

# **STUDIA DE HISTORIA SALVATORIANA**



## **A Short Biography**

**SHS 1.0**

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**THERESE VON WÜLLENWEBER**

**Mary of the Apostles**

**A Short Biography**

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# Foreword

“History can teach us what we and others are.”<sup>1</sup> I knew almost nothing about Father Jordan and Mother Mary when I entered the Salvatorian Sisters' Community at the end of 1964. I had come to realize that "this is my way, too" through personal contact with the sisters, their life and their work. During the subsequent two years of novitiate, we heard very little about Father Jordan. We did, however, pray intensely for an early and successful outcome to the Beatification Process of Mother Mary. We held a so-called "Mother Mary Hour" each month, but it was not always easy to plan something for this as there was very little material available. The Beatification took place on October 13, 1968 and it was a great event for us. But, personally, I still had difficulty in relating to Mother Mary. It was only years later, when I was working in Rome during 1980/1981 and had the opportunity to work on her *Diary* and to read some of her letters to the sisters, that I began to get a glimpse into her personality.

Since that time, the DSS series issued by the Salvatorian Fathers has provided us with much more information on Father Jordan. The successful outcome of his Beatification Process is now at the forefront of our prayer. We have also gained a deeper insight into Mother Mary's personality due to the work done by the Mother Mary Study Group and the new information it has brought to light. During a conversation I had with S. Avellina Tietz in Berlin in 1987, she said: "Mother Mary was a wonderful woman. If she hadn't been so strong, she would never have been able to accomplish the work with Father Jordan."<sup>2</sup> The more I

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<sup>1</sup>H. Lübke, *Geschichtsbegriff und Geschichtsinteresse* (Basle, 1977), p. 213.

<sup>2</sup>S. Avellina Tietz, conversation with author, Berlin, 13 Apr. 1987.

myself have to do with Mother Mary, the more I have to agree with Sister Avellina and the more Mother Mary's personality fascinates me. It cannot be described in just a few words; it breaks through narrow limits and its aspects cannot be reduced to a common denominator.

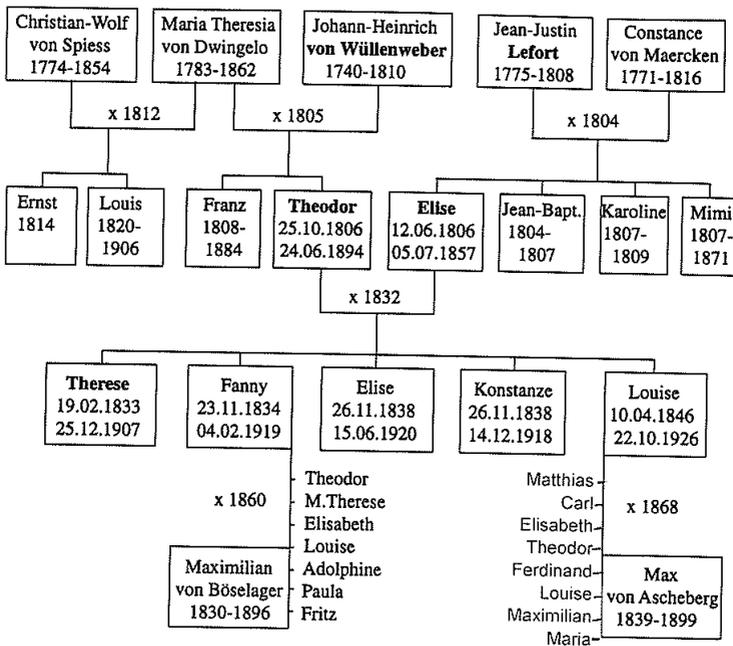
The availability of documents from various archives and the material which the Study Group had assembled to date made the writing of this short biography possible. It is just a small contribution toward an improved understanding of Mother Mary and an attempt to show some aspects of her personality.

Sister Ulrike Musick, SDS

Vienna 1987/1988

# Family von Wüllenweber – Lefort

## Family von Wüllenweber – Lefort



Aunt Cis: Franziska Lichtschlag (1783-1871) – Stepsister of Constance von Maercken

# Chronological Table

- 1833-1848 Therese von Wüllenweber was born on February 19, 1833 at Castle Myllendonk near Mönchengladbach and spent her childhood there.
- 1848-1850 At the Benedictine boarding school, “Our Lady of Peace” in Liège
- 1850-1857 At Myllendonk; participated in parish missions in 1852/53 and 1857; mission ideal
- 1857-1863 Member of the Sacred Heart Congregation: January 13, 1857, entrance in Blumenthal: August 30, 1857, beginning of novitiate; September 29, 1859, temporary vows; in Warendorf and Orleans; February/March 1863, departure.
- 1863-1868 At Myllendonk; March 1863, three weeks at the Visitation convent in Mülheim
- 1868-1871 Member of the Sisters of Perpetual Adoration: March 21, 1869, beginning of novitiate in Brussels; in Ghent and Liège; June 12, 1871, departure
- 1871-1876 At Myllendonk; confessor, Dr. von Essen; 1875, private “mission vow”; March 24, 1876, rental of part of the east wing of the Neuwerk convent
- 1876-1882 At St. Barbara Institute, Neuwerk, under the direction of von Essen; January 7, 1879, purchase of the convent
- 1882- 1888 At Neuwerk under Fr. Jordan’s direction; July 4, 1882, first meeting with Fr. Jordan; September 5, 1882, member of the 1st degree of the Apostolic Teaching Society; May 31, 1883, private perpetual vows

- 1888-1894 In Tivoli: December 8, 1888, foundation of the Congregation; March 20, 1889, diocesan approval; March 25, 1889, perpetual vows; general superior; June 1894, typhoid epidemic
- 1894-1903 In Rome, Via della Lungara 111/112
- 1903-1907 In Rome, Salita Sant'Onofrio 11; August 3, 1903, purchase of the house; December 1-6, 1905, 1<sup>st</sup> General Chapter; December 25, 1907, death of Mother Mary
- 1968 Rome, October 13, 1968, beatification

# Mother Mary's Family and Childhood

Fairly recently, the owners of Castle Myllendonk<sup>3</sup> gave a number of family documents, letters and diaries to the municipal archive of Mönchengladbach for safekeeping. This has made it possible for us to gain access to numerous personal records relating to the various family members. All these papers give us an insight into bygone times. They tell us of both joyful and sad events and reflect some seemingly unimportant details. They also reveal the deep piety and close relationship which existed between the family members, each one sharing in the joys and sorrows of the other.

For me personally, the letters of Mother Mary's grandmother, Therese von Dwingelo (widow of von Wüllenweber and the wife of von Spiess) were like a priceless treasure. Almost every week, she sent a letter to her son Theodore at Myllendonk. She had her own opinion regarding all the happenings in the family and gave her own special commentary on them in her letters.

After the marriage of Mother Mary's parents, Theodore von Wüllenweber and Elise Lefort, she wrote: "...Please tell your dear Elise that I am eagerly looking forward to her visit. She must not build up a very high opinion of House Lotten. However, what is lacking outwardly will be made up for by affection ... I was happy to receive the news that you are already looking forward to the joys of fatherhood ... may heaven send a blessing on this. ... A little son would be more welcome to me than a girl."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Myllendonk: medieval moated castle east of the river Niers, district of Korschenbroich near Mönchengladbach; in possession of the French crown from 1794; purchased in 1803 by magistrate Lichtschlag and his stepchildren von Maercken.

<sup>4</sup> T. v. Dwingelo, letter to Theodore v. Ww., 18 July 1832, in ACMG/23/348.

Prior to the birth, she made sure that Theodore would arrange for the family baptismal clothes to be used: "... because this was also your first little bonnet."<sup>5</sup>

And when a healthy baby girl came into the world on February 19, 1833, the whole family rejoiced. "Thanks be to God. The longed-for news arrived last Sunday telling us that dear, good Elise has safely delivered and has presented you with a pretty daughter as a pledge of her love. ... I am so very happy that I have lived to experience this joyful event and to know that a grandchild has been born who will carry my name."<sup>6</sup>

Some weeks later, Theodore's stepfather, Major Christian Wolf von Spiess, went to visit Myllendonk. On returning home, he wrote to Theodore: "... You have a lovely wife and you should value her highly; she has my greatest respect. Always live very happily with her and may God keep your dear little Therese safe for you. Give mother and daughter a loving kiss from me."<sup>7</sup>

The following year, the grandmother could hardly wait for the moment when she could welcome Theodore and his family into her home: "... So little Therese is already so big that she can run around the room. I am rather afraid that she will be frightened when she sees me and will not come into my arms. Come, and most importantly, bring your wife and child."<sup>8</sup>

Some time after the grandmother at last had the joy of hugging Elise and the baby, another child was found to be on its way at Myllendonk. At Fanny's birth she commented: "... Although I tried from the beginning not to raise my hopes in case dear Elise was not to bring a little son into the world, the thought that it might possibly be one did come

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<sup>5</sup> T. v.Dwingelo, letter, 13 Feb. 1833.

<sup>6</sup> T. v.Dwingelo, letter, 28 Feb. 1833.

<sup>7</sup> Christian Wolf von Spiess, letter to Theodore v.Ww., 13 Aug. 1833, in ACMG/23/347.

<sup>8</sup> T. v.Dwingelo, letter, 13 Mar. 1834, in ACMG/23/348.

quite involuntarily into my mind ... however, that is beside the point: I hope that this new baby may be as dear as little Therese.”<sup>9</sup>

Life at Myllendonk was busy and lively and, from a distance, the grandmother took an active interest in it: “... Elise wrote that you want her to wean little Fanny and I agree with that, as breast feeding ... takes away a lot of strength. However, I advise you to pay a great deal of attention to the care and nourishment of the child.”<sup>10</sup>

In autumn 1836, another child was expected. Was it to be the hoped-for son and heir? Grief for the loss of this child was not overcome, above all by the mother, Elise, even after the passing of many years. In her retreat notes at the end of 1856, she wrote that she had spoken with the retreat master “... about the eternal life of unbaptised children.”<sup>11</sup> The grandmother sorrowed with the parents and tried to console them. The father’s stepbrother, Ernest, also wrote to express his sympathy: “... the sad news of your wife’s difficult delivery and the subsequent loss of the little one made me very sad. You write that your wife is all right and this is a consoling compensation for me for the loss: I hope your wife will not feel any ill effects and nothing would please me more than to see you and your dear wife this autumn. ... It would surely be good for your dear wife if you took her on a trip after her convalescence. She would, without doubt, go along the Rhine and you would have a good time during the wine harvest ....”<sup>12</sup>

The following two years passed without anything outstanding happening at Castle Myllendonk and then we read in a letter from Theodore’s mother: “... I am anxiously awaiting news of how dear good Elise is getting along, although I do not think that the baby will arrive this month. ... I love the dear woman as if she were my own daughter. My

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<sup>9</sup> T. v.Dwingelo, letter, 30 Nov. 1834.

<sup>10</sup> T. v.Dwingelo, letter, 6 Mar. 1835.

<sup>11</sup> Elise Lefort – v.Ww., Notebook, 4 Oct. 1856, in ASDS.

<sup>12</sup> Ernst von Spiess, letter to Theodore v.Ww., 7 Sept. 1836, in ACMG/23/349.

one hope is that Auntie Cis will be back at Myllendonk again and can help Elise as needed.”<sup>13</sup>

A little later on, with relief at having heard of the birth of the twins, Elise and Constance, she wrote: “... I am glad that your dear wife is freed from the heavy burden and has delivered safely. Just in the first moment, I was almost sad about the double blessing and would rather have had a grandson than two granddaughters. One must see the good side, however, and thank God that both children are well-formed and have no limbs missing. Elise comes from good stock: may heaven preserve her from having a double burden next time. For this time, we can say that it was not desired but nevertheless welcome. ... I ask you earnestly, tell me ... whether you took a wet nurse or if she feeds them herself.”<sup>14</sup>

For some years after that, the day-to-day life at the castle went uneventfully along its accustomed path. Ernest von Spiess, who as a professional soldier was often away on his travels, envied his stepbrother Theodore at times: “... I wander here and there in the world and I don't reach my goal. I wonder what you really think of me. Maybe it goes something like this: Due to the unstable life he follows, he is not the man he should be. Oh yes, dear Theodore, it costs a lot to remain steadfast when faced with many opportunities to do otherwise. However, my parents gave me a good upbringing for which I can never thank them enough and this is, together with religion, a powerful support to me. My comrades have always respected me and I am still in favor with my superiors.”<sup>15</sup>

“... I am very glad that everything is still going well with you and your dear family. Your dear little children are already tall, beautiful and are studying. This also is a sign that we are getting older and that more

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<sup>13</sup> T. v.Dwingelo, letter, 7 Nov. 1838, in ACMG/23/348.

<sup>14</sup> T. v.Dwingelo, letter, 2 Dec. 1838.

<sup>15</sup> Ernst von Spiess, letter, 12. Feb. 1839.

than six years have passed since I last saw your dear ones at Myllendonk. It is really good that you went on a trip with your wife last autumn. You surely enjoyed each other's company."<sup>16</sup>

When Louise, the fifth daughter, came into the world some years later in 1846, her grandmother wrote: "... I will keep silence over this new addition at Myllendonk as it doesn't correspond to my desire and I endure it with the religious outlook that what God gives is good!! ..."<sup>17</sup> Can we ourselves understand even something of what it meant for Elise and Theodore, in spite of all the love they had for their children, to have only daughters and no son? Time and time again, the father had to face the fact: "It's another baby girl."<sup>18</sup>

Later on, in connection with the introduction of the Beatification Process some sisters spoke of what Mother Mary had related to them about her childhood: "She told me that her dear father had a wagon-load of sand brought into the castle courtyard for the children to play with: he said it was good for the children's health. ... She had a lively nature and was sometimes a bit too high-spirited: to the gardener's distress, she went jumping over the newly planted flowerbeds together with a large dog."<sup>19</sup>

After the years had passed and the Myllendonk children had grown older, we learn from their mother's diary: "The Lord kept my dear ones safe this year. ... I was very busy with household affairs, important ones as well as seemingly unimportant ones, which I really could not give over into hands other than my own."<sup>20</sup> "I had things to prepare today for noontime, as well as several things to attend to regarding Therese's clothing. The remaining time was taken up by social con-

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<sup>16</sup> Ernst von Spiess, letter, 5 July 1841.

<sup>17</sup> T. v.Dwingelo, letter, 14 Oct. 1846, in ACMG/23/347.

<sup>18</sup> S. Leonarda Merkel, Test., in ASDS.

<sup>19</sup> S. Bonaventura Zenker, Test., in ASDS.

<sup>20</sup> E. Lefort- v.Ww., Diary, 15 May 1850, in ACMG/23/K44.

tacts. ... Vicar Kneipp was here today ... he gave classes to the children and, after he had finished, I spoke with him about further lessons.”<sup>21</sup> “The following Monday, my husband, myself and Therese visited Prince Salem at Dyck, ... we ate there and went for a nice walk with the family.”<sup>22</sup> “In my opinion, one should not completely exclude the children from social life and so, because I do not like to spend more than necessary on fashion and such things, I make their clothes myself and have been quite successful at it. As well as this, I also make vestments for poor churches and while I do it, the children make their contribution by reading good, uplifting books to strengthen my spirit.”<sup>23</sup>

The daughters received their education and upbringing at the family castle, primarily from their mother and from the parish priests. There were also governesses employed at the castle who were personally and carefully selected by Elise: “... A young woman I took on to help with household affairs failed to come up to my expectations due to her worldly outlook and superficiality. Since she had been recommended to me on very good authority, I didn't want to show my often grave doubts about her and I was very patient with her. It was just the same with the children's teacher. She was an excellent teacher but her example did not come up to her words. I had no joy in either of them: they were respectful to my face but were no credit to the house. I was able to find a good way to get rid of them both. I hope I can find someone more suitable for the children (as I had before).”<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> E. Lefort- v.Ww., Diary, 26 May 1850.

<sup>22</sup> E. Lefort- v.Ww., Diary, 30 July 1850.

<sup>23</sup> E. Lefort- v.Ww., Diary, 5 Jan. 1853.

<sup>24</sup> E. Lefort- v.Ww., Diary, 15 May 1850.

## At Boarding School

All the daughters spent some time at a boarding school to complete their education: Therese and Fanny at the Benedictine Sisters at Liège in Belgium; Elise and Constance at the “Sacred Heart”, Blumenthal in Vaals, Holland, and Louise at the Sacré Coeur in Münster, Germany.

Their mother wrote regarding this: “... The two trips to Liège belong to the pleasant events of the past year. I feel that the boarding school which our daughters attend is a very good one. The syllabus is unusually varied, the religious life not too strict. The mistresses are well-educated and are experienced in the ways of upper-class society. ...”<sup>25</sup> So this decision had turned out well for all concerned although, originally, Therese had been destined for another boarding school. The latter had, however, proved to be too worldly for her father’s satisfaction.<sup>26</sup>

From a school prospectus dating from these years we learn that the school tried to correspond to the solid curriculum in which religion held the first place and permeated every aspect of school life. The main subjects were: arithmetic, bookkeeping, history. English, German and French, literature, grammar, composition and conversation, geography, cosmography, logic, physics, natural science, home economics, plain sewing, embroidery, music, and drawing.

Many years later, Mother Mary told the sisters that: “... she had been rather untidy, leaving a thimble lying in one place, scissors in another and knitting in yet another, etc. In the boarding school, this was a punishable offense and she had to pay a penny for each failure. Her sister Fanny hid the money in the stockings. The dormitory situation, too, left

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<sup>25</sup> E. Lefort- v.Ww., Diary, 15 May 1850.

<sup>26</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892, in ASDS.

much to be desired: combs were not cleaned properly, the folds of the bed curtains not set straight. These tasks were the duty of the young women themselves and were intended to accustom them to keeping order.

“Periods of conversation and etiquette were conducted at the boarding school during which the students had to behave as they would in society: one took the part of a listener and, when the other spoke to her, she had to listen attentively, nod her head, etc.”<sup>27</sup>

Mother Mary always looked back with pleasure to the time she spent at Liège. When Father Jordan was considering the possibility of a foundation in Belgium and asked her for a report, she wrote back full of joy: *From Aachen to Liège, it is beautiful, a paradise. ... When, through God's mercy, I was there at the Benedictine Sisters' boarding school – Bishop van Bommel<sup>28</sup> was the unforgettable bishop there since he was so very active in upholding the rights of the Church and put everything in order. ... Liège is, therefore, a place of grace for your spiritual daughter, dear spiritual father and founder. --- I also received the prize for good behavior (which I think was truly undeserved since I was very lively). I attribute it, however, to the fact that I joined with two others to begin the first group of Children of Mary at the school – under the direction of Madame Stephanie.<sup>29</sup> There, way back in 1849, I was thinking of Rome and wanted to learn Italian. None of the sisters knew the language: but the day student, Justine de Bellefroid, took Italian lessons at home. She brought me her lessons and I taught her German – and later on we corresponded in Italian. ... Dear Reverend Father! Thank you for giving me the opportunity to write about Liège.*

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<sup>27</sup> Zenker, Test.

<sup>28</sup> Msgr. Corneille Richard van Bommel: b. 4 Apr. 1790, Leyden (NL); 1816, ordained priest, Münster (D); 1829-1852, bishop of Liège (B); d. 7 Apr. 1852, Liège (cf. SHS-O, 4.5/v. Bom).

<sup>29</sup> Madame Stephanie, OSB (Juliette Smets): b. 1803, Paris (F); 1844 choir sister and teacher with the Benedictines at Liège (B); d. 27 Aug. 1889, Liège (cf. SHS-O, 4.5/SmSt.).

*There is rather too much that is personal in it, but my heart is full of gratitude – perhaps it is not irrelevant. Oh! may this foundation come about soon. ...*<sup>30</sup>

In 1849, during this time at boarding school in Liège, Therese was confirmed by Bishop van Bommel. His relationship to her was almost like one of the family. The sisters later gave the information that "... she venerated Joan of Arc. This courageous defender of her country was chosen as a confirmation patroness by Rev. Mother because she, too, wished to be completely determined and strong; she disliked all forms of weak and sentimental behavior in herself and in others."<sup>31</sup>

Even into later years, Therese remained closely united to her teachers and fellow students. Up to 1888 she took part in the yearly retreats held at the Benedictine or Sacred Heart convents in Liège and also liked to visit there later on.<sup>32</sup>

## At Castle Myllendonk Again

Mother Mary's mother, Elise von Wüllenweber, wrote in her diary during the month of May 1850: "... Our eldest daughter, Therese, came back from boarding school recently. The second one, Fanny, is still there in Liège; the children give me much joy. Therese does not harmonize with her mother in various ways. However, I think that the Lord leads to the goal by many different roads and so I have good hopes for her."<sup>33</sup>

"On returning home from boarding school, she had to learn how to run the household and also how to cook, do the laundry, etc. She was not

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<sup>30</sup> MM, note to FJ, "About my beloved Liège," 27 Jan. 1892, in APS-Ec. 610.

<sup>31</sup> Zenker, Test.

<sup>32</sup> MM, note, "About my beloved Liège."

<sup>33</sup> E. Lefort- v.Ww., Diary, 15 May 1850.

too enthusiastic about this and would rather have left it to her younger sister who liked it better. She herself would have preferred to help her father with the administration, ..."<sup>34</sup> as the sisters learned later from her own account.

Once again Therese was living at the family castle and, like most other girls of this age, she was full of questions and longings regarding her future way of life and work. Most of her poems were written during this time she spent at home between 1850 and 1857.

### The Heart

The heart is indeed a stormy thing-  
seldom stilled, seldom serene.  
(Like a wind that rushes in blustering,)  
the heart, without warning and unforeseen,  
will suddenly throb and palpitate  
unpredictably at a galloping gait.  
Then all on which its glances fall  
appears to it insignificantly small.

Lured to the beyond, the heart leaps to attain;  
to reach out, it will pound, skip and overstrain  
itself. It soars, wheels and wings  
to the heights; it whirls, reels and swings  
to the depth - thirstingly set  
on things unseen. Hope makes it so intricate.

Yet, should the heart incline to rest,  
distaste will readily follow and molest  
it if it slumbers at length.  
Then, boredom, with defying strength,

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<sup>34</sup> Zenker, Test

arouses the heart, bids it forsake  
its sluggish sleep: Awake! Awake!  
And so the heart again is spurred to dart  
ahead. Seethe on, move on, brave heart!

Inspired and held by a beautiful thought,  
the heart is intrigued and at once caught  
up. It expands, delights and glows.  
For a brief span it no longer knows  
the pain or sorrow that earlier distraught  
it. Immersed in the eloquence of thought,  
the heart flows on - calm, and tranquilly  
like crystal waves on a drifting sea.

At times the heart is strangely found and bound  
in sadness - a sadness that burrows underground,  
tormenting the heart to piteous cries -  
even bringing it to agonize.  
Now everything seems to it painful and sad.  
So focused, it forgets any good ever had.

When in touch with its deepest desires,  
the heart inevitably aspires  
to God and heavenly things. Then follows this:  
a taste - like a promise - of heavenly bliss...  
It makes the heart softly ask: "Oh, when will I possess  
the fullness of God in true happiness?"

Often the heart must spring up and engage  
in fierce battle, for cravings tend to rage  
within it; and it dare not covet all it would.  
Then conscience allies with the heart for the good.

If that deepest self is well-attended,  
the heart turns victor. Peace reigns. War is ended.

When the heart is attuned with desire within  
for joyful sacrifice and for genuine  
love, let it not search for something grand -  
but give in the moment what is first at hand:  
something of itself, without condition.  
Blest is the heart with this disposition!

Oh heart, when an experience of good  
leaves you so happy that even tears would  
steal down your cheek, that gift alone  
you truly can call your very own.  
Be aware: such joy can be but brief and fleeting,  
(for God has touched your inmost being).

Yes, heart my heart, I have portrayed  
you faithfully. But you masquerade!  
How long? How long will you be tossed  
about? Once glad, then sad, or feeling lost?  
Yet, however restless now you may be,  
you will once rest in Got eternally.<sup>35</sup>

I, personally, was very touched to find Mother Mary using some of the words which were very frequently used by Father Jordan many years later in his *Spiritual Diary*, such as everything, nothing, always, Savior, etc.

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<sup>35</sup> Therese, poem, 1853, in ASDS.

Is this due to the influence of contemporary thought and feeling, or is it a unison of ideas?

## Life at Myllendonk

We may not form any grand ideas about life at Myllendonk. The castle had changed hands frequently and came into the possession of the von Wüllenweber family only at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Count Ostein, who inherited the castle in 1737, entrusted the administration of the property to his magistrate, Johann Anton Franz Rudolph von Maercken.<sup>36</sup> This magistrate married Anna Margarita Elisabeth Philippine Wüllenweber. She was the sister of Mother Mary's grandfather on her father's side: Johann Heinrich Joseph von Wüllenweber who, as postmaster general, was raised to the peerage in 1781 by the Austrian Emperor Joseph II.<sup>37</sup>

Wilhelmine Constance von Maercken was born of that von Wüllenweber/von Maercken marriage. She was to become Mother Mary's grandmother on her mother's side.

