

# *Triumph of the Heart*

THY WILL BE DONE  
ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

*Family of Mary*  
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*“Say a prayer to want to do God’s will and a prayer to know God’s will.”*

*Pope Francis, January 27, 2015*

## *Thy Will Be Done*

*Dear Readers, we pray every day in the Our Father, “Thy will be done”. Yet, we rarely ask what God’s will is in our lives in order to act accordingly. We prefer to decide on our own and to take our lives into our own hands. Could it not be “risky” in the end if God wanted something from us which was not in our hopes or plans? In order to eliminate such unfounded fears and doubts, we would like to consider the theme “Thy will be done” in this issue.*

*B*lessed John Tauler (ca. 1300-1361), a German theologian and mystic, prayed to the Lord for years to send him somebody who could teach him the true spiritual life.

One day, at the church portal, he met a beggar who was barefoot and dressed in rags. Then he heard a voice which said, *“He will teach you.”*

So, Fr. Tauler greeted him, *“Good day, my friend.”*

*“Master,”* the poor man replied, *“I cannot remember ever having a bad day. When I was hungry, I praised God; when it rained or snowed, I praised Him; if somebody was disrespectful to me or chased me away, I glorified my God for it.”*

Fr. Tauler was astonished and wished the beggar good luck.

*“I was never unlucky because I am used to wanting whatever God wants, without reservation. Whatever I run into, be it sweet or bitter, I joyfully accept it from God’s hand as what is best for me. That is what makes me the happiest.”*

*A*fter they had spoken about several other things, Fr. Tauler asked his new teacher what had led him to such a high perfection. *“Silence,”* he answered, *“silence towards man so that I can speak with God, and the union with my beloved Lord.”* This beggar who sought union with the divine will in all the situations of his life was, in all his poverty, richer than the wealthiest person on earth, and in all his trials happier than those who seek their pleasure in the world.

# God is a loving Father

Whether I want to fulfill God's will in my life depends on my image of God and, consequently, my relationship to Him. If I am convinced that God is a loving Father who only wants the best for me, then I may be sure: the realization of His will means the greatest happiness and highest development for me.

In this case, I would gladly learn about His plans for my life. If, however, God does not mean much to me, then neither will His will mean much to me. The one to whom God means nothing finds His will so bothersome that he prefers to ignore it. Just consider the persecution of the prophets in the Old Testament or even those who were responsible for Jesus' death.

The one who believes in an infinitely loving God is also convinced that this loving Father only wants the best for him when he encounters pain or suffering which, at first, he does not understand. He knows from Faith what has to be said in this moment: God never wanted suffering, illness and death, just as He never wanted their cause, sin; yet, He had to allow it because of man's freedom. In His love for us, the God-man took all suffering, illness and even death upon Himself as the Redeemer and gave them saving power through His infinite love.

The same God, who originally did not want suffering, now asks us—like Him and united with Him—to lovingly accept, carry and make a sacrifice, a gift of reparation, from pain, illness and death. What in itself is not divine, any form of suffering, now takes on a coredeeming value when we carry it united with Christ and in His

love. It sanctifies, even divinizes us.

With this background, one can begin to understand how stigmatized expiatory souls like the Italian Teresa Palminota (1896-1934), for example, could be happy when they suffered, aware that they were fulfilling the will of God in this way. *"I spend my paradise here on earth by doing His will. I want to make Him happy, even if the soul is crushed by pain, by trials, by opposition and deprivation ... or also in all the little things that happen each day."*

Once, she asked Jesus why she was happy in spite of her suffering. He responded, *"You are happy because you do what pleases Me. And do you know why you always have the sun in you? Because I am always in you ... because you always fulfill My will."*

The lover desires to be one with the will of the beloved. Therefore, the one who truly loves God tries to handle according to the will of God even in suffering. The Holy Family is an enlightening example for us! Knowing that Redemption could take place only through suffering carried out of love, they accepted without reservation every pain as a mandate and so also from God's hand; and even in the greatest abandonment, they never doubted in the Father's love.

The Father's will played such a central role in Jesus' life that He even said, *"My food is to do the will of the one who sent me"* (Jn 4:34). It was, as such, the source of His vitality to unite His human will in everything with the divine will of His Father, so that the Father's will might be realized.

A true disciple of the Lord, Edith Stein, the holy Carmelite St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, recognized how meaningful God's will was for the happiness of every Christian. *"Doing God's will and not your own, placing all worries and hopes in God's hand, no longer worrying about one's self and one's future, therein lies the freedom and happiness of a child*

*of God. How few of the truly pious, even those willing to make heroic sacrifices, possess it! ... The 'Thy will be done' in its full measure has to be the guiding principle of a Christian's life. It has to rule the day from morning until evening, the course of the year and the whole life. It will also become the Christian's only concern. All other concerns the Lord takes*

*upon Himself. This one concern, however, remains with us throughout our life.”*

Naturally, this must also include the readiness, “*to take everything from the hand of the Father. He alone knows what is good for us. And when from time to time need and deprivation are more appropriate than a comfortable,*

*certain livelihood, or failure and humiliation are better than honor and recognition, then we have to be ready for that as well. Placing all worries and hopes in God’s hand, no longer worrying about one’s self and one’s future, therein lies the freedom and happiness of a child of God.”*

## *How do we recognize God’s will?*

Once we are convinced that it is really best to want *what* God wills, to want it *when* God wills and to want it *as* God wills, then the big question is—How do I recognize God’s will?

That is not as difficult as it might sometimes seem to us. We know very well what God wishes of us. The Old Testament is already full of loving indications, advice, words of wisdom and laws of love for a successful life, starting with the most important one: “*Love the LORD, your God, with your whole heart, and with your whole being, and with your whole strength*” (Dt. 6:5).

Jesus, the incarnate God, revealed to us the Father’s will in His “Good News”—at times in great detail. He even explains to us how we should pray, fast and give alms. It is His will that we love our enemies and see Him in the least of our brothers, and that we trust Him like a child. In the eight Beatitudes, He gives us a recipe for a successful, fulfilling life. He shows us in instructive parables what is truly important as a Christian.

When it comes to personal decisions regarding our lives, nevertheless, God gladly helps us

recognize His will through an experienced spiritual director or confessor. Otherwise, He places a certainty in our hearts in silent prayer as only He can. A particularly sure way to act according to God’s will is when we, out of love for God, obey those who are responsible for us: a child obeys his parents, a priest his bishop, a consecrated soul his superior.

