

## DOCUMENTATION SERIES

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### MAGDALENE OF CANOSSA : FOUNDRRESS

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*MAGDALENE  
OF CANOSSA  
AND  
THE TERTIARIES*

ROME 1994

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## FOREWORD

Magdalene of Canossa's whole life is the fulfilment of her spiritual experience which is concisely expressed by the well-known motto: "Charity is a fire that ever spreads embracing all".

In fact, Magdalene, whose heart was aflame with the love of Christ Crucified, wished to reach out to the larger number of people as possible to uplift them, make Jesus known to them, comfort them in sorrow and in sickness.

Prelates and Bishops of other towns appreciated the work blossoming in the houses she had founded and solicited her to respond to the needs of their flock as well. Her daughters, however, though generously available, could not cope with all their pressing requests.

Thus, Magdalene nourished the "challenging idea...that the Tertiaries..." should stand in wherever her Daughters could not, to carry out "many ministries that the Institute of the Canossian Sisters cannot embrace because they are to be involved in the works proper to the Institute".

The Tertiaries' Institution reminds us of the "Third Orders" of old, but it has its simple and essential structure.

It stands side by side the Institute of the Daughters of Charity and involves youth, widows and married women who are touched by the "Greatest Love" contemplated in Christ Crucified and Our Lady of Sorrows.

The modalities, by which this wonderful, still relevant fruit of Magdalene's insight are incarnated in history, varied from time to time.

The Tertiaries, before, and the lay vocations, today, are ablaze with the same flame of charity that kindles many generous people.

M. Elide Testa  
Superior General

# 1. THE INSTITUTION ACCORDING TO THE FOUNDRESS

## First Plans and Their Implementation

Magdalene of Canossa, overflowed with zeal for the Glory of God and the salvation of her brothers and Sisters and was aflame with "charity, which like a fire spreads, embracing all"<sup>1</sup>. She was so touched by the boundless love of Christ Crucified, that she wanted to extend her apostolic project to the greatest number of persons as possible, involving them in the dynamics of her charitable activity. Being an ingenious and creative woman, guided by the Spirit, she invented new means to spread God's kingdom in the world.

Thus, the "Tertiaries" of the Daughters of Charity were born of her mind and heart. This institution is not one of the five official "Branches of Charity"<sup>2</sup>. It is a fruit of the inner fire that urged Magdalene to set others ablaze with the same zeal.

Initially, Magdalene thought of lay persons (virgins, widows or married women) willing to cooperate with her to implement her great apostolic project. Her first insight dates back to earlier than 1818.

In fact, on 21 October 1818, replying to Elena Bernardi, Magdalene begged her to tell her Milanese friend, Countess Carolina Durini, that she had no time to write about the Tertiaries:

*"Tell my Durini, whom I embrace dearly with all the other friends, that, since I'm running short of time, I am unable to write about the Tertiaries. However, I would not write, even if I were available, because I have no one to consult: Don Galvani is out of town and he will return just after my departure".<sup>3</sup>*

Magdalene completed the Plan of the Tertiaries five years later, that is, in 1823. She sent it to Msgr. Francesco Maria Zoppi, who was going to Rome to be consecrated a Bishop.

Below the Plan, she wrote, by hand:

*"Dispatched from Milan to Rome on 17 November, 1823"<sup>4</sup>*

In the accompanying letter addressed to Msgr. Zoppi, she expressed herself as follows:

*"I avail myself of your outstanding charity, being encouraged by what you deigned to write to me... together with this letter, you will receive the Plan of the Tertiaries... You*

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<sup>1</sup>. Cf. M.d.C., Regole e scritti spirituali, P.1a, p.43

<sup>2</sup>. "Branch" means "an apostolic sector" ( cf M.d.C.,R.s.s., P.1a, p.43).

<sup>3</sup>. M.d.C. to Bernardi, 21 October (1918), Ep.III/5, pp.4004-4005. We gauge the date of this letter from the text and from other letters of the time.

<sup>4</sup>. M.d.C., R.s.s., P.2a, p.49.

*might find it too wide, but to my humble opinion, when they (the Tertiaries) trust us (we have their heart in our hand), we may really help them live a true christian life. Besides, I think that if they carry out what is described in the Plan, families and individuals will be changed for the better".<sup>5</sup>*

Magdalene wanted that the Institution, at least at the beginning, be simple, open, flexible, and with basic structures. The Plan reads:

*"...it looks proper that we establish it in the simplest way as possible, at least at the moment..."<sup>6</sup>*

*"...The Tertiaries of the Daughters of Charity, who are bound simply by this great Virtue and are devoted to our most Holy Mother of Sorrows, live in their family, and practise the works of charity embraced by the Institute".<sup>7</sup>*

Since the Tertiaries were entrusted with different duties as to whether they were virgins, widows or married people, Magdalene thought it necessary that

*"...each one seeks for unity in the Spirit and everybody strives after the particular as well as the common good".<sup>8</sup>*

She outlined the essentials of the Institution of the Tertiaries and stated that it could be easily implemented:

*"After describing the Project fully, the writer thinks it fit to add that, though she had not yet implemented it, the little achievements in the works of the Institute show that it could be easily carried out".<sup>9</sup>*

Before initiating the Project, Magdalene wished to know her Superiors' opinion on the matter. As we have mentioned earlier, through Msgr. Zoppi, who was on his way to Rome, she dispatched the Project to Cardinal Zurla, so that he might present it to the Pope and ask for His blessing.

Cardinal Zurla received two Plans; the second one, which dealt with the Tertiaries living in a community, was more exacting, required that members had a special call from God and needed to be tested by experience. On receiving the two Plans together with the Rules of the Daughters of Charity, the Cardinal thought that the Plans were an Appendix of the Rules.

On 27 March, 1824, Magdalene wrote to him and clarified that the Plans had no connection with the Rules:

*"At this juncture, I think it necessary to humbly explain the remark I made when, lately, I heard from Msgr. Zoppi that he had handed to your Reverence, our Rules as well as the two Projects, or Plans. The latter have no connection with the Rules. I understand now the reason why in your last very cherished letter, you deigned to tell me that you were having also the "Appendix" of our Rules".<sup>10</sup>*

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<sup>5</sup>. M.d.C. to Msgr. Zoppi, November 1823, Ep.II/1, p.579.

<sup>6</sup>. M.d.C., Piano delle Terziarie, 17 novembre 1823, T1, A3,XV, A.C.R.

<sup>7</sup>. Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>. Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>. M.d.C., Piano delle Terziarie, R.s.s., Pt. 2, p. 49.

<sup>10</sup>. M.d.C., to Cardinal Zurla, 27 March, 1824, Ep.II/1, p.583.

In this letter, she also requested for the Cardinal's and the Holy Father's opinion and blessing on the Plans, especially on the Plan of the Tertiaries living in a family :

*"I think that to revitalize deeply the faith of the people and reform their behaviour, as the Lord, miserable as I am, grants me the desire, it would be very opportune to implement the two Plans or Projects. At the moment I did not intend to ask for the approval. I wished to know only if the Holy Father and your very Reverence considered them opportune and blessed them...I would like to add that, if we want, the Project of the Tertiaries (living in a family) could be easily implemented, and will be very beneficial to the people living in the country-side, for in our Houses we have the branch concerning the training of the Country-teachers. The other Plan requires maturity, time and prudence in every respect and, when it is needed, should be promoted slowly".<sup>11</sup>*

After some months, precisely on 25 August 1824, Magdalene, having no reply, solicited again the consensus from Rome. She would have liked to implement the Plan of the Tertiaries living in families on the occasion of the Spiritual Exercises for the Country-Teachers, which were to be held in October. She wrote to Cardinal Zurla:

*"I do not wish to hurry you for a reply, but since you urged me to work for God's glory and service, I cannot but ask you if the Plan of the Tertiaries for which, as your Eminence know, I did not ask the approval, may be blessed by the Holy Father and by yourself...If the Lord will not dispose otherwise, early October the Spiritual Exercises for my country girls and other good young ladies from villages will be held in Bergamo. If you agree, on that occasion I will start implementing the Plan. I think that the Tertiaries could help, by and by, to stamp out ignorance in the families and in the country-side".<sup>12</sup>*

At last permission came from Rome. In fact, on 28 October 1824, Cardinal Zurla wrote to the Marchioness:

*"Also the Plan of the Tertiaries is acceptable, you may consider it".<sup>13</sup>*

After receiving the favourable reply, Magdalene hastened to propose the Project to the Country Teachers, who, in her opinion, would welcome and implement the Plan more aptly. On 27 November 1824, she wrote to the Cardinal as follows:

*"I think that the Tertiaries, which I have implemented as soon as I received your cherished letter, will achieve very good results".<sup>14</sup>*

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<sup>11</sup>. M.d.C., to Cardinal Zurla, 27 March, 1824, Ep. II/1, pp.583-584.

<sup>12</sup>. M.d.C., to Cardinal Zurla, 25 August 1824, Ep. II/1, pp.586-587.

<sup>13</sup>. Cardinal Zurla to M.d.C., 28 October 1824, *ibid.*, p.725.

