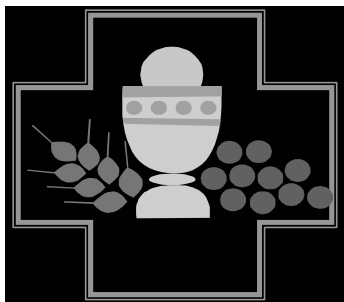


Message from the Director



As Branches on the Vine...

Dear Companions of Pauline,

November 1, All Saints Day, seems an appropriate time for the printing of this letter. Mother Pauline so often counseled her Sisters, "See to it that you become saints." And we as followers of Pauline have this counsel to keep.

What does this mean for each of us? It means doing the ordinary tasks of our daily life--whether it be caring for a family, living out our religious vows, teaching a class, or lying on a bed of suffering--doing all of this extraordinarily well. During this month, let us all remember each other in prayer that we live our lives in Christ-like love, true Christian charity.

At the beginning of October, we had our annual retreat for the Companions of Pauline. It was great to see so many of you—over 75! For those of you unable to come, please know that you were united with us in prayer. At the beginning of the retreat day, I had read an e-mail from Sister Maria Dolores Tan, missionary in the Philippines. They, as you know, have been in the midst of much tragedy due to the recent earthquakes and their aftermath. Despite this, Sister sent a message that she hoped we had a blessed day and that she was praying for us. Talk about unity among our Sisters and Companions!

During the last week of February and the first week of March, one coordinator of the Companions of Pauline and a Companion from each of our provinces will meet in Rome and in Germany to share ideas concerning our various programs. We will also have the opportunity to visit, as pilgrims, some of the places which are special to our Congregation. Judy Fischer, Companion of Pauline from Williamsport, will accompany me. If you have any thoughts and concerns which you would want addressed at this meeting, please let me know. Sister Adalberta has asked me to chair the various sessions, so please keep me and all participants in your prayers. Judy and I will have lots to share with you on Covenant Day!

Our last several issues of "As Branches on the Vine" focused on the life of Mother Pauline up to the founding of the Congregation, since in August we celebrated our 160th anniversary. For the next several issues, I thought you may want to hear about the early days of the congregation. We will begin with an account of the novitiate year of Mother Pauline and the first three Sisters. I think you will find them interesting and inspirational.

May God be with all of us in a special way as we "companion" each other and all those we meet on our way to Him. That is my special prayer for you.

Love,

Sister Joseph Spring, S.C.C.

The Novitiate Year Of Mother Pauline and Her Three Companions

The first small motherhouse, hidden away behind the tall yew trees at the Cassel Gate in Paderborn, is a well-known picture to all of us. It was there that Mother Pauline and her first three companions passed their novitiate year from August 21, 1849 until November 4, 1850, and his Excellency Bishop Franz Drepper, had designated Mother Pauline as superior. Prior to this announcement, Mother Pauline had faced the situation and placed herself wholeheartedly and unreservedly under the Holy Will of God, stating: "If the Bishop appoints another as superior, I will obey her with the greatest alacrity; but if I am appointed, then I must lead them in all things that they may have a feeling of security. I may not be a swaying reed but to all a firm support, a strong wall." To the other three Sisters it seemed but natural, self-understood, that Pauline, the Foundress, should also be the superior and the leader of the little group, although she was not the eldest of them. Sister Maria Rath was 42 years of age at the time she received the holy habit, Sister Elizabeth Schlueter was 25, and Sister Mathilde Kothe, just 21.

The communal life of these first four Sisters was not restricted exclusively to the Meyer estate on the opposite side of the street (the so-called "hollow", now Mallinckrodt Street); there and in the porter's lodge at the corner of Cassell Street and Busdorf Road, which the city officials had rented to Pauline for her day nursery in the beginning of 1849, she and her companions carried on their activities. The arrangement was not at all convenient, considering the comparatively long distances that the three houses were from

each other and which had to be traversed several times a day. The cooking was done in the small motherhouse and the meals were also served there. Several Sisters also slept there as did also the maids. The summer cottage of the Meyer estate was used principally for the blind; there they were instructed, were taught the arts and crafts, and slept there under the motherly protection of Mother Pauline, who would not be deprived of this privilege. There, too, was the modest little chapel. Sister Mathilde was in charge of the day nursery. Her little charges arrived at 7 a.m. and remained there all day until evening. The housekeeper, Jule, who had served as cook for the children in the secularized Capuchin monastery, rendered service here in the same capacity.

Despite the great handicap of their cramped quarters and the many inconveniences connected therewith, it was Mother Pauline's ardent desire that the Sisters should lead a well-regulated conventual life, as can be seen from the annotation which she made in her diary on All Souls' Day, 1849, which was, incidentally, also the monthly day for spiritual renewal:

Oh, ineffably good and loving Jesus, help me to be more punctual in the observance of the daily schedule. All depends on me; if I am prompt, then, too, the entire house will be punctual. Help me to be friendly and affable toward the good Sisters at all times, so as to lighten their task, for they labor so untiringly from morning till night without ceasing. (But we must set aside a period in the

evening for communal spiritual reading). Lord, grant me a tender, loving solicitude toward all: the children, the Sisters, the domestics—toward all! Grant me, dear Lord, the grace to be faithful in my prayer life, punctual in obeying the daily schedule, and help me to be charitable toward all!

We shall only be able to comprehend the scope and the depth of these various resolutions when we stop to consider the multiplicity of problems and business transactions that had to be solved during the first year of the existence of the young congregation.



Even before the foundation of the Congregation, Reverend Father Wiemann, Pastor in Dortmund, had appealed to Pauline for Sisters to staff a school in his parish for the education and training of girls and young women. Before coming to Dortmund, Reverend Father Wiemann had been chaplain at Wewelsburg and had been closely acquainted with Pauline and the entire Mallinckrodt family. Pauline recognized in this offer, as she so aptly describes in the first part of the Annals of the Congregation, “a striking indication of the ordinances of God’s providence and love.” Her paternal grandfather had been mayor of the free imperial city of Dortmund and both he and his ancestors were staunch adherents of the Protestant religion since the days of the so-called Reformation. As a result of the marriage of her father, a Protestant, to her mother, a Catholic, Pauline was the first Catholic girl in the Mallinckrodt family. She was, therefore, ineffably grateful that God had offered her the grace to assist in re-establishing the Catholic faith through the education and training of Catholic girls in her father’s hometown, and was willing to make every effort, despite the few members that she had at her disposal.



In the next issue:

**Mother Pauline Negotiates
With Civil Authorities**



As we approach the beautiful holiday of Thanksgiving, we can use the prayer of Mother Pauline:

My whole heart is grateful to you,
and I would rather experience
my thanksgiving,
my love,
quietly in your presence,
than express it in words.

You have drawn me to yourself
in a wonderful way,
have taught me things
about which
I knew nothing before.

In deep peace I desire
to surrender myself
to your faithful guidance
and
to pray quietly in your presence,
"I am the handmaid of the Lord;
Let what you have said
be done to me."

(Retreat, November 1846)

***A Blessed Thanksgiving
to all!***



Prayer Corner

**Please remember in your prayers the repose
of the soul of:**

Sister Ruth Speak
Sister Marie Kavanagh
Sister Virginia Janson
Sister Elise Kerekes
Sister Mary Gerard Gebler
Sister Mary Vianney Kaeser

**Please remember in your prayers
the return to good health of:**

Companion of Pauline, Kathleen Reiss

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

srjoseph@scceast.org