If someone really wants to orientate their life according to the will of God, but does not seem to find an answer to his question, one can console him by saying the following: If you sincerely pray with your whole heart, “*Father, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven!*”, you can be sure that God, in spite of your weakness, will find the means and the way for you to realize His plans in your life.

Today there are so many—also in the Church—who do good, have great initiatives, work hard and yet we still do not experience a renewal of the Spirit. Is the reason perhaps that so many build on their own ideas and activities instead of asking what God’s will is?

## *A fruitful life for the Church and the world!*

That is why, Jesus said to St. Faustina Kowalska, “*Entrust yourself completely to My will saying, ‘Not as I want, but according to Your will, O God, let it be done unto me.’ These words, spoken from the depths of one’s heart,*

*can raise a soul to the summit of sanctity in a short time*” (Diary #1487). That is easy to understand because this interior disposition and openness make it possible for God to realize the holiness that He wants to give us.

For those who seek the will of God, it does not matter what one does because just knowing that he makes God happy gives him a deep peace and the confidence of serving the work of Redemption in the most effective manner.

In 2007, Pope Benedict XVI told seminarians in Rome a story from the life of the African saint Josefine Bakhita in response to the question of a theology student about how a priest can protect himself from striving for a career in the Church. Bakhita, who suffered horrible things in Sudan as a slave, then found the Faith in Italy and later became a nun, served as the porter in her religious community. When she was older, the bishop came to visit the convent; but he did not know the little,

*F*or some people, it becomes very clear what a fruitful effect their seeking the will of God and then acting accordingly had for them. Let us consider, for example, the student Karol Wojtyła. Had he given in to his inner inclination, without asking in prayer what the will of God is, he might have become a famous Polish actor, but never the holy Pope John Paul II, who brought forth such a richness for the Church and the world.

Or Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta—she

elderly African sister. Therefore, he asked her, *‘And what do you do sister?’*

“In her humility, Bakhita answered with a beautiful truth, *‘I do the same thing as you, Your Excellency.’*”

“The bishop asked astounded, *‘What do you mean?’*”

“And Bakhita replied, *‘Your Excellency, I fulfill the will of God. That is what we both want to do. Is it not?’*”

“The bishop and the little nun who could not work anymore did, in very different positions, the same thing: They fulfilled the will of God and thereby inundated the Church with the odor of sanctity.”

loved to teach children as a Loreto Sister. One could not imagine a better school principal. If she did not follow the inner voice which revealed to her the will of God, to leave the convent and take care of the poor, the work of the Missionaries of Charity would not exist today.

In the articles of this issue, we will read further impressive stories testifying to the spiritual fertility in the lives of those who wanted to do only the will of God in their lives.

## *Begin each day anew*

*W*hat if, until now, we never or rarely asked what the will of our Creator is? It should not discourage us, because we can start today and every day anew. On top of that, God reacts more quickly and skillfully than a GPS navigation system which with each false turn or headstrong decision we make calculates a new route in order to lead us to our goal.

May this beautiful prayer which St. Edith Stein liked to pray, put our souls each day in the proper disposition:

*“Let me blindly go, O Lord, the ways of Yours so mild. I don’t want to understand how You lead me; I am just Your child! You’re the Father of wisdom, and to me a Father too. Lead also through the night, lead me still to You. Lord allow what You want; I am ready! ... Make all take place as You have planned in Your council. If You quietly ask for sacrifice, Lord, help me to fulfill. May I completely oversee my very little me, that I, dead to myself, may live alone for Thee!”*



# Behold, I am a Handmaid

*The Spanish nun Eusebia Palomino (1899-1935) is one of those lovable blessed who has yet to really be discovered in our parts of the world.*

*A true daughter of Mary, she made her hidden service spiritually fruitful for many people, because she strove to recognize God's will in every situation.*

*Even in great renunciations, Sr. Eusebia was able to see the hand of God and let herself simply be led by it.*

Although Eusebia's home was a poor shack in the little Spanish village of Cantalpino, close to Salamanca, the Palomino family possessed a strong Faith, mutual love and admirable surrender with which they accepted their poverty. Consequently, Eusebia grew up with her two sisters happily and carefree—thankful, undemanding and enthusiastic about God's beautiful nature. The hard work at home and the day-long trips to Salamanca, holding her father's hand as they went begging, meant that the seven-year-old received only one year of schooling. Yet the girl had an excellent memory, especially when it came to the Catechism!

At her First Holy Communion, Eusebia was the only girl without a white dress because her

Our Lady, who was Eusebia's great love from her childhood on, then took care that God's plan for her life began to take shape more clearly. One day, while hoeing in the garden at the asylum, she found a medal with an image of Mary, Help of Christians, and felt an unexplainable joy, even though this veneration of Mary was completely new to her.

Soon thereafter, an unknown girl, whom she never saw again, invited Eusebia to accompany her to the oratorio of the Salesians the following Sunday. About this first visit Eusebia wrote, *"When I entered the chapel, I found myself in front of a statue of the patroness of the order—Mary Help of Christians. I was overcome by something so powerful, that I fell*

family could not afford one. This humiliation, however, could not cloud Eusebia's joy. *"On this day, I understood that I wasn't created for this world ... I felt that God wanted me to live alone for Him now."* What a deep insight for a child!

Eusebia learned early on, in fact, to share the pain of renunciation with Jesus. To support her family, the little girl worked in the village as a maid or a shepherdess until her sister Dolores brought her to Salamanca when she was twelve. Eusebia worked there in an asylum for poor, elderly people whose wounds she bandaged and sometimes even kissed in her love for the Crucified Lord. Already at this time, Eusebia would have loved to become a religious sister, but her poverty seemed to be an insurmountable obstacle.

*down on my knees at her feet. In that moment, I heard a voice in me which said, 'This is the place where I want you to be. You will be my daughter.'*" Eusebia did not know if she would be accepted without a dowry or any possessions, but from that time forward, she anxiously awaited going to the sisters on Sundays.