<sup>14</sup>. M.d.C., to Cardinal Zurla, 27 November 1824, *Ibid.*, p.593.

## II. - GOAL OF THE INSTITUTION

Magdalene of Canossa permeated all her institutions with the vital sap she drew from Christ Crucified and Our Lady of Sorrows, Mother of Charity at the foot of the Cross.

Her only goal was to root deeply in charity, in generous self-sacrifice and gratuitous, joyous self-gift, the persons following her apostolic projects.

In drawing up the essential guidelines of the Institution of the Tertiaries she stated:

*"Being encouraged by the blessings which the Lord has bestowed up to now on the little works of the Daughters of Charity, the writer wishes that the Queen of Heaven be more greatly glorified and would like to implement this Plan now, in order to extend somehow also the Institute to accomplish what the Institute as such cannot pursue".<sup>15</sup>*

At the conclusion of the Plan she wrote:

*"(The writer) would like that this Sodality be established to the greater glory and service of our Lord Jesus and of our most Holy and amiable Mother of Sorrows".<sup>16</sup>*

The goal was well defined right from the first outline of the Plan of the Tertiaries:

*"...to practise and spread the devotion of our Lady of Sorrows, to sanctify oneself carrying out one's duties...and perform the works of charity in one's own family and outside..."<sup>17</sup>*

Even the operational limitations of the Institute of the Daughters of Charity urged Magdalene to implement the Institution of the Tertiaries, the aim of which was to overcome them:

*"... though the Plan of the Institute of the Daughters of Charity stretches far and wide, it can only respond to the smallest portion of the needs of the Diocese where it is established..."<sup>18</sup>*

*"...the Institution of the Tertiaries... would accomplish the works performed by the Institute, in particular those which the Sisters, as Religious, cannot perform in a perfect manner".<sup>19</sup>*

Magdalene explained why:

1. The Rules are a necessary protection, but they bind the Daughters of Charity and restrict their work.<sup>20</sup>
2. The need to be self-sufficient conditions the Sisters' numerical growth, as the following passage shows:

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<sup>15</sup>. M.d.C., R.s.s., Pt. 2, p.43.

<sup>16</sup>. Ibid., p. 49

<sup>17</sup>. Ibid., p.17.

<sup>18</sup>. Ibid., p. 44

<sup>19</sup>. Ibid., p. 17

<sup>20</sup>. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 44

*"...as the Institute was born amid a variety of political constraints, to ensure its Simpler and more natural existence, we thought it necessary that each member bring along...what is needed for their sustenance. Consequently many well-to-do persons are scared and do not dare to embrace an Institute which delights to take care almost always of the poor, and those who decide to join very often lack means of livelihood. Though the Lord is never wanting in sending suitable subjects...the needs are much greater than their number."<sup>21</sup>*

On the contrary:

- The Tertiaries had no other bonds but Charity, so it would be easy for them to move about.

- *They could reach "where the Institute cannot" and spread rapidly, as one could easily join this Sodality and "at the same time care for the spiritual welfare of many souls".<sup>22</sup>*

It is crystal clear that the Foundress was constantly fixed on the Glory of God and on Making Jesus loved by the larger number of people of any status and condition. Her deepest longing in her apostolic life was to prevent sin. Therefore, the Tertiaries, too, should

*"perform those charitable works which prevent, impede and remove sins, which Cause very deep sorrow to the Mother of God".<sup>23</sup>*

With regard to the commencement of the Institution of the Tertiaries, Magdalene wrote to Cardinal Zurla as follows:

*"...I think that by this means, by and by ignorance and moral disorder will be largely removed and Christian spirit revived in the families and in the country-side".<sup>24</sup>*

Real good, that is, salvation of souls, was Magdalene's constant yearning. She was ready to achieve it or to facilitate it at all costs.

She followed this criterion even on 19 February, 1825, when she replied to Msgr. Zoppi who had manifested to her the urgent spiritual needs of his diocese:

*"Your description of the spiritual needs of your people aroused in me a pleasant idea...to reach the heart of the adult ladies you know and be useful to them through the Tertiaries ..".<sup>25</sup>*

Magdalene always looked beyond her actual field of action. Christ on the Cross had communicated her a thirst that not even death could quench: from Heaven she still urges her Daughters to continue the good work she has begun.

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<sup>21</sup>. M.d.C., Plan of the Tertiaries, 17 November 1823, T1, A3, XV, A.C.R.

<sup>22</sup>. Cf. M.d.C., R.s.s., Pt.2, pp. 44-45.

<sup>23</sup>. Ibid., p.17.

<sup>24</sup> M.d.C., to Cardinal Zurla, 25 August 1824, Ep. II/1, p.587.

<sup>25</sup>. M.d.C., to Msgr. Zoppi, 19 February 1825, Ep. II/2, p. 1061



### III. - "DEVOTED TO THE MOST HOLY MOTHER OF SORROWS"

Magdalene of Canossa declared Mary Most Holy and Sorrowful "Foundress and Mother" of the Institute of the Daughters of Charity and dedicated

*" the Queen of Heaven be more greatly glorified... ".<sup>26</sup>*

True, authentic devotion to Mary must be an imitation of Mary to be live concretely.

The Tertiaries ought to practise some virtues proper to the Daughters of Charity, like docility, patience, meekness, gentleness - not only in view of their own sanctification, but also because these virtues are indispensable in dealing efficaciously with the youth. The Plan reads:

*"...to imitate Mary, these Tertiaries' filial service to Mary most Holy and Sorrowful will consist in practising patience, docility, meekness and gentleness. This will be done not only to sanctify oneself, but also to be free in carrying out the works of Charity in line with the Institute... ".<sup>27</sup>*

The Tertiaries' spirituality is the Daughters of Charity's spirituality: both come from the same root, are born of love and imitation of Mary Most Holy beneath the Cross:

*"The least Institute of the Daughters of Charity ...which was initiated a few years ago, is dedicated to the Great Virgin of Sorrows who is acknowledged as its only Mother".<sup>28</sup>*

*As the Daughters of Charity are called*

- to empathize with the countless sorrows of the Queen of Martyrs,
- to remind people of these sorrows,
- to prevent and blot out in oneself and in others the cause of her sorrows, that is, sin,<sup>29</sup>

so the Tertiaries will

- devote themselves totally to Mary Most Sorrowful...
- spread in the world the devotion to her and to the cause of her sorrows, that is, the most sacred Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>30</sup>

Magdalene contemplated Mary next to Christ Crucified. Mary was inseparable from Him in love and in sorrow. She is the Mother of Charity beneath the Cross who revealed to

Magdalene the unfathomable richness of the love of Christ and led her to take His love as the inspiration of all her Institutions, of the Tertiaries, too, whom she had started in 1824.<sup>31</sup>

From June to August 1825, Magdalene visited three times the Marian Shrine at Caravaggio. It was at that time that she decided to instill into the heart of the Tertiaries the devotion to the Passion of Christ and to the sorrows of Mary, as a token of gratitude for the many graces she had received from Our Lady. She wrote in her Memoirs :

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<sup>26</sup>. Ibid., p.43.

<sup>27</sup>. M.d.C., R.s.s., P.2, pp. 46-47.

<sup>28</sup>. Cf. ibid., p. 43.

<sup>29</sup>. Cf., ibid.

<sup>30</sup>. Ibid., p.46.

<sup>31</sup>. M.d.C., to Cardinal Zurla, 27 November 1824, Ep.II/1, p.593.

*"...I wondered how I could show my gratitude to Mary. I thought I would do so by promoting the devotion and the memory of the Lord's Passion and of the Sorrows of the Virgin Mary among the Tertiaries of the Institute...In our prayer encounters with the Tertiaries, I began by making them reflect on the insults Jesus received when He appeared before the Tribunals."*<sup>32</sup>

Magdalene recorded in her Memoirs that on her second visit to Caravaggio :

*"...as I prayed before the Blessed Sacrament...I was reminded of the agony of Jesus in the Garden of Olives. I understood that the Tertiaries should start the reflection on the Passion from this point".*<sup>33</sup>

This strong inner urge to let the Tertiaries reflect on what Christ had suffered in His Passion is a clear indication of Magdalene's deep longing to extend her zeal for the Redemptive Mystery of Christ to any new initiative.

Magdalene's letter to Faccioli, Superior of St. Stephen's Convent in Milan, belongs to this stretch of time. Magdalene insisted:

*"Remember your Spouse abandoned in the Garden and willingly keep him company, because He cannot be comforted in his agony if we get sad for trifles".*<sup>34</sup>

*Our saintly Foundress wanted the Daughters of Charity and the Tertiaries to respond generously to the infinite love of the Son of God. She wrote in her Memoirs:*

*"...I was enlightened on the infinite love of Jesus in the Institution of the Blessed Sacrament. I decided that in considering the Passion, both the Tertiaries and the Sisters should reflect on the excessive charity of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist and pray to be able to bear with love the bitterness, the insults, the contempt, the forgetfulness, the wrongs, and anything else which the Lord deigns to send them, in imitation of the patient Savior."*<sup>35</sup>

Mother Elda Pollonara's comment is as follows:

*"Magdalene was impressed by the infinite love of Jesus in the Eucharist, by His patient availability to God the Father and to mankind and planned to animate the Tertiaries and the Daughters of the Institute to welcome lovingly with the same interior attitude of Jesus, the bitterness, the insults, the contempt, the forgetfulness and the wrongs they would meet in the apostolic service of their fellowmen. It is the same spirit of Charity and holiness of Christ that every member belonging to the Institute, is progressively called to assimilate."*<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>. M.d.C., Memoirs, A contemplative in action, Rome 1988, pp. 371-372.

