



Alexandria, 26 October 2014
Feast of the Divine Master

To All the Sisters

Dearest Sisters,

I am writing to you for the Feast of the Divine Master to send you my warmest best wishes, as well as those of the General Councilors and all the sisters of this vast United States Province, which we have been visiting for over a month. It has been a joy for us to see that in every community our sisters manifest a strong feeling of belonging to the Institute, a profound love for the Pauline vocation and great creativity in the apostolate. Spending many hours waiting in crowded U.S. airports, I felt moved to share with you, during this year dedicated to Maestra Thecla, a few reflections concerning our dear Mother's personal relationship with the Divine Master.

Maestra Thecla was literally captivated by the Founder's insistent invitation to attain union with the Master, to reach the highest degree of prayer—the point of "it is no longer I who live but Jesus who lives in me" (CSAS 154/1). Prima Maestra's spiritual notes allow us to glimpse significant features of her journey of conformity to Christ: "To live in union with God as St. Paul did: 'My life is Christ.' To do everything for him, with him and in him" (June 1963). "To remain united to Jesus. To have his thoughts, his will. To love God the Father above everything else: to do [everything] for him and with him. To make sacrifices for souls." To imitate St. Paul's union with the Divine Master: 'What can separate us from the love of Christ?' "Today, greater intensity of life with Jesus Master. Everything with him: unity." "To remain united to the Divine Master. To learn internal and external silence from the Holy Family. To live in intimacy with the Divine Master: mind, will, heart, works, senses, hands, feet, eyes, hearing—everything for him and with him" (Jan. 1963). Maestra Thecla's longing for unity with Jesus led her to experience his same feelings and compassion and to yearn that the Gospel might reach everyone "with the most rapid and fruitful means," that is, through all the languages and forms of communication.

Her loving attention to the Divine Master dwelling within her radiated from her entire being. Fr. Domenico Spoletini, ssp, said: "From Viña del Mar, Chile, we took the train to visit the Daughters of St. Paul in Valparaiso. The Founder and I were seated next to each other, with Sr. Thecla and Sr. Giulia Toschi in the seats ahead of us. At a certain point, Fr. Alberione gestured toward Sr. Thecla and said to me: 'You see Prima Maestra? She has given herself entirely to God with absolute dedication. There is not a single part of her spiritual organism that is not moved according to the Spirit.'"

Maestra Thecla was a faithful interpreter of the *apostolic mysticism* that makes us contemplative in action and active in contemplation. She taught us that we become *apostles* when we make our own the apostolic spirit of Jesus Master. In fact, devotion to the Divine Master must involve every aspect of our life, give direction to the apostolate and be transformed into a spiritual project of life aimed at bringing our faith to full development.

May our Mother obtain for us the grace to live an intimate relationship with Jesus Master and with one another. May she help us open our hearts to the people to whom we are sent—to the men and women of today who often live in a spiritual desert and who are yearning for light, hope and peace. Let us remember all the families in the world and above all the Church of Pakistan, which just observed a day of fasting and prayer for Asia Bibi, condemned to death for blasphemy. Let us make our own the heartfelt plea of the Pope: "We cannot resign ourselves to thinking of the Middle East without Christians. We cannot resign ourselves to the progressive uprooting of a people who have confessed the name of Jesus for over 2000 years."

Let us entrust to the Lord our sisters—above all those in Pakistan, South Sudan and Venezuela—who are suffering and working intensively so that justice, peace and reconciliation will triumph in hearts.

I hope this feast will be marked by a "family" color for all of you—a day in which we perceive our life immersed in the life of the Master and in which we recognize that we are all sisters and brothers in him—all walking toward the same Father.

With deep affection,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan".

Sr. Anna Maria Parenzan
Superior General