After the death of her husband, von Maercken, Anna Margarita married his successor in office: Josef Lichtschlag.

In 1803, Josef and relatives of the von Maercken family jointly acquired Castle Myllendonk, a property which had become by then a possession of the French crown.

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<sup>36</sup> Jakob Bremer, *Die reichsmittelbare Herrschaft Myllendonk*, (facsimile, 1939).

<sup>37</sup> Patent of nobility, 2 May 1781, copy in ACMG/23/K45.

Franziska Lichtschlag, known as Auntie Cis, was a child of this marriage and she spent all her life at Castle Myllendonk caring for members of the family. Following the early death of her brother-in-law, Jean Justin Lefort, and that of his wife, Wilhelmine Constance von Maercken, she looked after their children Elise and Mimi at Castle Myllendonk. Elise was later to become the mother of Mother Mary.

Elise subsequently inherited part of Castle Myllendonk and the land belonging to it. Elise and Theodore von Wüllenweber were able to acquire the remaining part after their marriage.<sup>38</sup>

Many decades later, Matthias Weuthen of Mönchengladbach recounted what his mother-in-law had so often told him about her work in Castle Myllendonk as a young girl: "... Baron Theodore was a straightforward man with a love for order and yet he was kind. He demanded total dedication to work on the part of his employees and their conformity to the Christian spirit of his family. He himself honored God and he wanted to see the same in all those who were in his service. He made it his business to arrange the daily work schedule for the estate and he also checked to see what work his staff were doing and how it was being done. There were usually some day laborers employed in addition to the regular staff. Most of the people who lived in the vicinity of the castle were known personally to the Baron. If he met someone he knew when he went out riding to look at the work in the fields, he would usually stop to talk. His loud, powerful voice could then be heard resounding far and wide over field and grove. Right up into his old age, he was the caring and friendly 'Baron und Freiherr von und zu Millendonk'."<sup>39</sup>

"The men and women servants took their meals together in the great servants' hall. All assembled there at the appointed time. When the first course had been brought in, the head servant picked up the bread

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<sup>38</sup> Contract of sale, 23 Oct. 1833, in ACMG/23/D76.

<sup>39</sup> Matthias Weuthen, letter to S. Avellina Tietz, 1957, in ASDS.

knife and tapped its handle against a leaf of the long oak table. This was the sign for the table prayer which followed and all present were expected to take part in it.

The head servant also had the duty of cutting the bread. After the meal, he gave the same sign again and a thanksgiving prayer was recited in common. That was the daily custom at breakfast as well as at the midday meal and at supper.

“The food was always plentiful and good. One of the ladies of the castle was in charge of the food preparation and the supervision of the kitchen. They changed off weekly and each in turn had to help with the kitchen work and assist in the preparation of all the courses. The master and mistress of the house took their meals within their family circle.”<sup>40</sup>

This was the lifestyle of the family von Wüllenweber. They were respected and loved throughout the district and took an active part in the parish life of Korschenbroich.

## Parish Missions and the Retreat Movement

The recommencement of the parish missions in Germany is very closely connected with that of the Ignatian retreats which, since the beginning of the forties, had prepared the ground for the missions. Initially, the State tried to make it impossible for retreats and missions to be held by requiring that licenses should be obtained and then refusing to issue them.

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<sup>40</sup> Weuthen, letter, 1957.

Along with deepening of religious knowledge, priority was given to improving morality in general and the promotion of prayer and devotions. From 1850 onward, about seven hundred missions were given in the Archdiocese of Cologne alone. They formed the sense of identity which made Catholic Germany strong in face of the Kulturkampf.<sup>41</sup>

Therese and her family were among those who participated in the parish missions: at Gladbach from December 1852 to January 1853 and again in February 1857 at Schiefbahn.

We learn how much the family members were impressed by these experiences from the diary of the mother, Elise von Wüllenweber: "... the mission at Gladbach increased my love for St. Ignatius. Father Hasslacher aimed his conferences ... at having an impact on life, the purification of morals and toward making each one aware of his or her personal responsibility. ... and God will surely crown his good intentions with success. His words moved many to tears, including myself; the second conference on the duties of married persons left me cold: I got the feeling throughout that something earthly was mixed in with it, ... But it hurt me especially when we were leaving, that my husband labeled this conference as the best and as having made the whole mission worthwhile."<sup>42</sup>

We will notice other instances which show that Therese, too, had a preference for the Jesuits. She frequently turned to them for help and advice and, later on, tried to make contacts with those Institutes which had been founded by Jesuits.

Many years later, Therese made a brief reference to the mission in Gladbach in her life sketch: ... *But at home, after the Jesuit missions (especially through the conferences of Rev. Father Ph. v. Mehlern, ...)*

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<sup>41</sup> cf. Erwin Gatz, *Rheinische Volksmission im 19. Jahrhundert*, (1963).

<sup>42</sup> E. Lefort- v.Ww., *Diary*, 7 Jan. 1853.

*in 1853 and 1857, I was totally taken up by enthusiasm for the missions.*<sup>43</sup>

She was moved by many thoughts and in 1853 composed the poem:

#### Questioning

Shall I then finally give  
and relinquish all?  
Risk and dare to live  
another call?

Perhaps, then, you would really be happy!  
... Yes, someday that will be true -

No ... no ... so much says to me:  
Oh! my child- That you cannot do!<sup>44</sup>

From September 25 to October 1, 1856, together with her mother and her sister Fanny, Therese took part in a retreat given on the Rhine island of Nonnenwerth.

Since retreats were actually reserved mainly to male participants even during these flourishing years of the retreat movement, it is of particular interest to us that the mother and her two older daughters went to take part in a course already in these early years.

The mother kept notes about herself and her daughters and these give us many details about these days. The themes of the conferences were: human destiny; review of life; personal life orientation toward

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<sup>43</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

<sup>44</sup> Therese, poem, 1853, in ASDS.

God; the significance of evil; the importance of self-denial in the following of Christ.<sup>45</sup>

Therese formulated her own retreat experience into a fifty-five-line poem, **Nonnenwerth**, of which the following is an excerpt:

Once, to break with the world and life's pace  
I withdrew to that island for a space  
of several days. I spent all my time there  
seeking God - God alone, in quiet prayer.  
From my window, at times I quietly observed  
the bright bustling movement that ever stirred  
close by below. Somehow, this spoke to me -  
somewhat like a verdict or kind of decree...  
because, from the sight I clearly grasped how  
everything is deceit that does not endow  
persons with virtue, and does not lead  
to God and to goodly deed.  
Often, I felt drawn to heaven then,  
and afterwards, back to earth again.  
I stayed at length with the movement within, pondering...  
without decision to delay or begin.

Now I am back from that grace-filled place, remembering  
all that God taught me -- so many a thing  
in those days. Oh heart, my heart, with pain  
you recall it. Yet, my heart, you gain...  
You sense within what you are meant to do.  
You perceive what God is asking of you.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> E. Lefort- v.Ww., Notebook, 4 Oct. 1856.

<sup>46</sup> Therese, poem, 1856, in ASDS.

She still struggled to know what was God's will for her: *...I liked best to study in Holy Scripture how, in the time of Jesus, the apostles and devout women worked together for Christ. (The first monasteries were also double convents) and I wanted to find such a convent, but one with a missionary purpose. – That I could not find anywhere – I searched and searched. I was advised to wait.*<sup>47</sup>

In February 1857, at Schiefbahn, another parish mission was given. Whether it was this that gave her a push toward the next step, or what it was that finally brought Therese to a decision is beyond our knowledge. Whatever it was, she wrote in 1892 from her memories of this time: *... Finally I came to the decision to enter the newly founded novitiate of the Sacred Heart in Blumenthal. (I thought these sisters would help me find the right path and I made this known to them from the beginning, – but I was surprised to see, quite early on, that they would prefer to keep me for their own order).*<sup>48</sup>

## Therese in the “Sacred Heart”

The religious Congregation of the Sacred Heart<sup>49</sup> was founded by Madeleine Sophie Barat<sup>50</sup> and Father Joseph Varin, S.J.<sup>51</sup> in Paris in November 1800. Its purpose [as outlined in the early Rule] is the spiritual renewal of human society through the education and upbringing of women and girls, especially of those who come from the influential classes of society. The Religious Sisters run boarding schools and

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<sup>47</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

<sup>48</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

<sup>49</sup> Sacred Heart (Sacré Coeur), in SHS-O, 5.1/RSCJ.

<sup>50</sup> Madeleine-Sophie Barat: b. 13 Dec. 1779 (F); 21 Nov. 1800 foundation of the Sacred Heart Sisters in Paris, together with Fr. Varin; d. 25 May 1865, Paris; 24 May 1925, canonization (cf. SHS-O, 4.5/BarS.).

<sup>51</sup> Joseph Varin: b. 1770, Besançon (F); 1796, ordained priest, Augsburg (D); 1800, foundation of the Sacred Heart Sisters in Paris, together with M.S. Barat; 1814, entered the restored Jesuit Society; d. 19 Apr. 1850, Paris (cf. SHS-O, 5.1/RSCJ.).

also have schools for the poor and organize retreats for women at their convents.

Before Vatican Council II, the division into choir and lay sisters still existed. Both groups kept strict enclosure (even though this was adapted to the aims of the community) and made the three vows. The choir sisters had the obligation to devote themselves completely to the work of education.<sup>52</sup>

The convent of Blumenthal in Vaals/Holland was founded in a large house donated to the sisters by Baron von Lommessem of Aachen. It lay close to the German border.

Letters prove that Therese kept in contact with Anna von Lommessem,<sup>53</sup> a religious of the Sacred Heart, at least up to 1880 and she also visited her.<sup>54</sup>

The novitiate at Blumenthal was opened in 1856, that is, shortly before Therese's entrance. In Mother Gazelli, the superior and novice mistress, the convent possessed an exemplary and esteemed religious and educator.<sup>55</sup>

*...Only my dear mother brought me there on June 13, 1857; my dear father was very sad about my entrance ..., wrote Mother Mary in later years.*<sup>56</sup>

Louis von Spiess wrote to his brother, Therese's father: "...Even if I did have some intimation regarding the intentions of dear Therese, it was

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<sup>52</sup> RL-RSCJ, 1826, esp. Art. 108, Art.226.

<sup>53</sup> Anna von Lommessem: b. 15 Jan. 1815, Aachen (D); 1884, entered the Sacred Heart, was in various communities in France, Germany, Holland, and Belgium, but never together with Therese; d. 18 Mar. 1898, Jette (B) (cf. SHS-O, 4.5/LomA.).

<sup>54</sup> MM, Diary, Feb. 1878 p. 17; May 1878, p. 19; June 1878, p. 28; Sept. 1880, pp. 33-34, in ASDS. Letter, A.v. Lommessem to Therese, 2 Aug. 1880, in ASDS.

<sup>55</sup> Marie-Christine Gazelli: b. 21 Nov. 1818, Turin (I); 1838, entered the Sacred Heart; 1849-1861, at Blumenthal as superior and novice directress; d. 21 Jan. 1897, Turin (cf. SHS-O, 4.5/GazMC.).

<sup>56</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

never conveyed to me as something definitive and so I was somewhat surprised to know about this surely long-cherished plan only after it had been carried out. What I have expressed in my letter to your daughter, I can only repeat to you. I rejoice with all my heart that this child has made such a decision. A person can generally only find happiness when one follows a way of life which is in conformity with one's desire and objectives. If one would want to have Therese, for example, bear children ... with all the cares and great difficulties connected with this, then she would be in the wrong place. What is simpler than to let her have a future in life which corresponds to her heart and soul."<sup>57</sup>

Shortly after Therese's entrance into the Sacred Heart, her mother died very suddenly and unexpectedly: ... *Oh, and this dear mother died quite unexpectedly from a stroke on July 5, 1857 ... I never saw her again – what grief at home.*<sup>58</sup>

Louise, the youngest daughter, was only eleven years old and none of the sisters were married when their mother died. Auntie Cis took over and cared for the family.

The main concern of Theodore's mother was now her widowed son and she wrote to Auntie Cis: "My poor Theodore's situation is really pitiable. All the brothers feel with me about his hard lot. I want to ask you, my cousin, to support him with love and advice as one of the family."<sup>59</sup>

Therese wrote affectionate words from Blumenthal to thank Auntie Cis for her condolences and she tried to put her mind at rest concerning herself: *Dear Aunt, when I had written out the word 'wish', one was immediately fulfilled: to see you and my other dear ones and to see in your eyes that the Lord consoles you as well. As you, dear one, are*

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<sup>57</sup> Louis von Spiess, letter to Theodore v.Ww., 14 June 1857, in ACMG/23/350.

<sup>58</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

<sup>59</sup> T. v.Dwingelo, letter to Franziska Lichtschlag, 21 Oct. ? (n.yr), in ACMG/23/341.

*so good as to take an active interest in my happiness, it is a real consolation to me that I can contribute something to your joy. Oh, dear Aunt, all those here are not merely content but they are really happy. The dear Lord rewards the little they offer him with an abundance of interior consolation – if persons who are already good are so thankful, then we cannot be surprised that God, who is eternal Goodness, is also grateful; isn't that true? ... And so, dear Aunt, you promised not to shed tears over me any more – I ask you to keep to your words and to remember: every person has a vocation in which happiness can be found through the fulfillment of one's duties and which helps one to carry every pain. - Would you be so good and tell my dear sisters that the feastdays of the superior general and our dear Mother Gazelli were celebrated with heartfelt joy last week; I hope, therefore, that they have sent the latter the greeting they owe her. Many greetings to all of them, especially to little Louise and I ask her to remember what she promised me so happily when she was here.<sup>60</sup>*

Already on August 30, 1857, Therese became a novice at the Sacred Heart.<sup>61</sup>

She wrote only a short remark concerning the subsequent events: ... *On June 29, 1859, I made a promise – to leave the matter of my transfer to another Order (departure) quietly in the hands of my superiors. - And on September 29, 1859 I became an aspirant (conditional vows for 5-10 years); I was first sent to Warendorf in Westphalia,<sup>62</sup> from March 1860 to September 1861.<sup>63</sup> I was then, at my request, transferred to Orleans.<sup>64</sup>*

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<sup>60</sup> Therese, letter to Franziska Lichtschlag, 26 July 1857 (begun 19 July), in ACMG/23/340.

<sup>61</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892; Register, RSCJ - Blumenthal, in ARSCJ.

<sup>62</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

<sup>63</sup> Register, RSCJ- Warendorf, in ARSCJ.

<sup>64</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

We learn something about these years from family correspondence: “...Have you had good news from Therese? How much longer will it be before she receives the black veil?”<sup>65</sup>

“... The items from mother and Therese which were enclosed have given me very different impressions. ... The letter of Therese, however, breathes a spirit and a kind of childlike innocence which, I, in my constant and sole contact with worldly affairs, am no longer able to grasp. ... She is, moreover, happy at heart – and that is wonderful!”<sup>66</sup>

“... I received a very nice letter from dear Therese yesterday in which she told me of her joy and happiness at the visit of her father and little Louise.”<sup>67</sup>

“... I was happy to hear from my Theodore that all is going very well for dear Therese at Orleans and that she is still happy in her vocation.”<sup>68</sup>

We are not really clear what actually caused her to leave the Sacred Heart. A letter from Orleans in December 1892 does not indicate any special worry or difficulties. Therese only recalls with gratitude the care given by her aunt to the little ‘Theta’ in her early years.<sup>69</sup>

The only sign which perhaps gives an indication of Therese’s inner struggle during these years is her handwriting. The lines are stiff and even formal, whereas her writing is otherwise rather animated and open.

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<sup>65</sup> Adolfine (v.Ww. ?, v. Böselager ?), letter to Franziska Lichtschlag, 8 Mar. 1858, in ACMG/23/340.

<sup>66</sup> Louis von Spiess, letter to Theodore v.Ww., 27 Nov. 1859, in ACMG/23/350.

<sup>67</sup> T. v.Dwingelo, letter to Franziska Lichtschlag, 29 Dec. 1860, in ACMG/23/340.

<sup>68</sup> T. v.Dwingelo, letter 7 Mar. 1862.

<sup>69</sup> Therese, letter to Franziska Lichtschlag, 29 Dec. 1862, in ACMG/23/341.

Gradually and ever more clearly, Therese realized that life at the Sacred Heart was not God's will for her. She wrote in her life sketch: ... *I always felt the same desire, especially after Holy Communion.* ...<sup>70</sup>

*... Finally, my highest superiors (Paris) were also quite convinced that I could not make perpetual vows like this and that I had not yet found the right Order.* ...<sup>71</sup>

In her testimonial regarding Therese, the Foundress and Superior General of the Sacred Heart, Sophie Barat, expressed the opinion that Therese did not seem called to a life devoted to teaching.<sup>72</sup>

Was it that she did not want to work only within the convent nor to be bound exclusively to the work of education? Was the desire to go out to the people more urgent and was there a stronger call toward a convent devoted to mission purposes in which as "in the time of Jesus, the apostles and devout women worked together in Christ"?<sup>73</sup>

We do not know the exact date on which this important period in Therese's life came to a close and she left the Sacred Heart. It must have been at the end of February or at the beginning of March 1863.

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<sup>70</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

<sup>71</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

<sup>72</sup> Sophie Barat, Testimonial in French, 15 Feb. 1863, in ACMG/23/D47:

"I, the undersigned Superior General of the Society of the Sacred Heart, certify that the conduct of Miss Therese von Wüllenweber has always been in accord with the religious rule, that she is pious and of good character and that she has given no reason for dissatisfaction which would have led to her departure. From the novitiate on, one did not find in her the gift for education – the particular aim of our vocation: but due to her attachment to the Sacred Heart, due to her desire to remain in it, the decision – which one knew would be painful to her – was always delayed, in the hope that she would still acquire that which she lacked in order to have success.

The various means that one tried remained (however) without results: so this fact had to persuade one that she is not called to a life in which she cannot fulfill one of the main requirements.

Paris, 15 February 1863.

Barat, Superior General  
of the Society of the Sacred Heart"

<sup>73</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

Mother Mary noted later only: ... *Papa came to Orleans to get me. – I stayed one day at home and he brought me to Castle Mülheim. ...*<sup>74</sup>

Later on, Mother Mary wrote about the time she spent at the Sacred Heart: ... *I was very happy there – but already at the time of my entrance I had the interior conviction that it would not be forever. I am very grateful to the Mothers there; I also learnt much there*<sup>75</sup> ... *I found an exemplary religious spirit in this convent and was always closely united with my beloved superiors.*<sup>76</sup>

What remained from Mother Mary's days at the Sacred Heart? What influence did this have on her later life and work? Apart from the lived experience which Therese gained through her training and activity in this religious community, we have found very little trace of this up to now. In the testimonies given by our sisters during the preparatory process for the Beatification, they mentioned that Mother Mary had often repeated the saying of Mother Barat: "My child, God alone".

In one of her letters to Father Jordan, we read: ... *I also wanted to tell you once, that being Mother Superior is easier for me than for someone else because I saw good examples at the Sacred Heart.*<sup>77</sup>

The lists of the sisters' work assignments which Mother Mary sent to the Founder in 1894 likewise resemble the division of duties at the Sacred Heart.<sup>78</sup>

Whether the devotions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus stem from the contemporary piety of the nineteenth century or from the spirituality of

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<sup>74</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892. In this edition, we have corrected the spelling of this place from Mühlheim to Mülheim (because there are two places with similar names in Westphalia).

<sup>75</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1888.

<sup>76</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

<sup>77</sup> MM, letter to F J, 3 Oct. 1894, in APS-E. 627.

<sup>78</sup> MM, letter to F J, 19 May 1894, in APS-E. 623.

the Sacred Heart Congregation is not clear; at all events: "... throughout the month of June, she read meditations on the virtues of the Sacred Heart in the chapel every day and added a litany and a prayer."<sup>79</sup>

## Therese – A Failure?

We do not know how Therese's father felt about her leaving the convent. From her short life sketch we can gather that she went to Mülheim in deference to his wishes: ... *Papa greatly preferred, above all others, the newly founded Visitation at Castle Mülheim in Westphalia. (I had always had a rather special liking for the spirit of St. Francis de Sales and the purpose of his foundation. But I first heard, or rather saw when I was there, that the convent was enclosed and had only a boarding school attached to it. - A von Böselager relative was also there.) ... The sisters were dear, they edified me – they were convinced that I was destined for them.*<sup>80</sup>

Her father's brothers, however, were happy about Therese's return: "... The good news of the safe return of your dear daughter Therese made me most happy. My great desire to see dear Therese in her father's house again can and will be fulfilled, with God's help, in the very near future."<sup>81</sup>

"... I have already told you of my joy at Therese's return. May heaven send her interior peace ... ."<sup>82</sup>

After the years at the Sacred Heart and the short visit to the Sisters of the Visitation, Therese found herself again confronted with the vital

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<sup>79</sup> S. Hilaria Poetsch, Test., in ASDS.

<sup>80</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

<sup>81</sup> Ernst von Spiess, letter to Theodore v.Ww., 6 July 1863, in ACMG/23/349.

<sup>82</sup> Louis von Spiess, letter to Theodore v.Ww., 27 July 1863, in ACMG/23/350.

question: Where and how could she realize what she knew to be her vocation?

At first, she tried to make herself useful at home. From this period we have a copy of a handwritten housekeeping book in which she wrote: *The great number of cookbooks containing an excessive number of recipes made their consultation a continual burden, almost useless to me: so I will write down here only what I have myself tried and found good. But first, I will indicate what experience has taught me to be necessary for ordered and well-conducted household management.*<sup>83</sup> Then, after the thoughts about order, cleanliness and thrift, the recipes are given.

She was also occupied with looking after Louise: *... Just at the time of my return home with my father, my youngest sister had to leave the boarding school of the Sacred Heart due to illness. So I had to take her away immediately for a cure: to Ems. (While there, we often saw the Archbishop of Pest. He wanted me to go into a convent in Hungary – to be the superior, one was needed there, etc.) However, I was searching only toward my goal, though now without haste.*<sup>84</sup>

One of her nieces recalled later on: “... My aunt Therese lived on the second floor of the big tower which has the chapel down below and, on the third floor where the little windows are, she kept canaries for years.”<sup>85</sup> In 1866, her sister Fanny was already in the sixth year of marriage and was expecting her fourth child. Therese stayed over Christmas with her at Peppenhoven (near Bonn), the home of the von Böselager family, in order to be of help.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Therese, handwritten housekeeping book, 1863, photocopy of transcription in ASDS.

<sup>84</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

<sup>85</sup> Elisabeth v.Ww.- v. Böselager, letter to the Rev. Superior, 13 Nov. 1933, in ASDS.

<sup>86</sup> Therese, letter to Franziska Lichtschlag, 30 Dec. 1866, in ACMG/23/340.

When Louise also married in the summer of 1868, it seemed to open the way again for Therese's own plans and undertakings. Her father was an active and healthy 62-year-old. She could leave 85-year-old Auntie Cis and their frequently ailing sister Constance in care of her sister Elise.

In the meantime, one of Therese's cousins had told her about the newly founded Institute of the "Sisters of Perpetual Adoration and Help for Poor Churches."<sup>87</sup>

## Therese at the Institute of the Sisters of Perpetual Adoration and Help for Poor Churches

This Institute, a Congregation of pontifical right, was founded in 1857 by Anna de Meeus<sup>88</sup> and Fr. John Baptist Boone, S.J.<sup>89</sup> It received final approbation in 1867. Since 1968, it has been known by the name "Sisters of the Eucharist."<sup>90</sup>

At the time of foundation, there were two groups of members: the choir sisters, who made final vows immediately on completion of their two-year novitiate and pronounced a fourth vow to promote devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, and the lay sisters who served the needs of the

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<sup>87</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

<sup>88</sup> Anna de Meeûs: b. 22 Mar. 1823, Brussels (B); 1848, foundation of the Association and 1857, of the Sisters of Perpetual Adoration and Work for Poor Churches in Brussels, together with Fr. Boone, S.J.; d. 15 June 1904, Watermael, Brussels (cf. SHS-O, 4.5/MeeA.).

<sup>89</sup> Jean-Battiste Boone: b. 31 Oct. 1794, Poperinge (B); 1815, entered the Jesuits; 1820, ordained priest in Brig (CH); 1848, foundation of the Association and 1857, of the Sisters of Perpetual Adoration in Brussels, together with A. de Meeûs; d. 2 Feb. 1871, Brussels (cf. SHS-O, 4.5/ BooJB.).

<sup>90</sup> cf. SHS-O, 5.1/ Ad. Perp.

community. These latter made only three vows on completion of the novitiate, making them initially for a period of six years and then forever.