<sup>33</sup>. Ibid., p. 342.

<sup>34</sup>. M.d.C., to D. Faccioli, 17 August 1825, Ep.III/2, p.1178.

<sup>35</sup>. M.d.C., Memoirs, p. 372.

<sup>36</sup>. E. POLLONARA, in M.d.C., Memoirs, p.373.

#### **IV. - CRITERIA FOR SELECTION AND MODALITIES FOR ACCEPTANCE**

Magdalene of Canossa, who had initiated the "Training Courses for Teachers" <sup>37</sup>two years earlier, thought that youth willing to be Tertiaries could be easily recruited among the participants, as she had written to Cardinal Zurla on 27 March 1824<sup>38</sup>

The first chapter of the Foundress' incomplete sketch of the First Plan reads:

*"...any person of good conduct, whether a virgin or a widow, can be enrolled as a Tertiary of this Sodality..."*<sup>39</sup>

In the complete Plan she had sent to Rome through Msgr.Zoppi, she specified:

*"...the writer wishes to welcome into the Solidarity not only the virgins and the widows, but also some married women, thus following, though afar, the modality of the seraphic Father Francis of Assisi with regard to his Tertiaries..."*<sup>40</sup>

The definitive form of the Third Order (<sup>41</sup>) dates back to St. Francis of Assisi: men and women, married or unmarried, lived their family life and carried out their profession while, under the guidance of the First Order," followed certain Rules and devoted themselves to specific practices of prayer and love of neighbour".<sup>42</sup>

Magdalene followed this general criterion, but in the same Plan she described in detail the directives the Daughters of Charity ought to adopt when selecting persons to be Tertiaries of her Institute.

With regard to the virgins she stated:

*"Among the youth attending the Institute let them choose some of tested piety, most solid way of thinking, and really eager to live a truly Christian life."*

About selecting the country-girls educated in the Institute, she wrote:

*"Let them choose the most pious and those of greater wisdom".*<sup>43</sup>

In fact, in her perspective, the "Country Teachers" who will become Tertiaries, will expand greatly their work, that is:

*"By their teaching, they will extend in the country-side... the same Sodality".*<sup>44</sup>

It is not clear whether the Foundress here is referring to the Sodality of the Dolours of Mary Most Holy or to the Tertiaries. From the context, however, we gauge that she meant the Tertiaries, who, first, ought to enroll in that Sodality, which was like the stepping stone to being Tertiaries later on.

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<sup>37</sup>. E.POLLONARA, Training Courses for Teachers in the Beginning of the Institute, Rome 1986.

<sup>38</sup>. Cf. M.d.C., to Cardinal Zurla, 27 March 1824, Ep. II/1, p.584.

<sup>39</sup>. M.d.C., R.s.s., P.2, p. 18.

<sup>40</sup>. M.d.C., Plan for Tertiaries T1, A3, XV, A.C.R.

<sup>41</sup>. The association of lay people is called "Third Order" because the First Order is the Religious Men's Order and the Second is the Religious Women's Order.

<sup>42</sup>. Cf. K. BIHLMEYER - H. TUECHLE, Storia della Chiesa, Brescia 1969, p. 322.

<sup>43</sup>. M.d.C., Plan for Tertiaries already quoted.

<sup>44</sup>. M.d.C., Plan for Tertiaries, T1, A3, XV, A.C.R.

In the beginning the most consistent nucleus of the Tertiaries was made up of youth, yet the Foundress wanted that the Daughters of Charity discern among the ladies they met or dealt with

*"on account of the school girls  
or in the parish doctrine  
or in the hospitals,  
pious widows and good married ladies  
who sincerely wish to be totally for the Lord".<sup>45</sup>*

Modalities of acceptance and enrolment were simple:

*"After testing them for some time and instructing them on the goal of this Institution and how to achieve it, if they are eager and disposed, the Superior should get them to be enrolled in the Sodality of the Dolours of Mary Most Holy, by a priest, approved for the purpose..."<sup>46</sup>*

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<sup>45</sup>. M.d.C., R.s.s., Pt. 2, p. 45.

<sup>46</sup>. M.d.C., Plan for Tertiaries quoted earlier. We think that this quotation confirms what we have stated earlier on : enrolment to the Solidality of Mary Most Holy before becoming Tertiaries.

## **V.- SPIRITUAL AND APOSTOLIC COMMITMENTS OF THE TERTIARIES LIVING IN THE FAMILY**

### ***Spiritual Commitments***

We have already mentioned which spirituality should animate the Tertiaries.

The Foundress, however, knowing by experience that spirituality needs to be nourished by concrete actions, laid down practices of piety and times of prayer, as a necessary support to the Tertiaries along the journey of being faithful to their vocation.

She outlined various itineraries of growth in spiritual life: participation at Mass and the Sacraments, meditation, practice of special virtues, fulfilment of one's duties. They were necessary for the personal sanctification of the Tertiaries and their apostolic commitment:

- "Every day they will recite seven Hail Marys to the Sorrowful Heart of Mary to obtain a holy life and death and for the conversion of sinners...

- Each one will try to attend Mass every day and reflect, according to one's ability, on the Dolours of Mary Most Holy and on the Passion of Jesus.

- if her family allows it, she will introduce the custom of the recitation of a third part of the holy Rosary and on Saturday will replace it with the recitation of the Chaplet of the Dolours of Mary Most Holy.

- if possible, will receive the Sacraments on the Feasts of Mary Most Holy, including the two feasts of Our Lady of Sorrows.

- will wear very simple, modest and also decent dresses, according to her social status.

- will try as much as possible to witness to her faith and promote union in her family by imitating Mary most Holy, practising especially patience, docility, meekness and gentleness.

All this ought to be done not only in order to sanctify oneself, but also to be enabled to freely practise the works of Charity of the Institute.<sup>47</sup>

### ***Apostolic Commitments***

*Regarding the works of charity, Magdalene called on the Tertiaries to reflect, first of all, on charity towards their family members.*

*She, too, was generously involved for many years in assisting the sick, old grand-uncles and her uncle, a widower, in educating her little cousin Charles, in forming her younger sisters and instructing the servants.*

The Plan reads:

*"The first way to practise... the works of charity embraced by the Institute, is that of practising them in their family as much as possible and with total commitment, care, patience, docility, meekness, gentleness".<sup>48</sup>*

The Tertiaries, in a special way those who because of circumstances or for special duties could not extend their apostolic work outside the family, would devote themselves to:

*"- form the young members of their family  
- instruct them in religion  
- take care that they receive the Sacraments well." <sup>49</sup>*

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<sup>47</sup>. Cf. M.d.C., R.s.s., Pt. 2, pp. 46-47.

<sup>48</sup>. Cf. M.d.C., R.s.s., Pt. 2, p. 47.

<sup>49</sup>. Cf. Ibid.

Besides, each Tertiary should, as far as possible,

*"- help in the parish doctrine on feast-days, assist the sick members of their family in a very charitable way".<sup>50</sup>*

In drawing up the Regulations of the Tertiaries who would carry out the works of charity of the Institute of the Daughters of Charity, Magdalene took into account, with wisdom and prudence, their respective condition as virgins, widows and married women.

### ***The virgin Tertiaries***

In the Plan Magdalene pointed out works more suitable to the youth. She wrote:

"To the virgins should be allotted especially the formation of youth. They will

- animate, instruct, prepare them dutifully to the reception of the Holy Sacraments of Confirmation, Penance, Eucharist;
- draw them away from (moral) dangers as best as possible;
- accustom them to dress modestly;
- teach them to beware of moral dangers in their working-place.<sup>51</sup>

On feast-days the virgin Tertiaries will

" encourage the girls to attend Christian doctrine in the parish;  
- look after the girls in time of relaxation and entertainment, if they are available: either keeping them close by or taking them to suitable places of entertainment".<sup>52</sup>

Besides, the Virgin Tertiaries will

" assist dutifully in the parish Christian Doctrine in any role suitable to them, except that of a nurse, unless they are over forty years of age".<sup>53</sup>

The "ministries of charity", including visiting the poor and the sick at home, flourished as a consequence of the good relationships established through the work of Christian Doctrine.

Magdalene exempted the young Tertiaries from embracing nursing, but she encouraged them to take up a responsible role in the parish doctrine. In this last task the Tertiaries differ from the Daughters of Charity who are forbidden to "take up any presiding role"<sup>54</sup> in the parish ministries.