The institute's superior finally offered her a job. The sixteen-year-old rejoiced, helping around the house and accompanying the children of the home to school each day. All the housework—cleaning, kitchen duty and the wash—was hard for the gentle girl, especially in winter. *"I paid attention neither to being tired nor to the cold when hanging up the wash for hours on end, nor to the cracks in my hands which hurt so*

*much. On the contrary, I was happy when I had something to offer to the Lord.”*

Eusebia’s extraordinary readiness to serve did not remain hidden for long. Whatever she was asked to do, she obeyed immediately with sincere joy and pure simplicity. Nobody ever heard a complaint out of her, nor did they see her disagreeable or with a sense of discontent. *“It seemed that she never thought about herself, only about how she could be useful and make us happy. She accepted everything and was always smiling, even when she felt the moodiness of some of the sisters.”* Eusebia’s secret was to want only

*E*usebia’s heroic correspondence to what she understood as God’s will awoke, on one hand, people’s amazement and sympathy and, on the other, worked gracefully in the souls of the institute’s students. They were soon irresistibly attracted to this hidden, seventeen-year-old maid with no formal education. They looked for Eusebia first thing in the morning in the schoolyard before classes started; they could not pass the kitchen without stopping in for a moment to be with her.

Her pure radiance, overflowing joy and spiritual depth stimulated the girls; they even rejoiced when the sisters sent them to the kitchen to help because they knew that Eusebia was there. *“We listened with delight when she told us about God and Mary ... We considered her a saint.”* They also observed with what deep reverence she

*I*n August 1922, a new life started for Eusebia as a novice of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians—two intense years of studies, prayer and work. Yet, Eusebia remained faithful to her joyful readiness to serve. She, the fragile young woman, was responsible for the garden, a job which she loved despite the physical effort it entailed. She could be completely with God there, in spirit and in her heart! When the novice mistress recommended a book to Eusebia for personal meditation one day, she asked astonished, *“But, do you need a book to meditate?”*

one thing—to fulfill the will of God—lovingly, carefully and faithfully.

In order to do so, Eusebia had to fight against her sensitivity and her energetic character. She did this, however, with such an iron will, that nobody noticed. *“Sometimes I became sullen and angry, and it cost me a lot to humble myself.”* Yet, she learned to conquer all resistance by calmly accepting everything.

Especially in painful situations she was aware, I belong to God alone and I serve only Him in everything! She was always approachable and even joyful.

often prayed in the chapel.

Eusebia, who lived as if she was a Don Bosco Sister, had great doubts about whether her dream of one day becoming a nun would ever be fulfilled. It was God’s will though that at the beginning of 1921, the Vicar General of the Salesians visited Salamanca and recognized the authenticity of her vocation. *“Don’t worry about a thing, everything is taken care of. You will join the congregation,”* she assured the girl.

One year later, Eusebia began her postulancy at the age of twenty-two. However, instead of being allowed to do her spiritual formation at their house in Barcelona-Sarrià, Eusebia had to make another sacrifice because she was indispensable as the kitchen sister’s aid in Salamanca. She surrendered to doing her postulancy among the pots and pans.

*“How do you do it?”* the novice mistress responded.

Eusebia explained in her unique simplicity, *“Ah, for me it is enough to see an olive tree to contemplate God.”*

The experienced sister suspected that Eusebia’s spiritual life was already at a much different level than one would expect from a novice.

The other sisters repeatedly observed that Eusebia, despite her meager education, possessed a deep understanding of divine things and could speak about them with such astonishing ease,

certainty and enrapturing enthusiasm that one lost track of time. *“Everybody hung on her every word...”* Still, her understanding had not been read in books; God had shared it with Eusebia because she lived completely in His will.

Before she could make her first profession, the Lord tested her selfless compliance once again. Some time before the profession, she fell down the basement steps with two bottles in her hand. A piece of glass cut a vein in her arm, and she nearly bled to death.

The wound became infected and weakened Eusebia so much that they did not think she would recover. In any case, she could not be admitted to the profession. The other sisters were astonished that Eusebia accepted the superior’s decision so peacefully. Eusebia explained to them: *“Yes, it is true, I am calm because I have completely*

*A*t the age of twenty-four, Eusebia made her temporary vows and was sent to Valverde del Camino in Andalusia. When saying goodbye to her friend Caridad, Sr. Eusebia said, *“We have to become holy, everything else is a waste of time!”*

In Valverde, there was also a lot of work awaiting Sr. Eusebia. As a result, she was once again unable to develop her distinct gift for teaching Catechism, although it would have fit so well to her apostolic zeal. Instead, she was instructed to tend to the kitchen, the door, the clothing and a group of girls from the oratorio. Sr. Eusebia was content with everything. She wrote in a letter, *“A humble person is obedient with every task ... He is always satisfied because in the Lord’s*

*S*r. Eusebia’s living according to the will of God had an effect on the girls who listened to her like she listened to God. Her constant Fiat gave the sister such a noticeable power in prayer that it seemed God could not refuse any of her requests.

Once, for example, Sr. Eusebia knew that the provincial was coming soon to visit. For the occasion, she planted spinach in the little vegetable garden to prepare it fresh for the important visitor. It never rained though, and the plants had

*surrendered myself to the will of God. He knows what is best for me ... Nevertheless, my desire to become a sister is so great that I would be willing to spend my entire religious life picking up the leaves that have fallen from the trees.”*

When the superior reluctantly told Eusebia that she would have to send her back to her parents, the novice simply responded, *“Good, Mother, if I cannot officially be a Salesian, then I will be it spiritually in my hometown, Cantalpino, and live what I learned here about my founders Don Bosco and Maria Mazzarello.”*

Cut to the core by such a surrender to the divine will, the superior decided to allow Eusebia to make her profession in spite of her physical weakness. And behold: her health unexpectedly improved.

*house nothing is too little, everything is great when it is done out of love.”* This attitude gave Sr. Eusebia’s words to the girls in Valverde a mysterious, grace-filled effect.

The new sister, having finished her work, offered her Sunday afternoon to the students in the courtyard. During recreation she told them spectacular stories from the lives of the saints and they were all fascinated by the little sister with the big heart.

Soon, they also saw a saint in her. Many of them later entered the novitiate of the Don Bosco Sisters, and the astonished provincial inquired about the numerous vocations, *“What is going on in Valverde?”* And she discovered, *“There is a cook there who tells the girls exciting stories.”*

barely come up out of the ground. With a sigh, the kitchen sister went out to the garden and said to the Lord, *“Had you let it rain a little in the last days, then I would know now what to put on the table for dinner.”*

At that moment, Sr. Eusebia remembered that there was a pot on the stove and ran back to the house. When she came back to the garden a few minutes later, the spinach leaves were the size of her palms! On another occasion, the canister of



olive oil in the kitchen was empty. Sr. Eusebia tipped it and behold: the tiny stream of oil which drizzled out of the canister at first gradually became thicker until the oil poured out abundantly.

