

COMMUNIO IN CHRISTO

*Our Life -
Our Works*

Digital Spiritual Letter No. 25, December 15th 2023

Theme:

A Christian's task in the world

SEAT IN LIFE

The chosen reflection is taken from Mother Marie Therese's last book "I implore you, o Holy Church". She wrote it in August 1993 in her last serious sickbed. At that time, she mainly stayed in her room but never forgot to focus on her Social institute and her order. She was close to each of the residents in the care facilities and always took an interest in their individual situations. The first hospice already existed in Mechernich in 1993. Both hospice guests and long-term-care residents found a home there. In Blankenheim, the senior citizens' home "Haus Effata" was opened in 1982.



Members of the first community who lived together with Mother Marie Therese in the Motherhouse and of whom some still live there today, testify that she had the gift of soul seeing. We can find this gift throughout Church history in various Saints. It is connected with God's mission and serves fellow human beings and also the Church.

Therefore, Mother Marie Therese had a deep insight into the situation of the Church, the world, and the future as her reflections prove. Because of her close relationship with God, she was able to interpret and explain events and developments with reference to God.

Jaison Thazhathil
Superior General



REFLECTION OF MOTHER MARIE THERESE

August 3rd 1993

In this reflection the Holy Spirit is leading me into the darkness of this world and the task of a Christian. I so vividly experience the bliss of love that it almost seems unnatural that I have to look into the confusion and darkness of this world. However, my vocation promises me the light into which we Christians are growing. It calls our attention to the personal task of having to overcome everything a human being may encounter in this world.

Thinking of the residents of my two houses and the troubled existence of so many, I feel overcome with compassion and pity. Although for more than 14 months I have been unable to personally make sure of their weal and woe, I know all about them. It is the goal of the already existing houses as well as those which are being built to open the residents' hearts for the promised eternal bliss, in which all sorrow turns into unspeakable joy. There are many forms of suffering many people have no sympathy for. It is the spirituality of my Communio in Christo to take in the dark side of the world and to open our hearts to the Saviour. What all the members try to straighten out in their own minds, they can pass on to the residents of House Effata and Stella Maris. To somebody who has found his peace despite all the adversity of his existence the mystery of human suffering will be a true revelation. In my hospice there are patients who have to endure a kind of suffering others could not bear. The inner contentment of those patients is remarkable. Some of them go through a phase of inner transformation in which they more and more firmly cling to God. Their condition has strengthened their will and determination to subject their every-day life to an adaptive order. With some of them the self has completely withdrawn into the background. It is no longer their suffering they are occupied with but their unfolding faith.

A few days ago another patient died of Aids. It was the 17th Aids patient within the course of a few years. It is part of my mission to provide shelter and a home especially for such patients.

There must be no inner distance and coldness in the members of Communio in Christo. I feel called upon to concern myself especially with the plight of our time. Every human fate must be seen and responded to individually. Giving love is a task which takes patience and compassion. The way in which the Holy Spirit reveals the life of the charism bestowed on me deserves our thanks. Raised into the unspeakably blissful light of his love, I experience the sufferings of this world, which has apparently lost the feeling for God and eternity. I see all those who do not give a thought to their way of life and thus deprive themselves of a meeting



with God in their anguish. They spend their lives without the slightest self-accusation, blaming God for everything that goes wrong. I can see the ignorant who spend their time dreaming. They consider themselves as winners and the world as their prize, even though they may be losing everything.

As a young girl I was in contact with the two daughters of a wealthy family. The girls' father managed a big firm. He had totally distanced himself from the Church and once I heard



him say: "I still have plenty of time to convert when I am at death's door." A few years later he suddenly met his fate. He died within seconds without a priest and without God. His life had been characterized by superficiality. I am convinced that nevertheless redemption was ensured for him, too, the more so as the Holy Spirit keeps telling me never to pass judgement on anybody. A human being's dependence is so great that he can hardly be held responsible. On the other hand this means that neither scientific knowledge nor acquired power can give him the right to abuse it or to consider himself better than anyone else.

We must not live in fear of anything. The profession of one's own insignificance is the guarantee for redemption.

Sheltered in the light of love, we regard our tribulations and personal suffering as temporary experiences which arouse in us an overwhelming longing to open ourselves to the eternity. I feel I should console those who are bearing a heavy burden as well as those who have been deeply disappointed. Spirit and matter form a human being and determine his state of mind.

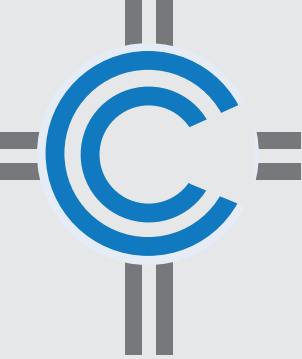
This is what I want to say to the patients and residents of both my houses:

„Your experiences have made you compassionate. They opened your eyes to the background of your life. You have opened your up innermost heart. You know of your future. You know you are embraced and consoled. You got to know the real life. You have discovered love and have become an example of light and joy.

To me it is important to be able to tell you how valuable the solidarity that unites us. From my own experiences I may tell you that I am not unfamiliar with your distress. I am saying this in order to stress that we have great sympathy for you. I am deeply grateful to you for all the support you have given this work of ours. I wish you all the best in the special love of God.”



