

Vatican City, 18 February, 2019

Prot.n. A.136⁻¹/2002

Dear Brother,

With this letter, we would like to confirm the content of our recent discussions.

The *Family of Saint John*, founded by Fr Marie-Dominique Philippe and composed of three religious institutes of diocesan right – the *Brothers of Saint John*, the *Contemplative Sisters of Saint John* and the *Apostolic Sisters of Saint John* – have experienced a number of grave difficulties that have been especially linked to certain aspects of the personality and behaviour of their founder and of some of their members. These difficulties warranted the implementation of important measures in pastoral accompaniment to help the *Family of Saint John* acknowledge the abuse committed at its very heart, to responsibly acknowledge and tackle cases of abuse and to put structural, human and spiritual changes in place in order to care for the victims and prevent the recurrence of similar misdeeds.

The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, which has paid careful attention to the accusations reported to it, also recognises that the members of the *Family of Saint John* have welcomed these decisions, not without suffering and yet with a sincere desire for Gospel conversion. The Congregation recognises the willingness of those responsible for the *Family of Saint John* to address the abuse that has been reported as well as their firm decision to put in place the necessary concrete measures to this end.

Hence we have deemed some structural and formative evolutions to be indispensable, and these are currently actively underway. More profoundly, the personal work of acknowledging and of grieving an idealised vision of the founder and of the *Family of Saint John* has involved the constraints of a psychological process, which, though it may be long, has nevertheless been encouraged by the public statements of the Prior General, by speaking with, listening to and exchanging with other members of the community, and by the important efforts made with regard to formation (formation of those who themselves provide formation, formation of those in positions of responsibility, ongoing and initial formation).

For these reasons our Congregation, acknowledging the work that has been undertaken, wants to encourage the *Brothers and Sisters of Saint John* to continue along this path, humbly and with courage, confidence and determination, in the steps of our Lord Jesus.

We take this opportunity to send you our fraternal greetings and assure you, Reverend Brother, of our full support in the Lord.

Secretary Archbishop
José Rodríguez Carballo, O.F.M.

Prefect
Joao B. Card de Aviz