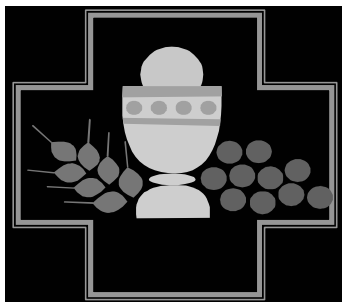


Message from the Director



As Branches on the Vine...

Dear Companions,

As I write this, the memory of our retreat day on October 11 is fresh in my mind. It was so wonderful to see all of you who were able to come. For those of you unable to come due to distance and other commitments, I want you to know that we prayed for you both at Mass and at the conclusion of the day. It was a glorious day both inside and outside! When our Sisters and Companions are together, it is always a very special day.

Today was also the day on which we heard the news of Sister Maria Nicholson's death. Sister had assisted with the Companions of Pauline in Camp Hill during the past two years, as much as her failing health permitted. She was such a valuable asset to the group and we will sorely miss her presence.

We are now embarking upon a new "adventure" with our Companions. Beginning this year, we will do a rather intensive study and reflection upon the life and spirituality of Mother Pauline, the ministries of the Sisters of Christian Charity, and your vocation in the Church as a member of the laity.

It is not coincident, but rather God-incident, that we begin this year as we prepare to celebrate the 160th anniversary of the founding of the Congregation. During the course of the year, in addition to other news to be shared, a portion of "As Branches on the Vine" will be devoted to the life of Blessed Pauline.

I trust that you are all well and continue to live the charism of our Mother. Let us keep each other in prayer.

*Lovingly,
Sister Joseph*

Life of Mother Pauline

A Glimpse into the Childhood of Pauline von Mallinckrodt

Nearly two centuries ago, Pauline von Mallinckrodt was just a girl throbbing with youth and vitality. She attended select schools of learning and by her attractive amiability and sweet charity became the popular girl of the class. Indeed, Pauline's tender charity

would not tolerate the slightest criticism of others. Already during her school days at Aix-la-Chapelle, her companions knowing that she always tried to excuse the faults of others, joking said to her, "If there were a means of whitewashing the devil, you would surely use it."

But not only in word did Pauline practice this beautiful virtue of charity; her thoughtfulness of others was manifested in more than one way. What motive other than charity could have prompted her to gather into her school bag bits of broken glass which she noticed lying in the streets on her way to school? Knowing that the poor children of Aix-la-Chapelle were accustomed to play in the streets barefoot, Pauline wished to serve God's poor by preventing those little ones from hurting themselves.

Vivacious and cheerful, she was at the same time characteristically pious as the following little instance denotes. "Pauline, Pauline!" The anxious cry broke the stillness that reigned in the residence of Lieutenant Governor von Mallinckrodt on that memorable Good Friday. Finally, in breathless amazement Frau von Mallinckrodt halted abruptly at the foot of the garret stairs.

Here was the object of her search, caught in the act of climbing the stairs on her knees. To substitute for the devotion she had not been permitted to attend at St. Leonard's, Pauline had conceived this method of making the Way of the Cross.

At a time when the doctrines of the Mystical Body of Christ, the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and Christocentracy were as yet little discussed, Pauline lived these truths even in her youth. "One day," her aunt related, "I noticed how on several occasions Pauline, seated at the window, would suddenly rise, bow respectfully, and then resume her seat. After repeated demonstration of this kind I inquired, 'What are you doing, Pauline?' Quite confused, the child admitted, 'An old man just passed by and I greeted our Lord in him.'"

Complementary to Pauline's childlike, receptive mind was a loving heart ever open to all noble pleasures. With a certain secret joy, therefore, Frau von Mallinckrodt could write to her mother that the romping tomboy who usually defeated her two brothers George and Herman, in their sham battles and in playful contest had now de-

What motive other than charity could have prompted her to gather into her school bag bits of broken glass which she noticed lying in the streets...?

veloped into a thoughtful and sensible school girl. And a few years later, Bertha von Hartmann, Pauline's cousin, writes in the same strain to a friend of the family, Professor Schlueter: "Such a combination of deep, continual earnestness with an almost jubilant gaiety has never before come to my notice." In a letter to the same professor, Pauline herself describes her stay in the country thus: "there were eight of us young girls together at Boedeken, and you can readily imagine what a lively group we were. If you could have seen us play 'crack the whip', tag, and other similar games, you would have believed we were school children."

What, then, was the secret of this admirable blending of the natural and the supernatural, an accomplishment which manifested itself even more strikingly as Pauline advanced in years? It was none other than the intense consciousness of the Indwelling of Christ in her soul and in the soul of her neighbor—hence her firm determination to afford others pleasure.

Pauline's return from the French boarding school at Liege marked the end of her girlhood days and the beginning of her social life at Aix-la-Chapelle. Concerning this period in the life of Pauline, her mother wrote to Grandmother Hartmann at Borchen:

"Pauline is a perfectly wonderful girl, always sweet and cheerful. I can never thank God sufficiently for her lively disposition. Although she is now a society lady, the joys and duties of home have still that greatest charm for her. And well may that be for our happy family circle will never permit home life to become monotonous."

