



# COMMUNIO IN CHRISTO

*Our Life -  
Our Works*

Digital Spiritual Letter No. 33, May 8th 2025

*Theme:*

## The Imitation of Christ

### SEAT IN LIFE

**Dear Readers,**

The book “The Imitation of Christ – The Rule of the Order Communio in Christo as a way for all” by the Dutch mystic Mother Marie Therese is a modern spiritual work that reflects the timeless wisdom of the German mystic Thomas à Kempis expressed in his book bearing the same title “The Imitation of Christ”. Written in the 20th century, her book is a profound guide for Christians seeking a deeper spiritual life. Like the work of Thomas à Kempis, which has guided the faithful for centuries, Mother Marie Therese calls on readers to follow Christ through both contemplation and active service, encouraging them to live out their faith in love and service to others. Her spirituality, rooted in personal encounters with God and with others, emphasizes that following Christ is not only about personal holiness but also about engaging with the world. She invites readers to discover Christ in their everyday lives and to cultivate a balance between deep spiritual connection and merciful action.



The chapter “The Imitation of Christ” from 1985 is an example of this approach, which inspires both meditation and action. Through her work, Mother Marie Therese offers a contemporary guide for all who wish to walk a close path with Christ in today’s world, uniting the rich spiritual heritage with the practical demands of modern life.

With Easter blessings,

Jaison Thazhathil, Superior General



# REFLECTION OF MOTHER MARIE THERESE

## THE IMITATION OF CHRIST

January 3rd 1985

*The commandment of Christ*

*Love as life*

In the words of Jesus our whole life is outlined: „A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you.“ Jesus loved us to the point of self-sacrifice.

Affection in the sense of emotional life is never under our control. That kind of love is dominated by sensuality. But here Christ is speaking of the kind of love that is subject to will and self-control. The love that Jesus means is the virtuous love that is not infatuation but a lasting affection and devotion for the sake of love.

The example of this kind of love is Jesus himself, is God.

He loved us because we were sinners. He endured our abuses and went to his death because he loved us so much. Self-sacrifice is the love he is talking of.

When somebody insults or defames us or breaks up our friendship, we must not say: „I will love you again if you change“, but we must be the creative power for the improvement of the other person through this Imitation of Christ.

Let us consider Jesus when he gave Peter – who was denying him – his love, thus changing him.

Jesus said: „Love your enemies!“

The thing is to expect nothing and yet to go on loving when we meet with persecution, hostility, hatred.

Love proves to be unselfish only by enduring.

Unselfish love makes itself dependent not on emotion but on the will.

Jesus is our life.



It shows us how to use – or rather to live – the love coming from our self for the benefit of others.

Such was the life of Jesus and the way he loved while living on earth:

He became possession of another person,

we, too, for the sake of love.

He looked after other people,

we, too, for the sake of love.

He spread love where there was none,

we do, too, for the sake of salvation.

Don't ever think we we are good.

Strive for the good.

Jesus is our example.

Try not to think yourselves better than someone else.

Always remember we have the same faults we criticize in other people.

Jesus showed us how to live a love that should encourage us to live likewise.

Jesus says: Judge not, that you be not judged.



Consider: How could I think someone else dubious and

controversial if I myself have not come to realize my insincerity?

All of that is expression of our arrogance.

All his life Jesus was the unselfish, humble sacrifice of himself.

We have to be like him if we want to live his life for the sake of love.

Never repay hatred with revenge.

It is the excessive respect for ourselves, the protest against any mingling.

Do not ask: How can I become popular?

Do not seek popularity.

Do not deny purpose and aim of your life.

We have been created in God's image.

God had mercy on us.



We all have sinned.

He lived among us in great simplicity.

Nothing indicated his dignity.

In nothing did he distinguish himself from us human beings.

He loved, and that was his life.

He lived the love that completely sacrifices itself.

If we hurt someone we do not like, dislike turns into hatred.

What consequence follows from that example?

He lived among us giving the example of a love that unselfishly loves the one that does not seem likable.