In 1930, revolutionaries in Spain who opposed the Church joined forces against the monarchy. Shortly thereafter one hundred churches and religious houses went up in flames and Eusebia suspected that this was only the beginning of a great suffering for the people. Therefore, the thirty-one-year-old decided with her superior's

*F*rom January 1933 onward, Sr. Eusebia, suffering from bouts of suffocation, had to remain in bed. Her condition deteriorated, but her room in the infirmary nevertheless became a consultation room for many. Despite the great pain, she radiated peace and joy until the end; she never complained and wanted "*neither to live nor die,*

permission, to offer her life to God as a sacrifice "*to save Spain and for the kingdom of Jesus and Mary*". Sr. Eusebia soon contracted asthma.

In the meantime, her reputation for holiness, also through her gift of prophecy, had spread so far that many people seeking advice, seminarians and priests came to the convent to speak with Sr. Eusebia. Whether doing the wash or peeling potatoes, lovingly and calmly the Salesian advised, consoled and helped many through her view toward the future.

*just that the will of God be fulfilled.*" In the final weeks, the asthma turned more and more into a mysterious illness, unknown to the doctors, which disintegrated the inside of Sr. Eusebia's body. On February 10, 1935, the Salesian finally succumbed in great suffering. She was not yet thirty-six years old. God had accepted her sacrifice for Spain.

Source: Armida Magnabosco,  
Eine Arme bereicherte viele, Don-Bosco-Schwwestern, Innsbruck

Eusebia Palomino's "trademark" was and is her radiant smile with which she gave of herself to everyone. In 1933, she wrote in a letter to her mother, "Sometimes we find souls who say like Job, 'The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Thy will be done, my Jesus!' God loves such souls because they love Him equally in poverty and in wealth, whether the sun shines or is stuck in difficulty."

# Johann Sebastian Bach's Favorite Song

*My Father, if it is not possible that this cup pass without my drinking it, your will be done!" This beautiful attitude of peaceful surrender distinguished Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750), one of the most renowned German composers.*

Bach who, with Beethoven and Mozart, is one of the greatest composers of classical music, spent the longest period of his life in Leipzig, Germany. The composer worked there for twenty-seven years before passing away. As the Thomas Cantor and musical director for the four main churches of the city, every Sunday as many as two thousand believers heard his compositions which reflected some of the deeply religious sentiments of the faithful Lutheran. Even though Johann Sebastian Bach was considered outstanding in his improvisational skill on the organ and piano, Leipzig never suspected that they had one of the greatest geniuses in music history, one whose works are known today throughout the world. One need only consider his "St. Matthew Passion", his "Christmas Oratorio", the "Brandenburg Concertos", "The Art of Fugue" or his grandiose "Mass in B Minor", at the performance of which he, although a Lutheran, assisted in the Catholic palace chapel in Leipzig. As far as we know, Bach was never seriously ill. Yet the last year of his life was surprisingly different. An increased clouding of the lenses due to cataracts eventually caused him to go blind in both eyes. The handwriting of the sixty-five-year-old composer, who loved to create, became sloppy. In the end, his second wife, Anna Magdalena, or his son, John Christian, one of his twenty children from his first and second marriages, had to sign all of Bach's documents. In the Spring of

1750, the infamous English ophthalmologist Sir John Taylor came to Leipzig, prepared to operate on Master Bach's eyes. "In the name of God," he agreed and placed his future fate completely in God's hands. The operation was a risky torture in the eighteenth century because there was neither narcotics nor sterile instruments. The first surgery at the end of March was unsuccessful, and so he had a second operation. When they removed the bandages from Bach's eyes a few days later and the gathered family asked their beloved father, "Can you see?", he answered, "The Lord's will be done! I don't see anything!" Everybody began to cry, thereby making their father's heart heavy, but he encouraged them, "Sing me rather my favorite tune: 'What my God wants, may it always happen, His will is best'." For nearly four months, Bach, now surrendered to God, bore his extinguished sight. Nevertheless, he continued to play his incredible and tender improvisations on the organ in the Church of St. Thomas. He did not give up composing either; rather, he ardently dictated note for note to students or relatives. Bach must have felt that his end was drawing near because he fittingly entitled his final choral "I step now before your throne". Following a stroke, Johann Sebastian Bach said a peaceful farewell to his loved ones from his deathbed before he stepped "before God's throne" on the evening of July 28, 1750.

The talented musician considered his entire musical works to be a praise of God. Therefore, whenever he completed a masterpiece, he signed each score and each manuscript with three simple letters "SDG" or he wrote out the words "Soli Deo Gloria", "God alone be glorified".

# Lord, as You Will!

*Florian Pedarnig played for the Innsbruck Symphony Orchestra for thirty-seven years. "It was my passion and joy, my dream job which I would choose again in an instant!" the full-blooded musician told us when we visited him for an interview. Along with other beautiful compositions, Florian wrote a very special melody which is the subject of this article.*

I had a happy childhood with my fifteen siblings at my parent's farm in Schlaiten, Austria. That is where my musical "roots" are because I inherited a "music gene" from my father. When he founded the brass band in our village in 1952, my four brothers and I enthusiastically joined. After a bit of training in directing and conducting, I became, at the age of seventeen, the youngest conductor in the Tyrolian region. The love for music, fostered by my father, eventually led me to a career in music.

On the other hand, I never saw myself as a composer. I was more of a musician who now and again contributed to one of the many existing melodies. My first religious song, "Lord as You will!", however, noticeably stood out from my other compositions. It will always have a place of honor for me because it is one for which I prayed, a song that was "given" to me as a gift, one for which I did not have to struggle. In its simplicity, it is for me the most beautiful one I wrote.

Its origin is closely related to our daughter

One day, while driving to Innsbruck for an orchestra practice at the theater, the thought came to mind: "Actually, you could write a melody for that beautiful prayer." At the same time, however, I had great respect because I was certain, "No matter how beautiful the melody is, it could not match the beauty of the prayer. You cannot simply invent something like that. If it is possible at all, then you have to let it be given to you." So, I said the prayer and thought, "Jesus, I cannot do it! You or Fr. Rupert Ma-

Gabi who, following trying years, found her way back to God, the faith and her family. She even became a sister in the "Family of Mary" in 1994, something that made us as parents so thankful. Then suddenly Gabi, now Sr. Maria Gabriele, became very sick. She was diagnosed with breast cancer. What a shock! Through the community I learned about Bl. Rupert Mayer, the Apostle of Munich, and his favorite prayer, "Lord, as You will!", which soon became my favorite prayer too (see back cover).

