



COMMUNIO IN CHRISTO

*Our Life -
Our Works*

Digital Spiritual Letter No. 30, October 17th 2024

Theme:

CHARITY

SEAT IN LIFE

The chapter on “Charity”, written by Mother Marie Therese as a guiding principle for following Christ, was completed on 31 December 1984, just over three weeks after the founding of the Ordo Communio in Christo on 8 December 1984, which was her final foundation.

By this time, the first community of priests, sisters, and lay people had already taken residence in the Motherhouse. Her guiding motto, since the first foundation in 1977, had been: “Love of neighbor is



living in God.” This motto is embodied in the Latin initials engraved on the cross worn by each member: “CEVID – Caritas est vivere in Deo.” From the outset, Mother Marie Therese seamlessly wove together deep spirituality and active charity. For her, all humanity was part of God’s family. Seeing the divine in every soul, she loved each person with the same profound tenderness-without distinction, without favoritism, and free from the bias of sympathy or antipathy.

Her unwavering example of love in action should serve as an enduring source of inspiration and motivation, particularly in these challenging times.

With warm regards and in shared prayer,

Jaison Thazhathil, Superior General



REFLECTION OF MOTHER MARIE THERESE

December 31st 1984

Charity

The Commandment – The will of God

The fourth vow

Serve the one who suffers, who doubts, who lives in fear.

Love the one who seems disagreeable, whose friendship you do not care for.

Seek contact with the one who knows anything better than you. Do not be jealous.

Do not think yourself better than someone else.

Bend down to the misery of our time, so that the will of God may be fulfilled.

Love for God and love for one's neighbour are forgotten commandments that are more and more seldom revived. We groan with the burden of a commandment we are supposed to obey, and a misinterpretation makes us tired, stubborn and hard.

We want the practically lived Gospel.

We must have great respect for God in man.

In meeting human beings we meet God. If someone is in need it is God who is asking for help.

There is only one sin:

not to love,

to go our own ways.

We live in community.

In the community we practise the perfect love.



That means:

I endure the other person,

I am always cheerful,

I accept his faults,

I particularly love the disagreeable person,

I am helpful,

I look after the other person,

I have respect for everybody,

I try to love everybody equally dearly.

Surrender yourself to Christ, who will receive you when you wish to open yourself in love for the commandment of love.

God is love.

He gives Himself away in perfection.

He gives us His grace and the strength we need to love our neighbour as He loves us.

Who is my neighbour?

All human beings are my neighbours, without exception.

Our knowledge of heaven comes from our faith. We know the taste of total devotion, of humility, of hope and of love.

We experience the community of people living together,

of reciprocal help,

of forgiving,

of sharing things.

We endure suffering – for the sake of love.

We endure injustice – for the sake of love.

We do not condemn a person – for the sake of love.

God has given us the highest good. He became a human being. He showed us the way, he gave his love for us.



We, too, must give our life for the fellow-being – as a testimony to our love for God.

He who loves, regardless of person or merits, without reward or recompense, simply for the sake of love, confirms his having been born out of God and having recognized him.

How do I bear witness?

For instance, an addict knocks on your door. He may be an alcoholic or a drug addict. He has lost his family and is left alone, without money or dwelling. What can we do? Help. But how? By having advisory talks, giving material help, letting our life serve as example of a way to God. The main point is giving everybody another chance, always remembering the mercy God granted to us.

We don't even have to give one another as much merciful patience as God offers to us. We simply have to do what we can for our neighbour, in total unselfishness. That is what we have to do.

In every community the members indulge in a multitude of egoistic pursuits.

The worst evil is self-love, the enthusiasm for oneself.

When charity is alive in a community it is easy to love one another. Resembling Jesus means to love one's neighbour with all one's heart, without expecting a reward but possibly even ingratitude and indifference instead, and to experience people's using one's friendship in order to betray it. Loving that way means being like to Jesus.

We must overcome our sensitivity.

We have become oversensitive.

We quickly reach the end of our tether.

We are outraged if someone cheats us.

We get used to living with a lie.

What does the Communio in Christo intend to do?



We want to live as Jesus lived:

Amidst the people.

We are always ready to approach another person, to overcome human limitations, to start anew or to continue from where the other person ceases to love.

„If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‚Go in peace, be warmed and filled,‘ without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit?“ (Jc 2,15-16)

With us, especially, there is a need for constant admonition to eliminate the distance between what we are and what we pretend to be.

CHARITY IN THE COMMUNIO IN CHRISTO!

The fulfilment of the commandment.

To love all human beings as God loves us.

Community in Christ so that his kingdom may be realized.

A people on the march, in love.

LET US TAKE AS AN EXAMPLE:

THE LIFE OF JESUS!