### **The widowed Tertiaries**

Widows, who choose to remain such and are not bound by other family commitments, may, according to Magdalene's Plan, devote themselves to any work of charity, always in conformity with the works embraced by the Institute of the Daughters of Charity.

*"They should be entrusted with the duty of:*

- *verifying how the girls going to school in the Houses of the Institute behave at home;*
- *visiting sick women;*

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<sup>50</sup>. Cf. Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>. Cf. Ibid.

<sup>52</sup>. Cf. Ibid.

<sup>53</sup>. Ibid., pp.47-48.

<sup>54</sup>. M.d.C., Plans of the Institute, Ep. II/2, p.1427.

- *supporting the work carried out by the Daughters of Charity in hospitals...*
- *teaching Christian Doctrine in the parish;*
- *accepting the duty as a nurse in the Christian doctrine school, visiting...not only the sick colleagues of the Christian doctrine, but also the sick Tertiaries...".<sup>55</sup>*

### **The married Tertiaries**

With regard to the "married "Tertiaries Magdalene made a further distinction: women who had children and those who had no children.

The latter, if their husband agreed, could devote themselves to many works of charity like the widows. In particular, they could:

- "- *attend Christian Doctrine in the parish and take up any post...*
- *visit the sick women in hospital and help them solve their problems...*
- *support needy girls and find a shelter for poor women leaving hospital...".<sup>56</sup>*

The married Tertiaries who had children, by the fact that they were Tertiaries, had to take greater care of the members of their family. First of all and above all, they should practice charity at home by :

- "- *caring not only for their children, but also for their servants and helpers;*
- *exacting that their daughters dress modestly and behave ell at home...*
- *if the essential duties at home are taken care of, they, too, like the married tertiaries, could teach doctrine, assist the sick in the Hospital and carry out other works of charity".<sup>57</sup>*

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<sup>55</sup>. M.d.C.,R.s.s., Pt. 2, p. 48.

<sup>56</sup>. *ibid.*, pp. 48-49.

<sup>57</sup>. *Ibid.*, pp.48-49.

## **VI. - RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TERTIARIES AND THE DAUGHTERS OF CHARITY**

The Daughters of Charity will always be the point of reference and support for the Tertiaries living in the family.

The relationship between the two Institutions will be marked by cordiality and reciprocal help.

Magdalene wrote:

*"... union of Charity between both Institutions is necessary so that the Tertiaries may find comfort and spiritual assistance in the Daughters of Charity and the latter may consider the Tertiaries as persons caring for them, replacing them and performing works they cannot because of their sacred bonds".<sup>58</sup>*

To keep alive the spirit of the Institution, the Foundress established the following:

"Once a month the Tertiaries, who will be available, will meet together with the Superior of the Daughters of Charity, who will comfort them along the journey;  
- assign to them - according to each one's commitments, the works of charity needed at the time, for instance:

- \* getting information about some girls;
- \* visiting some sick girls;
- \* carrying out some business concerning the hospital and similar...".<sup>59</sup>

These meetings were also a time for evaluation and spiritual uplift.

In fact :

*"In such meetings the Superior will foster the good work initiated by the Tertiaries either in the parish Doctrine or in caring for the youth, that is, in their charitable works".<sup>60</sup>*

In 1831, the Institution of the Tertiaries was in full swing, especially at Trent.

The Superior, Margherita Rosmini, asked the Foundress if a priest could be called in to hold a conference for the Tertiaries during their monthly meeting.

Magdalene suggested her to do like in Verona, where such meetings were held in a simple manner and with profit. She replied as follows:

*"If we meet the Tertiaries as we do without a priest, we can hold a simple lesson on some rules, reflect on them and listen to what they (the Tertiaries) have to say in relation to the works of Charity".<sup>61</sup>*

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<sup>58</sup>. M.d.C., R.s.s., Pt. 2, p. 17.

<sup>59</sup>. Cf. Ibid. p. 45

<sup>60</sup>. Ibid.

<sup>61</sup>. M.d.C., to G. Rosmini, 30 December 1831, Ep. III/4, p. 2995.



## VII. - EXPANSION OF THE TERTIARIES LIVING IN THE FAMILY

The Institution of the Tertiaries, as it is laid down in the Plan, dated 17 November 1823, was fully operating before the Foundress' death.

The Plan was functioning well.

"Perhaps it is too lengthy"<sup>1</sup> explained Magdalene to Msgr. Zoppi. Yet it is what is needed for the one who, though living in a family, is willing to co-operate with other groups in the Church in order to respond somehow to the deep love of the Lord.

The virgins, the spouses, the widows found help to work out their sanctification by being faithful to their duties and carrying out the works of mercy.

This Christian life-style was also suitable for the Ladies of high rank who attended annually the Spiritual Exercises in the Houses of the Daughters of Charity. The first step was enrolment into the Union or Sodality of Our Lady of Sorrows.

Magdalene's conviction was that the Lord had chosen Mary not only as the way to us, but also as the way to Him. Magdalene wanted everyone to love her, especially with the title "Our Lady of Sorrows".

She communicated her boundless love for our Lady of Sorrows to the girls flocking to the Houses of the Daughters of Charity, to her Daughters, born of her love for the Crucified Lord, and also to the priests she met and esteemed most.

On 29 January 1826, she wrote to Msgr. Zoppi:

*"I would like, first of all, to propose to you a devotion which came to my mind a few months ago. I have started it in the Institute as well as among our Tertiaries. Now it is spreading among some priests".<sup>2</sup>*

It was the Sodality or Union of Mary Most Sorrowful.

Not all the confessors of the Communities of the Institute had the power to enrol into this Union the persons who wanted it, therefore, Magdalene wrote to Canon Luigi Polidori, in Rome, in order to obtain it for them:

*"The reason for disturbing you, now, concerns the service of this Holy Mother of ours... You know that our least Institute is dedicated to Mary our Most Holy Mother of Sorrows, who established it and guided it up to this moment. I feel it strictly a duty of mine to spread the devotion to Her Sorrows and since there are almost no Servites in our place... here I am to beg you to obtain from the General of that Order the power and the grace that the respective Confessors pro tempore of our Houses may enrol the persons who wish so into the Sodality of the Dolours of Mary Most Holy".<sup>3</sup>*

The General of the Order of the Servants of Mary ( or Servites) dispatched Magdalene's request to the Holy Father. On 7 April 1826, Pope Leo XII granted the various permits ("remisit preces arbitrio")<sup>4</sup> to the Father General of the Servites.<sup>5</sup>

At once, Magdalene sent a copy of the Rescript to the Confessor and Superior of the House of Bergamo, Don Giovanni Zanetti:

*"Attached to this letter of mine you will find a copy of the Rescript (for the Union of Our Lady of Sorrows) of the Holy Father, by which you may enroll the men and women who wish to, into the Union of Our Lady Most Sorrowful. You will find also other permits related to it. Forgive me, if, owing much to our common Mother Mary*

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<sup>1</sup> M.d.C., to Msgr Zoppi, November 1823, Ep. II/1, p. 579.

<sup>2</sup> M.d.C., to Msgr. Zoppi, 29 January 1826, Ep. II/2, p. 1074

<sup>3</sup> M.d.C., to Msgr. Polidori, 18 December 1825, Ep. II/1, pp. 600-601.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Rescritto del Santo Padre Leone XII, 7 aprile 1836, A2, XXVIII, f. 4 (3c) A.C.R.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

*Most Holy, I beg you to avail yourself of this right as soon as possible, because I wish that everyone may serve and glorify Mary even for me, for I am serving her only in words, though I have many reasons to do it even in deeds".<sup>6</sup>*

One month later, she wrote to the same Superior:

*"As soon as I meet you, I will hand to you the booklet together with all the information regarding the Sodality of Mary Most Holy and Sorrowful".<sup>7</sup>*

**At Verona:  
from being members of the Union of Our Lady of Sorrows  
to being Tertiaries**

Magdalene's letters show that Magdalene and her companions kept up human spiritual relationship with the girls of the School of Charity right from the beginning of the Institute and later with the ex-pupils of the "training Courses for Teachers". They helped them in their problems, supported them with their prayer and advice and provided them a job or an accommodation.

Such a link was established because the Daughters of Charity considered friendship, formation, and spiritual guidance as the corner-stone for fostering vocation to consecrated life as religious and as Tertiaries who are called to a committed apostolate and Christian witnessing in the world.

In 1822, the "Union" of the young ex-pupils of the School of Charity blossomed in Verona. It was guided by Cristina Pilotti.