*Father,
tribulation, fear and suffering prevail in our time.
We know the fate of those who are persecuted and outcast.
We share the plight of the homeless, the lonely
and of those who have been hit by the forces of nature.
We hear about the growing numbers of victims
of persecution and torture;
in many parts of the world we notice a steady increase in poverty.
We see the luxury of the new-rich
who build palaces and lead a lush life,
who enjoy their riches
and have no thought for others.
Every day the media tell us of starving children,
of those who are in danger of being deprived of their human dignity.
We hear of injustice
though all the world is talking of human rights.
O Father, we are living in a turbulent age
in which the human being does not count for much
and people no longer strive to give their lives a meaning.
Sluggishness, apathy and indifference prevail
and determine people's way of living
in which there is no more room for You.
We are permanently under the influence of desensitizing opiates.
We are willing to support the misuse of power.
We know of the tension and conflicts among congenial persons.
You, o Father, have shown Yourself to us in Jesus Christ.
It must not seem immaterial to us
to accept this power inherent in His word and life.
The Saviour of this century is at one with You, o God Father.
He voices the promise*



*and is deeply concerned about all the fears and misery of our time,
in order to have power over life and death.*

*Father, we are threatened in our existence
if we imagine You did not care.*

We must take Your love seriously again.

*We must recognize Your Son as the image of man,
in order to realize how precious we have become thanks to him.
In his words we can discern his concern about us humans,
getting the consoling answer to all the plight of this age.*

*The love You mean,
the love that wants to become our life,
is the sign of Your compassion,
so that we may endure all sorrow and tribulation
until the final union in love.*

*Father, help us to understand these times as a request to us,
to turn to You again.*

*Help those who are far from You to find You again
and be close to all misery,
so that we may glow with love
and give You thanks and glory.*

*From: Mother Marie Therese, I implore you, o Holy Church - In the name of the Spirit,
Patris Verlag GmbH 2015, pp 322 ff*



COMMENTARY

By Rev. Fr Patrick Mwanguhya

Our bimonthly Spiritual Letter this time relates to the chapter “A Christian’s task in the world” taken from Mother Marie Therese’s last book ‘I implore you o Holy Church’. Mother was led by the Spirit into the darkness of the world and the task of a Christian. She vividly experienced the bliss of love that almost seems unnatural while she had to look into the confusion and darkness of this world.

Dear readers, love as the summary of the commandments from God our father, as it is stated by Jesus in the Bible, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. And the second which is similar to it, appeals to love your neighbour as you love yourself. (Mt 22:37-40). This is the love that drove Mother Marie Therese guided by the Holy Spirit to establish the three social structures, that is, the Hospice Stella Maris, the long term care facility Communio in Christo in Mechernich and House Effata for elderly people in Blankenheim. And she was deeply involved in the lives of the people staying there. And she stood by them especially in times of inner distress and fear. She gave them a home and visited them regularly until she was no longer able to do so for health reasons.

My dear friends, the people who live in the three facilities mentioned above are only some of them that need our love most, because they are vulnerable, have pain, feel isolated, some are rejected by the society and have no families and lack a place they can call home. And some think that God is no longer caring about them. But God gave them to us to care about them, to cheer them up, to bring them Good News (Lk 4:18), he entrusted them to us to show the world that they are precious in the eyes of God.

Mother Marie Therese did not only put on buildings and structures but she was directly involved in their lives staying with them under the same roof and giving all what she could within her means with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. She felt that the inner contentment of the patients is paramount or remarkable in their lives and helps them to go in inner transformation in which they more and more cling to God. This makes this love concrete.

Dear friends, what Mother called confusion and darkness of the world, we see today, where many parts of the world are ravaged with wars, hunger, diseases and drug abuse, to mention but a few. Most likely humanity is drastically losing a sense of love of neighbour and being a brother’s keeper. Mother said, every human fate must be seen and responded to individually. Giving love is a task which takes patience and compassion. Our world today is slowly drifting



away from God, a lot of egoism, political intolerance and greed are slowly on the forefront of our world. The task of love has to begin in our families and planted in our children when they are still young, to show them the importance of God in their lives and caring of fellow humans. The question will come, how can someone love?

I don't want to portray that people have not loved, no. But people have found love as a big and challenging task because of the inconsistencies they meet. Some have been betrayed by the people they love and trust, some are neglected and some have their generosity abused and they find it difficult to love and trust again. All these people must not break us and divert us from our task which needs patience and compassion. This is exactly what Jesus went through until he was hanged on the cross. Let us give love, even if we can't expect to receive it back from those we have showed it to. We win our wars through love!

In this time of Advent, we are asked to stay awake and always be conscious of our task as a Christian in this world to make it a better place for everyone and all that it contains.

Trust in the Lord and love him always and all his creation, love and understand your neighbour and all will fall in line. The task of each of us is to help the residents discover God as a loving God, as a friend at their side. Mother Marie Therese said: God is a friend in life. We are to contribute that the residents recognize him as their friend and open their souls wide for eternity.

God bless you all!

I remain

Fr Patrick Mwanguhya

Rev. Fr Patrick Mwanguhya

Rev. Fr Patrick Mwanguhya was born in Fort Portal in Uganda in 1986. He has six siblings. He was ordained a priest by Bishop Dr. Robert Muhiirwa in 2018. His bishop visited the Motherhouse of the



Communio in Christo in Mechernich twice in 2018 and was very impressed by the service to the seriously ill and dying in the care facilities. When he was then asked in 2021 whether he could make a priest available to the Communio for a few years as a chaplain for the sick, his choice fell on Fr Patrick, whom he considered suitable to provide pastoral care to the residents of the long-term care, hospice and elderly care facilities. Fr Patrick came to Mechernich in October 2021 and initially learnt the German language. He now devotes his priestly ministry entirely to pastoral care for the residents of our medical facilities. We are greatly enriched by his service in the community. He also helps out in the parishes in this region when he is needed.



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