Next issue: A Glimpse into the Young Adulthood of Pauline von Mallinckrodt

Translating the Poetry of Luise Hensel

by Companion of Pauline
Judy Fischer

Luise Hensel was a well-known teacher and writer in Germany in the 1800s; however, in a German grammar book dated 1911 containing short biographies of famous German scholars, artists, and writers, Luise Hensel is noted as having a claim-to-fame for being a teacher of the highly regarded Pauline von Mallinckrodt, foundress of the Sisters of Christian Charity, who had been her student at St. Leonard's Academy. Miss Hensel is also noted in the article as being the author of the beloved poem and song: "*Müde bin ich, geh' zur Ruh.*" The article states that she spent her last years with her former student in Paderborn, where she died in the SCC convent in December 1876.

Last year Sister Joseph Spring asked Sister Susanne if the Williamsport German Club might attempt to translate a book of Luise Hensel's poems.

The Williamsport German Club had its origin several years ago when Sister Susanne Kullowich, who spoke German as a child, organized German conversation sessions at Divine Providence Hospital for Sisters preparing for a summer spiritual renewal in Rome and Germany. From those sessions evolved the present-day German Club. Companion of Pauline, Doris Puderbaugh, already a member, invited me to a meeting several years ago, for which I remain grateful. Although the purpose of the gatherings and the participants have changed since the beginning, Sister Susanne remains the leader. When she asked if any of us would consider Sister Joseph's challenge, I thought about the connection to Mother Pauline, took about ten pages of poems and worked on them during the year.

Translating poetry in a foreign language is always a challenge, but translating poetic images expressed in vocabulary used 150 years ago is particularly difficult, unless the translator has a dic-

tionary dating from that time period. I do not, but fortunately, my 1950's dictionary includes some of the more archaic expressions.

As I worked through several poems, I became aware of a persistent theme in the pages assigned to me: the burden of this world, and a longing for eternal rest. Luise writes:

*"What troubles me,
then?
This life,
a silent tomb.
I know the Father
loves me
and one day will call
me home."*

And: "*Lord,
your servant is tired;
O, give me rest!
Here below
there is no peace.
Lord Jesus, I call to
you!*"

And again: "*Be calm my heart,
it will not be long;
Soon everything that weighs you down
will end.*"

When I worked through Luise's poem entitled "Look Up" and read: "*Be cheerful, my heart, and soar to heaven. Submit your life to God, our Lord. Then all will be well done,*" I was reminded of Mother Pauline's maxim: "*Sursum Corda! Our home is above...life's task is to love God. Then He will one day lead us to His eternal bliss.*"

In another poem Luise says: "*I find no pleasure in playthings and vain jokes. I must press on silently and alone. No heart for this heart;*" and I was reminded of Mother Pauline's "*How little attraction does this world hold out to my soul. It would indeed be difficult to separate myself from You again. My soul realizes that in Your company it is truly at home, that it is a stranger*



in this world.”

A second predominant theme in the pages I worked on was the influence of St. Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises*. I had great difficulty with one poem in particular, until I realized that it was a meditation on the "Two Standards." Then all the images fell into place: *"There await you two choices; child, look here and choose! The first (from) a prince of this world; the other, (offers) an eternal kingdom... The first gives you great honor, jewels and charm; the other carries a cross...Welcome, blessed struggle! O path, so steep and narrow, you will bring me to Him. Then, a thousand times—AMEN."*

In another entitled "Evening Examen" the poetess chides herself for eating and forgetting to give thanks for the food and drink; for all the thoughtless words she spoke, while forgetting to use her voice to praise God. She prays: *"Justice will destroy me. Only mercy can save my life. How quickly a word is spoken that cannot be snatched back. How easily a resolution is broken, on which the heart's peace hangs."*

In her poem "On a Delicate Heart" (which, in the language of the time could have been "A Scrupulous Heart"), she admonishes the reader to *"lay in a shroud all the blessings that belong to you...The world will tempt you with its delights, and just as quickly threaten you with pain and sorrow."* She concludes: *"Yes, Father, I will be content; will bear my burdens, my hands lifted to You, and not longing for this world."*

I finished the pages given to me with the overwhelming desire to read Mother Pauline's writings in the original German, to see where, in her thoughts, were other seeds planted by her beloved teacher.

My experiences in our German Club constantly remind me of the teachers of German, all of them Sisters of Christian Charity, who influenced my desire to learn, and my love for

expressions: Sister Estelle, Sister Leonis, Sister Reginata, and, at the very beginning some 45 years ago, Sister Mary Thomas, who was given a week's notice that she was to be the German teacher for our senior class. I am fortunate that another member of our present German Club, Gene Otterbein, was my classmate in that senior class of 1963. We often remember those classes with Sister Mary Thomas, and salute her for accepting the challenge. The fruits of her obedience are visible in the enduring interest in things "German" in "Herr Otterbein"(as Sister Susanne calls him) and me. Likewise, seeds planted by the teacher, Luise Hensel, have borne fruit for so many years beyond those that she could ever have imagined, and in countries all over the world, wherever Sisters of Christian Charity read and meditate on the writings of Mother Pauline.



Prayer Corner



Please keep in your prayers
the recently deceased:

Daniel Mertz

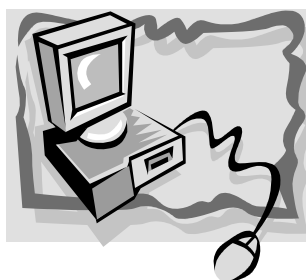
Husband of Companion of Pauline
Helen Mertz

Anthony Allocco

Husband of Companion of Pauline
Marge Allocco

Sister Maria Nicholson

Coordinator of the Companions of Pauline
Camp Hill Branch
(Her obituary letter is attached.)



**If you have an e-mail
address and it is not listed in
the directory, please send it
to
SisterJoseph at:**

srjoseph@sceast.org