a seminary when he was 18 years old after having experienced hard difficulties in the fields, nights spent studying and the daily struggle for survival of poor people.

He was ordained priest on **September 19th 1925**. His first pastoral commitment was among the youth of the parish of Vedano Olona (Varese). The beginning of his life as a priest was marked by problems of every kind, up to his unjust imprisonment under the Fascist regime.

In **1928** he was assigned to the Sanctuary of the Madonna of Miracles in Saronno where he organised numerous initiatives for young people.

If you have true faith and are animated by a great love,
you will know how to give yourselves completely, without asking why
and accepting everything with humble trust and abandonment
to the will of God, thus reaching that true hopeful joy of each being.

And you, let yourselves be led

(blessed Luigi Monza)





THE GREAT FAMILY OF BLESSED LUIGI MONZA

The Founder's spiritual message is for everyone, men and women, called to live their lives in today's world, within the family or in the life of consecration, in their professional life or in their free time.

Many have accepted his invitation to realize an evangelical life in charity, becoming promoters of good and inspiring a human and ecclesiastical society.

The various areas of commitment that have arisen from blessed Luigi Monza's spirituality testify to the richness of his charism which has always known how to communicate the light of the Gospel, proposing itself as a possible life for everyone.

Various groups and organizations that constitute an expression of the same spirituality, each in their own original and special way, are inspired by this.

- Family of Families – family spiritual group
- Zarepta – widowhood spiritual group
- Spiritual youth groups
- “Our Family” Association
- Scientific Hospital “Eugenio Medea”
- Friends of father Luigi Monza group
- “Our Family” Parents' Association
- OVCI – Voluntary Organization for International Cooperation
- FONOS – Serene Horizons Foundation
- “Father Luigi Monza” Voluntary Association
- Amateur Sports Association “Viribus Unitis”

Here his look, perfected by trial and reached by that of God, had learnt to look afar, over the whole world, a world marked by solitude, sadness and selfishness, that 'was urging to return to God's love'.

In particular, in a world that, as he would say, “become Pagan”, he had the intuition to see in the charity of the first Christians the most suitable means of being close to contemporary man and to proclaim the Gospel of Christ.

In 1936 he was nominated parish priest in San Giovanni in Lecco, where he was 'a priest according to God's heart'.

It was then that don Luigi found the road that the Lord was showing to him. The Secular Institute of the Little Apostles of Charity was born from his fatherly heart by the gift of the spirit, to bring into the world the fullness of a life consecrated to the total love of Christ with the apostolic fervour of the first Christian community.

On September 29th 1954, father Luigi died silently, like a grain of wheat that dies to give life to the ear of wheat.

Father Luigi Monza was proclaimed Blessed in Milan Cathedral on April 30th 2006, under the Pontificate of Pope Benedict XVI.



They pay particular care and attention with regards to:

young people

- they promote humanistic and Christian paths of education, prayer and community life in various spiritual youth groups
- they lead and accompany voluntary work experiences in branches of “Our Family” in service to the community and in training projects aimed at acquiring a style of gratuitousness in daily life, in professional choices and solidarity openness
- they hold faith education and catechism courses in local parishes

families

- they collaborate in the pastoral activities of the Church, in particular by working side by side and supporting families in difficult situations, promoting their development also through associations
- they organise and promote:
 - the formation of families called to share the ideal of the “practical charity of the first Christians” by responding to the urgent needs of hospitality, education and service to life

foreign countries

- through the voluntary organization for International Cooperation (OVCI - “Our Family”). Little Apostles are present in communities in Brazil, Ecuador, Sudan, South Sudan and Asia. They also collaborate in numerous cooperation and development projects.

THE LITTLE APOSTLES OF CHARITY

Each one of us must become an artist of souls.

And we must paint the beauty of Jesus, not on painting but in souls.
(blessed Luigi Monza)

By vocation, Little Apostles of Charity are set to follow Jesus, to be anywhere and everywhere ‘like the Apostles with the practical charity of the first Christians’ *(blessed Luigi Monza)*.