Love your neighbour – that is Imitation.

Who is our neighbour?

The other self

The touchstone

The enemy.

The life of Jesus is the life of the Communio – it is the utmost love that does not obey emotions but the will.

It is the only way by which our love will be a testimony of His love.

*LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR,  
UNSELFISHLY AND WITH DEVOTION.  
LOVE ONE ANOTHER  
AS I LOVED YOU!*

*Taken from: Mother Marie Therese, The Imitation of Christ as the Rule, Pelplin, Bernardinum, 2008, pp. 92 ff*



## COMMENTARY

**By Teresa Swieca from Poland**

Jesus Christ gave his life out of love, and we are to live our love for others – our fellow brothers and sisters – like he did. We ought to be like Jesus, „a creative force for the good of others”. Selfless love does not depend on feelings, but on the will.

Thanks to the willingness to love, we are able to respect others. I am not better than others. I often make similar mistakes that annoy me in others. Jesus says: “Do not judge, so that you will not be judged.” God, the Lord, loves me and has given me free will and understanding.

I am called to consciously show love to my neighbor - even when I am hurt - seeking not to repay evil with evil. He or she may have hurt me, but I will not hurt them in return.

We are able to forgive because we ourselves are not perfect. When sensual love fades, it is time to love with reason, with will, and with charity - to support our fellow human beings and to love wisely. Love within the family, within the community of the Church, should be filled with selflessness. Without it, it falls apart.

It is difficult for us to live out this love - pride gets in our way, as does the division of people into important and unimportant, rich and poor, natives and foreigners, better and worse, and so on. Respect for others without regard to status, and selfless love, are both our calling and our salvation. Sadly, in our minds the following question often lingers: “What do I get out of this? Is it worth it for me?” Time and again, we face the temptation to say: “He or she is not important, so we can be disrespectful, show your superiority, feed your pride.”

Before God, I will stand alone. God will not ask me what my colleague, a stranger, my neighbor, my husband, or my child did to me - but he will ask me what I did to them. This is what the text of Mother Marie Therese reminds me of. I will not be excused if I allow myself to be provoked into hatred or vengeance. I will be judged by the love I showed to my neighbor. Love that is guided by the will, not by emotions, does not permit us to harm others - or even to kill in the name of God, as we see with extremist religious groups. It is always possible to begin anew and change one’s behavior. God forgives, but we do not know the day nor the hour when He will call us to account - so we should not delay in resolving to change to the better.

It is easier to live amid the many injustices people do to one another when we know that God loves us, even though we are sinful. Our actions should be a creative force for others to change and become better. We are called to bring love to the places where it is absent.



Let us offer our love to others - perhaps it will change them. Let us take Mother Marie Therese as our example. In the midst of suffering and pain, persecution and scorn, she lived love through the strength that God granted her.

### **Mrs. Teresa Swieca, Poland**



Teresa Swieca has been a member of the Communio in Christo since 1998. She is responsible for the Communio in Skarszewy in the Pomorskie Voivodeship in Poland. The Motherhouse in Mechernich and the Communio in Christo community are like family to the members and friends from Skarszewy.

Together with the designated Communio priests, Mrs. Teresa Swieca organizes the annual Communio gatherings in Poland, the country with the largest number of Communio members. For many years, she has also facilitated the participation of friends and members from Skarszewy in spiritual retreats held in Częstochowa – regarded as the „spiritual heart“ of

Poland and home to the Black Madonna at the Shrine of Jasna Góra. This pilgrimage is typically combined with a Communio meeting held on site.

Teresa Swieca was also actively engaged in establishing and keeping alive the town-twinning of Mechernich and Skarszewy, which meanwhile grew to be a very fruitful mutual friendship of persons and families from Germany and Poland.

Teresa Swieca has 3 adult children, and two grandchildren: Maya and Klemens. She used to work as a midwife and is now enjoying her retirement.



## Imprint

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

Responsible in the sense of the German press law: P. Rudolf Ammann ISch, Mechernich/  
Germany  
Editorial: Ronald Larmann 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