The purpose of the Congregation is adoration and pastoral work, and surrender to Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. Each member is to be an apostle of Christ's love. The main activities are: adoration and spread of devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, the support of poor churches, teaching catechism, preparing children and adults for First Communion, and pastoral service to the sick poor. In order to make their work among the laity easier, the sisters did not wear a religious dress in those days.<sup>91</sup>

Writing to the foundress, Anna de Meeus, on July 14, 1868, Therese gave news of her imminent arrival, together with the information that she intended to visit the Benedictine boarding school in Liège where she had been a student. She further explained: ... *It is truly the good God who arranged this trip for me. ... I was much more against than for it, thinking I would have the opportunity only after five or ten years' time to get to know the Institute whose name alone has enthused me for the past six months already. ... I know that, whatever happens, a sacrifice will be awaiting me. Either I give up my comfortable life and everything at Myllendonk or I give up my conviction regarding your worthy Institute. ... I found a report on the aims of your Congregation in the house of Miss de Holling at Aachen. This put away some of my doubts and strengthened my conviction that this is what I have been looking for.*<sup>92</sup>

The exact date of Therese's entry is not known; no formation program for postulants existed at the period. She is entered in the register under number 48.

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<sup>91</sup> RL-Ad.Perp., 1856, Art. 34, 35.

<sup>92</sup> Therese, letter to Anna de Meeüs, 14 July 1868, in AAd. Perp. (French).

Those who were listed under number 47 and 49 began their novitiate in 1868; the commencement date for Therese's novitiate is given as March 21, 1869.<sup>93</sup> An explanation for this may be found in the fact that she was giving catechism classes in Ghent during the winter of 1868-69.<sup>94</sup>

During the second year of novitiate, the novices went to work in various houses of the Congregation under the direction of the local superior. During the summer, Therese was with the little community in Liège. The convent where she lived was only a few houses away from the Benedictines where she had formerly been a boarding student.

From a letter written by her superior, Jenny de Limburg Stirum,<sup>95</sup> we learn that Therese restarted the work of teaching catechism to the Germans there.<sup>96</sup>

Mother Mary recalled this work in her report to Father Jordan: ... *where I gave special classes to the Germans on Sundays (I think they no longer do this). Oh, that is a needed work. Many thousands of poor Germans moved to Liège where there is no obligatory schooling, in order to send their children to work in the coal mines. In these conditions, without religion, they are ruined spiritually and physically.*<sup>97</sup>

Also in Brussels the sisters had made their church available for the use of the German community.<sup>98</sup> Father Joseph-Marie Laurent,<sup>99</sup> director of the "German Work" (l'Oeuvre Allemande) in Brussels, was

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<sup>93</sup> Register, Ad.Perp., in AAd.Perp.

<sup>94</sup> MM, note, "About my beloved Liège."

<sup>95</sup> Jenny de Limburg Stirum: b. 31 July 1828, Antwerp (B); 1861, entered Ad.Perp.; 1870, superior in Liège; d. 7 Nov. 1914, Watermael-Brussels (cf. SH-O, 4.5/LimJ.).

<sup>96</sup> J.de Limburg, letter to A. de Meeûs, 4 Sept. 1870, in AAd. Perp.

<sup>97</sup> MM, note, "About my beloved Liège."

<sup>98</sup> A.de Meeûs, letter to Msgr. Deschaps, 7 Mar. 1873, in AD-Me/Desch. III.A17.

<sup>99</sup> Joseph-Maria Laurent: b. 30 July 1826, Wychen (NL); 1847, entered the Conventuals in Würzburg (D); 1849, ordained priest in Würzburg; worked in Belgium and Holland, confessor for Ad. Perp. and director of "l'Oeuvre Allemande", Brussels; d. 3 May 1895, Urmond (NL) (cf. SHS-O, 4.5/LauJM.).

the sisters' confessor. It was he who directed Therese, after she left, to his friend, Father von Essen.<sup>100</sup>

Beginning in 1869 and continuing into the seventies, the Congregation met with much opposition and difficulty.<sup>101</sup> Therese later wrote: ... *They met with much opposition on all sides; the German foundation did not come about either. ...*<sup>102</sup> *If they had come to Germany, I might perhaps have entered (this was the original intention). I am grateful to God for the grace of those years.*<sup>103</sup>

She was in the novitiate and it seems that, as this period came to an end, she was not ready to make vows. Her father, Theodore von Wüllenweber, set out on the road for Brussels to call for his daughter from the convent once again.<sup>104</sup>

Many years later, Mother Mary told the sisters the following anecdote about this time: "... Once, when the catechist had to leave the class during a lesson, the young students became very unruly and so, putting on a pair of spectacles and, drawing herself up to her full height, she took the worst one, a twenty-year-old boy, by the back of his collar and placed him in front of the desk. She kept him standing there, and the others then became quieter. The priest said that he himself would not have dared to do such a thing."<sup>105</sup>

Mother Mary often repeated in later years the motto of Anna de Meeus: "To God alone the honor, but to me contempt."<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1888 and 1892.

<sup>101</sup> cf. SHS-O, 5.1/Ad. Perp.

<sup>102</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

<sup>103</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1888.

<sup>104</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

<sup>105</sup> Zenker, Test.

<sup>106</sup> S. Liboria Hansknecht, Test., in ASDS.

And in a letter concerning the acceptance of older candidates, Mother Mary mentioned the positive experience she had had in Brussels.<sup>107</sup> Also, the sisters related many years afterward: "... In those early SDS-years, Reverend Mother herself heard the catechism that we sisters were required to learn and she explained the meaning of the questions to us."<sup>108</sup>

So it was that another chapter in her life closed for Therese and in 1871 she returned, now 38 years old to Castle Myllendonk.

## The "Kulturkampf"

In her German homeland, a bitter controversy was going on between the Church and the State, the so called Kulturkampf. The underlying reasons for this were many. To mention a few: Bismarck wanted to protect the priests and laity who did not want to accept Vatican Council I. There was, in addition, his political opposition to the Central Party and to Windhorst, their politician. Through the issuing of a series of laws, an attempt was made to render the Church's influence and the Church itself completely ineffective. The Kulturkampf developed somewhat differently in the various German States. Points common to practically all of them were, among others: the closing of the Catholic department in the Religious Ministry; the pulpit paragraph, according to which priests were penalized if they spoke out on general matters of government in "a way detrimental to the peace"; the Jesuit law, which suppressed in the entire country all Jesuit houses as well as those religious orders related to the Jesuits and banned the members from the Empire; the infamous May Laws, which regulated priestly formation and clerical discipline in a manner detrimental to the Church and prescribed high fines and imprisonment for nonobservance; the

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<sup>107</sup> MM, letter to Rev. Brother, 9 May 1895, in APS-Ec. 649.

<sup>108</sup> Poetsch, Test.

school supervision law, which gave the State alone the right to inspect schools, even in matters of religion; the so-called closure and begging law, which abolished State financial assistance for the Church; the closure of the Prussian Embassy to the Holy See; the suppression of all religious Congregations other than those devoted solely to the care of the sick.

The consequence of this controversy was that, by 1878, only a third of the bishops were still at their posts; the ecclesiastical seminaries for priestly formation were closed; approximately one thousand parishes no longer had a priest to care for them; about one hundred priests were exiled from the country, many were in prison or outside the country, as they refused to submit to the unjust “closure” law.

The firm and tenacious opposition of the Catholics was not without influence on Bismarck and his advisers. In addition, various movements within politics made him see advantages in using his influence to regain the support of the Central Party and in defusing the situation himself. It became somewhat easier to bring an end to this fight which had been so detrimental to both parties when, in 1878, Leo XIII became Pope. He combined great diplomatic talents and absolute fidelity to Catholic tenets with great prudence and was mild, wise, and conciliatory. This made it possible for the laws of the Kulturkampf to be gradually suppressed.<sup>109</sup>

On May 25, 1886, the Emperor signed a peace agreement. Then, as Mother Mary noted, much of the regrettable Kulturkampf is laid aside – vacant posts in the parishes can be filled again; priestly formation is free again; and the religious, Sisters of Charity, are permitted to do many good works.<sup>110</sup> In contrast, however, the Jesuits and related Orders remained banned from Prussia up until 1917.

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<sup>109</sup> R. Fischer-Wollpert, *Lexikon religiöser und weltanschaulicher Fragen* (Regensburg, 1981) pp. 311-312.

<sup>110</sup> MM, Diary, May 1886, p. 71.

# Therese at Neuwerk

Msgr. von Essen<sup>111</sup> became parish priest of Neuwerk in early 1872. Therese came to know him through his friend, Fr. Laurent, who had been her confessor at Brussels, and his mission plans and zeal gave her renewed hope. *He soon spoke to me in earnest as many have done before him, of making a foundation myself.*<sup>112</sup>

Matthias Weuthen of Mönchengladbach wrote in his remembrances that Therese went along the path from the castle to Neuwerk almost every day of the week. Even on the dark, dull days of winter when the way was often snow-covered and in bad condition, she went along it to the church. On such occasions, she carried a lantern which was lit by a burning candle. Along the way, she took with her the children of Uedding who were going to the school Mass or to classes.<sup>113</sup>

Therese noted in her life sketch: *Dr. von Essen was a strict but true director to me – He said that, especially in this time of Kulturkampf, new foundations are necessary. ... The Bishop of Hong Kong<sup>114</sup> was in Neuwerk as well, and he encouraged me very much in regard to a*

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<sup>111</sup> Ludwig von Essen: b. 3 Nov. 1830, Krefeld (D); 24 Apr. 1854, ordained priest, Cologne (D); 8 June 1854, chaplain in St. Marien at Lyskirchen; 22 Sept. 1854, vicar and rector of the public high school, Jülich; April 1860, opening of the secondary boys' school, Kerpen; Oct. 1862, private tutor for Prince Rospigliosi, Rome; 10 Dec. 1864, parish priest, Afden (D); 14 July 1868, parish priest, Malmédy (B); June-August 1871, Premonstratensian novice, Tongerlo (B); 10 Jan. 1872, parish priest, Neuwerk (D); Pentecost 1874, meeting with Arnold Janssen (cf. Footnote 140) and Msgr. Raimondi (cf. footnote 114), plans for a German mission house; March 1876, separated from Steyl; 7 July 1882, vows in the ATS (cf. Footnote 145); 1883, member of the 2<sup>nd</sup> degree; 1885, requested to enter the Benedictines; d. 6 Jan. 1886, Neuwerk; (cf. Fritz Borneman, S.V.D., *Der Pfarrer von Neuwerk Dr. Ludwig von Essen und seine Missionspläne*, 1967).

<sup>112</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

<sup>113</sup> Weuthen, letter, 1957.

<sup>114</sup> Timoleone Raimondi: b. 5 May 1827, Milan (I); 1850, ordained priest, Milan; co-founder of the Milan Missionary Seminary; missionary in Melanesia, Borneo, and Hong Kong; 22 Nov. 1874, consecrated bishop, Rome; d. 22 Sept. 1894, Hong Kong.

*foundation; yes, he prophesied ... it would be soon. I became enthusiastic about this and I saw the fulfillment of my early dreams coming nearer. ...*<sup>115</sup>

However, we also find the reservation: ... *Mission sisters matched my inclination exactly – making a start myself, less. ...*<sup>116</sup>

In the meantime, once the parish priest had won her *to help toward the foundation of German mission sisters*,<sup>117</sup> Therese did what she thought to be possible and useful in order to further the proposed undertaking. On December 17, 1874, she deposited a “mystical” (confidential) Testament in which she left all she had to Prelate von Essen to be used for the establishment of a community of mission sisters.<sup>118</sup> In April 1875, she made a private vow to devote herself totally to the missions.<sup>119</sup> The two poems she wrote in 1875, are also evidence of her strong desire to work for the missions:

### Yearning

When I hear about the missions  
I experience within me real urgency -  
a love and a yearning that  
otherwise are unknown to me.

My lifetime is drifting away,  
my graying hairs are showing;  
but interiorly there is no diminishment.  
In my heart this love is growing!

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<sup>115</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

<sup>116</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1888.

<sup>117</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1900.

<sup>118</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

<sup>119</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

One thing, only one, I still desire:  
Would that I could serve or go  
or do something for the missions -  
something very special, entirely so!

Who implanted this zeal in me?  
Who gave me this deep urge?  
Is it not from God my Savior...  
meant to return to and in Him converge?

I want to give myself to You wholly and entirely -  
wholly and entirely for whatever You choose.  
I want to disappear in humility ... lose  
myself: be but a tool for You to use.

When death approaches I shall speak:  
I will say: "Look, it is fulfilled!  
What was always moving through my life  
has unfolded. See what God has willed!"

My yearning now is stilled. And my God  
gazes tenderly on me at my side.  
People everywhere are finding life: salvation!  
God's kingdom is spreading worldwide!<sup>120</sup>

When, in November 1875, Therese read in a newspaper that the old Neuwerk Convent was available for rent, she asked Mr. Holl, the local mayor, to do whatever was necessary to obtain it for her.

Over the years, the convent had acquired eight owners and so the matter dragged on and on. *People thought it should be a hospital - my*

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<sup>120</sup> Therese, poem, 1875, in ASDS.

*aim was for every good purpose*, she noted.<sup>121</sup> It was not until March that the rental contract could be signed.

She informed her father by letter: ... *so in this old convent I will, with God's help, begin a charitable institute, a kind of hospital, with some young women – all this has been well thought out and God, who allowed it to begin, will also bring it to completion. ... I have also arrived at an understanding with the Committee for the Poor. So my steps will not lead me to France, Belgium or even Asia, but right close by. ... Maybe you have already heard of this in Venne - and you will surely be happy about it because you have always shown such an interest in the old Institute. Now it is in the hands of your eldest daughter - - didn't I also feel directed and drawn toward it myself in view of the former unsuccessful attempts at a true religious life and of the present situation in Germany. Now, at last, I can begin with the smaller furnishings, for which I have saved the money.*<sup>122</sup>

*For my part, from then on, I had to put my hand to the work – to calm those at home, to think of the furnishings, to encourage the people to move out – to repair the interior a little ... to think about getting helpers ...*<sup>123</sup>

She quietly moved in on November 13, 1876; ... *from then until New Year's the housecleaning was done, some things were repaired and the house furnished.*<sup>124</sup> Through a kind of agreement with the municipality, she was also able to take in the orphans and poor children of the area.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> MM, Diary 1, 1875, p. 3.

<sup>122</sup> Therese, draft of letter to Theodore v.Ww., 30 Mar. 1876, in ASDS (cf. Chr. N., Appendix I, p.1).

<sup>123</sup> MM, Diary 1, 1876, p. 3.

<sup>124</sup> MM, Diary 1, p. 4.

<sup>125</sup> MM, Diary 1, 24 Apr. 1877, p. 7.

In her request to the Crown authorities, Therese asked for permission to open an orphanage as well as to begin a housekeeping school and to train persons to care for the orphan girls.<sup>126</sup>

“Through this, she hoped not only to obtain suitable assistants but also to gain more latitude in order to keep open every possibility for the planned mission house within the limits set by the Kulturkampf laws.”<sup>127</sup>

In her diary, Therese wrote: ... *My Papa was here three times before Easter; my sister Elise also comes frequently and helps me here and there at times. ... Since St. Joseph's day – morning and evening prayer have been said in common – the rosary has been prayed in common since February – a room was set up and has been used as a chapel since January. ... Slowly and quietly everything is progressing with God's help.*<sup>128</sup>

Father von Essen had written Statutes for the community<sup>129</sup> and an article about the “Institute for Ladies,” appeared in the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*.<sup>130</sup>

Therese took in some women boarders and tried to live a kind of convent lifestyle with them, but the Institute did not develop beyond this initial phase. It is a fact that some single ladies did show interest in the Barbarastift from time to time, but most of them seem to have lacked the necessary religious motivation. Difficulties quickly arose on both sides because of this and Therese, therefore, had to record continual changes. On the one hand, she was dependent on the income from two or three ladies; on the other hand, she was adamant about the

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<sup>126</sup> Administrator Bödiker, letter to the Government at Düsseldorf, 24 Oct. 1877, copy in ASDS (cf. Chr. N., Appendix IV, 2, pp. 12-13).

<sup>127</sup> DSS XIV, p. 344.

<sup>128</sup> MM, Diary 1, 1877, p. 6.

<sup>129</sup> Statutes for St. Barbara Institute, 1876, copy in ASDS (cf. Chr. N., Appendix III, pp. 5-10).

<sup>130</sup> cf. Chr. N., Appendix II, pp. 3-5.

religious standards she felt to be appropriate for the Institute and she had the full support of Father von Essen for this.<sup>131</sup>

In December 1878, Therese received the offer to buy part of the convent and, on January 7, 1879, she acquired part of the East Wing together with the courtyard, farm building, garden, orchard and farmland, and the three houses bordering the road. After the purchase, the work of repairing the building went ahead. Work was continually in progress in one room or another.<sup>132</sup> There was still widespread lack of clarity about the purpose of the Institute and so Therese received suggestions and requests from all sides: ... *Mr. Brandts suggested that I turn my convent into a home for handicapped factory girls. ... The mayor suggested that I give my convent for use as a hospital.*<sup>133</sup> *Mr. Emil Brandts of Gladbach wanted to use this convent for the factory girls of Gladbach, ... The matter was, however, set aside at least for the time being.*<sup>134</sup>

Antonia Raczkowska, the future Sister Stanislaus, could speak of this period from firsthand knowledge: "... In order to do good, Therese let the factory girls come every Sunday and feastday and occupied them with the singing of religious songs, the reading of good books, and useful pastimes, because, as she said: 'When they are with us, they cannot be running around with boys and many a sin is avoided.'

"Regularly, every eight days, she went from Neuwerk to Castle Mylendonk and I often went with her. We once found some mushrooms in the little woods we had to pass through and, due to Therese's practical eye for housekeeping and with a view to economy, we picked as many as we could. We thought we were doing our cook a favor through

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<sup>131</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892; Diary 1, 1877-1878, pp. 9-23; Therese, letter to Gobbels, May 1877, copy in ASDS.

<sup>132</sup> MM, Diary 1, 1878, p.23 and 1879, p. 24.

<sup>133</sup> MM, Diary 1, 1880, p. 35.

<sup>134</sup> MM, Diary 1, 1882, p. 40.

According to Dr. Löhrt (Director of the ADMG), this probably refers to Franz Brandts, who, in contrast to his brother Emil, was much engaged in social questions.

this, but ... what a mistake! She did not want to prepare the mushrooms and responded quite angrily: 'Oh, madam, we in Westphalia give such things to the pigs.' Miss von Wüllenweber did not withdraw her request, however, and the cook had to prepare everything according to the cookbook. They tasted quite good to us afterwards."<sup>135</sup>

Not content with the limited apostolic opportunities offered by Neuwerk, Therese repeatedly tried to make contact with other communities in order to put herself and the St. Barbara Institute at the service of a good cause.

## Therese Continues Searching

Already in 1875, she had shown some interest in the Institute of the "Daughters of Divine Love" (Illanz, Switzerland).<sup>136</sup> The Bishop of Trier's response to her written inquiry included the following comment: "The priest, Fr. Pozzo di Borgo, the soul of the entire undertaking, is ill and near death at the present time, I have been told. They wrote me that his passing will probably be a deathblow for the young, defenseless Institute. In the present circumstances, I cannot recommend that anyone enter there."<sup>137</sup>

Later on, Therese had some further contact with the Institute and, at the time, the acting director, Wilhelm Cramer, was the first to show interest in Neuwerk. In August 1878, negotiations were carried on regarding cooperation, and a contract was drawn up. In November, Therese went to the Daughters of Divine Love at Illanz for eight days.

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<sup>135</sup> S. Stanislaus Raczkowski, Test., in ASDS.

<sup>136</sup> Daughters of Divine Love of Illanz (CH): present name "Dominicans of St. Joseph"; founded in Illanz by Johann-Fidel Depuoz (del Pozzo di Borgo) and Maria-Theresia Gasteyer; 1894, affiliated with the Dominican Order (cf. SHS-O, 5.1/Illanz).

<sup>137</sup> Matthias, Bishop of Trier, letter to Therese, 13 Feb. 1875, in ASDS (cf. Chr. N., Appendix V, pp. 16-17).

At the beginning of June 1879, two sisters from Illanz went to the St. Barbarastift. The “pious and hardworking sisters” did not, however, feel at home in Neuwerk, and Therese herself did not get along too well with them either.

*Due to anxiety and fear of a foreign spirit forcing its way in here, I was quite ill for some weeks,<sup>138</sup> she wrote, full of concern. Already in mid-July, both sisters were suddenly recalled and three others arrived in Neuwerk. They stayed until mid-December. Therese, in fact, retracted the contract drawn up by the notary for my connection with the Institute made in November 1878, and she notified the director of Illanz on December 4, 1879, that due to the many contributing circumstances which I have weighed before God, I feel it best to discontinue our mutual connection.<sup>139</sup>*

Even before the separation from Illanz, Therese had turned again to her original plan. She also recalled the hopes of 1875 when she had been advised ... *to begin myself and indeed for the missions with Steyl.*<sup>140</sup>

She knew Arnold Janssen<sup>141</sup> and his foundation through Dr. von Essen. So she ventured a new attempt to come into contact with him. ... *On November 21, 1879, I was for one day at the mission house in Steyl. ... Oh! How happy I was in this house which strives for this spirit!*

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<sup>138</sup> MM, Diary 1, 1879, p.28.

<sup>139</sup> MM, Diary 1, 1879, p.32 (cf. Diary, 1878, p.22 and 1879, pp. 27, 29, 31; L. Sk., 1892)

<sup>140</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1888.

<sup>141</sup> Arnold Janssen: b. 5 Nov. 1837, Goch (D); 1859, grammar school teacher; 1861, ordained priest in Münster (D); teacher at the public high school, Bocholt (D); 1873, chaplain, Kempen (D); publication of *Kleiner Herz-Jesu-Bote*; Pentecost meeting with von Essen and Raimondi; 8 Sept. 1875, foundation of the Steyl Mission House (NL); 1884, changed to a religious congregation, “Society of the Divine Word” (S.V.D.); 8 Dec. 1889, foundation of the Sisters’ “Congregation of the Servants of the Holy Spirit”; 8 Dec. 1896, foundation of the cloistered Sisters; d. 15 Jan. 1909, Steyl (cf. H. Ficher, S.V.D., *Arnold Janssen Gründer des Steyler Missionswerkes*, 1919); 19 Oct. 1975, beatification.

*If only I could do something so that such a spirit would be enkindled in the souls of many young women - I was there to speak also about this matter.*<sup>142</sup>

When this hope also came to nothing, Therese followed the suggestion of her former fellow sister of the Sacred Heart, Anna von Lommessem, and made contact with the “Daughters of the Heart of Mary” (Paris),<sup>143</sup> once again with no results.<sup>144</sup>

Therese loved her St. Barbarastift. It was her enterprise and she did not want to let it go lightly out of her hands. “For the now nearly fifty-year-old, the fact that her efforts had failed to make even a modest success of it was a hard and humiliating trial, one which she accepted as God’s will.”<sup>145</sup>

## New Hope

Therese did not give up in spite of the many failures: ... *So I continued to hope and pray until at Easter 1882, on April 12, I read an advertisement of the Apostolic Teaching Society.*<sup>146</sup> *In response to it, I wrote to*

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<sup>142</sup> MM, Diary, 21 Nov. 1879, p. 31.

<sup>143</sup> Daughters of the Heart of Mary: 1790, founded in Paris by Pierre-Joseph Picot de Clorivière, S.J., and Adelaide Champion de Cicé. The members make religious vows, have no religious habit, and remain in their existing occupation; 1857, received papal approbation; the Congregation is international, lives the Rule of St. Ignatius, and does any kind of work.

<sup>144</sup> MM, Diary, 1880, pp. 33-34; A. von Lommessem, letter to Therese, 2 Feb. 1880, in ASDS (cf. Chr. N., Appendix VIII, pp. 23-26; MM, L. Sk., 1892.

<sup>145</sup> DSS XIV, p. 347.

<sup>146</sup> Apostolic Teaching Society (ATS=SAI): founded in Rome by John Baptist Jordan with two priest members: Bernhard Lüthen (cf. Footnote 146) and Friedrich von Leonhardi. The purpose: the spread, proclamation and strengthening of the Catholic faith in all parts of the world in the spirit of the Apostles. The members are divided into three Degrees:

1. Priests and laity: those who leave all, after the example of the Apostles, and devote themselves exclusively to the purpose of the Society;

*the present Fr. Bonaventura Lüthen.<sup>147</sup> (on April 25, 1882), offering my convent with the intention of running the house with my sisters for the incoming missionaries. - I wanted to set aside the thought of a Congregation of sisters. (Only when the reply came did I know it was a new Society... .)*<sup>148</sup>

Can we ourselves even begin to understand how it was possible for such a small, almost insignificant newspaper advertisement to awaken such enthusiasm and zeal in her? She made a note on it and kept it with her throughout her life!

*...After some correspondence, the Founder of the Apostolic Teaching Society arrived here from Rome on July 4. I could hardly have had a greater joy! – He gave me the impression of being a humble, true and zealous apostle – he stayed for three days ... my first and only desire is to belong to this Society ever more closely until my death. Dear God, thanks be to you forever!...*<sup>149</sup> And only eighteen days later, she composed a song about the Apostolic Teaching Society to the melody of “O Sanctissima,” in which she gives expression to her great enthusiasm:

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2. Educated men who, without giving up their existing occupation, contribute to the scientific or literary efforts of the Society;
  3. All those who strive to carry out their duties in the spirit of the Society. (cf. Fr. Bernhard Lüthen, *Apostolische Lehrgesellschaft, ihr Wesen und ihre Bedeutung*, 1881).

