

Prot. N. 421/20

From the Vatican, 31<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Re: *Postponement of the XXV World Congress Stella Maris/Apostleship of the Sea and the Centennial Celebration*

Dear Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences and Bishops Promoters,  
Dear Regional Coordinators, National Directors, Chaplains and Volunteers,

On July 14, 2019, with a letter addressed to all of you, I officially announced the “XXV World Congress of the Stella Maris/Apostleship of the Sea and the Centenary Celebration from the 29<sup>th</sup> September to the 4<sup>th</sup> October 2020 in Glasgow – Scotland.”

The organizational plans for this occasion were quite advanced, however the new COVID-19 pandemic and its spread attested by the World Health Organization (WHO) have forced us to change our original project.

Therefore, I would like to inform you that, after having carefully considered the various practical implications involving the organization of the event and the unprecedented situation of uncertainty on how the worldwide situation will evolve in the future, the decision has been taken to postpone the XXV World Congress of the Stella Maris and the Centenary Celebration from Sunday October 3<sup>rd</sup> to Saturday October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 in Glasgow - Scotland. While we are saddened by this decision, we think that this is the best solution in the interest of our delegates and also of seafarers, fishers and their families.

However, because we do not want that October 4<sup>th</sup> 2020, Centenary day, go unnoticed, we urge you to organize celebrations, united in purpose, to mark the beginning of the commemoration of this important event which will culminate in the XXV World Congress of the Stella Maris/Apostleship of the Sea and the Centenary Celebration in Glasgow, next year.

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To the Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences  
To the Bishops Promoters  
To the Regional Coordinators  
To the National Directors  
To the Chaplains and Volunteers

In this time of global crisis let us pray for the seafarers who in spite of all, continue to support with their work the world economy by moving the essentials goods needed for our life personally paying the price with additional sacrifices because contracts are extended behind the usual terms, and most of the shore leaves are cancelled.

I would like to express my gratitude to the chaplains and volunteers who could not do "ship visit" because of the restriction in place to prevent the spread of COVID-19, but found new creative ways to continue to support and be near to the people of the sea.

Let us ask the intercession of Mary, *Star of the Sea*, to strengthen our faith in the Lord that with his passion, death and resurrection has defeated every evil and brought new life to all of us.

Sincerely yours

Cardinal Peter K. A. Turkson

Prefect