Naturally, over the course of the six years of Gabi's illness, I had to say yes over and over again. "Lord, since it's Your will, it is best", these words were a long fight for me. Also "Lord, when You will, then it is time," made me think. It was not so easy!

I prayed that prayer hundreds of times, even in the car. It pulled me from my clouded thoughts and always consoled me, especially the conclusion, "Since it's Your will, with courage I vest. In Your hands my heart is at rest."

yer have to give it to me." And suddenly, the melody was really there, like poured in without much consideration. Simply a gift. Of course, I didn't have any note paper in the car to write it down. I was not afraid that I would forget the melody though. It was so deep within me that, back home, I immediately tried out a three-voice movement. It was a little bit difficult to sing, but the sisters managed. Our Gabi even sang along later at a wonderful recording.

Perhaps not many people understand, but

this prayer “Lord, as You will!” made it possible for me not only to accept the illness and passing of our daughter, but even to accept it as a gift. Therefore, it is and will remain “my” prayer,

which accompanies me every day from morning until evening. I gladly give it to people at music seminars or other occasions and promote it in the hope that it helps others as it has helped me.

The former Tyrol regional conductor directs many bands and is known in the area of brass bands and folk music well beyond the boundaries of Tyrol, Austria.

In spite of exciting orchestral performances, the nicest thing for me was to make music with my family, with Inge and our three children. Today, Florian in Munich and Alexandra in Vienna are both good career musicians. I thank God also for our two adopted children Manuel and Melanie and our five healthy grandchildren.

## Husband, Father and Priest

*It is often standing room only at San Martino in Rimini, Italy. Faithful from all around come for Adoration and Holy Mass every day with their spiritual father, Fr. Probo Vaccarini.*

*Even at the age of 96, Fr. Probo is always there for anybody who asks for his advice, absolution or blessing. He is truly a father for many with his humor and his radiant eyes.*

*A*t the age of 29, Probo was stuck in a deep crisis. Although the young surveyor had a job with the Italian railroad, his doubts about the faith and the lack of a family banished any perspective for the future. He turned to God in his inner darkness with the following challenge, “*If You show Yourself to me and let me encounter You, I will do whatever Your will is for me, otherwise I will continue to live according to my will.*”

A few months had passed when a colleague

showed up at work one day noticeably cheerful and relaxed.

Probo quickly inquired, “*Did you win the lottery or what?*” The young railroad employee beamed back, “*I went to Padre Pio, and he told me what I should do with my life and how I should act.*” That hit home—that is exactly what Probo was also seeking! The very next day, he made his way to San Giovanni Rotondo to meet Padre Pio.

## San Giovanni Rotondo 1948

*W*hen Probo arrived in the little southern Italian town, he inquired as to the best way to speak with the holy priest. “*In the confessional,*” he found out. So, he went and stood in the long line of penitents. He was not a big

sinner, he thought to himself. He had not killed anybody, stolen anything and was otherwise an upstanding young man.

Yet when he presented his peccatucci, his “little sins” as he called them, he was surprised

by the deep, loud voice of Padre Pio who said, “*Get out of here!*”

“*I’m sorry? I wanted to go to confession.*”

“*Get out! Come again some other time,*” came the response, no less harsh. Probo was dismayed.

Why had the priest refused absolution? He could not return home like that. He signed up for confession a second time, and two days later he was kneeling again in front of Padre Pio. This time, he mentioned a few more things in his life that were not really good. Yet again, he heard the hard words, “*Get out!*” That was just too much

for the young Italian. He drove home with the resolution never to return to that place again.

He could not get it out of his mind though; an uncertain fear was consuming him. “*Why didn’t Padre Pio give me absolution?*” This plagued him for forty days.

Then one night, Probo had a dream. The Capuchin came to him and told him all the sins that he had not confessed. What a relief! As soon as he could, Probo drove back to San Giovanni, and this time he received absolution right away. Not only that, he also experienced in Padre Pio a good priest through and through who opened his eyes for the good he could do.

## *A new life*

*A* new life started for Probo. He turned to the faith, started helping in the parish and felt a true inner joy come over him. Shortly thereafter, Padre Pio came to his spiritual son anew in a dream and called him with the words, “*Come, I have to speak to you.*”

This time, Probo received not only absolution, but also a concrete commission for his life: “*Hurry up and marry.*” As penance, he was to go to Holy Mass every day for one month in a specific church.

*P*adre Pio accompanied the family like a true good shepherd. All seven children, three daughters and four sons, received their First Holy Communion from the hand of the holy Capuchin father. They went to him whenever they could. Every two weeks, Probo made his Confession with him and readily accepted any advice which Padre Pio gave him. God revealed Himself to Probo, just as he had asked, and now he too wanted to be faithful to his promise to do His will in everything. In times of great need, Padre Pio repeatedly came in bilocation to Probo’s family and advised them how they should handle certain situations. Anna Maria was an educated woman, a teacher, and, as far as the raising of their children was concerned, she was one with her husband in everything.

Fr. Probo recalls, “*I started looking at women from a different perspective and judging them from a different set of standards as I had before, because I knew that I would have to present my future wife to Padre Pio. I asked Our Lady for a wife who was like her. Rather quickly, I met Anna Maria Vannucci and brought her with me to San Giovanni. Padre Pio didn’t let us wait long to marry. On June 1, 1952, he wed us in Pietrelcina. I was 33 years old.*”

Therefore, it was a hard hit for everybody when God called her to Himself in 1970. The youngest was only five years old and asked her dad, “*Why did Jesus take my Mommy even though I’m so little and still need her?*”

The suffering widower answered his daughter, “*Is Jesus God?*”

“*Yes, Daddy.*”

“*If Jesus is infinite goodness, love and wisdom and He allowed this, then it is proof that He loves us and Mommy.*”

To this day, Fr. Probo, along with his biological and spiritual children, prays this short prayer several times a day, “*My Father, Good Father, I offer everything to You and give myself to You!*”



Probo had his hands full with his job and raising his children, being both father and mother for them. Since they did not have any money, he pushed the oldest child to marry quickly. When two of his sons wanted to become priests, the father denied their request because he did not see any way that he could finance their education. The following night, his wife appeared to him in a dream and lovingly corrected him, “*Let them*

*go, stay calm. I’m taking care of you all.*” In the morning, Probo told his sons what their mother had told him in the dream and, consequently, gave his consent and his blessing.

Later, the other two sons also found their way to the priesthood, and one of the daughters became a religious sister. The children had learned from their father’s example to seek the will of God and then to put it into practice.

