



COMMUNIO IN CHRISTO

*Our Life -
Our Works*

Digital Spiritual Letter No. 35, August 15 2025

Theme:

The testimony of a common life in love SEAT IN LIFE

Dear readers,

We are pleased to forward to you the August edition of our Spiritual Letter. This time we share with you a chapter from the Rule of the Order dated 17 August 1992 and titled “The testimony of a common life in love”. It is interesting to note that the new Catechism of the



Catholic Church (CCC) which was published a few weeks later, spoke about what Mother Marie Therese had prophetically expressed in her Rule of the Order: It was an appeal to the Church and the society to establish a “civilization of love” – a guiding principle that Pope Francis reaffirmed during a General Audience on 9 September 2020.

Mother Marie Therese’s founding idea – “Love of neighbor is living in God” – reflects the teaching of the CCC that true society is based on love and that selfishness should be overcome. This proves convincingly that the spiritual vision of the foundress Mother Marie Therese did not just benefit her community but was also in harmony with the statements of the Church at the time.

During the Jubilee this year we are pilgrims of hope. Let us stay united in love and prayer so that people can find new hope – especially in our time so plagued by sorrow and wars.

Yours

Jaison Thazhathil, Superior General



REFLECTION OF MOTHER MARIE THERESE

The testimony of a common life in love

August 17 1992

The modern world tends to atheism and unbelief. The development of prosperity has produced egoism. In every respect a distance to God becomes evident.

Man seeks freedom because the present world has become a world of slavery and captivity. You can sense that God wishes to approach our time with special love and kindness.

The message of salvation produces a dynamic effect; faith, however, has got bogged down amidst law statutes. In discussions and conferences a way out is being sought in order to avoid an imminent catastrophe... for the purpose of which, however, certain laws will have to be amended or annulled.

And no-one dares to still believe that only in love everything can change for the better.

As a founder I observe this world and thanks to divine grace I have been able to discern the great sign in the Communio in Christo.

It is an admonishing appeal to the conscience of all.

It is the model for the realization of the Council.

It is the initiative for the spiritual renewal of prayer.

It is the testimony to a common life in love.



What I have noticed and what God has revealed to me is the increasing distance in the communal life of the religious orders in which more time is being spent on spiritual exercises and the observance of the proper attitude and form than on the realization of the love that should radiate outwards so noticeably that the world can be seized and carried by it.



The nobleness of this order moves the Second Vatican Council. I have been requested to interpret my foundation of 8 December 1984 as a religious order and have committed myself to call the Communio in Christo a religious order in accordance with the request of a supreme power, in order that the Second Vatican Council may prove to be a dogmatic one.

God gave me the gift he treasures most: His love, in which everything means salvation and peace.

Since its foundation, the Communio in Christo has been an order of a specific character. For its members there is but one consequence: to live up to that love using the resources and means given to all of us. That is to say: dedicating oneself to God and obeying his will.

Weaknesses we might observe in ourselves should not discourage us. They serve humility and self-knowledge.

Let us carefully watch our life together so that it might not endanger the bonds of the love for one-another we are especially endowed with.

The words of Jesus shall penetrate our hearts: I am leaving you peace as my bequest. I am giving you my peace.

In obedience and poverty we find the realization of the love to which we have committed ourselves.

The world receives the gift of the Communio in Christo, which has only one ideal: to make the love come alive that it has been gifted with. It confirms the truth of Jesus' message and proves his presence in the Church.



All of us bear a heavy responsibility: Success and fruitfulness demand solidarity and love among and for one another any minute of our life.

It is the plan of God to let his presence and love flourish in this world so that we all may come to realize once again that a world without God is a dead world.

The more we open ourselves to the will of God, the more effective the power of love will prove for our time.

We must regain the childlike dependence because relinquishing one's own wishes and observing obedience towards the will of God binds the love to us and we can be true witnesses to his loving kindness.

That is our responsibility: loving one another in Communio, without distrust, without oversensitivity or irritability. In us God's loving kindness must be in evidence, radiant and strong, so that it may be present as truth and peace in Church and world.