At the beginning, (1936), the Secular Institute was born without a defined project of apostolic activity except that of bringing charity to the world.

Currently Little Apostles are engaged both in the management and running of the 'Our Family' institutions, serving children with disabilities and their families in Italy and abroad, carrying out their profession in schools, the health care system, in companies and in voluntary work: *‘where the urgency of charity requires it’* (cf 2 Corinthians 5.14).

They live the scope of community in small groups or individually, in their commitment to total self-giving to the Lord.

The name - Little Apostles of Charity - encloses and recalls the essential elements of their existence, spent in humility and participating in the same apostolic mission of the first disciples of Jesus, ready to give themselves unto the end (cf John 13:1).

Their characterising style is to be contemplative throughout the world, immersed and engaged in the common activities of each person, in the sharing of what one is and what one possesses. In their profound relationship with the Lord and in intense prayer that intercedes for the world, a Little Apostle finds meaning in a life marked by hope and passion.



THE MISSION

Remember only one thing, any form of apostolate is always good for us because it is not the work itself that is our purpose but it is the spirit that follows every work that the Lord sends us.

(blessed Luigi Monza)

Little Apostles live the charism of charity according to the lifestyle of the first Christians, which is expressed in various apostolic activities, wherever Providence leads them: 'The whole earth is your place' (blessed Luigi Monza).

Like anyone, they maintain themselves with the proceeds of their work, considering their professionalism as a mission and an apostolate, ensuring that it is carried out seriously and competently. They are actively engaged in the ecclesial field in parish, diocesan and national organisations and associations, collaborating in pastoral catechism, charity, liturgical and missionary activities.

They participate in the local life they are part of and give their contribution, collaborating with other local entities in a political, cultural, social and educational context.

Driven by the idea of bringing charity into the world, they carry out their profession and their apostolic service in specific service to life, in particular to its protection and care, through the Work called 'Our Family' (legally recognised Ecclesiastical body) which carries out various activities of:

1. Scientific research, carried out at the 'Eugenio Medea' Scientific Institute recognised for research and rehabilitation in the specific field of child development.
2. Rehabilitation of people with physical, psychological and sensorial disabilities, often associated with social adversity.
3. Training and refresher courses (degree courses in convention with universities, ongoing training, conferences and communication activities).



SPIRITUALITY

In this morally disconcerting world we must be able to say with our life:

See how amazing it is to live in love.

(blessed Luigi Monza)

A Little Apostle, obedient to the action of the Spirit, lives her radical consecration through the orientation of her whole life towards Christ, with the passion to take all the realities she encounters back to Him.

A Little Apostle's spirituality is nourished daily with prayer, it manifests itself in her being small, humble, open to generous charity in service to her brothers.

She is fulfilled in the sanctity of her life through the simplicity of ordinary gestures. She loves the fraternal community that can overcome conflicts and divisions "So as to form one heart and one soul" *(blessed Luigi Monza)*.

Little Apostles pay particular attention to the Family and to its mission as a place to welcome and cherish the gift of Love in conjugal reciprocity, in the generation and education of children, in the acceptance of the Lord's plan, at times mysterious, especially when faced with 'difficult' situations. They collaborate with married couples and priests in the activities and promotion of the family spiritual group "**A Family of Families**", as a precious show of integration between different vocations as mutual enrichment between consecration and married life, experienced by drawing on the same spirituality.

In the same spirit of collaboration and sharing, they are also involved in the "**Zarepta**" group, comprised of women called upon to live their condition of widowhood as a new calling, accepting their situation as a vocation. Each year they promise to live the commitment of widowhood chastity.

You sow the seed of a tree. Do you think to rest in the shade of its branches? No, did you sow the good seed for your children? Happy you will be if your children rest in the shade of your works. And do not despair of a good result. Do not tire.
(blessed Luigi Monza).