“At our wedding P. Pio said to me, ‘You should have a numerous and holy family.’

## *From deacon to priest*

When Probo retired, he started training to be a permanent deacon because he wanted to invest his strength in the service of God and neighbor. His service as a deacon brought new life to the parish that was entrusted to him.

Then, something very unexpected happened. On August 10, 1987, the 77th anniversary of Padre Pio’s ordination to the priesthood, Probo heard the voice of his already deceased spiritual father during Holy Mass in San Giovanni Rotondo: “*You will be a priest.*” These words were repeated to him three times.

*“I laughed as I left the church because I thought, you don’t know Latin and never*

*went to seminary, how should you become a priest?”*

His heart was restless though. In the end, it was not just anybody who had said these words to him, but his spiritual father—and he had never refused him anything. And if it really was the will of God?

Probo decided, therefore, to go to his bishop, and he told him “with his knees shaking” what he had experienced. The bishop, who knew the able and virtuous family father, confirmed the authenticity of his call and ordained him a priest on May 8, 1988, at the age of 69. What God can do in a soul who sincerely seeks His will!

# We Thank God

*There is a lot to tell about the spiritual children of Fr. Probo. We chose two of them, Lino Angeli and Adele Bartoli, whose stories impressively testify to the blessed result of helping one another to realize the will of God.*

Lino Angeli, the grandfather of our Fr. Matteo, is known today throughout the city of Riccione, Italy. It is impossible to imagine parish life in “San Lorenzo” without him as a permanent deacon. Nobody would guess that this humorous, deeply pious and genuine man, who radiates the stability and serenity of an experienced life, is 86 years old.

Lino, who lost his father at the age of thirteen, grew up in a time when Italian communism was blossoming. He knew what the Church taught, but

When their son was diagnosed with a serious illness and the only help for him was the air close to the sea, the family moved to Riccione. Lino invested all his strength in building a house for the family, yet as a father and husband he was often aggressive and frustrated.

In 1978, he was deeply touched when he begged for the grace of faith at the grotto of Our Lady’s apparitions in Lourdes. Back home, he asked his wife if they could pray the Rosary together every day. He slowly started to change.

Ten years later, Lino accepted an invitation to Medjugorje even though he hesitated at first. He remembers, *“Already the first evening, I felt that something special was awaiting me. For some time, I had wished to have a spiritual director to bring me closer to God. Yet, of all the priests I knew, none of them seemed to be right for me. When Fr. Jozo Zovko elevated the Host at Holy Mass after the consecration, something very unique transpired. I saw around the Host an image of Our Lady, the*

he did not practice his faith at all. When he fell in love in 1960, he was confronted with the Catholic Church anew through his fiancé Maria because she was a believer. In the beginning, he went with her to Holy Mass once in a while because he loved her, but he soon stopped when he found a good job in Milan. When he went out in the evening with his colleagues for a drink, he often returned home swearing and full of rebellion. The painful conflicts in their marriage increased, and so Maria sought her refuge in the Lord.

*Sacred Heart of Jesus and the face of Fr. Probo whom I had only heard about. In that moment, I knew that God wanted to give me this priest as a spiritual director.”*

Back in Riccione, he went with his wife to the parish San Martino in Venti on November 1, 1988, All Saints Day. As Fr. Probo passed by the couple during the Eucharistic procession, he suddenly said to Lino, *“I’m bringing the Blessed Sacrament to the sacristy, and then I will come right to you!”*

After this completely unexpected reception, all Lino’s reservations disappeared and he simply told the pastor how it came to pass that he was there that day.

From that moment onward, a deep relationship developed between Lino and his spiritual father, to whom he wholly entrusted himself. He helped him in the parish and learned through Fr. Probo’s example, more than through words, what it means to live for God and souls.

While Lino was taking care of the parish

for a month in 1991 during Fr. Probo's trip to Israel, a Capuchin priest whom he did not know unexpectedly came to celebrate Holy Mass. He asked Lino, "Are you a deacon?" Surprised, he said no. He had never considered it; he was already older and did not have any theological

training. "Then speak with your bishop, and if he has any objections, ask him if St. Peter was educated." Fr. Probo is convinced that this unknown Capuchin was Padre Pio. In 1992, Lino started studying theology, and five years later he was ordained a deacon.

Maria and Lino with their children Ornella, the mother of our Fr. Matteo, and Dino. Maria recounts, "Our Lady thoroughly transformed my husband. For me, he is unrecognizable today when I think back to the first years of our marriage, even if he always had a good heart. He has become understanding, ready to help and, above all, willing to sacrifice. That motivates me to imitate him. One of our greatest joys is that God gave our grandson a vocation to the priesthood. We accompany not only him, but all our children and grandchildren with our prayer and with all our love. We can only thank God for what he has given our family through Fr. Probo."

## A Thorny Path to Happiness

In 1990, the family father and permanent deacon Lino Angeli became instrumental in leading a young woman, Adele, to her future spiritual father, Fr. Probo. She came from a believing family, but as a teenager she, like many adolescents, turned her back on God and the Church. She moved in with a married man, with whom she had a daughter, and dreamed of raising a family.

Although she did not practice her faith and some things in her life were just not right, Jesus came to her in a dream and begged for her love. Crowned with thorns, suffering unspeakably, He looked at her and said:

Then He showed her people's evilness and the most repugnant sins. When Adele awoke, she

Adele had just turned 25, and she had to wait seven years before the deacon and family father Lino noticed her one evening in the parish church of Riccione. He knew her parents, and when he saw her praying so profoundly in her need, he went over to her and said, "It would do you well to meet Fr. Probo." He gave her two of his books which she read that very evening. She barely started reading and she knew, "This

bawled her eyes out because she had never seen before so much suffering. She fervently started to pray and promised Jesus, "I give You my life; I want to do everything as You will and accept all suffering which You send to me."

Even though she did not go to Holy Mass and continued to live unmarried in her relationship, her life changed otherwise that night. She prayed a lot and looked for a priest who could help her to understand God's will in her life.

The first one to whom she opened up turned her away because she was not immediately ready to break off her relationship. After the father of her then two-year-old daughter left them, a very sorrowful time began.

*priest is my spiritual father!"*

The next day, she drove to Fr. Probo who, after he prayed a novena to the Holy Spirit and to Our Lady, accepted her into the flock of his spiritual daughters.