<sup>147</sup> Bernhard Lüthen (Fr. Bonaventura): b. 5 May 1846, Paderborn (D); 15 May 1872, ordained priest, Paderborn; castle chaplain and pastor, Wewer near Paderborn; 1877, Cassianeum, Donauwörth (D), editor of the *Ambrosius*; 1881, joined Fr. Jordan and published the *Missionär*; 8 Dec. 1881, first member of the ATS; from 1883, in Rome, co-worker with Fr. Jordan, his secretary and substitute, novice master, and prefect; d. 10 Dec. 1911, Rome (cf. Fr. Willibrord Menke, *Pater Bonaventura Lüthen*, 1936).

<sup>148</sup> MM, L. Sk., 1892.

<sup>149</sup> MM, Diary 1, 1882, pp. 41-42.

O holy, venerable,  
unique Society!  
Apostolic, soul-zealous,  
greathearted Society!

Grow steadily, increase,  
spread everywhere!  
Embrace and renew  
the universe!

Draw to yourself pastors of souls,  
draw teachers, educators and  
dedicated women -  
Oh, lead and guide them all!

Rechristianize the homeland;  
evangelize non-believers;  
protect parentless children -  
Oh, teach and instruct them all!

Motivate fathers to steadfastness,  
mothers to holy child-rearing,  
country innkeepers to trustworthiness -  
To holiness, call them all!

Impart true wisdom to the learned;  
give pure form to the arts;  
consecrate and transform the workworld.  
Oh, do it... do it!

Enlighten your own leaders,  
ignite them heart and soul  
so that truly they seek nothing  
but Jesus alone!

O holy, venerable,  
unique Society!  
Apostolic, soul-zealous,  
greathearted Society!

## Difficult Years of Uncertainty

The year 1882 really brought new hope to Therese and the Neuwerk community. Jordan established a new daily schedule<sup>150</sup> and Friedrich von Leonhardi, a priest of the Apostolic Teaching Society, accepted Therese, through her commitment, into the First Degree of the Society.

*...I hereby promise, with full knowledge of what I am doing, to obey Father J. B. Jordan, Founder of the Apostolic Teaching Society, in all that is lawful and to live in the spirit of poverty ... Through this commitment of mine, I intend for the present to bind myself with respect to Fr. Baptist Jordan for one year to be reckoned from today's date.*<sup>151</sup>

Following Therese's usual mode of going about things, the affair continued as decisively as it had begun and she noted: ... *On the 6<sup>th</sup>, steps consequent on this were made ... God alone! and the salvation of souls ... At the notary, I gave my convent and the three houses to the First Order ... to the three Founders.*<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Daily schedule from FJ, 6 July 1882, in ASDS (cf. Chr. N., Appendix XI, p. 31).

<sup>151</sup> MM, Diary 1, 1882, p. 42; vow formula and admission of Therese, 5 Sept. 1882, in ASDS (cf. Chr. N., Appendix XII, p. 32).

<sup>152</sup> MM, Diary, 1882, p. 42.

In the meantime, Father von Essen had also become a member of the Apostolic Teaching Society and had put aside plans for making a foundation himself. Therese's will of December 17, 1874, therefore, was void.

In autumn 1882, Father Jordan's foundation in Rome received a new name: Catholic Teaching Society. In 1893, Therese recalled: ... *instead of **apostolic**: catholic, which for me in 1882 – October – was a sad change.*<sup>153</sup>

In Neuwerk, she devoted herself to working as best she could for the Catholic Teaching Society (CTS). She was a promotor for the Third Degree and furthered the distribution of the *Missionär* and other publications. Later on she became a promotor of the Angel Sodality<sup>154</sup> and sold "building stones" to gain funds.<sup>155</sup>

On January 11, 1883, she made a new will and noted on the copy: ... *O God, how I thank you ... Now I have a strong, sure hope. The Sacred Heart of Jesus, the dear Mother of God, the holy Apostles will now help bring to fruition that for which I, through God's grace, have always desired to live ...*<sup>156</sup>

This will had no special significance at first, since Therese had invested all her savings in the St. Barbarastift. What would come to her as an inheritance after her father's death still remained a question. She was aware, however, of her father's wish that the castle estate should not be divided. Her personal needs were secured for the time being through annuities from deceased family members and the con-

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<sup>153</sup> MM, Diary, 22 May 1893, p. 76.

<sup>154</sup> Angel Sodality: Association for children, founded by FJ in Rome on 8 Dec. 1884, as a special division of the CTS (for Statutes, cf. DSS II, pp. 191-194); canonically erected on 16 Aug. 1886, Decree, Cardinal Vicar Parrocchi.

<sup>155</sup> MM, Diary, 1882, pp. 42-43, and 1884, p. 56; Membership lists and accounts, in APNk/ASDS; Therese letter to FJ, 5 Mar. 1888, in APS-E. 603.

<sup>156</sup> Therese, Testament, 11 Jan. 1883, in ASDS.

dition laid down in the deed of gift which ensured her a place of residence in one of the houses of the Catholic Teaching Society. She was, therefore, independent of her relatives. At this period, Father Jordan and Therese still had the hope that Neuwerk could become a house of the CTS, but the Kulturkampf in Germany remained a hindrance to this.<sup>157</sup>

Many happenings during the year 1883 also touched Therese in Neuwerk. Fr. Friedrich von Leonhardi left the CTS at the end of January. - The loan which he had taken out for the Society and for which Therese had stood surety continued for a considerable time to be a concern for her and for those responsible in Rome.

Father Jordan himself made religious vows into the hands of his confessor at St. Peter's, taking the name Francis of the Cross (March 11). Father Lüthen made a retreat during Holy Week and, at his investment, received from Fr. Jordan the religious name of Bonaventura (March 18).

Jordan became more and more of the opinion that a separate religious Congregation for women would be a better solution than their incorporation into the First Degree. He founded a community of Sisters in Rome itself (March 18).

On Good Friday, Father Jordan sent Easter greetings to Therese and her companions in Neuwerk: ... *I often think of you and have not forgotten Neuwerk. It is possible that you and the other sisters must come to Rome for a while in the coming autumn. The sisters here*<sup>158</sup> *receive*

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<sup>157</sup> DSS XIV, p. 390.

<sup>158</sup> Sisters of the CTS: Amalia Streitel arrived in Rome on 16 Feb. 1883. She was invested on 18 March and was the superior of the little community of sisters in the Borgo Nuovo. The emphasis in her life and spirit was on penance and poverty and not, as with FJ, on the apostolate. After many difficulties, the separation from FJ became final on 13 Oct. 1885. They received the name "Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother". (cf. MM, Notes about the 2<sup>nd</sup> Order, 7 May 1898, in ASDS – Chr. N., Part II, pp. 4-5; MM, Diary 1 Dec. 1882, p. 44; Jan. 1883, p. 45; Nov. 1885, p. 64; DSS XIV, pp. 259-260, 354-370, 435, 439-480, 505- 679).

*many graces and are very happy. Three of them will receive the habit on Easter Day. I have also called Fr. Lüthen here for a while. If at all possible, we must have our Motherhouses in Rome, the center of Christendom, from where individual sisters will also be sent out into the missions.*<sup>159</sup>

Therese noted the content of this letter and made the remark: *It is surely God's will ... and in Rome at Easter, three sisters of the Catholic Teaching Society have received the habit.*<sup>160</sup>

The Founder himself went to Neuwerk again in May and Therese gave expression to her great joy. ...*He remained until the first of June and motivated us strongly for virtue and the apostolate – through everything. On the morning of May 31, after Holy Communion, he came into our house chapel where everything for the good God and everything for my soul took place ... at last - at last - forever - forever. Rev. Father Francis of the Cross and Maria Theresia of the Apostles prayed alone.*<sup>161</sup> Later, she added the information: *I made perpetual vows ...*

<sup>162</sup>

She received a nameday letter from the Founder which outlined only a few plans concerning the sisters and included the hope: ... *that we can erect a really apostolic house in Neuwerk one day.*<sup>163</sup>

In a New Year's letter of 1884, Fr. Jordan made known his opinion that S. Maria Theresia and also Ursula Rabis should *come to Rome this year, for some months at least, because I see this as being absolutely necessary for unity. At this time, you will both receive the religious habit and also get gradually accustomed to community life. ... You will yourself understand how necessary it is that sisters who are to work*

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<sup>159</sup> FJ, letter to Therese, 23 Mar. 1883, in ASDS.

<sup>160</sup> MM, Diary 1, 1883, p. 52.

<sup>161</sup> MM, Diary 1, 31 May 1889, pp. 53-54.

<sup>162</sup> MM, Diary 1, 31 May 1883, pp. 53-54; vow formula, 31 May 1883, in ASDS.

<sup>163</sup> FJ, letter to Therese, 14 Oct. 1883, in ASDS (cf. DSS X, No. 172).

*for the same goal must also get to know one another and have a truly sisterly relationship. I know your spirit of sacrifice and consider you called to something higher; you will, however, scarcely reach this if you remain always in Neuwerk. ... Something great only comes about if it starts, as the God-man began his work, in poverty. Look at St. Clare ... St. Colette ... St. Theresa. I am sorry you have to wait so long before you can engage in true activity. God will help. However, let us bring him also our will as a sacrifice.*<sup>164</sup>

Sister Maria Theresia replied to this: ... *On receiving the news that I also may now come to Rome sometime, I was very happy. ... Whatever you say, Reverend Father, is the expression of God's will for us. ... But in reality, will not some things be perhaps difficult there for my weak self? The question also arises --- will I see the St. Barbarastift once again? - But confidence in God will help, and we come with good will, Reverend Father.*

*In my joy, I at first forgot to think of the details – I would have liked to hasten to Rome right away! - Now come the afterthoughts: how shall we manage it? I will tell you the whole situation. Now, around this time, would surely be the best time to travel. But – first: Antonia (as I already informed Fr. Lüthen) has now decided to return to her former convent in America – because, in spite of all her industry (particularly in the garden and farm), she shows no sign of having a religious vocation to the Society -so that she - even if she does wait until spring – cannot really be the caretaker and representative here. - The second afterthought was: do I still have enough money for two persons to travel to Rome? Then, as I was praying to St. Joseph today, it occurred to me that I could also travel 3<sup>rd</sup> class - that would also be just as good and it makes no difference to me – moreover, we could not meet any acquaintances on the trip who might make wrong judgements ... and may I make a suggestion: Could you not, Reverend Father, send a*

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<sup>164</sup> FJ, letter to Therese, 1 Jan. 1884, in ASDS (cf. DSS X, No. 174).

*couple of sisters who could look after the convent (until I return, if you find that to be good, or until you ... come yourself to arrange everything). I could acquaint them already with the most important things and authorize them --- additionally, the stay here could be a kind of break for the two sisters. ... But please, everything only as you decide ... I was also very happy when I read that the apostolic work with poor girls will also begin in Rome soon.*<sup>165</sup>

In the meantime, Fr. Jordan made untiring efforts to find ways in which to fulfill his obligations toward Neuwerk. In April 1884, he wrote to the parish priest of Neuwerk, Dr. von Essen, and asked his help in an attempt to “open a back door” into Neuwerk, cut off as it was by the Kulturkampf. He asked: *Can I send sisters without a habit, though under vows? Can I do this without informing the Archbishop of Cologne? ...*<sup>166</sup> The vows of the sisters were, anyway, only private vows until the approbation of the Church was received.

Father von Essen answered Fr. Jordan immediately. He would need to obtain permission from the Archbishop and should also not overlook the difficulties with the State. Msgr. von Essen also went on to inform Dean Wiedemann of Jordan’s plans.<sup>167</sup>

In her turn, S. Frances Streitell, superior of the sisters in Rome, wrote to the parish priest of Neuwerk in May, asking whether she could not “send sisters into Prussia wearing a simple dress without any distinguishing style.”<sup>168</sup> They were to help with nursing and educational activities. The parish priest was ready to agree with this offer which could

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<sup>165</sup> Therese, letter to FJ, 9. Jan. 1884, in ASDS (cf. Chr. N., Appendix XVI, pp.49-51).

<sup>166</sup> FJ, letter to von Essen, 7 Apr. 1884, in ASDS (cf. Chr. N., Appendix XV.I, pp.39-40).

<sup>167</sup> Von Essen, letter to Wiedemann, 23 Apr. 1884, in ASDS (cf. Chr. N., Appendix XV.2, pp. 40-43).

<sup>168</sup> F. Streitell, letter to von Essen, 10 May 1884, in ASDS (cf. Chr. N., Appendix XV.3, pp. 43-44).

be to the advantage of his parish, but he did not want to reply without knowing the opinion of his friend, the Dean.<sup>169</sup>

In the meantime, Fr. Jordan tried to solve various difficulties connected with the sisters in Rome and he requested the dispensation of Sister Streitel's earlier religious vows which had never been correctly dissolved.

The promised sisters arrived in Neuwerk at the beginning of July.<sup>170</sup> S. Maria Theresia and S. Ursula set out on their journey to Rome on July 22, 1884.<sup>171</sup>

What mixed feelings she must have had on leaving Neuwerk! For sure, it was her longstanding desire to go to Rome; but she also hoped to reach the goal of her vocation at last. She was ready to accept everything that the Founder thought to be good and she noted with joy: ... *We often had the grace of speaking with the Rev. Founder, Fr. Jordan.*<sup>172</sup>

How did she feel otherwise in her new surroundings? She wrote of her experience of this time in a little notebook, using pencil and writing in French; and immediately after arrival she resolved: ... *Love above all.*<sup>173</sup>

The other entries give some indication of the ups and downs of her thoughts and feelings during these days:

*Keep a contemplative spirit in action, like St. Francis Xavier. -*

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<sup>169</sup> Von Essen, handwritten note, May 20, 1884, and of Wiedemann, May 29, 1884, in ASDS (cf. Chr. N., Appendix XV.3, p. 45).

<sup>170</sup> MM, Diary 1, July 1884, p. 58 (cf. DSS XIV, pp. 451, 603-606).

<sup>171</sup> MM, Diary 1, 1884, p. 58.

<sup>172</sup> MM, Diary 1, 1884, p. 58.

<sup>173</sup> MM, Notebook, 31 July 1884, p. 1, in ASDS (French).

*Everything is very poor now (the poor Orders are less persecuted). Because weaknesses soon show themselves, I am not for the contemplative life.*

*I return to Neuwerk – because here is not the place for you... .<sup>174</sup>*

*What happiness, that I can now give myself totally and completely to God – everything as he wants it from me. - I must also trust that he will give me the strength to do everything that he wants – when tasks are not to my liking. - Right now, I have everything I have desired **my whole life long**: Rome, an Order, a guide and such a one as I had always wanted: now come what may; I am unworthy of all this. The holy will of God and never my own: then I will always be full of humility, if that is possible – and free. ... If I am outwardly no good for anything, - then I will be something of a martyr for the Society. **God alone** will make me happy; I will love obedience above all (it's my nature to love holy zeal) – (To throw oneself into the waves like St. Peter, bold, if crosses come.) ...*

*I will wear the habit worn here, although I am unworthy of it ... - The Holy Rule will always be my support, my guide, my priceless treasure; - ...*

*If it is possible, I will deepen my indissoluble commitment to it. I would rather die than leave the Society and also rather suffer, go through every imaginable difficulty, than to leave it – to leave the Founder!! I will never distance myself in the least from him, from his spirit, from his obedience, not even the distance of an atom. ...<sup>175</sup>*

Only about three weeks afterward, however, Sister Maria Theresia and Sister Ursula left Rome at Fr. Jordan's request and returned home. They soon received a consoling letter: ... *The Lord will have guided you safely back to Neuwerk. I was very concerned and anxious*

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<sup>174</sup> MM, Notebook, 31 July 1884, p. 1.

<sup>175</sup> MM, Notebook, 11 Aug. 1884, pp. 2-7.

*and can only adore the holy will of God. ... My thoughts are often with you sisters and if you only knew how the salvation of your souls lies on my heart. You can be sure I pray for you. We will keep on hoping that the dear Lord will soon show his ways, ... I hope, with God's grace, to do always what I know to be his holy will.*<sup>176</sup>

In Neuwerk, the sisters of the Roman community and those of the Neuwerk group lived more alongside of than with each other: ... *These three now have their own prayers, Rule and meals, and we continue as formerly ....*<sup>177</sup> wrote S. Maria Theresia.

At Fr. Jordan's request, S. Frances Streitl came in person to Neuwerk in mid-September, with S. Scholastica Demmer as her companion, in order to get to know the situation, but at the end of September, all the sisters of the Roman community went back to Rome.<sup>178</sup>

Shortly afterwards, Fr. Jordan again asked S. Maria Theresia to be patient in prayer and to hold on until everything was put in order: ... *May the dear God regulate things in Neuwerk soon according to his holy will; I can assure you that I have already suffered much because of Neuwerk and the happenings there. I trust in God, and would wish that everyone always knows that I want to act according to God's will. In conclusion, I assure you that I will pray for you and have not acted with any bad intention toward you.*<sup>179</sup>

As the year 1885 began soon afterward, Fr. Jordan had no inkling of how tragically the situation would develop in regard to his foundation of sisters in Rome. When writing to S. Maria Theresia, he gave her advice concerning Neuwerk and assured her: ... *I want that no limits be set to your apostolic zeal through me. Pray and work, the Lord will certainly show you the way. ... Oh, how great is the field of activity*

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<sup>176</sup> FJ, letter to Therese, 21 Aug. 1884, in ASDS (cf. DSS X, No. 181).

<sup>177</sup> MM, Diary 1, 11 Sept. 1884, p. 59.

<sup>178</sup> MM, Diary 1, pp. 59-60.

<sup>179</sup> FJ, letter to Therese, 19 Oct. 1884, in ASDS (Chr. N., Appendix XVII, p. 52).

*everywhere. If only one could really spread the Angel Sodality and the Class of Collaborators, oh, how much good could be done; even if you have to make small trips for the honor of God. Apostolate! Apostolate! Let us leave the future to the Lord.*<sup>180</sup>

At Fr. Jordan's request, S. Maria Theresia traveled to Maastricht, where the Bishop of Cologne was in residence, to obtain his permission for Sisters of the Catholic Teaching Society to come to Neuwerk. He, however, did not give it because of the Kulturkampf laws.<sup>181</sup> In April, the Founder wrote just a few lines to the two sisters at Neuwerk: *... that you will probably have to come to Rome soon while some sisters will come to Neuwerk as private persons ... the dear God will do everything well.*<sup>182</sup>

That God did know how to take care of everything was the great trust of Fr. Francis, for, in the following weeks and months, the tragic events and difficulties in the Roman community of the Sisters of the Catholic Teaching Society increased. Finally, Msgr. Georges Jacquemin was appointed Spiritual Director of the sisters and they received a new name: "Sisters of Charity of the Sorrowful Mother." Throughout this time, Fr. Jordan's hands were tied by the ecclesiastical authorities and their orders.

At the beginning of October, the sisters received from their new director a rule which he had drawn up, and on October 13, 1885, Fr. Jordan had to give a written declaration that he would have nothing more to do with this community of sisters. No mention of all this sorrow and care was made in Fr. Jordan's brief letters to Neuwerk. And what should he say? The whole affair presented itself as too painful, too complicated and uncertain until the very end.

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<sup>180</sup> FJ, letter to Therese, 11 Jan. 1885, in ASDS (cf. DSS X, No. 186).

<sup>181</sup> MM, Diary 1, 10 Feb. 1885, p. 61 (cf. DSS XIV, p. 461).

<sup>182</sup> FJ, letter to Neuwerk Community, 3 Apr. 1885, in ASDS (cf. DSS X, No. 189).

S. Maria Theresia came to know the result through a letter from Fr. Lüthen: ... *A letter from Rome arrived here stating that the sisters in Rome are no longer under the direction of the Rev. Founder, Fr. Jordan – we are now, in fact, the only Sisters of the Catholic Teaching Society.* ...<sup>183</sup>

In Rome, Fr. Jordan had still to face the struggle, with the Church authorities regarding his First Order for men. Full of trust in God and awareness of his role as Founder, he approached the Cardinal Vicar and finally received the approval of his Rule.<sup>184</sup>

In the meantime, at the beginning of 1886, S. Maria Theresia lost her friend and spiritual director: ... *On the feast of the Three Kings ... following a six-day illness, the father of the parish, the good shepherd and director of souls, Prelate von Essen, 55 years old, died of pneumonia. He, who always lived as a saintly and zealous shepherd of souls, also died like a saint ... one more intercessor in heaven – that shall be our consolation;* ...<sup>185</sup>

She herself tried to go on with her work for the Catholic Teaching Society and could joyfully note: ... *Also my dear Papa has now ... become a cooperator and subscribes to the 'Missionär';<sup>186</sup> all the servants at Myllendonk are to read it, too. - Thanks be to God, he is now more in favor of it. ... Since March, I have been giving tuition-free handwork classes for the little children of the Angel Sodality who live nearby.* ...<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> MM, Diary 1, Nov. 1885, p. 64.

<sup>184</sup> cf. DSS XIV, pp. 486-491.

<sup>185</sup> MM, Diary 1, Jan. 1886, pp. 65-66.

<sup>186</sup> The *Missionär*: Monthly publication of the ATS in the German language for general circulation; edited by Lüthen from Sept. 1881 on.

<sup>187</sup> MM, Diary 1, Feb. 1886, p. 69.

In this month, another letter arrived from Fr. Jordan: ... *I haven't forgotten you. I hope that the dear God, whose hand intervenes so evidently here, will help soon. I have suffered much during this time. The Lord will show his way; just a little patience and much prayer.*<sup>188</sup>

How Fr. Jordan managed to keep going in these difficult times is disclosed in his 'Spiritual Diary': ... *When evil spirits, anxieties and sufferings encompass you on all sides, only pray to God for trust and work unremittingly for his holy cause. Help will come in his good time; do not lose heart but place your whole trust in God.*<sup>189</sup>

By summertime, he was already thinking of venturing on a new attempt to found a community of sisters. On the feast of Mary's Assumption, he wrote to S. Maria Theresia: *At last I can inform you that I am almost firmly decided to found another congregation of sisters, since the others, unfortunately, have separated from us.*<sup>190</sup> He received the swift and joyous reply: *A great joy filled my soul that I actually, in spite of all my unworthiness, shall still come to the religious life; yes, and perhaps can still do much – and through all fears and hesitations one calls and trusts: Mary helps. ... In the greater silence here I will also pray more and prepare myself. Sister Ursula, too, is very glad to come to Rome. You know both of us, Rev. Father. What more can I say.*<sup>191</sup>

But, toward the end of the year, Fr. Jordan had to tell himself to be patient and he informed the two sisters: *At the moment, I cannot do much about the matter of the sisters; it also seems to me to be the design of providence still to wait for a while until the men's Order is more developed. God bless and console you.*<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> FJ, letter to Therese, 13 Mar. 1886, in ASDS (cf. DSS X, No. 198).

<sup>189</sup> FJ, Spiritual Diary 1, p. 191, in AGS.

<sup>190</sup> FJ, letter to Therese, 15 Aug. 1886, in ASDS (cf. Chr. N., Appendix XVIII, pp. 54-55).

<sup>191</sup> Therese, letter to FJ, n.d., in ASDS (cf. Chr. N., Appendix XVIII.1, pp. 55-57).

<sup>192</sup> FJ, letter to Therese, 30 Nov. 1886, in ASDS (cf. DSS X, No. 204).

In the meantime, Neuwerk had received a new parish priest, Father Koch: ... *By all accounts, he has the reputation of being a very pious, zealous priest – he has already done good and great things. On October 30, he honored our convent and myself with a visit. He immediately suggested, seeing that it is in keeping with the vocation of the Catholic Teaching Society, that the children come to the convent for First Communion classes, to which I gladly agreed.*<sup>193</sup>

The new year 1887 got off to a confident start. The Cardinal Vicar gave verbal permission to Fr. Jordan for a sisters' foundation outside Rome in the near future, and Fr. Jordan immediately informed Neuwerk about this.<sup>194</sup>

Meanwhile, the new parish priest was going about his task with great zeal and he put his plans and desires before S. Maria Theresia: ... *On March 18, the parish priest was here and indicated that the Franciscan Sisters would probably be coming here, if Fr. Jordan was still unable to send sisters. On May 31, he had prayers said for an important matter. On June 1, he spoke to me about his plan which the most Rev. Archbishop had seen and approved: to have Franciscan Sisters from Heydthuisen – M. Gladbach come here to me. May his holy zeal and his humility be a blessing ... and also serve ultimately to the development of charitable activities of the Sisters' Congregation of the Catholic Teaching Society.*<sup>195</sup>

The plans of the parish priest seemed inopportune to Fr. Francis. He would have preferred that a solution for the future of the St. Barbarastift, something which had long been a concern to him, had been put off until after the foundation of the sisters. However, he soon had to

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<sup>193</sup> MM, Diary 1, Oct. 1886, p. 74.

<sup>194</sup> FJ, letters to Neuwerk Community, 20 Feb. 1887 and 19 May 1887, in ASDS (cf. DSS X, No. 205 and No. 207).