As Cristina was presiding over the educational Course for teachers, Magdalene, on her return from Bergamo, wrote to the Superior to convey to Cristina consoling news about her girls of the Union at St. Zeno:

*"...greet for me Cristina in particular. Tell her, to console her, that I began visiting her girls of the Union. They behave well. Two of them, Teresa Canizza and Beatrice Bottacina who are pressing the Superior Matilde and our dear Angelina (Bragato) to welcome them too (into the Institute). The latter assured me that they always behave well. I will tell them to pray for seven days Mary most Holy, then we shall see "<sup>8</sup>*

The following year, Cristina was once again at Bergamo for the "Training Courses for Teachers". Since A. Bragato was, then, replacing her, she added a foot-note to Magdalene's letter to A. Bragato, which Magdalene had dictated to her:

*"Your Cristina embraces you...I recommend to you my girls of the Union. They are very dear to me".<sup>9</sup>*

Again:

*"I am very happy, my dear Angelina, that you welcome the girl from Bolzano into the Union, much more because she deserves it for her conduct.".<sup>10</sup>*

Even the "Union of Our Lady of Sorrows" for adults, began to bear fruit. The once upon a time, little, ruffled girls or most lively youth of St. Zeno district, became apostles in their homes and district and tried to make perfect the "little works" of their educators, as "external Tertiaries".

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<sup>6</sup>. M.d.C., to Don Zanetti, 27 May 1826, Ep. II/1, pp.411- 412.

<sup>7</sup>. M.d.C., to Don Zanetti, 13 July 1826, Ep. II/1, p. 417.

<sup>8</sup>. M.d.C. to R. Dabala', 14 September 1822, Ep. III/1, p.564.

<sup>9</sup>. M.d.C., to A. Bragato, 20 October 1824, Ep. III/2, p. 968.

<sup>10</sup>. M.d.C., to A. Bragato, 25 December 1824, Ep.III/2, p.1012.

To this Union, especially to the celibate members, were "entrusted" the little girls who were nobody's children or were in moral danger. The latter were provided with food and shelter after a modest contribution.

In Magdalene's letters many such girls are mentioned, but we limit ourselves to write about three of them who, after being associated to the "Union of Our Lady of Sorrows", were, at first, External Tertiaries. Later, when Cristina Pilotti organized for them a "little house" next to the Convent, they became Internal Tertiaries.

These young ladies were: Miss Toffoloni <sup>11</sup>, Miss Perigozzo and Miss Finotti <sup>12</sup>. Magdalene turned to Miss Toffoloni to ask for shelter for some girls. On 9 April 1828, she wrote to A. Bragato:

*"With regard to the good Beppina <sup>13</sup> I think that you should beg Toffoloni (a Tertiary) to provide her with a bed for these few days and keep her until I come, then we shall settle everything..."* <sup>14</sup>

To the same person :

*"With regard to the girl Marzocchi..., if you see she is in (moral) danger..., try to shelter her somewhere, either in Betta's or in Miss Toffoloni's home..."* <sup>15</sup>

In November 1830, the young Miss Perigozzo joined as a Tertiary to assist the "guests" in the "little House" set up by Cristina Pilotti. Since Cristina was absent, Magdalene recommended to Angela Bragato to welcome her:

*"I heard that on 18 (November) Miss Perigozzo entered the Little House. Since Cristina is absent, I recommend her to you"*. <sup>16</sup>

### **At Trent**

Margherita Rosmini, Superior of the House of Trent, was especially keen to implement the Plan of the Tertiaries and spread the Institution among the noble ladies at Trent.

As a first step, they, too, were enrolled in the "Union or Sodality of Our Lady of Sorrows". Thus, Magdalene replied briefly to some questions of A. Rosmini:

*"B. Taxis <sup>17</sup> is not obliged to recite seven Hail Marys; however, I will be happy if she recites them: there is a difference between being simply members of Our Lady of Sorrows and being Tertiaries"*. <sup>18</sup>

To consolidate the good results brought about by the Ladies through the Spiritual Exercises, in 1830, Margherita Rosmini decided to begin the Institution of the Tertiaries in Trent and asked the Foundress for its Rules. Magdalene replied:

*"Don Leonardo <sup>19</sup> is still on vacation in the country-side with Carlino, therefore I have no chance to send you the Rules of the Tertiaries and the books"* <sup>20</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>. Miss Toffoloni: cf. Ep. III/3, pp.1673, 1892, 1955, 2073.

<sup>12</sup>. Perigozzo e Finotti: cf. Ep. III/4, pp. 2582 e 3184; Ep. III/5, p. 3488.

<sup>13</sup>. Giuseppina Gagliardi, cf. Ep. III/2, p.1511.

<sup>14</sup>. M.d.C. to A. Bragato 9 April 1828, Ep. II/3, p.1892.

<sup>15</sup>. Cf. M.d.C., to A. Bragato, 21 June 1828, Ep. III/3, pp.1953-1955.

<sup>16</sup>. M.d.C., to A. Bragato, 18 November 1830, Ep. III/4, pp.2581-2582.

<sup>17</sup>. Baroness Taxis, a relative of Margherita Rosmini, promoter of the Spiritual Exercises at Trent.

<sup>18</sup>. M.d.C., to M. Rosmini, 29 December 1830, Ep. III/4 pp.2650-2651

<sup>19</sup>. Don Leonardo Leonardi was the teacher of Magdalene's little cousin, Charles.

<sup>20</sup>. M.d.C., to M. Rosmini, 16 December 1830, Ep. III/4, p.2465

On 11 September, she wrote:

*"As for Don Leonardo, I called on him many times in order to hand him the Rules of the Tertiaries... yesterday I forgot to send them to you... I shall try to dispatch them "*<sup>21</sup>

*The Rules were received at Trent after a month and Magdalene wrote to Margherita how to go about them:*

*"With regard to the Rules of the Tertiaries, let no one read them; it is enough that you explain them orally. It is not necessary for the Tertiaries to come every Sunday; it is enough once a month or a fortnight; you may meet them individually when you are available".*<sup>22</sup>

Soon after, she wrote:

*"Here I am to reply to your questions, my dear daughter. As for the Tertiaries, you may expand them, though you should not group them all together. You will do it later on, I mean to say, we shall do it together, when I will come; meanwhile there are Tertiaries"*<sup>23</sup>

M. Rosmini, on the advice of her brother, Don Antonio, modified some Rules and submitted the changes to the Foundress who replied at once:

*"As for inserting into the Rules the item about shows and plays, I think it is better not to do it... Such a clause could prevent some from joining. Therefore, I prefer that they (The Tertiaries) root themselves in and fall in love with true virtue, because if they lead a holy life, the Fear of God cuts the roots of the love of the world and as a consequence, its branches will wither".*<sup>(24)</sup>

On 31 December, she wrote more widely on the same topic:

*"Let me now speak about the Tertiaries. I read the Rules you have drawn from the Plan and I compared them with it. I found some changes, that is, some omissions. For example, about the Virgins not taking up nursing in the parish doctrine, if they are below forty years of age and similarly.*

*I thought that at Trent such roles are not yet known and, therefore, you should not talk about them. I am of your opinion regarding the detailed description of what celibate Tertiaries should do more than widows and married Tertiaries, and about what is more convenient to the latter. The rest of the Rules is alright.*

*Let us deal now about gathering them once a month, providing them with a conference by a priest... I am afraid that in a town like yours, meeting them regularly once a month, at once, may draw too much attention. Instead, I think it is necessary to start it little by little and in a simple manner, so that the people may have a taste of the charitable work accomplished by these good persons and the Institution be settled gradually.*

*About the people coming on the 8th of the month, let it be, because they were invited...I think it is indispensable to speak to Msgr. Freinadimetz and hear his opinion about it.*

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<sup>21</sup> M.d.C., to M.Rosmini, 11 September, 1830, Ep. III/4, p. 2511.

<sup>22</sup> M.d.C., to M.Rosmini, 1 October 1830, Ep. III/4, pp.2525-2526.

<sup>23</sup> M.d.C., to M.Rosmini, 26 October 1830, Ep. III/4, p. 2544.

<sup>24</sup> M.d.C., to M.Rosmini, 5 November 1830, Ep. III/4,p. 2957.

*Here, during the Spiritual Exercises of the Ladies, without my knowledge, the Abbot Venturi proposed to them that they select one day a month to prepare for death. They accepted fully the proposal.*

*However, as they wanted to put the annual Spiritual Exercises on solid foundations, the project was not followed. I did not mind if it was accomplished, nor I withdrew from it, but I spoke secretly to our very zealous Bishop. He told me he likes the Institution much, but first, I should ensure that the number of the members be sufficient for the Institution to survive.*

*See, my dear daughter, if it is better that the day to prepare for death coincide with the monthly meeting, because people die also at Trent. Therefore, to prepare oneself to this last step is not something new.*

*Then, approach the Superior, show him the Plan and speak about it. The topic about death could be dealt with by a minister of God. He could be called in just to talk about this. If you gather the Tertiaries without engaging a priest, you could simply have a lesson concerning the little Rules, explain them and listen to what the Tertiaries would like to say on the works of charity.<sup>25</sup>*

The following year, Margherita Rosmini managed to organize the Tertiaries into a Sodality by the name "Devotees of Mary". Its Little Rules were drawn up by her brother, Don Antonio.

The contents of these Little Rules were not new. A. Rosmini summed up and arranged in four little chapters, the spiritual and apostolic commitments which were laid down in the Plan for the Tertiaries, dated 17 November 1823.

