



Roma, 5 febbraio 2020

## In memoria di Maestra Thecla

Rome, 5 February 2020  
*In memory of Maestra Thecla*

Dear Sisters and young women in formation,

In the beautiful message of Pope Francis for the 54<sup>th</sup> *World Communications Day*, two sentences offered me particular inspiration for this letter:

Each of us knows different stories that have the fragrance of the Gospel, that have borne witness to the Love that transforms life.

Our own story becomes part of every great story.

I did not know Maestra Thecla personally; I was not enveloped by her penetrating gaze; I did not hear her speak; I was not comforted by her encouragement. I “discovered” her at the very moment in which I was considering the Pauline life more seriously. Until then, I had frequented the world of the Daughters of St. Paul enclosed in their book center in my city and, for me, only Fr. Alberione existed. I admired him. I was fascinated by his total involvement in the social and ecclesial reality of his time, by his missionary thrust, by what he had achieved so that Christ might be proclaimed to everyone with all the instruments and languages of communication.

But meeting Maestra Thecla, first in the pages of a book about her and then through the testimonies of those who had known her, was—I’m sure—the “springboard” that made me take the definitive step toward the Pauline consecrated life.

Having never known Maestra Thecla, I live in constant nostalgia for this “mother.” Two years after her death, Fr. Alberione said:

Feel her present: as she taught by word and example up to the last moment of her life. Feel her present, not only so as to petition her but above all so as to *imitate* her.

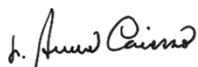
*Imitate* her docility, humility, coherence of life. Imitate her life as a mystic and apostle, her refusal to be overwhelmed by situations, and her capacity to reread events in the light of faith. In fact, Maestra Thecla was accustomed to wisely “summing up” things, introducing her syntheses with the phrase: “I have learned that...” And her most admirable synthesis was:

I have learned that we must trust in God alone and remain calm and serene, convinced that everything will be fine, even when it seems to us that the opposite is true....

*Imitate* the missionary passion that she shared down the years with Fr. Alberione and for the sake of which she urged us to “actively participate in the many sufferings of the world,” doing everything *with Jesus and for Jesus*. That is why the sole criterion she offered us, her daughters, in any apostolic endeavor was: “As long as it does good!” If an initiative does good, then we should not let obstacles prevent us from achieving it, because the spirit of the *Pact* will prevail!

On the table around which we usually gather for our council meetings, we have chosen to place a picture of Maestra Thecla next to the Word of God. It is wonderful to feel watched, accompanied and blessed by her. And, for me, it is a constant stimulus to learn from her wise and motherly outlook, which enabled her to *intuit, foresee and offer a remedy and comfort to all*, as Cardinal Larraona said in his funeral homily.

Let us ask Prima Maestra Thecla to maternally intercede for us and for all the members of the Pauline Family, which she deeply loved. With great affection,

  
Sr. Anna Caiazza  
Superior General