<sup>195</sup> MM, Diary 1, Mar. 1887, p. 76.

realize that it was a question of an urgent social need which it would not be right to block through delay.<sup>196</sup>

Sister Maria Theresia received a written instruction from him: ... *to give an immediate account of the situation in Neuwerk, ... I explained everything right away ...*, she noted.<sup>197</sup> Following this, Fr. Jordan could reply more calmly: ... *As estranging as your first letter seemed to me, so sincerely happy was I about your fidelity. ... God grant that the women's branch of our Society may soon come into being. I am certainly aware that there is still much to be done and that your present situation, dear Sisters, is far from being what I want. I have to say, to my sorrow, that the situation is somewhat half-and-half. There are many things that cause this. ... If you suffer much for the Society, then you have already done much and it will bring blessings for the future members.*<sup>198</sup>

Archbishop von Krementz of Cologne was in Neuwerk on the day that letter arrived; ... *I also had the great totally unexpected grace of ¼ hour visit from our Rev. Bishop and Father. What a good fortune! His Excellency the Bishop posed some searching questions; he specially mentioned that he corresponds with Fr. Lüthen and has the 'Missionär' sent to him; that the plans of the Society are great. He also asked about the layout of the house here, etc., saying: This is certainly a convent already. ... I had told him that I, as a Sister of the Catholic Teaching Society, was hoping that a charitable institute could be founded here.*<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> cf. DSS XV.I, p. 20.

<sup>197</sup> MM, Diary 1, Aug. 1887, p. 78.

<sup>198</sup> FJ, letter to Therese, 6 Sept. 1887, in ASDS (cf. DSS X, No. 210); MM, Diary 1, Sept. 1887, p. 79.

<sup>199</sup> MM, Diary 1, pp. 79-80.

The decision of the Cologne Diocesan Vicariate that the ownership situation of the St. Barbarastift was to be clarified provided Fr. Jordan with a welcome breathing space.

However, already in autumn, Father Koch himself asked if he could rent the St. Barbarastift and he received a negative reply from Fr. Lüthen. Fr. Jordan was not sure whether or not he might be able to use it for his planned foundation of sisters in the near future. Fr. Koch was angered by the abrupt reply sent from Rome and about the misunderstanding regarding 'rent' or 'gift' and he gave S. Maria Theresia a copy of the reply together with his own comments on it. She in her turn tried to clarify the matter, to calm the parish priest, and she defended her religious community with eloquence: ... *First of all, I must say that no one would be more sorry than myself if the house, - the convent here, could still not become a charitable institute, in spite of all my efforts and especially my own entrance into this religious Society as a sister. But Rev. Father Jordan is also seeking nothing else – this I know for sure – than that this convent serve the honor of God and the salvation of souls through the practice of charitable works here. ... Above all, however, Fr. Jordan will most surely act only in accord with the directives of the Most Rev. Archbishop. - It is he who must decide – for one is a sister only through the Church – and how much I long to get out of this half-and-half situation. ... Perhaps, Rev. Pastor, your worthy letter was not correctly understood, and I very much regret the subsequent and very short reply. But I will not lose courage. You will surely find a way, Your Reverence, of arriving at the goal.*<sup>200</sup>

At Christmastime, Fr. Francis assured the two sisters: *With God's grace I will now take the matter of the sisters firmly in hand. By when can I call you away from here? Would you please tell the parish priest that it is certainly my wish to send our sisters to Neuwerk some day.*

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<sup>200</sup> Therese, Letter to Fr. Koch, 16 Nov. 1887, in APNk (cf. DSS XV.I, pp. 99-101.

*However, they must first receive further training here or in another place and be firmly grounded in the religious life. Please say nothing about your having to come here because a beginning in Rome is still not sure and perhaps the start must be made in healthier air somewhere near Rome. So, take courage! ... S. Ursula must also come, of course, but you should not leave until you receive specific direction from me to do so.*<sup>201</sup>

The parish priest's Christmas greeting to the sisters was categorical and quite clear: "... Therefore, as soon as you leave, other sisters will move in here - until you come back."<sup>202</sup>

His New Year greeting of 1888 was similar: "... Now you must begin those many activities!!!"<sup>203</sup>

And S. Maria Theresia sighed: ... *Oh God! All for you and for the salvation of souls – bless your work!!! ...*<sup>204</sup> *Oh, may the beginning be made soon and in earnest here and in Rome for us sisters.*<sup>205</sup>

*On the 14<sup>th</sup>, the superior general of the Heydthuisen Franciscan Sisters and the superior from Gladbach arrived here unexpectedly, together with the parish priest. ... They were very unassuming – and I told them how I, in 1856, had praised them with youthful enthusiasm in a poem – had then, however, entered the Sacred Heart – that their habit had put me off.*

*On the 20<sup>th</sup>, the parish priest sent someone here to measure all the rooms in the convent; I gladly allowed it. ... On February 23, 1888, Fr. Jordan wrote telling me it would probably be most useful if they, instead of having the convent legally in their hands, would entrust it to the parish priest of this place, Fr. Koch. I should also have it evaluated.*

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<sup>201</sup> FJ, letter to Neuwerk Community, 19 Dec. 1887, in ASDS (cf. DSS X, No.212).

<sup>202</sup> MM, Diary 1, Dec. 1887, p. 83.

<sup>203</sup> MM, Diary 1, Jan. 1888, p. 83.

<sup>204</sup> MM, Diary 1, p. 84.

<sup>205</sup> MM, Diary 1, p. 83.

*This was done, at my request, by Mr. Rutten and Mr. Hauser. Because Fr. Jordan wants to give it over to the parish priest only for use as an institute, etc. - these gentlemen remarked that for a hospital, etc., the price must be kept low: because many alterations would have to be made.*<sup>206</sup>

In his letter of March 23, 1888, the parish priest asked Fr. Jordan to immediately get S. Maria Theresia to accept an agreement regarding the St. Barbarastift.<sup>207</sup>

Just three days later, the parish priest was already writing another letter to Rome: "... Yesterday, I met with the superior general of the Congregation, which is thinking of taking on the hospital here. The superior remarked: Experience has taught that if the previous owners, whether men or women, retain the right of residence in a house destined to be a convent, the situation provides constant cause and opportunity for dissension. Accordingly, the superior general firmly declared: It seems out of the question to have Baroness von Wüllenweber in the house together with the sisters of the Congregation. ... So there is a conflict which can only be lifted by your Reverence, obliging the Baroness in obedience to submit and to leave the house once it has been sold.

"... If the Baroness holds to her terms, then the previously mentioned sisters will begin already in May ... in another house in the vicinity of the church. Then the time-honored convent would lie there unused, certainly not to the edification of the faithful, and it would without doubt be used for secular purposes should it be put up for public sale."<sup>208</sup>

Fr. Otto Hopfenmüller had been entrusted by Fr. Francis to deal with the material affairs of the Society and, in this capacity, he now asked S. Maria Theresia to reflect once more before God to see if there wasn't a solution to be found for her which would be helpful for all

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<sup>206</sup> MM, Diary 1, pp. 84-86.

<sup>207</sup> Fr. Koch, letter to FJ, 23 Mar. 1888, in APS-E-786 (cf. DSS XV.I, pp. 120-121).

<sup>208</sup> Fr. Koch, letter to FJ, 26 Mar. 1888, in APS-E-787 (cf. DSS XV.I, pp. 121-122).

concerned. Fr. Francis asked her, through Fr. Otto, to renounce her right of residence or to retract her gift to the Society.<sup>209</sup> Regarding this, she remarked: ... *Of the two, the latter idea is the least uncertain for myself and for our purpose.*<sup>210</sup>

On April 11, she herself travelled to Heydthuisen with the intention: ... *to meet with the superior general ... especially to see how we could live together, - if we still cannot go to Rome. They in charge and I helping along – for her part, - the superior general was of the opinion that it would definitely not be possible as a Sister of the Catholic Teaching Society ... (They want) to write to me ... So, therefore, let us pray, pray !!!*<sup>211</sup>

*On May 6, a short answer arrived ... that, as was to be expected, it would not be possible. - Well, thanks be to the good God for everything.*<sup>212</sup>

S. Maria Theresia made a final attempt to save the St. Barbarastift for her apostolic work and the Catholic Teaching Society: ... *On May 16, I spoke with the Rev. Superior of the Poor Servants of Christ in Gladbach – we would be better suited to each other; we also have the same rule. - Well, God will direct everything. On the 20<sup>th</sup> a kind reply came from the superior: the superior general is very sorry but, owing to the lack of sisters, they cannot now take on the convent here ... On the feast of St. Anthony, I spoke with one of the sisters again. - They hope that I might some day speak personally to the superior general and they believe that they might then still be able to come.*<sup>213</sup>

Finally, in June, there came another, though short letter from Fr. Francis himself: ... *I wish to inform you that I intend, with God's grace, to*

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<sup>209</sup> Fr. Otto Hopfenmüller, letter to Therese, 30 Mar. 1888, in ASDS (cf. Chr. N., Appendix XIX, pp.58-59; MM, Diary 1, Mar. 1888, p. 87.

<sup>210</sup> MM, Diary 1, Apr. 1888, p. 87.

<sup>211</sup> MM, Diary 1, pp. 87-88.

<sup>212</sup> MM, Diary 1, May 1888, p. 90.

<sup>213</sup> MM, Diary 1, May 1888, pp. 90-91.

*establish the community of sisters next autumn and that you will probably have to leave Neuwerk.*<sup>214</sup> On receiving it, S. Maria Theresia noted: ... *I would fly to Rome with holy zeal – leaving everything!!!*<sup>215</sup>

In August of that same year, S. Maria Theresia and Fr. Thomas Weigang met for the first time. Later on, in Tivoli, he was to play a special role in the life of the sisters' community: ... *We had the honor and joy ... to have Rev. Fr. Thomas here with us – he is already older and was formerly a State employee – he has left everything for God. ... Before he went, he gave us a nice talk on following the dear Mother of God. He also brought such very good news regarding the development in the near future of the sisters' Congregation.*<sup>216</sup>

In October, Fr. Jordan wrote two letters to Neuwerk in the space of a few days: ... *Pray very much, especially during the coming days, because the matter of the sisters is very close to my heart, particularly as so many want to enter. Perhaps I will come to Neuwerk in person, if God permits, also in order to regulate the matter of the house there.*<sup>217</sup> *I hope that the affair will be in order soon.*<sup>218</sup>

During these autumn months, Fr. Jordan was very preoccupied with finding a house for the future community of sisters. The Cardinal Vicar's approval had been won for the foundation of sisters, but Rome was closed to new foundations for the time being. So Cardinal Parocchi was happy that Fr. Jordan could turn aside temporarily to nearby Tivoli where Bishop Celestine del Frate not only offered a helping hand, but was also a good friend. For this reason, Fr. Jordan was often in Tivoli in order to find suitable accommodation for the modest beginning. For the present, he needed a place for six women but he also had to look to the future. The Bishop himself joined in the search

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<sup>214</sup> FJ, letter to Therese, 22 July 1888, in ASDS (cf. DSS X, No. 217).

<sup>215</sup> MM, Diary 1, July 1888, p. 93.

<sup>216</sup> MM, Diary 1, Aug. 1888, p. 94.

<sup>217</sup> FJ, letter to Therese, 6 Oct. 1888, in ASDS (cf. DSS X, No. 220).

<sup>218</sup> FJ, letter to Therese, 12 Oct. 1888 (cf. DSS X, No. 221).

for accommodations with the result that Fr. Francis could, in good time, rent a provisional dwelling for the sisters.

Fr. Francis was concerned that the sisters would, from the beginning, develop a really convent-like lifestyle and so he made the changes necessary in the Rule of the First Order to convert it into a Rule for the Second Order. The aim and spirituality were the same for both branches.

Meanwhile, following a conversation with the parish priest, S. Maria Theresia was clearing out in Neuwerk: ... *I made a lot of space – downstairs to the right, everything is empty – the chapel upstairs – the living room on the left – the small kitchen at the back. Surely, the Lord will give his blessing.*<sup>219</sup>

Finally, at the end of October, she and S. Ursula received the long-awaited letter and call to Rome: ... *Next month, in November that is, you must leave for Rome in order to begin at last, with God's grace, the holy work with the sisters. Arrange everything, therefore, and put everything in order with the parish priest so that you can leave in peace: I shall most probably sell the property there. Hurry as much as possible and let me know at least eight days in advance when you intend to leave, as three candidates from Bavaria will travel with you. The foundation is not in the city of Rome but in the vicinity ... in a healthy locality and in a fairly large town. The Bishop is my friend and does all that he can for us. ... Pray a lot and be ready for sacrifices, for the beginning is always connected with great sacrifice. Get some practice of Italian, if at all possible. A great field of work is waiting. May God bless you.*<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> MM, Diary 1, Oct. 1888, p. 96.

<sup>220</sup> FJ, letter to Neuwerk Community, 31 Oct. 1888, in ASDS (cf. DSS X, No. 222).

The departure date was jotted down by S. Maria Theresia: ... *Yes, it is: with Jesus, Mary and Joseph!!! On the 21st of November – the holy, important day.*<sup>221</sup>

The day before that she took leave of Father Koch. He still came on the day of her departure to view the rooms and wrote Fr. Francis a detailed letter regarding his future plans.<sup>222</sup>

At Christmastime, Fr. Otto's letter of reply offered Fr. Koch the opportunity to buy Neuwerk: "...After mature deliberation, our Rev. Father is, with the agreement of Baroness von Wüllenweber, now Sister Maria, also of the opinion that the reasons for the sale of the property are the more weighty. He permits it to be offered for sale and the price will be the same as that which we proposed in spring."<sup>223</sup>

On January 16, 1889, Fr. Jordan asked Sister Maria to come to Rome to sign the power of attorney for the sale of the St. Barbarastift. The property was finally given into the possession of Fr. Koch on January 25, 1889.

Perhaps the importance of the St. Barbarastift in Mother Mary's life has now become a little clearer. And so it is also understandable that Mother Olympia Heuel, the superior general at the time, reacted so positively when, due to lack of vocations, the Franciscan Sisters were obliged to offer the hospital for sale after almost seventy years of activity there. In spite of protests and arguments, she immediately telegraphed: "Neuwerk must become Salvatorian."<sup>224</sup> With that, the sisters of the German Province mustered all their strength and means, bought the hospital and officially moved into Neuwerk on January 1, 1960.

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<sup>221</sup> MM, Diary 1, 1888, p. 97.

<sup>222</sup> Fr. Koch, letter to FJ, 23 Nov. 1888, in APS-788 (cf. DSS XV.1, pp. 144-146).

<sup>223</sup> Fr. Otto Hopfenmüller, letter to Fr. Koch, 23 Dec. 1888; copy in ASDS (cf. Chr. N., Appendix XIX.2, p. 61).

<sup>224</sup> M. Olympia Heuel, telegram to M. Hildegunde Reichart, 7 Dec. 1959, in ASDS-D1.

## In Tivoli

... On November 21, 1888, we, S. Ursula and myself, Maria Theresia von Wüllenweber, departed from the St. Barbarastift, Neuwerk, in response to the call of the Rev. Founder of the Catholic Teaching Society. In Munich, we met four additional candidates from the Diocese Bamberg. .... We were able to stay in Rome for three days in order to see the holy places. On November 27, our Rev. Father, Fr. Jordan, brought us – S. Ursula and me – to our new home in Tivoli. That same evening, I went to meet the other four sisters at the station.

Rev. Father gave me the Rule which I received kneeling. And he said: 'If you do this, you will become holy.'

We live here opposite the church of the Franciscan Fathers. The accommodation is poor and suitable for so few.<sup>225</sup>

Consequently, a blessing could rest on the little foundation ... Rev. Father came on November 29, and let the sisters begin retreat in preparation for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception and the ceremony of investment. Rev. Father gave precise directives regarding the religious habit which had been selected in Rome beforehand. ... After a short, forceful sermon on the part of Rev. Father ... Maria Theresia of the Apostles, who had already received that name in the Neuwerk convent, was the first to receive the holy religious habit and, from then on, the name 'Theresia' was omitted; the second to be invested was Maria Hopfenmüller, who received the name Sister Scholastica of the Immaculate Conception; and the third, Margaretha Rheinwald, received the name Sister Clara of the Immaculate Conception.<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> MM, Diary 2, 1888, p. 1; Account, "About the Foundation of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Order," 17 May 1900, in ASDS (cf. Chr. N., Part II, pp. 1-4).

<sup>226</sup> MM, Account, 17 May 1900.

“On December 18, Margaretha Ruderich and Laura Weinsheimer were invested by Rev. Father. At the investment, S. Scholastica was already feeling sick; unfortunately, she developed smallpox a few days later and had to be admitted to the hospital. The two bedrooms were sealed off by the police for two days. Then the sisters could sing the Magnificat in poverty and affliction. Thanks to be God that S. Scholastica could be brought home again on December 24.”<sup>227</sup>

“... In the first weeks and months in particular, Fr. Jordan was very much concerned for the interior growth and exterior well-being of the little community of sisters in Tivoli. The five sisters, and S. Maria of the Apostles most of all, were aware of the great responsibility that was laid upon them by such a modest and yet such a promising start. Sister Maria never forgot the admonition for her contained in the example of the separation of the first sisters from Fr. Jordan.”<sup>228</sup>

She felt really happy in those days: ... *I am longing for the religious habit now ... to be bound forever. How I will thank God in the hour of my death for having done this, for having obeyed, in order to give myself **totally** to the Society and to forget everything else – not to disturb myself about it.*<sup>229</sup> *Italy is everything to me, everything else is secondary. - The greatest grace and the greatest happiness is to suffer --.*<sup>230</sup>

The sisters had some difficulty in adjusting to life in a foreign land. Apart from Sister Maria, none of them had ever been away from their immediate home area. *Almost every day, one or the other of them is sick in bed.*<sup>231</sup> Fr. Jordan wrote to express his sympathy: *Blessed be the name of the Lord that he lets us drink from his cup of suffering in this way. ... The Congregation of sisters will be great if it is founded*

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<sup>227</sup> MM, Account, 17 May 1900.

<sup>228</sup> DSS XV.I, p. 41.

<sup>229</sup> MM, Notebook, 3 Dec. 1888, p. 11.

<sup>230</sup> MM, Notebook, p. 12.

<sup>231</sup> MM, Diary 2, 1888, p. 3.

*on the cross. Don't give up. The Lord will help. We pray daily in community for the sick sisters.*<sup>232</sup>

Whereas Sister Maria was now happy at being able to live her vocation, her former companion decided to leave her: ... *On January 29, S. Ursula left us to return home. She could not bear the climate here nor the stricter convent discipline.*<sup>233</sup>

Joyfully she noted: ... *At Candlemas, Rev. Father told me that I can make perpetual profession soon – thanks be to God!!! - next month.*<sup>234</sup>

Since Sister Maria had already placed herself under the direction of Fr. Francis through her private vows of 1882 and he had brought her to Tivoli to be the mother of the new foundation, she was allowed to make perpetual vows into the hands of Rev. Father on March 25, 1889, after receiving permission and a dispensation from the remaining period of novitiate from the Bishop of Tivoli. In her book of resolutions she wrote: ... *I must be thankful that my life is, in one sense, completed – in order to fully live a new life until death – to give myself **totally** to the Society – come what may – ... Do everything according to the **spirit of the Founder.** ...*<sup>235</sup>

Father Bonaventura Lüthen was given the task of helping Sister Maria make the dispositions regarding her property as required by Church regulations prior to making final vows. She also had to update her testament of January 1, 1883, to conform to the changed circumstances. She wrote a new one on February 19, 1889.<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>232</sup> FJ, letter to MM, 13 Dec. 1888 (cf. DSS X, No. 223).

<sup>233</sup> MM, Diary 2, Jan. 1889, p. 7.

<sup>234</sup> MM, Diary 2, Feb. 1889, p. 8.

<sup>235</sup> MM, Notebook, 22 Mar. 1889, p. 13.

<sup>236</sup> MM, letter to Fr. Lüthen, 16 Feb. 1889, in APS-E. 604; Fr. Lüthen letter to MM, 17 Feb. 1889, in APS-E. 605; MM, note to Fr. Lüthen, 19 Feb. 1889, in APS-E. 605 a; MM, Testament, 19 Feb. 1889.

*... Rev. Father came on the Feast of the Annunciation. First of all, I made a written renunciation of everything. ... and so I then had the great grace of renewing my perpetual vows publicly. ... Then he said: Now you are the novice mistress. God help me in my weakness: Everything in obedience.*<sup>237</sup>

Sister Maria's Father bought most of the furniture from her former convent in Neuwerk. She was allowed to use the money she received from this sale as well as her two annuities for the benefit of her religious family. Because of this, the community was not troubled by any financial problems, at least during the period of novitiate.<sup>238</sup>

Later on, Sister Maria's library books and personal belongings arrived from Neuwerk.<sup>239</sup> Further, Fr. Francis wanted to lay before the Cardinal Vicar the agreement made between herself and her family in regard to her financial affairs.<sup>240</sup> *... After Rev. Father's visit here on July 22, I signed a document which contained clear stipulations concerning my paternal inheritance. I also received from my dear Papa ... in addition ... a dowry ...*<sup>241</sup>

Shortly before signing the deed of sale for the St. Barbarastift, Sister Maria contacted Father Koch once again. She invited him to visit Tivoli and he replied: "... the worthy community of the Teaching Society ... and I myself only wanted the honor of God and the salvation of our neighbor. We have submitted with humility to the dispositions and providence of God. What I perhaps have done wrong in overzealousness, the Sacred Heart of Jesus will, with divine love, turn to good ...,"

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<sup>237</sup> MM, Diary 2, Mar. 1889, pp. 10-11.

<sup>238</sup> MM, Diary 2, Feb. 1889, p. 8 and Mar. 1889, p. 9.

<sup>239</sup> MM, list of items taken to Tivoli, 1888, in ASDS; MM, Diary 2, Apr. 1889, p. 12.

<sup>240</sup> MM, Diary 2, May 1889, p. 15; MM, letter to Theodore v.Ww., 3 June 1889, in ASDS; Fanny v.Ww., letter to MM, 10 June 1889, in APS-606a+b; MM, letter to Theodore v.Ww., 15 June 1889, in APS-606.

<sup>241</sup> MM, Diary 2, July 1889, p. 19.

and he went on to give an account of her father's visit on the occasion of the consecration of the altar and the inauguration of the hospital.<sup>242</sup>

The fathers took good care of the sisters' community: Fr. Lüthen was their regular confessor; he also gave conferences on the holy Rule and some Italian language classes. In the beginning the extraordinary confessor was Fr. Otto Hopfenmüller and, later on, Fr. Thomas Weingang.<sup>243</sup>

The connection with Mother Mary's family was also maintained: *Father Ignazio and Fr. Salesius visited Papa at Myllendonk and received a friendly welcome.*<sup>244</sup>

Those living at Myllendonk often received letters from her: *I received a nice letter from Fanny. ... It is very healthy here, not hot, the air is cooler. Now it is the month of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we honor it daily. - I pray every day for you, dear Papa. ... On July 5, I will also often remember our dear departed Mama. If she had lived, she would certainly have been here for a visit already. But we are always united in spirit. ...*<sup>245</sup>

*You want to be so good as to give me a book – those for meditation are lacking the most ... by Van Hammerstein. Fr. Bonaventura already said that would be nice – but it is too expensive: ... I also send greetings to everyone I know, the gardener, etc.*<sup>246</sup>

*... Also that you come here once, or perhaps you would prefer to come to Rome when I am there. ... The gardener is surely happy about the plants – trees.*<sup>247</sup>

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<sup>242</sup> Fr. Koch, letter to MM, 6 Jan. 1889, in APNk.

<sup>243</sup> MM, Diary 2, 1888, pp. 3-4, 5; 1889, pp. 13, 17, 29; MM, note to Fr. Lüthen, 17 May 1900, in ASDS.

<sup>244</sup> MM, Diary 2, 1889, p. 24.

<sup>245</sup> MM, letter to Theodore v.Ww., 15 June 1889, in ASDS.

<sup>246</sup> MM, letter to Elise v.Ww., 17 Oct. 1889, in ASDS.

<sup>247</sup> MM, letter to Elise v.Ww., 4 Nov. 1889, in ASDS.

Mother Mary was also happy when her former companion in Neuwerk, Miss Antonia Raczkowska, wrote and expressed the desire to rejoin her. *May it be the will of God to bring us together again ...*,<sup>248</sup> hoped Mother Mary. When Antonia Raczkowska really did enter in February 1890, and was later invested as Sister Stanislaus, Mother Mary stated: *... May she be happy and still do much for God's honor! ...*<sup>249</sup>

In November 1889, Fr. Francis was already asking the Cardinal Vicar that the sisters might move to Rome as soon as possible. The Cardinal did not give a definite answer and so Fr. Francis sent Mother Mary herself there to make the request: *... His Eminence was very gracious and his main point was: There is now a law that no more new Orders may come to Rome ..., for that purpose, we must obtain a letter from the Bishop of Tivoli, lay it before the Holy Father – and then it could be.*<sup>250</sup>

In the meantime, the sisters worked toward their own ongoing formation: *Most of them ... are now studying with S. Raczkowska: English and German (History, Geography, etc.). Morning and evening, one hour of class and one hour of study. And I give them Italian lessons. They also study the catechism every day ...*,<sup>251</sup> reported Mother Mary.

