

COMMUNIO IN CHRISTO

*Our Life -
Our Works*

Digital Spiritual Letter No. 40, July 6 2025

Theme: THE BLISS OF THE HOUR OF DEATH SEAT IN LIFE

Mother Marie Therese starts with exact details on the “seat in life” of the then following reflection. She had lost a good friend who had been close to her already before his priestly ordination. She calls him a “noble man” and “a fine priest”, whom “this world could look up to”.

Beginning of the week before she had still spoken to him. He had already been short of breath and said he was rapidly declining. Speaking was difficult for him, but he wasn’t giving up hope because “so many are praying for me.” Now he was at peace, Mother Marie Therese noted. “Too young” to die, she thought.

According to the records of her Father Confessor, the Superior General Karl-Heinz Haus, that priestly friend was Jeff Kleynen, whom Mother Marie Therese had helped financially at times during his formation to become a priest. She always used to support an average of four priestly candidates at the same time. Since age 14 Mother Marie Therese had a special relationship to the moribund. Every day at 3 pm – the death hour of Jesus - she prayed for them.

Karl-Heinz Haus, the first Superior General of the Ordo Communio in Christo, had to undergo several brain tumor surgeries in 2000, and thanks to the following reflection he found “deep peace” in everything. Father Hermann Walch, the first Spiritual Father of the Communio in Christo had similar experiences.

Deacon Manfred Lang, Deputy Superior General



REFLECTION OF MOTHER MARIE THERESE

March 29 1993



A few days ago I lost a good friend. He was a priest. We had already been friends before his ordination, which he received 40 years ago. A grave illness claimed the life of a noble-minded person, far too early. Good and fine priests we do not want to lose because our world needs such role models to look up to.

It was only at the beginning of last week that I talked with him. In answer to my question: „How are you?“, he said: „I am going down rapidly“. And he added: „So many people pray for me - that's why I haven't lost hope.“ His voice, the shortness of breath and his laboured way of speaking foreshadowed the nearing death... This morning we said: „His sufferings are over.“

All those hopes we cling to, in order to live... To us, the unknown beyond means more sorrow than joy. To each one of us the unknown afterlife is a frightening vision that holds us in its grip as long as death arouses nothing but fear and desperation in our minds.

But now, at this moment, the bliss of the hour of death is revealed to us, in which a human being joyously accepts and enters the hereafter. Time and world belong to the past. Redemption has become reality. From one second to the next God has become complete and whole existence. There is no other way, no alternative - the human being meets Christ, whose countenance he had recognized in faith. Now it becomes visible in its own glorious light. In Him a human being now experiences the infinite love of God.

Being redeemed means everything. In particular it means forgetting all things transient, liberation from all worldliness, from family ties, from one's self and one's possessions, from friendships and from everything that used to mean happiness. All sufferings and pain vanish from our minds. Hostilities are forgotten.



Being redeemed means seeing Christ before us, hearing his call. It is final fulfilment in infinite joy. Many people will not believe me if I say that complete happiness is only realized when every thought and every feeling of my own are eliminated.

My meeting with the time in which I lived, or the knowledge about my share of the offences committed against God would destroy any happiness. The meeting would be a scene of torture with the beyond producing more torment than this world. Being redeemed means the greatness of God, in whom so much love exists as we can hardly imagine.

Repeatedly my reflection has been a yearning for revelation. The death of a friend is the departure from a worldly reality. It is also extreme gratitude towards God, who granted him the longed-for bliss he had dreamt of as a priest. Full of love Christ approached him, filling his innermost soul with His mercy. Fire seized His servant. The fire of the deepest gratitude set his soul ablaze.

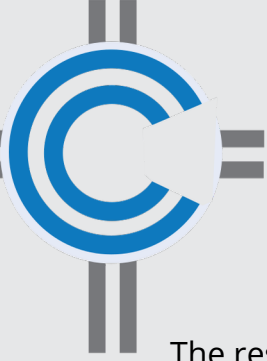
Being redeemed means living in God. The loneliness of sorrow and the hour of death are forgotten. Oh, I have experienced several times what redemption really is. We do not know it - and that is our protection. If we knew about the reality of this hour, we would sink through the ground with shame. The fall into the abyss of all we have done in our life, our mercilessness towards our neighbour, our hatred towards our brother and sister, our attempts to evade misery - in short: our betrayal of Christianity - the fall would be so deep that we would be crushed by desperation.

Being redeemed is the path of love on which the Cross of Christ gradually turns into revelation.

Being redeemed means being aware of one's own importance.

Being redeemed means taking example by God's regret at having imposed such terrible punishment on mankind. It means availing oneself of God's love and mercy as part of His justice through Jesus Christ, thus avoiding all evil in the dependence of this love.

Being redeemed and wishing to be redeemed shall make the hereafter a wonderful hope brightening our present life and suffering. Being redeemed means wanting to embrace the Cross, in order to let it shine in our own hearts. It means wanting to touch our hearts so deeply that everything, even the hour of death, will appear in glorious light.



The result of this reflection is the certainty that we are heading for eternal happiness. It is our task to prove to this world that Heaven exists. I experience it every minute of my life and I am bound to prove it to you. We know too little about our salvation.

The death of a noble friend was the impulse to this reflection. Redemption is holding me in its grip. Our going into God has aroused so much joy and gratitude in me that I can speak the words of farewell: Thank You, oh Christ crucified, who has delivered us from our guilt. Thank You for Your great, inconceivable love.