So, let us love one another in order that God on earth may become a common act of faith. That is our responsibility.

Taken from: Mother Marie Therese, The Imitation of Christ as the Rule, Pelplin, Bernardinum, 2008, pp. 222 ff



COMMENTARY

By Fr. Peter Omenyi from Nigeria

A testimony is a personal account or statement that shares an individual's experience, often related to their faith, personal growth, or a significant event in their life. It is a way to share how someone's life has been impacted, transformed or influenced by particular experience, person, or circumstance. It is this faith-based testimony that Mother Marie Therese shares on this chapter titled "The Testimony of a Common Life in Love". She observed the catastrophe enveloping the world through atheism and unbelief, materialism and egoism, and she cried out on this reflection 33 years ago admonishing the Church and the world to avert this danger with practical love. This is because love overcomes all things. Love, according to her is the fulcrum of Communio in Christo which can change everything for better when accepted and lived out. A common life in love is a beautiful life as it is the dedication of oneself to God by following his will and obeying his commandments. If you love me, you will keep my commandments (John 14:15).

When founding the Communio in Christo Mother Marie Therese was inspired to put "Love of Neighbor" as the highest sacred bond of commitment for its members. This was the result of her realization that "Love of neighbor is living in God" which until today is the motto of this association. She maintained that God gave her the special gift He treasures most: Love, in which everything means salvation and peace. But often, this love is neglected, abandoned and rejected. It is often replaced by egoism, selfishness and segregations. However, love requires putting the needs and well-being of others before one's own. Love entails sacrifice, responsibility, accountability and commitment. This explains well the mission of Mother Marie Therese: to respond to the missing love that inspired the foundation of Communio in Christo, with the aim of living out in practice the love of God and neighbor, and thus serving the fulfillment of the resolutions of the Second Vatican Council.

Since the foundation of Communio in Christo it has endeavored to fulfil Christ's commandment of love "You must love one another just as I have loved you." By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another (John 13:35). John's admonition to all Christians in his first epistle about love is all encompassing, he advised: "Beloved, let us love one



another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. If God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God but if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us. If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother" (1 John 4:7-12, 20-21). This brotherly love which is a unique and special bond among Christians has animated the life of *Communio in Christo* since its foundation, although not without difficulties.

The commandment of love seems easy in words but often the hardest in praxis especially in a communal life. When people of different backgrounds, upbringing and attitudes live together in a community, the individual differences sometimes can lead to misunderstanding, disappointments, hatred and conflicts. In this case, it becomes increasingly difficult to sincerely bear witness of love in words and deeds without the grace of God.

For this reason, Mother Marie Therese equated love with devotion – totally self-giving and to a cross, which must be daily carried to follow Christ if one wants to live in him and be his disciple. We must carry daily this cross, which may comprise burdens from others and follow Christ, for the cross is the center of the Communion and unity in Christ. To know the Cross is to know that we are saved by the sufferings of Christ; more still, it is to know the love of Christ Who underwent suffering and death in order to save us. The cross of Christ and his love for humanity are inseparable entities.

In living out this testimony of a common life in love, the admonition of Saint Francis de Sales becomes glaring, he said "The everlasting God has in His wisdom foreseen from eternity the cross that He now presents to you as a gift from His inmost heart. This cross He now sends you He has considered with His all-knowing eyes, understood with His divine mind, tested with His wise justice, warmed with loving arms and weighed with His own hands to see that it be not one inch too large and not one ounce too heavy for you. He has blessed it with His holy Name, anointed it with His consolation, taken one last glance at you and your courage, and then sent it to you from heaven, a special greeting from God to you, alms of the all-merciful love of God."

As children of God, we rely on him upon everything in our lives. We put him first and we always seek for his guidance and protection. And whatever difficulty we may encounter in our testimony of love either communally and



individually, let us see it as a cross to carry and follow Jesus, for He who imposes the cross will always give us the strength to carry it. It is by accepting this sacrifice and putting it into practice (and not blocking or running away from it) that our lives become a testimony of unconditional love.

Fr. Peter Omenyi from Nigeria



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