*"I decided in full liberty to obey him in everything in order to fulfill the will of God. It is unimaginable what God has all made good and healed in my life through obedience."*

*T*oday, Adele lives as a consecrated woman in a secular institute which has made it its task to stand by the priests with prayer and sacrifice. Adele gave her life to the Divine High Priest for all priests, but especially for Fr. Probo, in thanksgiving for all the good she has received through him.

She makes a living through various little jobs. After she spends the first hours of the morning in Adoration and Holy Mass with the Eucharistic Lord, she goes where she is called in the parish:

she helps with ironing, cleaning windows, looking after children, taking care of the elderly, going shopping—anywhere where her help is needed.

Her own “home”, however, is the parish church where Jesus is present; she brings Him everyone’s intentions every day in Adoration. “*I am one of the happiest people on earth,*”

Adele told us convinced, “*because there is nothing more fulfilling and useful as wanting to live the will of God even in the smallest things.*”

“It has always been my experience that Fr. Probo seeks the will of God. He never answered immediately or on his own when I asked him a question. Sometime he made me wait for weeks because he first wanted to understand in prayer what God’s will is for me.”

## *Love is not a Game*

*A few summers ago, the then 22-year-old grade school teacher Irina Weiss and her 27-year-old fiancé Alexander Breuss, an entrepreneur, gave a nice testimony at a youth meeting in Kundl, Austria. In the meantime, they have married and have two children. They gave us a shortened form of their testimony in writing.*

**Alexander and Irina:** To start with, it is important for us to say that we do not feel that we are better than anybody else nor do we want to preach about morals. On the contrary, it is our intention to tell about our experiences, how we had to fight for beauty and purity in our love. We learned in the process that it was all about our future and our happiness in life.

**Irina:** Although I grew up in a Catholic and believing family, the faith did not mean all that much to me. I went to Holy Mass every Sunday, but without any inner conviction. In this time, my life consisted of the latest fashion, going out, looking good, etc. Since everything was quite superficial, what mattered to me most was looking good, having fun and just enjoying life.

**Alexander:** I grew up in a Catholic family too. I had a wonderful childhood full of love; yet, faith never played an important role. Since I was raised without God, I lived like many other young people. I had a lot of friends, none of whom believed in God, and so we regularly enjoyed what the world had to offer.

My lifestyle was always being up to date. In other words, I always wanted to be a step ahead of my friends: a cool car, stylish expressions. For me, it was often just about impressing the girls. So, I lived without God until the day Irina walked into my life at a soccer game. Slowly but surely, everything changed.

**Irina:** I have to admit that I didn’t make it easy for Alex after we met. Although I still thought very

“worldly” at the time, I had already decided for myself that I would only start a deeper friendship with a guy who really loves me and whom I can trust. I thought to myself, *“If he’s truly and sincerely interested, then he should prove it.”* And so, he really had to try for half a year before I would go out with him.

**Alexander:** From the beginning, Irina made it a condition in our relationship that I go to Holy Mass every Sunday with her. Out of love for her, I decided to go along once. The only part of the Mass that I knew was the Our Father, everything else was foreign to me and I did not know what was going on.

Now, I was sitting in the church on Sunday evening instead of going to the movies or somewhere else with my friends. And so, it came to pass that this one time turned into a weekly Sunday Service even though the worldly events were still more important to us. We spent our Saturday nights with our friends at parties or in the bars, and then Sunday we were sitting again piously in the pew. At some point we felt that this was a contradiction.

**Irina:** We found ourselves in this conflict for a time. After a long struggle of being afraid of missing out on something, I decided to go to the youth meeting in Kundl for the first time. At this youth meeting, I gave Jesus an unexpected gift: I deleted my Facebook account. In Kundl I met the girl who is now my best friend. I experienced for the first time that God loves me and that He has a plan for my life.

When I returned home, I felt a noticeable difference in my life, without knowing exactly what it was. I had allowed God, perhaps unaware, to enter my life for the first time.

**Alexander:** After Irina decided to go to Kundl, she asked me if I wanted to go too. I was a little skeptical at first, but I decided to go along because of her. When I arrived, I was surprised. It was very new to me to meet such joyful and open young people.

On this weekend, it was suddenly about Jesus, Adoration, Confession, praying the Ro-

sary... I felt like I was hit by an avalanche. Yet after I had worked through all these impressions back home, I realized that the days in Kundl had done something to me. I felt that it helped me to receive Jesus, and it even became a desire to go to Holy Mass every day. Our relationship was also renewed and started to develop even more.

My understanding of love and friendship had changed significantly. Until now, I had thought that it was all about having fun; egotistically I was always trying to do *my* will. It was about *my* fun, *my* will, *my* desires; in short, it was all about me. Since we opened up to grace though, God could work in us.

Suddenly Irina started making one condition after another. At first, I didn’t understand, but after a while I realized that she only wanted the best for our relationship. It brought us to the essentials, in what a true and deep friendship consists. We learned about each other not solely on the outside, but at a completely different level. The other person, their way, their character, their strengths and their weaknesses were now in the foreground.

I learned to respect Irina’s personality; and, above all, I started to know her soul better. In the end, it was only grace and the mercy of God which I had accepted when I simply opened my heart for God.

**Irina:** We also learned to struggle together, and so we recognized that God has a goal for our lives: marriage, children, a family! He placed this longing in me. I determined that only with God’s help can I live and realize this.

Together, we had to fight for and learn what God wants for our life, because otherwise we would have just stayed together as long as everything was working out. We both understood that we would be happy only when we tried each day anew to fulfill the will of God. We had to learn to accept each other as we are and to forgive.

**Alexander:** It was, in fact, a constant struggle for the purity and beauty of our relationship. We discovered that our bond developed especially through sacrifices made out of love. What I mean is the “sacrifice of distance”, i.e. abstinence before



marriage. Only with this sacrifice out of love for the other person could our unity still be renewed day by day. Therefore, we try to preserve the purity of our friendship today through personal prayer and prayer together, the Holy Mass and through regular Confession.

**Irina:** Sometimes the sacrifice is hard, but it is fully worth fighting for, in part because it helps one to recognize whether the other is really the right partner. In order to find out whether our relationship is the will of God or not, we consciously decided to try to live completely according to God's commandments.

One thing was and is clear to us—the world laughs at us and thinks, *“They aren't normal.”* Even if it is impossible for some people to understand and we have lost friends, we want to encourage everybody to go the way of faith by having the courage to be laughed at. God always prepares the best for us!

**Alexander:** Dear girls, God gave you a great treasure, namely, a woman's dignity and virginity. Protect your inner and outer beauty because you are called to pass on life. Don't compromise this dignity for us men; don't present yourselves with outlandish clothing and makeup, but be natural

and make yourselves valuable because we men want to fight for the woman of our lives!