Father

I beg You in the name of the redeemed.

We long for Your kingdom.

We are so very close to You

in the experience of Your distance.

The splendour of Your purity guides us.

In Your holy church we find such great love.

Nourishment You give us, so that we may live.

You strengthen us with the body and blood of Your Son.

You hasten to praise our nothingness

as being what You wish,

to be used as certainty of the salvation given to us.

Your kingdom, o Father, so full of love,

is the heritage merited by Jesus Christ.

The Cross on which He bled to death

is the view of Heaven.

In Him there is the fulfilment of regained freedom,

the glory for You in the forgiving of our sins.

You told me to live the mystery of Redemption

in accordance with my knowledge.

You wanted me to recognize the hour of death,

when You will be all my joy and grace.

My heart experiences the unspeakable happiness of every human being,

the fulfilment of justice.

You call upon me

to consider Your loving kindness in those infinite dimensions

where mercy and justice prove final in the death of Jesus.

Oh Father, I beg you,

to let blossom in us the whole truth of love

so that we may cease to curb it according to human standards.

I beg You to open and move my heart for everyone

so that death may turn into the fulfilment of hope.



*I beg You to make us lead a life full of gratitude and love,
so that in us the knowledge may increase
of having found in You a God,
oh so kind and merciful,
who permanently strives
to reveal to us his immeasurable love
and who affectionately calls us his children,
who in his love can never allow
his o so helpless and weak creature to get lost.
I beg You, o Father, for the truth,
in which we can recognize ourselves and follow You
to Your honour and glory.*

*Taken from: Mother Marie Therese, I implore You, o Holy Church – In the name of the Spirit, Patris
Verlag GmbH 2015, pp. 216 ff*



COMMENTARY

By Manfred Lang, Permanent Deacon, Deputy Superior General

Admittedly, it sounds presumptuous when someone talks about death and what comes afterwards while they themselves have not yet died. And yet, we find the accounts of people who have had near-death experiences fascinating. They give reason to assume that there may still be perception and “life” after the heart has stopped beating.

With Mother Marie Therese, however, the situation was different. What we are dealing with here is mystical experience - an extraordinary gift for perceiving the supernatural and God Himself. Professor Dr. Stanisław Urbański, one of the very few experts worldwide in Christian spirituality and mysticism, once explained this in an interview with his doctoral student Dr. Józef Zielonka, the first Superior General Karl-Heinz Haus, and me.

Dying evokes fear and despair. We associate the unknown hereafter with fear and sorrow; it is a “terrifying thought.” What does this have to do with the “joy” of which Mother Marie Therese writes?

For her, the curtain was lifted a little through a mystical encounter with the Almighty. She was granted a glimpse into the hereafter of her friend who had just died. She also looked into her own hereafter - and ours - and she gives us an account of what she “saw.”

“At that moment,” there opened before her “the joy of the hour of death, in which a person rejoices at the hereafter and embraces it. Time and the world belong ... to the past. ... From one second to the next, God has become the full and complete reality of being.” The human person experiences redemption by seeing Christ “in the fullness of light.” In that moment, the person experiences the whole love of God.

For this reason, Mother Marie Therese could say to everyone in this world, “You are saved, you are redeemed,” according to Superior General Karl-Heinz Haus, who counted the term “redemption” eighteen times in this reflection, six of them in connection with the word “happiness.” In 2014, on the occasion of Pope Francis’ proclamation of the Year of Mercy, he stated: “The ultimate cause is the mercy of God!”



To be redeemed means “the forgetting of all transience, liberation from worldly things, from family ties, from the self and from possessions, from friendships and from everything we regard as happiness. All suffering and every sensation of pain have disappeared; hostilities are forgotten.” For her dying friend, she recognized in the hereafter a state of “perfect happiness,” in which “every thought and every feeling is taken from us.”

“To be redeemed means to live in God,” said Mother Marie Therese. “The loneliness of suffering and of the hour of death is forgotten.” And further: “Going home should be a longing for home. It is an immersion into the source of eternal happiness. In the hour of death, the door opens. ... To be redeemed is the path of love, on which the Cross of Christ becomes a revelation.”

The recognition of our own sins - especially the lack of mercy and the hatred we have inflicted upon our neighbor - would be like falling into a bottomless abyss were it not for the redemption won through the death on the Cross of the incarnate Son of God. The foundress of the Communio in Christo calls this “an immersion into the source of eternal happiness. ... We encounter Christ, whose heart expands ... and receives us into itself.”

Manfred Lang, Permanent Deacon, Deputy Superior General

Deacon Manfred Lang, right, born in 1959, is the Deputy Superior General of the Ordo Communio in Christo. He is co-author of the biography on Mother Marie Therese “Weit über alle Grenzen” (Far beyond all boundaries) and of the anthology “Als ob es heute wäre – Von der ungebrochenen Aktualität des Zweiten Vatikanischen Konzils” (As if it were today – On the enduring relevance of the Second Vatican Council); he is also the editor of the collection of Mother Marie Therese’s “Words of hope” with the same title. The photo shows him together with the late Auxiliary Bishop of Aachen, Karl Reger. Manfred Lang is married. He has three adult children and three grandchildren. Archive photo: Dr. Michael Thalken/pp/agency ProfiPress.





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