

Time for responsibility and commitment
Letter from the Mother General after the end of the diocesan Inquest

Dear sisters, friends, and benefactors,

We write to you on the day when the Church invites us to look to Heaven, to that "great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language" (Ap 7:9). In that multitude we also want to see particularly our Foundress, the Servant of God, Mother Maria Agnese Tribbioli, whose diocesan Inquest on life, virtues and the reputation for holiness and signs ended last night.

In the church of San Giovannino degli Scolopi in Florence we experienced a moment of praise and prayer for the gift of our Mother, a craftswoman of mercy, an example of the courage of the myths and a witness of fraternity and friendship between peoples. Providentially this first phase of the long process of beatification ended in that church where she went to pray as a child and where, contemplating the crucifix placed on the main altar, she wondered why so much unconditional love.

This is an important moment for our Institute, for each of us: in fact, it is not only the time of praise and joy but above all the time of responsibility and witness. Why? The saints of all times - Pope Francis reminds us - "are not simply symbols, distant, unreachable human beings. On the contrary, they are people who have lived down to earth; they have experienced the daily toil of existence with its successes and failures, finding in the Lord the strength to always get up and continue on the way" (Angelus, 1 November 2019).

The normality of the saints, their humanity, encourages us to walk towards Heaven, towards holiness in our daily life because being saints does not mean doing amazing and extraordinary things but welcoming a gift that allows us to unite ourselves to "Christ, in living His mysteries, in making His attitudes, His thoughts, His behaviour our own. The measure of holiness is given by the stature that Christ reaches in us, by how much, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we model our whole life on His". (Pope Francis). And this also sheds light on the life and spirituality of the Servant of God Maria Agnese Tribbioli who lived an extraordinarily normal life but constantly animated by Love for God and the women and men of her time, a life in which Christ grew up in her thanks to that intimacy with Him which the Mother always desired, sought and cultivated through prayer, work, love for Our Lady, acceptance of sufferings and misunderstandings and the choice of the last. Our Foundress welcomed the gift of holiness by adhering and living her Christian and religious vocation to the full, putting love and charity into everything in her life. We must not stop at praise, therefore, but from our thanksgiving to the Lord must arise the witness of holiness in our life and in our Congregation.

To live our vocation as consecrated women, to incarnate in our stories the charism of the Institute means accepting the invitation that the Servant of God often made: "Make yourselves saint". And this is possible simply by loving what we are and what we can and must do. The trajectory has already been traced by the Gospel which Mother Agnese lived and which she also pointed out to us by her example: "I leave you no stuff and goods; I never had anything. [...] Love each other as the Lord has taught us. Be merciful and bear what you have to endure with generous love. Love the orphans, the children, the old who will be entrusted to you, the poor prisoners. Shall your life be like the house of Nazareth. Work and prayer. Be humble, simple, charitable. Teach the girls to love work, prayer and modesty" (1st October 1958). We must nourish the firm certainty that God wants us all to be saints, not just a privileged few; but this will depend only on our willingness to "surrender" to the "Saint of Saints".

In thanking Mother Marta for the passion and strength with which she wanted the opening of the diocesan Inquest of our Servant of God and Sister Rosanna, Vice-Postulator for the work she has done, we would like to remind everyone that the path towards the hoped for beatification of the Mother is not a "private matter" of the superiors and the postulator but of the whole Congregation, of every single Sister, friend and benefactor. The road is still long and demanding, but the responsibility of witnessing to the holiness of our Foundress commits us to being and doing, to prayer and daily conversion, to passionate

effort to spread knowledge of her life, her spirituality, her example of virtue, her reputation for holiness and the charism of the Institute.

We reiterate, therefore, some practical suggestions to be implemented over time. The pandemic that is worrying the whole world must not, however, prevent us from doing what is possible in strict compliance with the rules of prevention. Here are some concrete proposals whose support is guaranteed by the Superiors and postulation.

In each house, a sister should be identified to take charge of the animation for the greater knowledge of the Servant of God: monthly prayer (possibly on the 27th of the month) to be done preferably in the parishes or in our homes but open to those who wish to participate. Everyone should choose the best form, time, and place: celebration of Mass, Eucharistic adoration, Holy Rosary, Lectio Divina... Do not neglect the official daily prayer for Beatification and Canonization and ask for the intercession of Sister Maria Agnese Tribbioli so that the Lord may touch our hearts and free us from the coronavirus.

We should also think of periodic initiatives to meet and deepen our understanding of the Servant of God's writings and spirituality by involving postulation.

The 27th February, the day of Mother Agnese's birth in Heaven, must become a fixed date on which the whole Congregation commemorates and prays to the Foundress with public initiatives. In every house there should be spaces in which material about the life and spirituality of our Mother are available to the people (books, magazine, videos, pictures, brochures...).

It is necessary to intensify our presence on social networks by creating specific profiles (Instagram, Fb, TikTok, Telegram...) in which the figure of the Founder, the congregational charism and our life can pass through. So, make way for young people!

May the Lord through the intercession of Mother Maria Agnese Tribbioli guide our journey, making us more and more women and men who "through an enlightened and lived faith make God credible in this world" (Benedict XVI).

Florence, 1st November 2020

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Postulator

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Superior General

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