***RULES FOR THE  
DEVOTEES OF MARY MOST HOLY AND SORROWFUL***  
*connected with the Institute of the Daughters of Charity*

- \* *Personal sanctification*
- \* *Sanctification of one's own family*
- \* *Sanctification of neighbours in general*
- \* *Link between the Devotees of Mary Mother of Sorrows and the Institute of the Daughters of Charity...* <sup>26</sup>

Magdalene was pleased with Margherita, also because the Bishop and the Superior of Trent were happy about the "Devotees of Mary", and expressed her desire to hand the above-mentioned Little Rules to the Superiors of the Houses where there were Tertiaries:

*"I hear that over-there the most esteemed Superior as well as His Highness (the Bishop) are happy about the "Devotees of Mary". I was greatly consoled to hear how...he understood the real spirit of the Institution, for the method he suggested or approved, is the best to form and perfect them (the Tertiaries). Miserable as I am, I will never fail to pray for them, as I have this Institution much at heart. I like very much the Little Rules the very reverend Don Antonio provided you with. I would like to give a copy of them to the Superiors of the Houses where there are Tertiaries"* <sup>27</sup>

As the organization, by and by, became perfect, new requests were made with regard to indulgences and prayers for the departed Tertiaries.

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<sup>25</sup> M.d.C., to M. Rosmini, 30 December 1831, Ep.III/4, pp. 2994 - 2995.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. A. Rosmini's Manuscript, Le "Divote di Maria", A1: Teca "Trento -Rovereto" bis, Arch. Rosminiano, Stresa. (A photocopy is also in A.C.R.).

<sup>27</sup> M.d.C. to M. Rosmini, 11 January 1832, A2, XII, A.C.R.

Magdalene replied in a precise manner:

*"At the moment, we have no special indulgences for our Tertiaries"* <sup>28</sup>

Some months later, she wrote:

*"The very trustworthy Don Antonio was right in saying that we should ask for indulgences for the Tertiaries. Tell him that I hope to have soon the chance to ask the Holy Father for such indulgences"* <sup>29</sup>

Lady Turcati, from Trent, a promoter of the Spiritual Exercises, then a Tertiary, asked for clarification about the Tertiaries' spiritual bond with the Daughters of Charity and about the suffrages. Magdalene replied to A. Rosmini as follows:

*"As for the bond of charity our dearest Turcati asked about...tell her that the Tertiaries will draw benefit from the works of charity, prayers, etc. of the Institute during their life and at death. Tell her, also, that I am very happy if, when a Tertiary dies, in every House the Tertiaries receive Communion and pray the Way of the Cross, once, for the departed Tertiaries"* <sup>30</sup>

One month later she wrote:

*"With reference to the Tertiaries, it is enough that suffrages are made in the House where the departed Tertiaries were enrolled. However, they share in whatever good is accomplished by the whole Institute. Not all the Houses should pray for them, as we do for the Sisters, because we foresee that the Tertiaries will multiply much and the communities should pray for them at any moment"* <sup>31</sup>

After Margherita Rosmini's death, the well organized and spiritually formed group of Trent continued. It is confirmed by the Memoria della vita di Giuseppina Rosmini which the Superior of Trent, Domenica Salterini, sent to her brother Don Antonio on 19 March, 1839:

*"She was able to group together a good number of ladies and well-behaved youth who were devoted to Mary Mother of Sorrows by the name "Devotees of Mary". She arranged for a worthy and zealous priest to give them an appropriate talk on their duties on the first Sunday of each month. She provided them with excellent Rules in order to foster their personal sanctification and the sanctification of others. This Union is still active, rather, it is ever-expanding and very successful"* <sup>32</sup>

## **At Bergamo**

The Union or Solidality of Our Lady of Sorrows and the Institution of the Tertiaries flourished also in Bergamo.

On 19 January 1828, Magdalene wrote to the Superior, Domenica Faccioli as follows:

*"Rosa (Dabala', previously Superior in Bergamo), greets you and all your companions cordially. She begs you to greet also the girls of the Union".* <sup>33</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> M.d.C. to M.Rosmini, 16 September, 1831, Ep.III/4, p.2912

<sup>29</sup> M.d.C., to M.Rosmini, 3 February 1832, Ep.III/4, p. 3024.

<sup>30</sup> M.d.C., to M. Rosmini, 15 May 1832, Ep. III/4, pp. 3104-3105.

<sup>31</sup> M.d.C., to M.Rosmini, 27 June 1832, Ep.III/4, p. 3134.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Memoria della vita di Giuseppina Rosmini, A.C.R., C3, C3-II- PFC, Fasc. 5 (2c).

<sup>33</sup> M.d.C., to D.Faccioli, 19 January 1828, Ep.III/3, p.1815.

A few days later she wrote to her:

*"Please, do greet for me Miss Camozzi, Miss Tiraboschi and all my dearest girls of the Union...and all the girls who come to this house".<sup>34</sup>*

Again, on 29 April 1830:

*"Greet for me my dear girls of the Union, tell them to pray the Lord for me. I, too, pray for them".<sup>35</sup>*

The Ladies at Bergamo were not many. Among the most fervent ones were Countess Caterina Corner Passi, and Countess Elisabetta Zineroni Passi, who became Tertiaries, after having been members of the Union. In fact, on 29 May 1832, the Foundress wrote to D.Faccioli as follows:

*"I was pleased to hear that the good Countess Passi<sup>36</sup> associated with us happily. You have done well to keep her for lunch. Tell her, on my behalf, that she should feel at home each time, because she is our sister. We welcome very willingly also our dearest Lady Bettina<sup>37</sup>. Tell her that as soon as I shall meet her, I will provide her with the "Abitino" of Our Lady of Sorrows. Meanwhile she may enroll herself in the Sodality and when I come, we shall talk about the rest"<sup>38</sup>*

The Institution of the Tertiaries kept on developing even in Bergamo. It is confirmed by a letter of Pilotti to Domenica Faccioli, Superior in Bergamo. In this letter Cristina requested from her the list of Tertiaries:

*"With regard to the Tertiaries, I wish to get the list not only of the Teachers, but also of the other good girls who are enrolled in this Sodality"<sup>39</sup>*

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<sup>34</sup> M.d.C., to D. Faccioli, 24 January 1828, Ep. III/3, p. 1815.

<sup>35</sup> M.d.C., to D. Faccioli, 29 April 1830, Ep. III/3, p. 2372.

<sup>36</sup> Countess Caterina Corner, spouse of Count E. Passi, cf. Ep. II/1, p. 409.

<sup>37</sup> Countess Bettina Nob. Elisabetta Zineroni, spouse of Count Fermo Passi, cf. Ep. III/3, p. 2121.

<sup>38</sup> M.d.C., to D.Faccioli, 29 May 1832, Ep. III/4, p. 3116.

<sup>39</sup> C.Pilotti, to D.Faccioli, 2 November 1835, C1-4-Pil. Fasc.2 (4c) A.C.R.

## VIII. - THE TERTIARIES LIVING IN A COMMUNITY

*"I wish..."*

Magdalene was continuously requested to start new foundations, but either she had no means, no Sisters, or the requests did not agree with the spirit and the works of her Institute.

On the other hand, she did not wish to let down appeals from needy places. How to respond to them?

She tried by starting the Tertiaries living in a community (the Internal Tertiaries) and the project evolved from the year 1822 onward.

To know Magdalene's mind on the internal Tertiaries, let us examine the very simple and concise manuscript<sup>1</sup> which starts as follows:

*"I wish to set up a union of young women or widows, who will live in the same house, according to the spirit of the Daughters of Charity, taking special care of the girls and of the sick women of the parish"*<sup>2</sup>

Evidently, it was the first Project concerning the Institution of a "Regular group of Tertiaries of the Daughters of Charity". Perhaps it was an "outline" from which later the Foundress intended to draw "Short Regulations", based on further experience". This was expressed in the addition to the project which she sent to Rome in November 1823, to request for the Pope's blessing to proceed.

In fact, in a letter to Cardinal Zurla, she wrote:

*"The other plan requires maturity, time, prudence and, in case it is implemented, it is necessary to proceed very slowly to make sure it works"*<sup>3</sup>

Prudence, time, assurance, were truly necessary to select, form, organize youth who, to respond to a particular call, wished to live their life of consecration to God in the Canossian spirit, in a community.

It was necessary to group them in a true Congregation, to outline gradually their bonds and Rules and consolidate them through experience.

*Magdalene wrote:*

*"The Rules of the Tertiaries will be more or less similar to those of the Daughters of Charity. The Tertiaries, too, will take simple vows"*.<sup>4</sup>

To be accepted into the "Retreat House", the young women

*"are to be educated for seven months in the Institute Camozzi of the Daughters of Charity"*<sup>5</sup>, to be trained as teachers and acquire the spirit of the Daughters of Charity...

*They will have a three years' Novitiate training...will be tested...,after listening to the other Sisters' opinion"*<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>. Ms. T7, A3, XV, A.C.R. Cf. M.d.C., R.s.s., Pt.2, pp.20.22.

<sup>2</sup>. M.d.C., R.s.s., Pt.2, p.20.