Taken from: Mother Marie Therese, *The Imitation of Christ as the Rule*, Pelplin, Bernardinum, 2008, pp. 56 ff



COMMENTARY

By Br. Venance K. Kapita, fc, from Tanzania

Many years ago, during my formation, my novice master shared a deeply moving story: a true account of a Peruvian mother whose son had fallen into a pitiful state. He had drunkenly passed out beside the road, covered in his vomit and excrement, emitting a foul stench. Though the people who passed him knew where he lived, none dared to approach him due to his condition. However, when his mother was called, she arrived without hesitation. Amid her son's filth, she embraced him with the tenderness only a mother could offer. She did not rebuke him, nor did she express any disgust. Instead, she gently kissed him and said, "My son Roger, let us go home." That moment of pure, selfless love, untainted by judgment or revulsion, stands as a profound reflection of the unconditional love of God, an extraordinary love that we so often fail to recognise in our daily experiences.

This mother's charity and tenderness call us to reflect deeply on God's love for us. Thomas à Kempis captured this well in *The Imitation of Christ*, writing: "Nothing is sweeter than love, nothing higher, nothing stronger... for it feels no burden and desiring to do more" (Book III, Ch. 5). What is it that enables such capacity for love, a love that transcends the natural human tendency toward self-preservation or disdain? More importantly, what can we do to open our hearts to such grace, allowing it to operate within us? One of the ways we can begin to assimilate such extraordinary love is by silently gazing upon the Cross in prayer. In this gaze, we encounter the profound mystery of Christ, who humbled himself to death, absorbing all the brokenness and suffering of humanity with infinite love. The Cross is not just a symbol of suffering; it is a revelation of divine charity, a pure and gratuitous act of love born from a heart in deep communion with God. To stand in *Communio in Christo* allows this love to expand our hearts, moving beyond the narrow confines of ego and self-interest. It is to see the world through the panoramic vision of Christ's love, which reaches into the darkest, most desolate corners of human existence and transforms it.

Pope Benedict XVI wrote in *Deus Caritas Est* that encountering Christ „gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction“ (1). It is impossible to experience Christ and remain unchanged indeed. A life of prayer, contemplation, and self-denial is essential to grow in intimacy with God and be perfected in love. In our world, which so often emphasises self-centeredness, what can be described as a culture of "I, me, and myself" such a path may seem countercultural. Nevertheless, it is precisely this path that leads to true life. It is a journey from self-love and



control to the sweet surrender of trust in God despite our unworthiness. The spiritual journey towards selflessness and perfect charity is a gradual one. It is a gradual and often painful process, demanding patience and humility. Any genuine metanoia, a change of heart, is costly, but the fruits of such transformation are priceless. The love of Christ poured out on the Cross opens up new possibilities for us to respond with love in all situations, in solidarity with suffering humanity. We are invited to shift from a natural tendency to focus on ourselves to begin perceiving the needs of others and responding with compassion.

Through silence, contemplation, and prayer, our hearts gradually expand, allowing us to become conduits of divine love, peace, and joy. This state of pure love and being is what enabled the Peruvian mother to embrace her drunken son with tenderness, without judgment or shame. The same love inspired Mother Marie Therese, foundress of the Ordo Communio in Christo, to live by the mantra, "Love of neighbour is living in God." For her, this was not just a guiding principle but the very essence of the Gospel, opening new paths toward living in harmony with God and all creation. This journey is a daily invitation to surrender, let go of our ego, and live in the grace of divine love. It calls us to transition from navel-gazing to seeing the world through the eyes of Christ. As we progress in this journey, we, too, can become sacraments of God's love and presence like Mother Marie Therese, radiating His healing power in a restless and wounded world. May we embrace this call and, like the Peruvian mother, extend love to all who cross our paths, no matter how broken or lost they may seem. In doing so, we reflect the boundless mercy of the One who first loved us.

Br. Venance K. Kapita, fc



Br. Venance K. Kapita, fc, is a Brother of Charity from Tanzania who resides in Rome and serves as a local superior of their general house. In his capacity, he is also an editor of their monthly newsletter, Roma-On-Line. Before these functions, he served as the regional superior of Tanzania and the novice master of their International Novitiate in Nairobi, Kenya. He is a dear friend of Communio in Christo and has planned to attend the 40th Anniversary of their foundation this December in Mechernich, Germany.



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Publisher: Ordo Communio in Christo
Address: Bruchgasse 14, 53894 Mechernich, Germany
Website: www.communio.nrw
E-Mail: info@communio.nrw
Phone: +49-2443 9814823
Fax: +49-2443 9814824

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Editorial: Henri Grüger and Manfred Lang, Agentur ProfiPress, Mechernich/Germany

Layout: Henri Grüger, Agentur ProfiPress, Mechernich/Germany

Coworkers: Sr. Lidwina, Mechernich/Germany

Tilj Puthenveettil, Mechernich/Germany

Hilde Bouschery, Mechernich/Germany

Ewa Bochynek, Mechernich/Germany