In accord with Rev. Father, they looked on holy poverty as the foundation of the Congregation. But although the sisters lived very simply, Mother Mary always held to certain standards and was prudently generous: "... The tables in the refectory were always covered with white linen cloths in remembrance of the Last Supper. If a sister did not feel well or needed to sleep longer, Mother Mary gladly gave the permission. She said that younger people needed more sleep. She was also

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<sup>248</sup> MM, Diary 2, Oct. 1889, p. 24.

<sup>249</sup> MM, Diary 2, Feb. 1890, p. 27.

<sup>250</sup> MM, Diary 2, Nov. 1889, p. 25 and Apr. 1890, pp. 29-30.

<sup>251</sup> MM, Diary 2, May 1890, p. 32.

very prudent in regard to exceptions in the matter of food and saw to it that the sisters ate well, especially the younger ones.”<sup>252</sup>

Mother Mary also welcomed visitors gladly: ... *On June 10, the Rev. Brothers arrived. As they could not prepare an evening meal any more, I had the great joy of serving all of them in our refectory.*<sup>253</sup>

Fr. Jordan also paid attention in a prudent manner to the reputation of the sisters and was concerned that they have a good relationship with the people: ... *We had the good fortune to have Rev. Father here ... he gave his blessing to all of us and came once again later: he then made a special point of saying that I should no longer go shopping with a sister but that I should pay a lay person to do it; that one should never carry large bundles in public and that proper decorum should be observed in everything ... one should also bear in mind that the people here are eager to earn something – not to be too saving – to the glory of God.*<sup>254</sup>

On November 18, 1889, Propaganda Fide decided to entrust an Apostolic Prefecture to the Catholic Teaching Society. It included the former Kingdom of Assam, the Kingdom of Bhota and the State of Manipur.<sup>255</sup>

The first missionaries could be sent out on January 17, 1890, and three sisters followed at the end of the year. ... *On (December) 10, we held the farewell celebration for the sisters in a simple, moving way. ... In the refectory, I handed out a commemorative leaflet and I gave a little speech – then farewell, ‘the sacrifice for God’ – Mary helps, the holy Rule – we remain united. ... On the evening of the 12<sup>th</sup>, I was allowed to attend the departure ceremony in the chapel – kneeling at*

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<sup>252</sup> Poetsch and Zenker, Test.

<sup>253</sup> MM, Diary 2, June 1890, p.33.

<sup>254</sup> MM, Diary 2. p. 34.

<sup>255</sup> cf. DSS XV .I, pp. 247-256.

*the side of the sisters. Rev. Father and Founder gave each one a crucifix, ... he gave a nice sermon ... May God be praised for everything. His mercy endures forever!!!!!!*<sup>256</sup>

It had always been Mother Mary's wish to be active in the apostolate and in the missions, to work for the concerns of Christ, like the apostles and pious women. Now, being older and no longer able to go herself, she was happy that her sisters could go to the missions. For her part, she tried to help the people in her vicinity. The people gave some alms to the sisters. Mother Mary and the sisters looked out for the welfare of the children and did many a good turn for the neighbors: ... *From time to time, I go with a sister to visit a sick woman who has been bedridden for 20 years.*<sup>257</sup>

*By May 1, we had completely finished moving into the upper floor – we are now, thanks to be God, quite self-contained – alone in the convent; and 50 or more can be received.*<sup>258</sup> *Since the evening of the 14<sup>th</sup> (August) ... we have, thank God, been able to start praying the Office.*<sup>259</sup>

A new edition of the Rule of 1888 was published for the fathers and brothers in 1891. Apart from the chapter on the Divine Office, there were no important changes. For both the First and Second Orders, the two pillars of the Society were and remained the evangelical counsels and the apostolate.

In reference to obedience, Fr. Timotheus Edwein made the following observations: “However, the style of obedience, being strongly directed toward the Founder, took on a paternalistic character. Fr. Bonaventura Lüthen himself made a decisive contribution toward this usage. He withdrew as co-founder of the Institute and made himself the

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<sup>256</sup> MM, Diary 2, Dec. 1890, pp. 43-44.

<sup>257</sup> MM, Diary 2, 1890, p.29 and 1891, p. 47; Hansknecht, Test.

<sup>258</sup> MM, Diary 2, 1891, p. 49.

<sup>259</sup> MM, Diary 2, p. 51.

spiritual son of the younger but actual Founder. In the same spirit, Mother Mary followed his example without question even though she was some fifteen years older than Fr. Jordan. Just as he was, through his vocation, very strongly bound by obedience, so both of them wanted to live in obedience according to their way: ‘... Both of us are so close to the Rev. Founder, you his firstborn spiritual daughter and I his eldest son, and we have, whether both together or separately, always served him faithfully,’ wrote Fr. Lüthen to Mother Mary on September 9, 1893, while himself addressing her in the letter as ‘Dear Reverend Mother’.<sup>260</sup>

In a report on the history of the Catholic Teaching Society given in the *Apostelkalender* (Apostle Calendar) of 1893, we find the following statement: “Here I cannot omit to mention the heroic courage, the fidelity and adherence to our holy work which the Rev. Superior, Mary of the Apostles ... always showed in the severest of trials.”<sup>261</sup>

Father Francis and Mother Mary continued to form the life of the growing community of sisters in Tivoli: ... *On August 13, Rev. Father came and directed that we should now go out walking in twos.*<sup>262</sup> These walks were also opportunities for education.

Mother Mary “went with the individual sisters and postulants, each day with someone different, in order to get to know them well. Her kindness showed itself in her conduct and speech. When she was determining the order for going out and I made a remark here and there, she looked benevolently at me and said: ‘Our youngest child has brought it to my attention,’” Sister Hilaria Poetsch recalled later.<sup>263</sup>

Life in Tivoli was never totally without troubles, and Mother Mary longed for Rome, the center of Christendom.

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<sup>260</sup> DSS XV.I, p. 207; Fr. Lüthen, letter to MM, 9 Sept. 1893, in ASDS.

<sup>261</sup> *Apostelkalender* (Apostle Calendar), 1893, p. 51.

<sup>262</sup> MM, Diary 2, Aug. 1891, p. 52.

<sup>263</sup> Poetsch and Zenker, Test.

We learn of the happy and the distressing events from her *Diary*. These are her notes:

*Rev. Father also came for a short visit to console us, for the Franciscan curate had unfortunately made difficulties about giving us Holy Communion so frequently – and so we may not do the mending for them either, etc. - Hopefully, this will be a help toward getting holy Mass in the house. At the moment, things are also going better in San Francesco. All crosses are beneficial.*<sup>264</sup>

*On December 1, the matter of our holy Mass was brought before the Holy Father. Our Bishop gave his recommendation – Let us pray and give thanks!!*<sup>265</sup>

*On the 8<sup>th</sup>, on invitation from our Rev. Father, I was able to go with S. Ursula to the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of our dear Society. ... Rev. Fr. Bonaventura gave a nice speech.*<sup>266</sup>

*On March 19, (1892), our Bishop renewed the approbation of our Congregation, and our Rev. Father and Founder came to accept the vows.*<sup>267</sup>

*On March 18, the sisters slept in the new house (adjacent building) for the first time. ... Dear St. Joseph, our special patron, brought us many graces – and especially the holy Mass – March.*<sup>268</sup>

*On April 13, His Excellency, the Bishop, honored us with his visit. He was very friendly and seemed quite satisfied.*<sup>269</sup>

*On June 5, Sister Cecilia's father died. She screamed terribly from grief at this news with the result that our convent was surrounded by*

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<sup>264</sup> MM, Diary 2, 1891, p. 53.

<sup>265</sup> MM, Diary 2, p. 56.

<sup>266</sup> MM, Diary 2, p. 56.

<sup>267</sup> MM, Diary 2, p. 57-58.

<sup>268</sup> MM, Diary 2, p. 58.

<sup>269</sup> MM, Diary 2, p. 58.

*curious onlookers and bloodcurdling stories were fabricated. - These tales, inspired by the devil, were retold when Francisca died; this caused the parish priest to defend and praise us during the morning sermon. ... 'Il Messagero' printed an article concerning the uproar, and that nothing had been behind it. - Such crosses are wholly beneficial in the hands of God – Alleluia.*<sup>270</sup>

*On July 26, our dear, good S. Clara died.*<sup>271</sup>

*In the evening of July 30, Dr. Cav. Gianattasio came, sent by the government, to see if our living space here is too crowded, as two sisters had died so shortly one after the other. However, he seemed to be very edified by our orderly accommodation; he was very friendly and said that he would give an extremely good report concerning us. He feels there are now enough people in the house; yes, 35 persons would be sufficient. ... Now I really hope for a house in Rome and then my desires in this regard will be satisfied – to the glory of God, I hope.*<sup>272</sup>

Many years later, S. Bonaventura told of this time in Tivoli: "... We 24 novices had to look after the lighting. We had an oil lamp standing outside the door which led to several rooms. We sat there on the floor to pin our veils. We had only the one black one; the novices got white veils only when the novitiate moved to Rome. Shoes were also mended in the house. It then happened at times, that our feet bled because the nails came through. For mending the stockings, only the thread from old discarded and cut off pieces of stocking was used. All kinds of things were patched; we even tried to mend the locks on the suitcases. We also constructed an oven in which all the bread for the large community was afterwards baked.

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<sup>270</sup> MM, Diary 2, p. 61-62.

<sup>271</sup> MM, Diary 2, p. 63.

<sup>272</sup> MM, Diary 2, p. 64.

“In the novitiate, we had a large laundry wash boiler which already had holes in it. We put a piece of material through the holes, made a knot inside and out, and soldered the boiler. We used it like that for almost four years until the novitiate was transferred to Rome. The same was sometimes done with our soup kettles. From the leaky foot basins, we made a bake oven to use on the open kitchen range. The base was removed to become a cover for it. A tripod was placed over the fire because we had an open fire fueled by charcoal. Then one laid a flat container with some earth and pebbles on it, and onto this was placed the plate on which was laid the dough to be baked. However, at the first attempt, the poor soldered bake oven became too hot and, to our dismay, it broke apart. We, however, knew how to help ourselves. The soldered thread was sewn together again using steel wire and the baking process was promptly resumed. It resulted in good cakes made with yeast dough.

“Mother Mary visited the sick sisters gladly and often, lovingly caring for their needs. When I, as a postulant, saw this, I felt the desire to be sick as well.”<sup>273</sup>

When another sister died in Tivoli, the gossip began again. As a consequence, Fr. Jordan obliged the new entrants to live in a hotel temporarily. For them and for Mother Mary, this required no little sacrifice. After a second medical inspection, the situation quieted down and Mother Mary wrote: *We have, for example, 18 bedrooms, including some very large ones – 42 sisters sleep there now. Praise and thanks be to God for every cross.*<sup>274</sup>

But there were joys too: ... *At the request of the curate of S. Francesco, two sisters have started teaching catechism in our parish church on Sundays. He came again soon afterward and said that His*

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<sup>273</sup> Zenker and Poetsch, Test.

<sup>274</sup> MM, Diary 2, 1892, p. 65.

*Excellency the Bishop was very pleased and satisfied; - we should take on a third group as well. Thanks be to God!*<sup>275</sup>

At the close of the year, there were about 50 sisters and novices living in Tivoli. That was a great responsibility for Mother Mary: *What a prominent position, - influential, I have before God – O, think it through well before God – the responsibility ...*,<sup>276</sup> she wrote during the yearly retreat in November (1892), when almost sixty years of age.

In May 1893, she went to the Cardinal Vicar with the two sisters destined for Ecuador. She used the opportunity to ask him for permission to transfer her house from Tivoli to Rome. But Cardinal Parocchi put it off for the following year.<sup>277</sup>

*Then, today I heard ... that our dear Society has now received another name ..., the beautiful name: Society of the Divine Savior. After the change of apostolic to catholic, which for me ... was a sad change in the year 1882, I am very happy and will thank God for this name which directs us to the Savior once again.*<sup>278</sup>

*On August 6, 1893, Rev. Father came to receive the final vows (of five sisters) – in a very beautiful sermon, he highly recommended mutual love. ... On the 11<sup>th</sup> they (together with three priests), are to leave for the mission in Ecuador. ... In particular, they should always remain united with the Motherhouse – then be at peace.*<sup>279</sup>

Mother Mary's great desire was to have all the sisters, as they were gradually being sent out, remain in close contact with the Motherhouse. She was happy if news came frequently and always gave the

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<sup>275</sup> MM, Diary 2, p. 68.

<sup>276</sup> MM, Notebook, 22 Nov. 1892, p. 17.

<sup>277</sup> MM, Diary 2, 1893, p. 74.

<sup>278</sup> MM, Diary 2, p. 76.

<sup>279</sup> MM, Diary 2, p. 80.

community a detailed report from it. All the sisters who lived away from the Motherhouse received regular letters from her as well.

These letters show Mother Mary's humor and how very much she participated in all the joys and sorrows of the sisters: ... *Thank you for your nice letter. I was pleased to receive it, but I am sorry that you are sometimes depressed (A Westphalian oak does not bend). Don't give in to harmful thoughts. You can do much good through nursing, with the children, through prayer, work and good example ...*,<sup>280</sup> she wrote to S. Bonaventura in 1894.

To S. Valeria, among other things, she wrote: ... *For where something worthwhile is to come about, the chisel will not be wanting. So be of good courage and, above all, trust and remain cheerful. There is really no greater evil, apart from sin, than sadness.*<sup>281</sup>

... *I cannot refrain from sending a few lines to encourage you. The superior – the leader – must fight in the forefront, that is, be able to endure more. - Where there is no suffering, no struggle, there can also be no virtue. - I can tell you in confidence that I am happy when I see a little fire in you ...*,<sup>282</sup> wrote M. Mary to S. Bonaventura in 1899.

*On a visit to St. Catherine of Bologna, I saw the violin she used to play and I prayed for a religious spirit for all our educated members so that they do not become empty ...*<sup>283</sup> - [A play on the German words 'Gelehrter', scholar, and 'geleert' emptied], she informed S. Victoria.

Also remarkable is M. Mary's relationship with the sisters who left the community. It seems that she could understand such a step from her own life experience and she retained fond memories of each sister: ... *Here I received your last letter which, after all I knew and heard of you, was a surprise and made me almost speechless with sorrow. ... Only*

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<sup>280</sup> MM, letter to S. Bonaventura Zenker, 19 Nov. 1894, in ASDS.

<sup>281</sup> MM, letter to S. Valeria Behr, 23 Feb. 1900, in ASDS.

<sup>282</sup> MM, letter to S. Bonaventura Zenker, 19 Jan. 1899, in ASDS.

<sup>283</sup> MM, letter to S. Victoria Steuer, 7 Nov. 1899, in ASDS.

*pray for me, let us remain friends, as much as possible – yet, fiat – may all go well with you, - was her farewell to S. Theodora.*<sup>284</sup>

Mother Mary's desire was always directed toward Rome, yet it was necessary for the sisters in Tivoli to receive a good preparation for their apostolic work. The experience of Assam and Ecuador had taught the necessity of sending out trained teachers when possible.

Therefore, Fr. Jordan with M. Mary began a teacher training school for the Congregation with the assistance of a priest who was a trained teacher and of some sisters who had been teachers prior to their entrance. It was ready to commence on February 8, 1894: ... *In the morning, we sang the Veni Creator Spiritus with solemnity and then the Teacher Training Institute was opened ... I attended the first lesson. ... On February 11, Rev. Brother Barnabas, who had set up the teaching plan, was here at Rev. Father's request and he discussed many things with me - ... as well as answering the questions of Sisters Elisabeth, Clara and Engelberta, the teachers.*<sup>285</sup>

Fr. Francis knew that he could completely depend on M. Mary and he urged: ... *because I have the training of the sisters so much at heart, so I ask you very earnestly to supervise affairs with great care and to see to it that the talented sisters are given the best possible training. Let us start with this matter immediately, for time is pressing greatly. In summer, the sisters can no longer study so much, but I ask that even now the sisters not be overburdened with too much study, so that they remain healthy. ...*<sup>286</sup> And half a year later, Fr. Francis wrote: ... *I hereby send you some directives regarding education and ask you to read them through carefully and to give me your honest opinion and remarks on a separate sheet.*<sup>287</sup>

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<sup>284</sup> MM, letter to S. Theodora Geser, 8 Sept. 1900, in ASDS

<sup>285</sup> MM, Diary 2, 1894, pp. 89-90.

<sup>286</sup> FJ, letter to MM, 27 Jan. 1894, in ASDS (cf. DSS X, No. 259).

<sup>287</sup> FJ, letter to MM, 11 June 1894 (cf. DSS X, No. 266).

Somewhat later, a sister died and another had to be hospitalized. Father Francis himself was sick and he delegated the Fr. Procurator of Tivoli to see that all went well with the sisters. Fr. Simon informed himself in detail about their lifestyle and brought in a doctor. He diagnosed typhus. Consequently, there was much excitement and worry, for there were already several sisters affected by the epidemic. The doctor did his very best. The next day, on orders from Fr. Francis, Fr. Simon sent Mother Mary with one sister to Rome so that she would be out of danger, personally and with regard to civil authorities.

He ordered a more nourishing diet for the sisters. Very soon afterward, twenty sisters had to leave the house in order to avoid infection and to make more room for the sick. Fr. Francis appointed S. Elisabeth Albertzki as superior in Tivoli. In Rome, the sisters found lodging in a large house on the Via Lungara. A total of seven sisters died in Tivoli through typhus.<sup>288</sup>

In spite of the cross, Mother Mary also saw the blessing which had now brought the sisters to Rome: *Yes, so are the ways of God. Through sorrow and hardship, he led us to Rome into the arms of the Father of Christendom. - Oh, praised be his hidden mercies! Through still another cross I had to obtain the grace of coming to Rome. On the morning of the 26<sup>th</sup>, I had to hear from Rev. Father the very painful news that on June 24 my dearest Papa, almost 88 years old and always healthy up to now, had ended his honorable and devout life in love and good will toward God and neighbor. ... After a happy conversation with the entire family, he had died of a heart attack while kneeling for his evening prayer at the side of the bed in which my dear mother had died. - Oh! How much love and care I have to thank him for! The dear God will reward him!*<sup>289</sup>

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<sup>288</sup> MM, Diary 2, June 1894, pp. 96-101.

<sup>289</sup> MM, Diary 2, pp. 98-99-

In September, however, Mother Mary was told that the sisters could not yet remain in Rome definitively. ... *It was painful news to me, but must we not be happy at all times in order to obey. On the 14<sup>th</sup>, then, with a heavy heart, I sent back all nine novices in three groups of three.*<sup>290</sup>

*On the 24<sup>th</sup>, ... I received the good news that we professed sisters were allowed to remain longer, but we may never demand any rights or privileges – and must always keep a good relationship with other Congregations. (Oh, how rich in blessings, I think and hope, will be this humble beginning, founded on the cross!)*<sup>291</sup>

## Mother and Educator

“... She was not guided by false respect for persons; she was quite free in expressing her opinions, whether she was dealing with simple or more distinguished persons. She often asked prudent and saintly persons for their advice, and also often asked older, experienced sisters who did not belong to the general administration.”<sup>292</sup>

Later, the sisters described Mother Mary like this: “At recreation, she liked to be among us younger sisters. She spoke so simply and cheerfully that we never gave a thought to the fact that it was Rev. Mother we were speaking to.”<sup>293</sup>

“On feastsdays, she went out walking with us in the afternoons, and as we went, each one of us had to sing a song for her. Or she played

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<sup>290</sup> MM, Diary 2, p. 105.

<sup>291</sup> MM, Diary 2, p. 107.

<sup>292</sup> Zenker, Test.

<sup>293</sup> Poetsch, Test.

such games as 'Blinde Kuh' (blind-man's-buff) or 'Plumpsack' (Drop the handkerchief) with us. She liked to see us cheerful."<sup>294</sup>

"When I was very much plagued by homesickness and was already thinking of going home, she anticipated my decision, took me out for a walk and spoke of the edifying letters I had sent to the convent when I asked to be admitted: I had been ready even for martyrdom. In order to become a martyr, she said, it was necessary to learn to carry the small crosses. Such actions had their effect and helped me to overcome the storm ..."<sup>295</sup> S. Christine told later.

"When there was a misunderstanding, Mother Mary was considerate and sought to calm the tempers by a quiet manner."<sup>296</sup>

She was of the opinion: "A sister might be saintly interiorly, but outwardly have a fault or an imperfection which gives offense. Because of this, she cannot be placed in exterior works. Therefore, we should always regulate our outward behavior as well."<sup>297</sup>

Mother Mary sometimes said: "To correct others, to make them aware of their failings or to test and strengthen them in virtue requires strength of character."<sup>298</sup>

She saw it as her duty to train the sisters in a way that would enable them to stand up to difficult situations later on. At that time, asceticism and especially humiliations were looked upon as a way to personal sanctification.

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<sup>294</sup> S. Martha Storchenegger, Test, in ASDS.

<sup>295</sup> S. Christine Altmann, Test, in ASDS.

<sup>296</sup> Altmann, Test

<sup>297</sup> Zenker, Test.

<sup>298</sup> Poetsch, Test.

“She always knew how to find the weak side of a person, the point where one was very touchy at that moment. She could also really humiliate us before others, especially if one had failed and had not said anything about it to her.”<sup>299</sup>

Sister Dominica recalled: “... I was often very edified by her patience with us young sisters, for most of us were simple country girls. I never saw her get excited ... no matter how awkwardly we behaved. Although she often humbled us, she never did it in a hurtful way, and I was always glad about the humiliation. She often said: I want strong sisters, ready for sacrifice, sisters who can endure something. Those who shy away from the least pain, or who think only of themselves, are of no use for an apostolic work.”<sup>300</sup>

“If there was a disagreement at any time, everything had to be made up before going to bed.”<sup>301</sup> “If she saw that tears were coming, then she would say: ‘No, sister, I did not mean it that way’ ... If she had been too sharp, she looked for some way to soften it.”<sup>302</sup>

“If a sister was thought of for a post of responsibility, she made her undergo many humiliations. She wanted to test her. M. Mary placed much value on the virtue of humility. She humiliated us only in order to make us humble. This method, however, caused some displeasure among some of us.”<sup>303</sup>

“Patience ... that is the main virtue for superiors.”<sup>304</sup> “The superior must be like a sack on a donkey, that does not mind whether it is taken down or put up; a superior must be like that. If one gives her the office

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<sup>299</sup> Storchenegger, Test.

<sup>300</sup> S. Dominika Vieregg, Test., in ASDS.

<sup>301</sup> Poetsch, Test.

<sup>302</sup> Zenker, Test.

<sup>303</sup> Altmann, Test.

<sup>304</sup> MM, letter to S. Thecla Ziesel, 1899, in ASDS.

or takes it away from her, it must be the same to her ...”<sup>305</sup> this was M. Mary’s firm conviction.

“...She was also very serious about obedience. If she had given an order to do something, and it was not done immediately, she would take the person by the arm, and that one would find herself outside the door, hardly knowing what had happened to her ...,”<sup>306</sup> recalled S. Bonaventura.

S. Valentina confirmed this same attitude of Mother Mary towards Fr. Jordan: “... Her obedience and submissiveness toward Rev. Father and the Holy See were extraordinary. When I was her substitute in the house, I was not allowed to do the slightest thing without going immediately to Rev. Father and asking his advice. Rev. Father had to know and judge every small event.”<sup>307</sup> She often said: “Obedience is my greatest joy, for this reason I have placed myself under a Founder, in order to be able to obey.”<sup>308</sup>

“In the early days of the foundation, she had to give a daily report about how things were going, about everything that had happened. When doing this, she knelt humbly before Rev. Father, reported everything, even that which concerned herself, and listened very calmly to the correction and reprimands he gave her. And she stood up only after Rev. Father had gone.”<sup>309</sup>

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<sup>305</sup> Zenker, Test.

<sup>306</sup> Zenker, Test.

<sup>307</sup> S. Valentina Wirth, Test., in ASDS.

<sup>308</sup> Zenker, Test.

<sup>309</sup> Zenker, Test.

# Mother Mary – A Spontaneous Woman

In Mother Mary's correspondence and notes, we meet her as a spontaneous person who openly and vivaciously expressed her opinion and feelings: *Rev. Father will let me have my photograph taken for the sake of Papa and yourselves ... there is still a good photographer here ... he takes good photographs; but, how will I look?*<sup>310</sup>

In another letter to her family she writes: *You will notice that I have gained weight – when everything goes well, this often comes of itself. - Thank God, the spirit of renunciation need not suffer because of it. - All in all, I still look slim and other very pious sisters quite fat. ... Soon, dear Elise, we are expecting Italian postulants to enter, and I am supposed to have an Italian conversation class every day, so that I don't give offense to the young 'little nuns', which would not be advisable.*<sup>311</sup>

Sometimes she sighed: *Oh, when will our Rev. Founder and Father come here again! When will new postulants come! When will there be some progress. Now I still have courage – I am 57 years old. But with 60, old age approaches ...* .<sup>312</sup>

She poured out her heart to Fr. Jordan: *I was very sad yesterday – and I had to cry: my sister, Baroness von Böselager wrote that my dear Papa is not so well as he used to be. ... Then she asked our prayers, with a very troubled heart, for her exceptionally good, zealous, and pious son (the eldest), 33 years old ... ulcers, rupture: his name is also Theodore ... please will you also pray a little for these intentions.*<sup>313</sup>

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<sup>310</sup> MM, letter to Elise v.Ww., 17 Oct. 1889, in ASDS.