<sup>3</sup>. M.d.C., to Cardinal Zurla, 27 March 1824, Ep.II/1,p. 584.

<sup>4</sup>. M.d.C., R.s.s., Pt.2, p. 21.

<sup>5</sup>. The document specifies twice the name "Istituto Camozzi" because the first proposals are made to the Country Teachers in the province of Bergamo.

<sup>6</sup>. M.d.C., Pt. 2, p. 20.



This time will be for further selection and formation. To admit them into the Congregation, it is requested:

*"...a secret balloting by all the Tertiaries and the consensus of all the Daughters of Charity of the House...  
When a young woman is accepted, besides carrying her own furniture...she will pay very year a sum of money...for food and clothing".<sup>7</sup>*

About their on-going formation, Magdalene wrote:

*" They will make their Retreat in the Institute Camozzi, at least every three years, in order to keep up the spirit of charity and union with the Daughters of Charity" <sup>8</sup>*

For the various commitments she added:

*"The Superior of the Tertiaries...chosen by the Superior of the Daughters of Charity, will assign duties to all the Tertiaries. When the need arises, they will follow the Superior's advice and engage themselves in the various works of charity" <sup>9</sup>*

*"Teachers will take care especially to  
\* instruct girls in school,  
\* supervise them at play on feast-days,  
\* see to their welfare, instilling in them love for virtue  
and dislike for sin,  
\* prepare the girls for the Sacraments,  
\* teach catechism in Church on Sunday*

Others

*"will devote themselves to serve the poor sick women in the parish, especially those living next to the house.  
They will help these persons in their spiritual and physical needs, day and night".<sup>10</sup>*

Finally the short document describes very simple norms on how to practice poverty. Magdalene, who constantly took the Crucified Lord as the model and the yardstick for herself and her daughters, did not leave out a similar stress in these annotations:

**FOOD:**

*"Food will be simple and frugal.  
Enough bread and soup.  
Only a dish at noon and at night. Half a measure of wine for lunch and supper.  
At breakfast they will eat bread, some fruits, milk or broth".*

**CLOTHING:**

*"Clothes will be simple, uniform...modest, avoiding vanity...so that they be an example to the youth in the parish".*

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<sup>7</sup>. Cf. Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>8</sup>. Ibid., p.21.

<sup>9</sup>. Cf. Ibid., p.21

<sup>10</sup>. Ibid. p.21.

## FURNITURE:

*"All the furniture of the house and of the bedrooms will be simple and used in common, since all form a single family."*<sup>11</sup>

## THE "LITTLE HOUSE" AND THE INTERNAL TERTIARIES

Magdalene's will reads:

*"As for Cristina's house, it is my wish that Cristina herself be the directress, not the Superior Rosa (Dabala') nor any other Superior, as it would be too heavy a burden to them. Notice that the Superiors have decided that this work be totally separated from the Institute, especially for the temporal affairs; I think that the House (that is, the Daughters of Charity) may take care of the spiritual; but ask Monsignor's opinion (Msgr. Traversi was the Superior of the Institute)"*<sup>12</sup>

Cristina Pilotti, the most intimate friend of the Foundress, and her very faithful secretary, like the Marchioness, had a special liking for the poor. She was the spiritual guide of the girls of the "Union of our Lady of Sorrows" whom she cared for, even after they had left school.

The Foundress entrusted to her the administration of little donations for the poor.

Cristina rented some rooms for urgent cases whom, at first, she entrusted to "good women" or to the external Tertiaries, especially if they were widows or unmarried adults, as we have mentioned earlier<sup>13</sup>, until she managed to get a small house.

As for the rented rooms, since Magdalene and her secretary were often away from Verona, on 26 March 1828, Magdalene wrote to A.Bragato as follows:

*"If Lady Giulia will move away from that house, rent her room for Cristina. Hurry up, because Cristina would like to have that room for the old lady she wants to accept as soon as she comes to Verona. You might say that she had rented one already; it is true, but, for a certain reason which I will tell you orally, she would like to have even this."*<sup>14</sup>

And again:

*"Cristina begs you to give up renting the two rooms of Lady Luigia Betti when the rent expires and continue renting for two months more the two rooms of Lady Giulia"*<sup>15</sup>

In 1830 the "Little House" was bought and the Tertiaries settled in: it is confirmed by the fact that, on 18 November 1830, the young Miss Perigozzo entered it as a Tertiary to assist the guests<sup>16</sup>

When writing to A.Bragato, the Foundress made sure immediately that the guests be provided with basic necessities:

*"I reply at once about Miss Perigozzo: you may give her wine freely, as you wish, a bit also at night. She may take better oil as well. As for the blanket, you may provide*

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<sup>11</sup>. Cf. Ibid., p.22.

<sup>12</sup>. Le estreme volonta' della Marchesa, 9 aprile 1835, Ep. III/5, p.4147.

<sup>13</sup>. Cf. Ch. VII, notes n.14,15.

<sup>14</sup>. M.d.C., to A.Bragato, 26 March 1828, Ep.III/3, p. 1882.

<sup>15</sup>. M.d.C., to A.Bragato, 16 December 1828, Ibid., pp. 2053-2054.

<sup>16</sup>. M.d.C. to A. Bragato, 18 November 1830, Ep.III/4, pp. 2581-2582.

her one...

*If there are other needs, provide for them as you think best, but provide them as for the poor"*<sup>17</sup>

In January 1831, replying to A. Bragato who had asked her to house temporarily a deaf girl, Magdalene mentioned two Tertiaries, the young Miss Perigozzo and Rosina Sango, and described the rooms.

In fact, there were: a kitchen, a bed-room and an office cum bed room<sup>18</sup>.

When Cristina was absent, Magdalene informed her about the "Little House" through D.Faccioli:

*"Tell Cristina, to whom I do not write because I have no time, that everything is well in her "Little House". Miss Perigozzo speaks very well about it and says that there are broccoli in the orchard.*

*We gave back Mr.Moronati's house, but we still keep the keys.*

*Tell her that the cash in hand is a "genoa" (coin) and now they have fifty eight Austrian (lire) which they are spending for food. They are the income of the veils embroidered by the Saibanti"*<sup>19</sup>

When Magdalene went to Milan, the Milanese "sciure" (noble Ladies) provided her with money: a real providence for Verona! She wrote to R.Dabalà to keep Cristina informed of it:

*"Tell dear Cristina that she will receive money for the "Little House". I have in hand twenty-eight "talleri" given by the old "sciura"(Lady)"*<sup>20</sup>

A few days later, she wrote:

*"Adding up the money from our dear Countess Durini, from Ladies Cecca, Della Croce and Visconti, the sum of money Cristina will receive will be seventy-two "thalers". I will write to you later how I am going to send them to you"*<sup>21</sup>

### ***RULES AND PLANS FOR TERTIARIES LIVING IN A COMMUNITY***

As we have mentioned earlier, the Tertiaries, not the Daughters of Charity, were operating in the "little House". However, they were the "internal" Tertiaries, that is, those living in community and carrying out the works not included in the Rules of the Daughters of Charity.

The Tertiaries living in the "Little House" had a certain life-style, but they felt the need of Rules drafted just for them.

With regard to an aspirant, Magdalene wrote to A.Bragato:

*"Cristina embraces you and begs you to examine that good young girl who wishes to be welcomed by the good Giuseppina (Rosmini). I hear that she is disposed to enter a "Retreat", since she cannot join us. I think, her name is Maddalena Conti. Test her very well and see if she could join the Tertiaries in the "Little House". You know our opinion on the matter. Try to examine if she is ready to live as a poor, without being*

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<sup>17</sup>. M.d.C., to A.Bragato, 29 December 1830, Ep. III/4, pp. 2581-2582.

<sup>18</sup>. Cf. M.d.C., to A.Bragato, 13 January 1831, Ibid.,pp.2669-2670.

<sup>19</sup>. M.d.C., to D.Faccioli, 22 September 1832, Ep.III/4, p. 3200.

<sup>20</sup>. M.d.C., to Rosa Dabaà, 23 September 1834, Ep.III/5, p. 3695.

<sup>21</sup>. M.d.C., to R. Dabalà, 26 September 1834, Ep.III/5, p.3696.

*paid as Finotti and Perigozzo are (Tertiaries in the "Little House" in Verona).<sup>22</sup>*

We have stressed that, with respect to the internal Tertiaries, Magdalene wanted to proceed "slowly" and steadily, while waiting that the initial project (<sup>23</sup>) be fully implemented or modified by experience.

At this juncture, ten years have past from the implementation of the first "project" Magdalene had sent to Rome. When Magdalene wrote to Msgr. Traversi questioning him on various problems, she asked him also about the Tertiaries.

Msgr. Traversi sent her the replies to her questions, with autographic additions and corrections.