**Irina:** Hey guys, we girls aren't looking for a macho man, a braggart or a showoff boyfriend. On the contrary, in the depths of our hearts we long for someone whom we can trust, who doesn't constantly disappoint us, who lives the faith with us and, above all, doesn't play games with our feelings.

Love is not a game; it has to do with trust and self-offering. So try to be truthful and honest. Pay attention to the purity of your thoughts, your glances and your actions because God wants it too.

*“I promise to be faithful to you ... to love you and to honor you all the days of my life. Receive this ring as a sign of my love and fidelity.”*

These are the words of love and offering with which we said yes to each other before God in the Sacrament of Matrimony on July 24, 2015. The time of preparation for the most beautiful day of our life was complete; but, after the wedding, we really just started seeking daily to fulfill God's will and through it loving the other more than one's self. In order to succeed, we have learned to live always more from the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

# *I Felt He Called Me*

*Hyeyoung Maria Kim, now Sr. Anastasia, from Seoul  
is the second apostolic sister from South Korea in our community  
who has given her life to God in a special way for the sanctification of priests. Slowly  
but surely, Jesus conquered her heart.*

*T*he years of 2008 and 2009 were a very special time because I became aware of God's love for me and that He was preparing me for something. I had grown up with my little brother in a Catholic family, and we always went to the children's Holy Mass. I learned to paint as a child, and it was my favorite thing to do. So, I decided to go to an art academy when I was fourteen. Here in Korea, study and work are much more rigorous than in the West, and I had to study hard and paint a lot.

Since I did not have any free time, I had little interest in a life of faith. I would pray to Jesus

before my exams, short but fervently. With a lot of time and energy I was finally accepted to the university as an art student, something which is very difficult. Other than Yena, who today is a sister in the Family of Mary, I had no believing friends, and I only went to church three times a year: Christmas, Easter and anniversary of my Father's death. Like other young people, I wanted to live a meaningful life, but my soul was in the worst state. I was empty, actually. No one could console me and nobody really knew how I was doing, because on the outside everything seemed to be fine.

## *Encounter with a new world*

*A*t the age of 21, I took a break from my studies and made my first trip to Europe. While I was there, I found out about a volunteer program in England which immediately interested me. When the program's organizer asked if I could go to a convent of sisters, I said no. I thought that I would go crazy in a convent of sisters for a year.

The interesting thing is, I soon changed my mind, and I did, in fact, spend one year between 2008 and 2009 with them. It was so different than I had imagined, but I really liked it and enjoyed these days. I prayed and worked with the thirteen sisters wherever I was needed.

One of my duties was caring for the three oldest sisters who were 89, 90 and 91 years old. I still had time to sit in the chapel and talk to Jesus. Carefully, I opened my heart to Him and entrusted something very personal and secret about which

I couldn't speak to anybody.

It was in this time that my friend Yena, now called Sr. Marianna, was in Rome as a postulant and invited me to come and visit her. Since I was in Europe anyway, I gladly accepted her invitation; and there I met our Korean brothers, Fr. Sanghee and Fr. Damian, who were still seminarians at the time. Fr. Sanghee gave me a book by Sr. Emmanuel about Medjugorje, which I read in two days. It enflamed me with a great love for Our Lady and the desire for consecrated life, but again I quickly dismissed the thought of becoming a sister. What remained, though, was a love for praying the Rosary every day.

Two months later, I made a pilgrimage on the Camino of Santiago de Compostela with the intention of recognizing the will of God for my life. I offered Our Lady the Rosary for 30 days

with the request, *“Let me understand God’s plan for my life, lead me on the right path, help me to love my neighbor and make a true artist out of me.”*

I returned to Korea full of hope and, along-

side my studies, I started reading the Bible in order to know God better. Otherwise, nothing changed in my daily life, which consisted of studying, painting, making some pocket money and a few hobbies.

## He calls

I finished school in 2011, and worked for a year and a half as a graphic designer. My boss had converted from Catholicism to Protestantism and, therefore, had no understanding for my devotion to Mary, but he did not prevent me from living my faith. There was a chapel not far from my office, and I went there every day before work to pray the Rosary and go to Adoration.

These twenty minutes, completely alone with my God, were decisive for me because I felt more and more clearly that God was calling me. It is difficult to describe it, but I knew that as His co-worker I had to make the first step with His grace. At the same time, I felt that I was free.

When Sr. Marianna came to Korea for vacation, I gave her a letter for Fr. Paul Maria and asked him to pray, that I might receive clarity about my vocation. He advised me to consecrate myself to Mary every day, to go to Holy Mass as often as possible and to receive Holy Communion with a pure heart. Additionally, he offered to let me to spend a year in the Motherhouse of the Family of Mary in Slovakia, to help me recognize in prayer the will of God. I followed his advice for five months; then I had the strength to let go of everything and give Jesus one year of my life, regardless of the outcome.

When I said goodbye to my mom in the airport, we actually knew that I would not come back after one year. Behind my Fiat, was also my mother’s “Yes”. In spite of her pain, she has always supported me. She never pushed me and always respected my decisions. Through so many deep and open conversations, we’ve always understood each other. She is a friend, sister and

mother for me; oh, I miss her so much. During my many years of searching, she always encouraged me, *“Now it is hard and harsh, but you will be alright.”* My mother’s steady consolation and advice, and this awareness of God’s love helped me for those ten years.

In the end, I spent five and a half years in the Motherhouse, and I cannot say that the time there was easier than my life in the world. It cost me many tears to come to know myself and my weaknesses better, but I also learned to accept myself as I am.

In this time, I took in our beautiful spirituality of which I can say it is the treasure buried in the field for which it is worth selling everything. Yes, I found the precious pearl of which Jesus speaks in the Gospel. Many people ask me about the food. European food still is not always easy for me, but thankfully I already received the grace that I can eat bread, butter and jam for breakfast without any problems. I feel that the culture and mentality here is really different than ours. We think differently, express ourselves in another way and have a different sense of humor. However, there is a similarity in that we all have the same reason why we are here—because we all love Jesus and Our Lady.

I have also understood: wherever we live, whatever we do, there is always the Cross, the sign of love and the sign of purification. I can now say that I chose this life only for Jesus because I want to love Him and I want to resemble Him. Only Jesus can give me the love which I have always sought. It is a deep relief that He knows me, He loves me, He understands me and He consoles me.