<sup>311</sup> MM, letter to Elise v.Ww., 4 Nov. 1889.

<sup>312</sup> MM, letter to FJ, 28 Jan. 1891, in APS-E. 608.

<sup>313</sup> MM, letter to FJ, 4 May 1894, in APS-E. 621.

*Sister Elisabeth, whom I had asked to go to bed, came to meet me at the train in the evening; very dear and kind, it is true, but not prudent. ... My very personal opinion, I feel one laughs too much, and the other makes too sad a face.*<sup>314</sup>

Out of her life experience, she expressed: *What I mean is, that older postulants, provided they are healthy, are often the best – tested and knowing what they want (but they may not be the kind who look on the convent as a hospital...). I therefore think 41 is not old.*<sup>315</sup>

In a letter to Fr. Bonaventura, she stated: *There one can see how necessary a long period of probation is: the ‘Sacred Heart’ has 10-15 years -. Yes, that too needs experience ... - I am quite at peace – I trust you as formerly – You, Rev. Father, Rev. Fr. Thomas, Msgr. Von Essen - ... and I want to trust Rev. Father Pachomius --- And, thanks be to God – Until now all is going well with me before God. In old age, one cannot suddenly become evil and very stupid. May I ask an Ave in this intention.*<sup>316</sup>

*Then, I often feel as if I became a child – because I have to hear so many new things. But it is difficult to convince me, for I was very self-willed until I was 10 years old – in contrast, however, I was never disobedient after that – I looked on my superiors as saints. God is good to me. It was never inclined to haughtiness – Rev. Prelate (Msgr. Von Essen) once said, when he wanted to encourage me to love honor for God’s sake: ‘Well, I see that you don’t know in the least these feelings that men have.’ He was not absolutely correct, however, for it is in my nature to love everything that is just. - Now, enough of this disagreeable self.*<sup>317</sup>

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<sup>314</sup> MM, letter to FJ, 19 May 1894, in APS-E. 623.

<sup>315</sup> MM, letter to Rev. Brother, 9 May 1895, in APS-E. 649.

<sup>316</sup> MM, letter to Rev. Father, 29 Nov. 1896, in APS-E. 673.

<sup>317</sup> MM, letter to Rev. Father, 18 Dec. 1896, in APS-E. 676.

*I don't know why, but I want to tell you something good about my homeland (then I have the courage to become holy – through a great deal of work, cares, difficulty and struggle). It is this: Castle*

*Myllendonk has already brought forth two saints – they were born there: Rev. Abbess Ottilia of Myllendonk (Abbey of Villich near Bonn), and St. Caesarius of Myllendonk ... a scholar and monk (superior?) at Heisterbach, a Premonstratensian writer.<sup>318</sup>*

*She often knew how to make fun: Today I went on a quick visit to congratulate Msgr. De Waal ... he made the remark: 'Maybe your house is built on catacombs, on holy ground.' I immediately answered: 'The catacombs are greatly venerated, but don't let our house fall in. Pardon me, in that case I would only ask right away for Fr. Pancratius as protector' ... .<sup>319</sup>*

*And on April 4, 1906, she wrote in her own hand to her twelve-year-old grandniece, Adolfine von Wüllenweber: My thoughts are very often with you – since you will soon have the great happiness of taking into your heart our dear Savior, our Creator, our Redeemer and the dear Bridegroom of our soul. - How much I would like to with you then, in dear old Korschenbroich! ... I am sending you a little remembrance, a holy card ... in St. Peter's there will also be beautiful devotions; (The children here make a retreat before their first Holy Communion). All for Jesus!!! Pray for you faithful aunt.<sup>320</sup>*

## In Rome

At this time, Mother Mary had much to do in order to arrange things in the house in Rome on the Via Lungara. But above all, she had to do

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<sup>318</sup> MM, letter to Rev. Father, 23 Nov. 1899, in ASDS.

<sup>319</sup> MM, letter to Fr. Pancratius, 13 June 1904 (dictated), in APS-E. 745.

<sup>320</sup> MM, letter to Adolfine v.Ww., 4 Apr. 1906, in ASDS.

justice to her duties as superior general. That the superior in Tivoli at the time caused her some difficulties, sometimes unintentionally, could hardly be avoided, as Tivoli was still the Motherhouse and novitiate.

Father Jordan approached the Church authorities, trying carefully but insistently, to bring about a change in the situation.<sup>321</sup>

According to Fr. Jordan's and Mother Mary's desire, the postulants were in Rome and the Teacher Training College was re-opened: ... *So it began on October 11 (1894) – under the direction of S. Clara. There is a lovely, suitable place for it next to the loggia.*<sup>322</sup>

Furthermore, it was important for the sister's community to be able to take on some activities. Mother Mary noted at the beginning of December: *In a 'Dormitorio' (public overnight lodging) for 100-200 men, we have been offered the task of supervising the arrangements (it means going there once day – not far from here) ... Sisters Rafaela and Verena have been given the responsibility.*<sup>323</sup>

*On December 18, Msgr. de Waal went to His Eminence for us, in order to request for us the great grace of having the Blessed Sacrament in the chapel. ... On that same day, our chapel was solemnly blessed by our parish priest and Rev. Fr. Thomas.*<sup>324</sup>

On May 7, 1895, Father Francis gave the sisters the *Rule of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Order of the Society of the Divine Savior*. The Rule is the same as the first part of the "Constitutions of the Catholic Teaching Society" of 1892, except for some articles which are proper to it.<sup>325</sup>

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<sup>321</sup> DSS XV. II, pp. 450-451.

<sup>322</sup> MM, Diary 2, Oct. 1894, pp. 108-109.

<sup>323</sup> MM, Diary 2, p. 113.

<sup>324</sup> MM, Diary 2, pp. 114-115.

<sup>325</sup> MM, Diary 2, 7 May 1895, p. 127; cf. DSS I, pp. 147-163.

On May 30, the first three sisters were sent to the USA.<sup>326</sup>

In Rome itself, the sisters found a temporary field of work as directresses of the aforementioned 'Dormitorio' and as catechists in the parish of Santo Spirito.<sup>327</sup> Some were able to receive their training as nurses in the hospital of St. Giovanni.<sup>328</sup>

The sisters, and first among them Mother Mary, repeatedly went with their cares, complaints and questions to their 'Dear Reverend Father'.

Fathers Bonaventura and Thomas took some of the burden from him. Fr. Bonaventura tried to settle disputes and jealousies. Fr. Thomas was the wise and experienced confessor and retreat master.

Through Katharina Niggli, who had been taken home by her mother after five years of religious life as Salvatorian and had become ill, Fr. Francis and the Sisters' Community, with its administration, were once again brought to the attention of the Church authorities. The parents had gone to the Bishop of Munich with their complaints and, on a visit to Katharina, Fr. Thomas advised her to submit to the directives of the Bishop. The latter forwarded the parents' letter of complaint to Rome where it reached the Visitor of the Salvatorians, Father Antonio Intreccialagli, through the Congregation for Religious.

It was strange that the Visitor who got his information from some of the fathers, did not question any of the sisters and did not even make a visit to the sisters' convent. The visitation report was not lenient in its judgement. Fr. Jordan accepted the admonitions, leaving Mother Mary untroubled by what would have been a painful incident for her. The fathers supported him and offered their help to the sisters.<sup>329</sup>

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<sup>326</sup> MM, Diary 2, 21 Feb. 1895, p. 121 and 30 May 1895, p. 130.

<sup>327</sup> MM, Diary 2, 2 July 1894, pp. 100 and 102; Dec. 1894, p. 113.

<sup>328</sup> MM, Diary 2, Mar. 1895, pp. 122-123.

<sup>329</sup> MM, Diary 3, Nov. 1895, p. 8; Mar. 1896, p. 14; and Aug. 1896, p. 22; Niggli case in APS-F. 1/22; Fr. A. Intreccialagli, Visitation Report, 31 Mar. 1896, copy in APS-F.

There were also some restless and discontented sisters who felt that they were not given enough consideration by Father Jordan and by Mother Mary. Mother Mary openly showed her aversion to Tivoli: that in its turn disturbed the sisters who were in charge there and caused them to take a defensive attitude. Some sisters complained about a lack of religious discipline, others wanted to be better provided for. It was difficult to satisfy everyone. Mother Mary was accustomed to talking everything over with Fr. Jordan. She was thankful for every spiritual help and also humbly accepted many a correction from the Founder.<sup>330</sup>

In July 1895, another novice died of typhus in Tivoli. Two others became ill in September but recovered. Fr. Jordan, therefore, urgently desired to find a healthier house for the sisters, and he also looked for a suitable house in Rome in the hope that the sisters might be permitted to transfer to Rome permanently. Mother Mary, too, pressed for the recognition of the filial house in Rome as the Motherhouse. Msgr. de Waal, who took an interest in the sisters, made the suggestion that they should proceed as a German National Institute in order to obtain a residential permit from the Church authorities more easily. Fr. Jordan absolutely refused to do this and explained everything to the Cardinal Vicar.<sup>331</sup>

Toward the close of the year, the sisters who had been forced to leave Ecuador because of the revolution there returned, and the year ended with renewed tensions in Tivoli and in the USA.

*What, then, should I do? I would not trust in the dear Lord, I would have thrown off this burden already, but because of his love and because of obedience toward our Rev. Father and Founder, I will, with*

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1/22; S. Theresia (Niggli), letters to F J, 30 Dec. 1895, in APS-D. 421; and 27 Mar. 1896, in APS-D. 436; DSS XV.II, pp. 588-596 and 602-603.

<sup>330</sup> DSS XV.II, pp. 630-631.

<sup>331</sup> MM, letter to Rev. Father, 26 Nov. 1895, in APS-E. 646; FJ, letter to MM, 1 Dec. 1895, in ASDS (cf. DSS X, No. 293).

*the help of God, accept everything peacefully and joyfully, whether it please me or not ...*,<sup>332</sup> said Mother Mary, now almost sixty-three years old, to Sister Valentina.

Finally, at the beginning of 1896, the sisters in Tivoli could move into another house. In August, Mother Mary set out on a visitation in Switzerland. When she returned, there were still some sick sisters in Tivoli, but ... *apart from this, everything was going better, more orderly and religiously there*, she noted.<sup>333</sup>

During the year, there were repeated tensions between Mother Mary and the superior at Tivoli. Some sisters reproached Mother Mary, saying that they were being treated too strictly, and that she showed her strong aversion to Tivoli even in front of the novices, so that they already came to Tivoli with a negative attitude.<sup>334</sup> Following this, Fr. Bonaventura gave Mother Mary some clear-cut directives on how she should proceed in regard to the sisters.

In autumn, Fr. Pachomius, recently returned from Cartagena, received from Fr. Jordan the task of speaking with the sisters and of giving them a retreat. This young, ascetic priest was extremely narrow in his attitude toward religious discipline and observance. However, his report to Fr. Jordan was basically sound. A vicarress was appointed for the administration of the house. Four sisters, sincerely devoted to Mother Mary and with the welfare of the Congregation truly at heart, were appointed to help Mother Mary. In a short while, the task of Fr. Pachomius was completed.<sup>335</sup>

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<sup>332</sup> Wirth, Test.

<sup>333</sup> MM, Diary 3, 10 Aug. 1896, p. 21.

<sup>334</sup> MM, Diary 3, Jan.-Nov. 1896, pp. 11, 15, 16, 17, 20, 27; MM, correspondence with FJ and Rev. Father, Mar.-Dec. 1896, in APS-E. 660-677; Sisters, correspondence with FJ, in APS-D. 384- 458.

<sup>335</sup> MM, Diary 3, Nov. 1896, pp. 27-28; cf. DSS XV.II, pp. 674-677.

During this period, which was not an easy one for her, Mother Mary wrote: ... *Put away doubts – revive trust in my superiors.*<sup>336</sup> *I will avoid any bitterness, anxiety, aversion – I will struggle against non-acceptance of my position on my part. Try to love and value it.*<sup>337</sup>

At the beginning of December 1896, some discontented Sisters were again active and made strong accusations against Fr. Jordan and M. Mary. Fr. Bonaventura, as vicar of the Superior General, again had to take on the task of defending both of them against the attacks. With great patience he made clear decisions and thus calmed those who were upset.<sup>338</sup>

By Christmas, all was peaceful again. Mother Mary had endured these weeks in an exemplary manner. With great humility, she let Fr. Bonaventura correct her. On December 18, 1896, she wrote to him: *Now I have asked several capable sisters – whether or not I am outwardly calm or restless, etc. - Most of them – all (I did not ask S. Fil.) stated: always calm and even patient (which, however, is not the case). A good sister, S. Bonaventura, however, spoke truthfully: you often seem excited, saying: ‘quick, hurry, one word has to suffice’, but I did not see you agitated. - She was quite correct in saying this. Oh, if only I committed no other faults! (I still have your note in my pocket, Rev. Father.)*

*As regards the exterior, what I say is this: I am often too stiff – even impatient at times – could be more friendly – too much interior pride – then, again, speaking out too much (but only to those whom I trust). Then, quite frequently, feeling hurt (common sense can help me with this), God help me in everything. I have had ringing in the ear for one month now; I do not know if I will have a stroke – but I don’t think so – I still need to live- ... My interior faults are known to God and to Rev.*

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<sup>336</sup> MM, Notebook, 13 Nov. 1896, p. 18.

<sup>337</sup> MM, Notebook, 14 Nov. 1896, p. 18.

<sup>338</sup> cf. Footnote 332; DSS XV.II, pp. 677-679.

*Fr. Thomas. I ask your priestly blessing and for your patience, Rev. Fr. Bonaventura.*<sup>339</sup>

With great fidelity, Mother Mary carried her cross of being 'Reverend Mother' and did not let herself be shaken in her trust in the sisters and fathers. She left it to Fr. Jordan to call to account those sisters who were known both by him and her to be difficult.<sup>340</sup>

The sisters reported regarding Mother Mary: "She was quite often accused; then came reprimands from her higher superiors. But she was not afraid to correct the sisters; she could also be gentle with those sisters who could not bear much."<sup>341</sup>

"She never held grudges. After making a necessary correction, she was again the kind and caring mother. Even toward the sisters who sometimes did not behave correctly or who spoke rudely to her, she was calm and gentle."<sup>342</sup>

S. Bonaventura reported: "Once I went out for a walk with her and during it, she twice said to me: 'I think I have not done anything good with the foundation of the Congregation. I let the sisters study, and now they turn against me. If I had refused to accept them, they would have remained simple and not so arrogant.' ..."<sup>343</sup>

"Once, when Mother Mary and the sisters had come home late due to a long sermon, she was accused and received a correction from Fr. Thomas. She received the sharp rebuke on her knees; she accused herself, asked for pardon, then said 'Thank you' and asked for a blessing. Fr. Thomas refused to give her a blessing. As he left the house,

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<sup>339</sup> MM, letter to Fr. Lüthen, 18 Dec. 1896, in APS-E. 676.

<sup>340</sup> DSS XV.II, p. 679.

<sup>341</sup> Zenker, Test.

<sup>342</sup> Poetsch, Test.

<sup>343</sup> Zenker, Test.

he said to the sisters, out of the hearing of Rev. Mother: 'She should give me a blessing.' ..."<sup>344</sup>

In such difficult situations, Mother Mary retained her equilibrium.

Father Jordan tried to find work in Rome for as many sisters as possible, and in this way, to make their presence in Rome indispensable. This, however, was difficult, because most of the sisters had no diploma. The training courses in Tivoli and Rome were not sufficient.

From March 1897 onward, some sisters worked in the private clinic of Dr. Marocco, and there they received a kind of theoretical training twice a week but very little remuneration. When the sisters from Akyab (Burma) returned and there was no place for them in Rome, apostolic work for the sisters became an even more pressing worry for Fr. Jordan and M. Mary.<sup>345</sup>

In summer, Mother Mary began a long trip which took her, among other place, to Liège. She was now getting older, and she rejoiced at being able to attend the celebration at the Benedictine Abbey in Liège, ... *where I was educated – and met my relatives ... then I went home to the beautiful castle where I was born. ... I saw all my relatives again.*<sup>346</sup>

She kept up contact with her family and friends until her death. The younger generation of her family also learnt to appreciate her; they visited or wrote her: "Dear Aunt Therese ... I hope you will not forget us entirely ... Last time you were home, you worried that our Roman Catholicism might not be in such good shape. But it is not so bad as that, dear Aunt. Our parrot, which you have surely not forgotten, does its utmost to remind us of Rome. More than ten times a day we have to hear, on every kind of tone, the word 'Rome'. And when we hear

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<sup>344</sup> S. Xaveria Amrhein, Test, in ASDS.

<sup>345</sup> MM, Diary 3, March 1897, pp. 31, 32, 33; 1 April 1897, p. 33; 21 Feb. 1898, p. 46; DSS XV.II, pp. 722-723.

<sup>346</sup> MM, Diary 3, 22 July 1897, p. 38.

'Rome', we think at the same moment of you, dear Aunt. Therefore, you see, we do not forget you."<sup>347</sup>

Finally, in May 1898, when Fr. Jordan was away on a trip, Mother Mary sent an urgent message to him: *Tomorrow we celebrate the feats of Our Lady of Perpetual Help – yesterday we had the feast of the Queen of Apostles. Both feasts encourage me to write a few words of petition to you.*

*In the name of our heavenly Queen, in the name of your heavenly Mother, whose protection and help you have so often experienced, I ask you to think of the many poor sisters – for Mary's honor – while you are travelling, so that they too may spread work apostolically and help many to experience Mary's assistance. To respond, in this way, to the holy purpose of their foundation.*

*Oh, do not forget us, Reverend Father – we are 52 sisters here, 19 in Tivoli. Of this number, more than half could be sent out ... We pray daily together for Reverend Father, also in the intention just expressed, which I know, must also be close to your heart. And so I humbly beg for your priestly and fatherly blessing as one who is your most obedient and grateful spiritual daughter for 16 years now.*<sup>348</sup>

Soon Mother Mary also went on her travels for some weeks, ... *to visit the houses as well as for reasons of health.*<sup>349</sup>

In March 1899, the sisters in Tivoli could at last move into a new 'sunnier house' and, following a change of superiors, everything was in the best of order again.<sup>350</sup>

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<sup>347</sup> Maria von Ascheberg, letter to MM, 8 May 1906, in ASDS; MM, Diary 3, 3 Apr. 1902, p. 90; MM, letter to Rev. Father, 18 May 1900, in ASDS.

<sup>348</sup> MM, letter to FJ, 29 May 1898, in APS-E. 682.

<sup>349</sup> MM, Diary 3, 11 Aug. 1898, p. 49.

<sup>350</sup> MM, Diary 3, 20 Feb. 1899, p. 55, and 24 Mar. 1899, p. 56.

Nevertheless, there were still sufficient cares and worries; so Father Jordan's Easter greeting encouraged her: ... *to obtain gentleness, which is so necessary for superiors, consider that, in the Old Testament, they longed for a Lamb to redeem them. Those who try our patience usually have no bad intentions.*<sup>351</sup> And toward the end of the year, he asked of her: Because I hear that you give too little attention to your health, I expressly wish that you take care of it in a prudent manner and rather spend a little more than suffer great harm. May the holy angels protect you and may you, through word, action and example, do much good everywhere.<sup>352</sup>

## A New Time Begins

With the feast of Christmas before the turn of the century, a Holy Year began in Rome. The Salvatorian Sisters also gave hospitality in their house to Rome pilgrims: *Today, we accepted five women pilgrims from Tyrol ... they stay on the third floor where the postulants are (these moved temporarily to the 4<sup>th</sup> floor). S. Therese and the two postulants serve them; other sisters go with them on pilgrimage. ...*<sup>353</sup>

In her sometimes humorous way, Mother Mary reported to S. Thekla in May: "S. Crescentia, who is looking after the pilgrims, is the 'first pilgrim mother' - The pilgrimage chaplain from Württemberg gives her a lot of work: mending clothes, preparing sandwiches. Toward the end, he called her the 'sandwich-sister'."<sup>354</sup>

Regarding the Rev. Brothers, Mother Mary could record: *Since March, they have been publishing a new quarterly; it is called*

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<sup>351</sup> FJ, letter to MM, 2 Apr. 1899, in ASDS (cf. DSS X, No. 462).

<sup>352</sup> FJ, letter to MM, 2 Oct. 1899, (cf. DSS X, No. 481).

<sup>353</sup> MM, Diary 3, 1 Mar. 1900, p. 70.

<sup>354</sup> MM, letter to S. Thekla Ziesel, 21 May 1900, ASDS.

*'Salvatorianische Mitteilungen' (Salvatorian News). S. Stanislaus writes 2000 addresses for it.*<sup>355</sup>

Slowly but steadily, the Congregation became known and spread out. Since there had been repeated tensions and difficulties between the fathers and sisters in the USA, S. Clara (Krauer) went there on visitation in Mother Mary's name in November 1900, and remained there as a Commissary.<sup>356</sup>

In May 1901, Mother Mary joyfully noted: *Today we received a very great grace – the Holy Father sent a special blessing and praise to Rev. Father and Founder and us, his sisters; we were mentioned in a special way.*<sup>357</sup>

On the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the Society, Mother Mary sent her warmest congratulations: ... *Who should remember Foundation Day more and be more thankful for it, than we, your spiritual daughters, Reverend Father! ... We also promise to do all we can to bring you consolation. Your life, dear Rev. Father, the life of the First Order, is indeed our life also. ... I thank you in the name of all my sisters, your spiritual daughters, ... I ask forgiveness for all our mistakes and wish you an even more glorious 50<sup>th</sup> and, if possible, a 75<sup>th</sup> foundation celebration ... the increase and growth of the foundations, and the continual special protection of Mary, ...*<sup>358</sup>

On St. Joseph's day 1902, Fr. Bonaventura informed Mother Mary that the term 'Second Order' could no longer be used for the Sisters' Congregation: "Please take care of this matter everywhere. This mode of

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<sup>355</sup> MM, Diary 3, 3 Apr. 1900, p. 71.

<sup>356</sup> MM, Diary 3, 16 Nov. 1900, p. 79; Dec. 1900, p. 81; Mar. 1901, p. 83; Dec. 1901, p. 88; 27 May 1900, p. 75; DSS XV.I, pp. 129, 131, 177-180, 193-194, 233-235.

<sup>357</sup> MM, Diary 3, 21 May 1901, p. 83.

<sup>358</sup> MM, letter to FJ, 8 Dec. 1901, in ASDS.

expression (First and Second Order of a Society) is no longer accepted by the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars for new Congregations. The title: 'Sisters of the Divine Savior'.<sup>359</sup>

Looking back at the end of 1902, Mother Mary wrote to S. Thekla: *When one thinks that now we are almost 150 sisters, - and on December 8, 1888, we were five! - I was the first to put on this holy habit. Oh, how merciful God is to us – but why? What does He expect of it? The sanctification of souls, their salvation! Patience for our own benefit, - self-sacrifice for the good of others! ...*<sup>360</sup>

“This winter, too, Mother Mary was happy to participate in the retreat given by good Fr. Thomas. Her resolutions were those of a woman advanced in years, whom the Lord had led by a laborious and often humiliating path through life in order to let her grow towards holiness; one who now also felt the burden of her years, an experience that could render apostolic service more difficult for her in a new way.”<sup>361</sup> Mother Mary's resolutions were: 1) *I must always do as much as I possibly can;* 2) *Never think that I want to or must now give in to weariness; patience.*<sup>362</sup>

She was grateful to be in Rome: her dearest wish now was to be able to buy a house which would be the property of the sisters. Finally, in the summer of 1903, this too became possible: *This afternoon ... I went to see for the first time (together with S. Elisabeth) our large new house: Salita Sant'Onofrio, no. 11 ...*<sup>363</sup> and, already on June 30, she noted: *Today, the convent was bought and a down payment made.*<sup>364</sup> At the end of September, three sisters slept in the Salita Sant'Onofrio, no. 11 for the first time; *they also clean and do the painting there.*<sup>365</sup>

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<sup>359</sup> Fr. Lüthen, letter to MM, 19 Mar. 1902, in ASDS.

<sup>360</sup> MM, letter to S. Thekla Ziesel, 12 Nov. 1902, in ASDS.

<sup>361</sup> DSS XVI.I, pp. 349-350.

<sup>362</sup> MM, Notebook, Dec. 1902, p. 22.

<sup>363</sup> MM, Diary 3, 12 June 1903, p. 96.

<sup>364</sup> MM, Diary 3, 30 June 1903, p. 96.

<sup>365</sup> MM, Diary 3, 27 Sept. 1903, p. 97.

