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Letter from His Eminence Cardinal Angelo Sodano, on the part of Pope John Paul II for the Occasion of the 39th General Assembly

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SECRETARIAT OF STATE

N. 438.046
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From the Vatican, July 15,

Dear Father Maloney,

The Holy Father was pleased to learn of the General Assembly of the Congregation of the Mission, taking place in Rome in these days. He very much appreciates your expression of prayerful support for his ministry, and he asks you to convey to all present his greetings in the Lord and the assurance of his prayers.

Looking back to the great figure of the Founder, His Holiness gives thanks to God for the many graces brought to the Church and the world through the mission of the sons of Saint Vincent de Paul. In his time - *le grand siècle* - Saint Vincent understood that true grandeur lay in service of those who seem the least, "rejected by men but in God's sight chosen and precious" (1 Pet 2:4). His vision of the dignity of every human person and his courage in acting upon what he saw made him a luminous witness to the glory of God's love in Christ. At a time when human dignity is threatened in new ways, His Holiness prays that the Congregation of the Mission will live ever more deeply the charism of the Founder and be a prime agent of the new evangelization to which the Church is called. This will ensure that the future of the Congregation is as illustrious as its past and that the sons of Saint Vincent will play their part in ushering in the new springtime which the Holy Spirit is preparing for the Church (cf. *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, 18).

Commending the General Assembly to the loving care of Mary, Mother of the Redeemer, His Holiness cordially imparts to all his Apostolic Blessing.

With personal best wishes for the Assembly's deliberations, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

(signed) + Angelo Card. Sodano

Secretary of State

The Very Reverend Robert P. Maloney, C.M.
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