And also the last entry made in her own handwriting in her diary concerned the new house: *Today, I was able to pay the second installment. Thanks be to God.*<sup>366</sup>

From then on, Mother Mary wrote only a few brief words in her notebook; her eyesight was too poor. However, she continued to dictate the important events to one of the sisters until shortly before her death. *As a Christmas gift, I got a 'shot of flame' in the other eye and, although I see well again otherwise, I have to give up reading and writing. They say that there is a cataract developing in the one eye and, in order to see well again. I will have to have an operation in a few years' time: May God's holy will be done in everything!*<sup>367</sup>

It was in this year, too, that she wrote her well-known Testament in Italian:

*I hope in all humility  
that my good sisters will pray much for me,  
and that they will continue  
to strive earnestly for their own sanctification,  
always intent on doing real good to their neighbor  
and adhering to the spirit of the Founder  
of the Society of the Divine Savior.*<sup>368</sup>

Mother Mary still had one last, unfulfilled desire: that the house in Rome be recognized as the Motherhouse of the Congregation. She had waited patiently for this for a long time. Finally, in November 1904, she wrote in her diary: *Today I was called, together with the novice mistress, S. Bonaventura, to the Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for Religious, His Eminence Cardinal Ferrata – a great grace! His Eminence spoke French throughout. He examined everything thoroughly*

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<sup>366</sup> MM, Diary 3, 10 Oct. 1903, p. 97.

<sup>367</sup> MM, Diary 3, 24 Dec. 1903, p. 98.

<sup>368</sup> MM, Testament, 4 Aug. 1903, in ASDS.

and concluded very graciously by saying: 'I also have to thank you. It is now officially recognized by the Church that you are permanently in Rome, and the novitiate as well.'<sup>369</sup>

Then Rev. Father came twice and spoke to each sister individually. May these many days of grace with the holy retreat close with a grateful, humble attitude. Magnificat!<sup>370</sup>

The Rescript for the canonical erection of the Motherhouse and novitiate in Rome, given in the Holy Father's name, was finally issued on (November) 10.<sup>371</sup> Toward the middle of November, the representative of the Cardinal Vicar, His Excellency Faberi, came to examine the Motherhouse and novitiate. His Excellency was very satisfied with everything.<sup>372</sup>

On November 21 (1904), Rev. Father came for the investment ceremony. ... On the same day, three tightly packed wagons, with furniture, luggage, etc., arrived from Tivoli. They rattled up to the house, each with four horses, while Rev. Father was still preaching the sermon.<sup>373</sup> The novices came also and, with burning candles, entered the new novitiate that evening.<sup>374</sup>

How much times had changed can be learned from a letter to Sister Apollonia: *Things have now changed, my dear. Sometimes twenty letters arrive here on one day and need a reply. Since our Congregation has grown, our spirit of sacrifice must also grow and a true interior love must unite us closely, so that no mistrust and no resentment can take root among us.*<sup>375</sup>

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<sup>369</sup> MM, Diary 3, 8 Nov. 1904, p. 106.

<sup>370</sup> MM, Diary 3, 9 Nov. 1904, p. 106.

<sup>371</sup> MM, Diary 3, 10 Nov. 1904, p. 106.

<sup>372</sup> MM, Diary 3, 19 Nov. 1904, p. 106.

<sup>373</sup> MM, Diary 3, 21 Nov. 1904, p. 107.

<sup>374</sup> MM, Diary 3, 21 Nov. 1904, p. 107.

<sup>375</sup> MM, letter to S. Viktoria Steuer, 7 Dec. 1904, in ASDS.

And to Fr. Bonaventura went her request: *Daily classes for all: languages, music, drawing, knitting, etc. Isn't it time now for us to present ourselves more courageously? ...*<sup>376</sup>

But Mother Mary herself could not do this in her state of health; rather, she had to take care of herself. Her eye trouble had improved a little, thanks to the doctor's help. *It is gradually getting better*, she dictated to her secretary. And another time she herself wrote in large letters: *I can write a little in large letters, but I cannot read.*<sup>377</sup> Fr. Bonaventura advised her to have letters from the sisters read to her only by an older and discreet sister.<sup>378</sup>

In July, the visitation prescribed by Pope Pius X for all religious houses in Rome took place at the Motherhouse of the Sisters at Salita Sant'Onofrio. This task was entrusted by the Cardinal Vicar to Fr. Thomas Esser, O.P., a consultor of the Congregation for Bishops and Regulars, who was a member of the Sacred Office for Apostolic Visitations. He carried out his task very thoroughly.

Father Esser found, above all, that the purpose which Fr. Jordan had given the sisters was too diversified. He wanted to limit it to the education of girls. He, therefore, asked the Cardinal Vicar to change the Constitutions given to the Sisters by Fr. Jordan accordingly. After this, a General Chapter of the Sisters was to be held with Fr. Esser as its appointed president, in order that the renewal begun in the visitation could be completed. Further, he demanded a change of administration, as this 'from the beginning has always been in the hand of a woman without heart and with little sense.' The Cardinal Vicar found Fr. Esser's suggestions to be good and gave the requested authorization to call a General Chapter of the Sisters. Fr. Esser wanted to take further steps right away, but Mother Mary had left on the evening of

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<sup>376</sup> MM, letter to Fr. Lüthen, 25 Feb. 1905, in APS-E. 912.

<sup>377</sup> MM, dictation to Rev. Father, 16 Jan. 1904, in APS-E. 724; MM, letter to Fr. Pan-cratius Pfeiffer, 23 Jan. 1904, in APS-E. 727.

<sup>378</sup> Fr. Lüthen, letter to MM, 25 Oct. 1904, in APS-G. 32.

the day on which the visitation ended for Belgium where the Founder also was at that time.

In the meantime, the zealous Visitor insisted that the General Chapter should be held as soon as possible. On the last day of August, Mother Mary sent out from Drognens, Switzerland, the letter convoking the General Chapter, to begin on December 1, 1905.

By the middle of September, Fr. Jordan was in Rome again. He was naturally against limiting the purpose of the sisters in such a one-sided manner. All were agreed on the fact that it was not the affair of a visitor to alter the purpose of a foundation. But no one quite knew how to make this clear to the visitor.

Finally, the General Procurator, Fr. Pancratius Pfeiffer, took courage and met with Fr. Esser without the knowledge of the others. Fr. Esser simply turned him away. At this, Fr. Pancratius went to the Cardinal Vicar, explained the dispute to him and managed to make the Cardinal understand his concern correctly. He decided that Fr. Jordan, as founder of the sisters, was also responsible for a change in the purpose. Father Jordan was happy about the turn of events brought about by the courageous General Procurator. He left the purpose as it was, except for the restriction in regard to nursing in public hospitals that was wanted by the Cardinal Vicar.<sup>379</sup>

Mother Mary was away on visitation until September 5, and in November there was a retreat in the Motherhouse. She noted:

1) *In spite of all misunderstanding and ingratitude, one must always go ahead doing one's duty with joy for Jesus alone.*

2) *The best thing I can do for souls is to remain at my place – in order to suffer and to carry out my duty as always.*

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<sup>379</sup> MM, Diary 3, July 1905, pp. 113/114; 10 Sept. 1905, p. 115; 3 Oct. 1905, p. 115; 22 Oct. 1905, p. 115; DSS XVI.II, pp. 446-448, 710-723.

*Nov. 13 – Whoever does not meditate will never reach true piety, in spite of all one's prayer and practices of piety; (If you do not feel right before God – meditate, and you will find joy and holy zeal again; Fr. Etelbertus.)*

*Third day – If it is true, that I will not live much longer, I must work so much the more with zeal and holy joy – carry on to the end.*

*Sixth Day – Everything that is asked of me must make me happier and fill me with more fruitful zeal. Indecision brings unhappiness – only they are happy who are totally decisive, firm and resolute!*

*Seventh Day – Remain at peace there were you are.<sup>380</sup>*

The Chapter began on December 1, and Mother Mary noted: *After the six sisters from America, two from Switzerland, two from Vienna and one from Torri had already been here a few days, Father Esser, the authorized ecclesiastical delegate, opened the First General Chapter this morning with the Veni Sancte Spiritus, sung in the house chapel.<sup>381</sup>*

The minutes of the First General Chapter tell us: “Then, the Rev. Delegate and President gave Reverend Mother, in the name of His Eminence the Cardinal Vicar, some indications to resign from her office, since according to Church regulations, she could no longer be Superior General and, therefore, could also not be re-elected. She would surely be longing for a rest after so many years of exacting activity full of worries and, her spiritual daughters would also wish this for her with all their heart.

“Reverend Mother then stood up, and very calmly agreeing with the Rev. Delegate, she thanked the sisters for the goodness, filial love and affection they had shown toward her. She resigned from her office,

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<sup>380</sup> MM, Notebook, 1905, pp. 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9.

<sup>381</sup> MM, Diary 3, 1 Dec. 1905, p. 116.

and giving her health and age as the reason and pointing also to the required submission to the Church, she firmly and strongly expressed the request not to be re-elected. Rev. Father Delegate again confirmed this and ordered the election of another sister as superior general. He added the remark that, in case a sister would be elected who does not meet the required conditions, one could write: 'I vote for Sister N.', or 'I wish Sister N. as Superior General'. He then gave directions to proceed with the vote for the new superior general.

"The thought that they should now, so suddenly, lose her who for so many years had been their good Mother – and the first one at that, the foundress as it were – filled many an eye with tears. Yet, the election was undertaken with courage and confidence in God. The first ballot showed: Sister Mary of the Apostles: 8 votes; S. Ambrosia: 7; S. Scholastica: 5; and S. Bonaventura 1 vote.

"Sister Ambrosia then rose, asked to speak and inquired whether it really was impossible to re-elect Rev. Mother. The Rev. Fr. Delegate once again explained the reasons against this. He also said that a re-election would certainly make an approbation more difficult and that His Eminence, the Cardinal Vicar would hardly approve a re-election if this should take place. However, S. Ambrosia renewed her appeal with warm and stirring words so that the sisters were encouraged to re-elect Rev. Mother with a unanimous vote. Among other things, she said that, if the vote were not confirmed by the Church, at least we Sisters would not take upon ourselves the shame of having thrown out Reverend Mother.

"Some other sisters supported these statements and also directed attention to the fact that, in regard to the administration of the Congregation, which was the main point, there had been no complaint up to then – and this the capitulars themselves could confirm – that, on the contrary, the Congregation was progressing well, even if slowly, under the very careful and wise administration of Reverend Mother who had never acted independently, but had always followed good advice.

“Thereupon, a second ballot was taken by which, thank God! Mother Mary of the Apostles was unanimously elected superior general (S. Bonaventura received one vote). Now there was great joy, not only because we had Reverend Mother back, but also because the sisters so unanimously and firmly showed their good spirit and their love for the Congregation.”<sup>382</sup>

After this, the councillors were elected and a commissary was designated for the USA and Assam as an intermediate authority. After the elections, the change regarding the apostolic purpose, as it had been submitted to the Cardinal Vicar by Fr. Jordan was accepted (i.e. the sisters now required permission of the Holy See each time to accept nursing in public hospitals). On December 6, the Chapter was closed.<sup>383</sup>

The Cardinal Vicar approved the election of Mother Mary, and on December 8, the capitulars were received in audience by the Holy Father Pius X.

After that, “Mother Mary provided for the election of the superiors”; also the Motherhouse received a local superior.<sup>384</sup>

At the end of the year, Fr. Bonaventura asked Mother Mary not to send him any more letters. Only in extraordinary affairs would he, “by order of Reverend Father,” still give advice.<sup>385</sup> Father Pancratius continued to be the helper to whom Mother Mary could always turn for advice, and Father Jordan continued to have the final decisive word.<sup>386</sup>

The Apostolic Visitor of the Fathers, Fr. Antonio Intreccialagli, O.C.D., was appointed visitor also for the sisters, in the place of Father Esser. He came to the Motherhouse on May 6, and immediately

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<sup>382</sup> Minutes, 1<sup>st</sup> General Chapter, 1-6 Dec. 1905, in ASDS.

<sup>383</sup> Minutes, Chapter, 1905.

<sup>384</sup> MM, Diary 3, 8 Dec. 1905, p. 117.

<sup>385</sup> Fr. Lüthen, letter to MM, 31 Dec. 1905, in APS-G. 32.

<sup>386</sup> DSS XVI.II, p. 730.

asked for a report from the superior which was to be signed also by the sisters. Further, each sister was to write a confidential report on whether she was happy, how she was living, and which difficulties she encountered.<sup>387</sup>

In 1906, Father Jordan had to suffer much from press attacks on the Society initiated by its own members; it was a relief for him that no special burdens came to him on the part of the sisters during that year.

In spite of her increasing asthma, Mother Mary set out once more at this time to visit the sisters in Austria-Hungary. Sister Scholastica spent some time at home after the General Chapter and wanted to collect for the mission in Assam. She encountered there the press attack made in the Augsburg Evening Newspaper. She asked: "... how should one act? In our Society, one really faces severe tests of faith and fidelity. But I think that, with God, the superiors and the Constitutions, all we be well. How much one has to hear and yet find one's way with God's grace."<sup>388</sup>

This period places a great burden on Mother Mary's health. On February 19, exactly on her 73<sup>rd</sup> birthday, *I had a nighttime asthma attack for the first time; I was also quite ill in mind and heart because the American sisters whom I had destined for Asia were unable to come. After six weeks, on April 1, the same condition recurred, but less severely. Everything as the Divine Savior wills it! No one lives longer than God wills. After these two occurrences, it can also stop again completely. Now I am well again.* ...<sup>389</sup>

The sisters had their annual retreat in October. Mother Mary noted down the retreat master's suggestions and concluded with: *Like a child*

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<sup>387</sup> MM, Diary 3, 16 May 1906, p. 120 and 27 Dec. 1906, p. 122; General Secretary and MM, circular letter to all houses, 30 May 1906, in AGS.

<sup>388</sup> S. Scholastica Hopfenmüller, letter to FJ, 15 Feb. 1906, in APS-E. 939; DSS XVI.II, p. 747.

<sup>389</sup> MM, Diary 3, 1 May 1906, p. 120.

*in learning to walk, falls and gets up again; - like the child, so also must the sisters; often consider their beautiful name: 'Reverend Sisters'.<sup>390</sup>*

*On December 21, ... I suddenly became ill, she dictated later on, I received the Last Anointing. Reverend Father, as well as all the first Rev. Father's, S.D.S., and also Rev. Fr. Antonio di Gesù assisted me. After eight days, well again. Everything for the glory of God.<sup>391</sup>*

In 1907, Mother Mary's health continued to give cause for concern. In May, Father Jordan wrote a short greeting: *Before my departure, I send you my fatherly blessing and greet you and all spiritual daughters in Christ. May the Lord grant you good health again! I ask for your prayers.<sup>392</sup>*

Mother Mary continued to dictate short entries in the Diary up to July 30. After that, events were noted later by the secretary.

We read in the novitiate chronicles of September of that year: "Due to the illness of Reverend Mother, the feast of the Holy Name of Mary could not be celebrated as joyfully as in other years. However, dear Rev. Mother was present for the congratulations, which were kept short; but she was quite cheerful and spoke some encouraging words about peace and joy. Dear Rev. Father also spoke of love and of steadfast fidelity to the first superiors and to the Church. This would bring God's blessing upon our undertakings, and through this we would lead many souls to the dear Savior. ...<sup>393</sup>

On November 3, Father Jordan came for investment and to receive the vows. "Dear Rev. Mother was quite ill, but she attended the ceremony in the chapel with serenity. For the first time and surely with a heavy heart, she let S. Bonaventura, the novice mistress, hand the religious habits to Rev. Father. Afterwards, Reverend Father spent

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<sup>390</sup> MM, Notebook 1906, 14 Oct. 1906, pp. 3-4.

<sup>391</sup> MM, Diary 3, 21 Dec. 1906, p. 122.

<sup>392</sup> FJ, letter to MM, 24 May 1907; (cf. DSS X, No. 871).

<sup>393</sup> Novitiate Chronicles Rome, 1904-1912, pp. 25-26, in ASDS-AU.

quite some time with her in the upper parlor and gave her various encouraging news about our dear Congregation. Her pale countenance had the expression of complete calm, even of profound happiness, as was frequently the case during her days of suffering, even though she bore many sorrows and deep concerns.”<sup>394</sup>

The entries given by Mother Mary continued until December 14. On December 15, “all communities of our Congregation were notified that dear Rev. Mother was seriously ill and the worst was to be expected; that we are anticipating a sad Christmas. The dear patient began to lose the power of speech. Her brain was seriously affected. She suffered quietly, patiently.”<sup>395</sup>

On December 18, “... Rev. Father Pancratius, who for some days already made frequent visits to the dear patient on behalf of Reverend Father and Founder, transmitted to her the blessing of the Holy Father Pius X, which we had requested for her. She understood, smiled and said: How beautiful. Thank you!”<sup>396</sup>

“Upon our request, we received permission ... to have exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in our chapel also today. The intention: for our dear dying Reverend Mother. From 10 o'clock in the morning till 6 o'clock in the evening, we changed off storming the Divine Savior to direct everything according to His will, for the good of the heroically suffering dear Reverend Mother as well as for the good of her deeply sorrowing spiritual daughters and for our entire Congregation ... Rev. Father Pancratius is with us daily since then, even at night, often at the bedside or nearby.”<sup>397</sup>

December 23- “This evening, between 5 and 6 o'clock, Rev. Fr. Pancratius gave the beloved patient Holy Communion for the last time in

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<sup>394</sup> MM, Diary 4, 3 Nov. 1907, p. 7.

<sup>395</sup> MM, Diary 4, 15 Dec. 1907, pp. 11-12.

<sup>396</sup> MM, Diary 4, 18 Dec. 1907, p. 12.

<sup>397</sup> MM, Diary 4, 21 Dec. 1907, pp. 12-13

a small particle, as he feared she would have difficulty in swallowing an entire host, due to the sore throat brought on by the meningitis. When asked by Rev. Father, she had indicated that she wished to receive Holy Communion, and she received it with touching recollection. At the priest's 'Domine, non sum dignus,' she struck her breast which indicated, to everyone's joy, that she understood well."<sup>398</sup>

During these days, a number of letters were exchanged between Fanny von Böselager at Myllendonk and the sisters in Rome, in order to keep Mother Mary's family informed regarding her condition.<sup>399</sup>

December 24 - "... Since this afternoon, the dear patient has slept almost continuously, unusual for her. In the evening, about 9 o'clock, she became very quiet. We prayed much and recited ejaculations aloud for her. She listened with much pleasure – one could see it from the peaceful expression on her face –. At a quarter to twelve Rev. Father left the dear dying Mother – without realizing (the moment); a few sisters remained with her, the others gathered in the chapel."<sup>400</sup>

Sister Bonaventura Zenker tells about Mother Mary's last hours in the novitiate chronicle:

"Before the midnight Mass I said to her: 'Reverend Mother, it is almost time for the Christmas Mass; we shall offer Holy Mass and Communion for you,' to which she responded with a sound, as if saying 'yes'. I went, prepared myself for Holy Communion before Mass, attended the first Holy Mass until the last Gospel so that I could then go to relieve S. Johanna. As I came into the sick room, S. Filomena came and said: Reverend Mother is dying. She went to the chapel, I to the bedside. Together we said some ejaculations out loud for her. I still called: 'Reverend Mother, pray also for us sisters!' There was still a glance, a

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<sup>398</sup> MM, Diary 4, 23 Dec. 1907, pp. 13-14.

<sup>399</sup> Fanny v. Böselager- v.Ww., letter to S. Elisabeth Albertzki, 9 Dec. 1907 and 17 Dec. 1907, in ASDS.

<sup>400</sup> MM, Diary 4, 24 Dec. 1907, pp. 14-15.

breath, and her noble heart had beaten its last; our mother had left us. She had gone to her dear Jesus, for whom she had made such great sacrifices, and for whose interests she had worked, suffered and fought. May Jesus reward her for everything she has done also for us. - We now stand as orphans around her bed.”<sup>401</sup>

“Toward 11 o’clock in the morning, Rev. Father and Founder came with Fr. Bonaventura ... Rev. Fr. Pancratius had already paid tearful respects to her remains earlier in the morning.”<sup>402</sup>

“At noon, twelve death notices were sent out by telegram. Among them was one to the eldest sister of the dear deceased at Castle Mylendonk, the other eleven were sent to the houses of the Congregation.”<sup>403</sup>

December 26 - “The body was placed in the coffin in the afternoon ... in the presence of Rev. Fr. Pancratius; it was then brought to the German cemetery. - There was continuous heavy rain; no grave was as yet dug. The body ... was accompanied to the chapel of Our Lady where, thanks be to God, Rev. Fr. Bonaventura with Reverend Father and several others of the first SDS members had just gathered.”<sup>404</sup>

December 27 - “... All of us went once more to the chapel where the body lay ... the midday cannon shot was fired, the bells rang the Angelus, and during this same time, our dear Mother, also in body, was separated from us.”<sup>405</sup>

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<sup>401</sup> Novitiate Chronicles, Rome, 1904-1912, pp. 28-29.

<sup>402</sup> MM, Diary 4, 25 Dec. 1907, p. 16.

<sup>403</sup> MM, Diary 4, 25 Dec. 1907, p. 17.

<sup>404</sup> MM, Diary 4, 26 Dec. 1907, p. 17-18.

<sup>405</sup> MM, Diary 4, 27 Dec. 1907, pp. 18-19.

# Father Francis and Mother Mary, Models and Intercessors

The accomplishments of important persons do not end with their death. Their life can be an inspiration, their prayers a support for those of a like mind.

After Mother Mary's and Father Jordan's death, both religious congregations grew and spread out. Sisters, fathers and brothers committed themselves everywhere to the glory of God and the salvation of others, so that all "come to know you, O God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent" (Jn 17:3).

Mother Mary's process of Beatification was introduced in December 1943. In May 1952, her remains were transferred from the Campo Santo cemetery to the Motherhouse, where, in the 'Mother Mary Chapel', she again took her place at the center of the sisters' community at the Motherhouse in Rome. With the approval of Pope Pius XII, the Apostolic Process could follow in March 1955.

At the Beatification ceremony on October 13, 1968 (the very date on which, 83 years previously, Father Jordan had been obliged to give a written renunciation of the direction of the first Sisters' Community), Pope Paul VI said:

We admire two aspects in the life of Blessed Mary: apostolate and mission. ... She made apostolate her life objective. It was the reason for her total dedication to Christ's cause in heroic self-abnegation. Apostolate is also expressed in her striving toward a life lived courageously according to the Gospel in missionary service, an attitude that is so up-to-date at the present time. ... she understood intuitively that the mission field is not limited to foreign missions, but can also be found within Christian countries and their social structures. ... Her courageous trust in God's providence

bore ... fruit. ... At this point, we cannot overlook the name of a German priest who was an inspiration and a teacher for Blessed Mary of the Apostles, Father Francis Mary of the Cross Jordan, Founder of the Salvatorians. ...<sup>406</sup>

In Father Jordan's *Spiritual Diary*, the most frequent word is **Trust**. ...  
*How happy will I be if I trust God for then his providence will not fail me in my activity, and he will avert the dangers before I fall into them.*  
...<sup>407</sup>

Trusting in God, Mother Mary also mastered her life, and we, too, may depend on God's help, for *the more trust one has, the more one participates in the omnipotence of God.*<sup>408</sup>

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<sup>406</sup> Salvator Mundi Informations, 13 Oct. 1968, No. 60.

<sup>407</sup> FJ, *Spiritual Diary*, I, p. 45, in AGS.

<sup>408</sup> MM, Notebook, 21-25 Jan. 1892, p. 16.

# Abbreviations

## Archives

AGS	General Archives, SDS-M, Rome
APS	Postulation Archives, SDS-M, Rome
ASDS	General Archives, SDS-W, Rome
ASDS-AU	Provincial Archives, SDS-W, Austrian Province
AAAd. Perp.	General Archives Perpetual Adoration, Brussels (Be)
AD-Me	Diocesan Archives Mechelen (Be)
AOFM. Con. Br.	Archives of Conventuals, Brussels (Be)
AOSB-Lg	Archives of Benedictines, Liège (Be)
ASCRJ	General Archives Sacred Heart, Rome
ACMG	State Archives Mönchengladbach (Ge)
APNk	Parish Archives Neuwerk (Ge)

## Books, References, Other Writings

DSS	Documenta et Studia Salvatoriana (SDS-M)
SHS	Studia de Historia Salvatoriana (SDS-W)
Chr. N.	Chronicles Notes, edition of the Diary of Mother Mary by S. Avellina Tietz, SDS, 1970
L. Sk.	Life Sketch, Mother Mary
RL	Rule of Life
Test.	Testimony of witnesses for Beatification

## Titles, Persons, Countries, etc.

ATS	Apostolic Teaching Society
CTS	Catholic Teaching Society
FJ	Father Jordan
MM	Mother Mary
v. Ww.	von Wüllenweber

E. Lefort- v. Ww.	Elise Lefort- von Wüllenweber
T. v. Dwingelo	Therese von Dwingelo
B	Belgium
D	Germany
NL	Netherlands
F	France
I	Italy
CH	Switzerland
Art.	Article
n.d.	no date
No.	number

# STUDIA DE HISTORIA SALVATORIANA

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