We read:

*QUESTION: "If I could place our Tertiaries where the Institute cannot be established because of its specific aims ( that is, either because the villages are small, or lack necessary means or for other suitable reason). May I do so with regard to Breno in Valcamonica, though there is hope that the Institute be established later on?"*

*ANSWER: "Yes, in such case I can place them where I think, even at Breno, and settle them so that they may live on what I inherited and was donated to me for the Institute, until we can begin our Institute there.*

*If there will be no hope, it will be necessary to transfer the inheritance to the hospital, and see with the benefactors about what was donated; in such case assist the Tertiaries in some other ways or move them to other places."*

*QUESTION: "How can I establish these Tertiaries?"*

*ANSWER : By giving them a special Rule, something in between our Rule and the Rule of the Tertiaries living in the world, They will join the Institute which not only selects them, and, if possible forms them in the House closer to the place they will be assigned to. They will be sent by this House. They will return to this House for their annual Spiritual Exercises. The Superior of this house will keep in touch with them, or if she will think it best, with their mistress and use all the means which experience will suggest as more suitable for them. As for their sustenance, if they cannot afford it, the Sisters of the House they come from will get it from the place where the Tertiaries are sent to"<sup>24</sup>*

Two letters, that is, the letter Magdalene wrote to Rosa Dabalà on 10 January 1835 and the one Pilotti wrote to Msgr. Traversi on 6 June, the same year, confirm that Magdalene and Cristina co-operated in drawing up the Rules of the Tertiaries.

In fact, Magdalene wrote from Bergamo to Rosa Dabalà who was Superior in Verona:

*"...If you think that they will arrive safely by the mail-coach, send me a copy of the Rules of the Tertiaries and a copy of Cristina's Rules for the Tertiaries..."<sup>25</sup>*

Cristina Pilotti wrote to Msgr. Traversi:

*"I am requested by various persons to extend the Institution of the Tertiaries. The Marchioness and I have drafted a Plan which the Superiors in Milan were very pleased with..."*

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<sup>22</sup>. M.d.C., to A.Bragato, 13 November 1833, Ep.III/5, pp.3487-3488.

<sup>23</sup>. Cf. M.d.C., R.s.s., Pt. 2, pp. 20-22.

<sup>24</sup>. Cf. M.d.C., R.s.s., Pt. 2, pp.20-22.

<sup>25</sup>. M.d.C., to R.Dabalà, 10 January, 1835, Ep.III/5, p.3802.

*On her rounds to the Houses the Marchioness showed this Plan to the Superiors and all of them wished that the Plan be implemented in their town".<sup>26</sup>*

It is difficult to know exactly which of the manuscripts handed down to us belongs to the Foundress and which one to C. Pilotti. However, it is important to know that since Magdalene and Cristina had worked together in their last years, all the writings reflect faithfully Magdalene's thinking.

To understand the structure, the specific duties and the Rules of the Tertiaries living in community, it is more than sufficient to examine the manuscripts marked T6 and T5, because both are dated and have historical references.

The heading of page 11 of the second part of manuscript T6, is as follows: "The Regular Institution of the Tertiaries of the Daughters of Charity to begin in Verona on 8 September 1832".<sup>27</sup>

Below the second manuscript, marked T5, it is stated that Don Luca Passi of Bergamo wanted to join to the Tertiaries his own Institution and on the opposite page the manuscript reads: "Piano della Casetta 1835".<sup>(28)</sup> Besides, this second Plan, T5, is identical to the one which had been sent to Msgr. Traversi on August 1835<sup>29</sup>. It reads:

*"I enclose the Plan for the Tertiaries"<sup>30</sup>*

### ***GOAL, SPIRITUAL, COMMUNITARIAN AND APOSTOLIC DUTIES OF THE INTERNAL TERTIARIES***

The goal of the Institution of the Internal Tertiaries is basically similar to that of the Tertiaries living in the family.(External Tertiaries).

*"The Union of the Tertiaries...will be a simple Solidarity not bound by perpetual vows.*

*It will be dedicated to the Most Holy heart of Our Lady of Sorrows.*

*For the spiritual aspect it will be subject to the parish priest "pro tempore"...*

*The goal of the Solidarity is to form workers for the vineyard of the Lord and help the Institute in the works of charity it cannot perform because the established Institute of the Daughters of Charity is limited"<sup>31</sup>*

The exercises of piety are as follows:

- *Holy Mass*

- *A quarter of an hour of mental prayer a day.*

- *Communitarian prayers in the morning and in the evening, with the addition, in the morning, of some "Short prayers to the Patron Saints of the Pious Union.*

- *At night a 5 minutes Examen of conscience or Act of Contrition (in common) Spiritual lesson during lunch and dinner (to be taken in silence).<sup>32</sup>*

Besides, the Tertiaries are requested to

*"...dress very modestly"*

*"...behave humbly, respectfully and soberly".*

*"...practise charity in a specil manner with the sick in their home."*

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<sup>26</sup>. C. Pilotti, to Msgr. Traversi, 6 June 1835, C1-I-Pil., Fasc. 3 (1c), A.C.R.

<sup>27</sup>. Cf. Ms. T6, Regole della Casetta e Terziarie, p. 11, A3, XV, A.C.R.

<sup>28</sup>. Cf. Ms. T5, Piano delle Terziarie dell'Istituto delle F. d. C., A3, XV, A.C.R.

<sup>29</sup>. Cf. Ms. Piano delle Terziarie dell'Istituto delle F.d.C., A3, XV, A.C.R.- with Msgr. Traversi's address and a footnote on Pilotti's request to Monsignor.

<sup>30</sup>. C.Pilotti, to Msgr. Traversi, 5 August 1835, C1-I-Pil, F.3, XV, A.C.R.

<sup>31</sup>. Ms. T6, Regole della Casetta e Terziarie, p.13, A3, A.C.R.

<sup>32</sup>. Cf. Ibid. pp.3-5

*"...bear one another's limitations and ask for forgiveness".  
"...have a solid love for all, like Sisters, without being weak and rude".  
"...carry out humble duties, without making distinction of persons".  
"...to avoid worldly talk in conversation..."<sup>33</sup>*

*The "first teacher and the second had to correct at the proper time and with convenient words".*

*"All were forbidden to beat the girls".*

*Even the DAILY TIME-TABLE took into account the Works of Charity.*

*After rising, they were to recite "short morning prayers", do "housework" before "Mass" and "Meditation", because after "breakfast", they were to "teach in school" up to midday.*

*Before lunch, "an hour of relaxation". Lunch-time is the same as the noble people. There followed "housework" and "teaching till 8 o'clock" in the evening.  
"Before dinner : Chaplet, prayers, examen of conscience. At 10 o'clock : night rest".<sup>34</sup>*

*The main "works of charity" which the manuscript assigns to the Tertiaries were very congenial to the Foundress, rather they reflected the yearning of her apostolic heart, they fulfilled her desires of old and the reflections she had made during her youth. They were:*

- 1. "The School for the Deaf, to enable them to know God and receive dutifully the Sacraments".*
- 2. "To form Teachers who will be able to lead the "retreat" House...from which the Superiors select them and put them in twos.*
- 3. "To form and train good nurses, capable to be Directresses in Hospitals, assist the abandoned (lonely) sick women in town, be they poor or rich, and if they wish, to visit them at home in twos.*
- 4. "They will take care of the girls leaving the Place of the Franceschine<sup>(35)</sup> when they have no shelter: if they behave well (according to the Fear of God) they should be sheltered by the Sodality and also be instructed as servants or teachers in the school, according to their own vocation"<sup>36</sup>*

The fifth item of the manuscript T6 is not a "work of charity" but "seven hours of prayer" every day to honour the seven Dolours of Mary Most Sorrowful. It reads precisely as follows:

*"not seven hours for each person, but half an hour each, they will keep company to Mary reciting the Chaplet to honour her..."<sup>37</sup>*

For many years, Magdalene had fostered this devotion of the "Seven Hours" among her noble Ladies friends, the girls of the Union and the external Tertiaries.

With regard to the relationship of the Internal Tertiaries with the Daughters of Charity the manuscript runs:

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<sup>33</sup>. Cf. Ibid., pp.5-7.

<sup>34</sup>. Cf. Ibid., p.11

<sup>35</sup>. "Franceschine" was a Retreat in Verona for girls in "moral danger".

<sup>36</sup>. Cf. Ms. T6, Regole della Casetta e Terziarie, pp. 13-15, A3, XV, A.C.R.

<sup>37</sup>. Cf. Ibid., p. 16.

*"The first Directress of the Sodality, her Assistant, the Teachers of the various branches of Charity will be selected by the Superior of the House of the Daughters of Charity and they may change work even every year, as they will. The Tertiaries of the Sodality will obey the Superior of the Daughters of Charity and her Delegates.*

*They will be considered Sisters of the Daughters of Charity.*

*They will share in the good accomplished by the Institute... The Superior of the House of the Daughters of Charity or another Sister chosen by her, will supervise the Regulations and the internal running of the Institution of the Tertiaries".*<sup>38</sup>

The 1835 manuscript of the Plan for the Tertiaries, marked T5, is perfectly similar- as we have mentioned, to the one Cristina Pilotti had sent to Msgr. Traversi.

Though it is partly a copy of the Verona manuscript, T6, it is more structured and has some variations.

Instead of "girls leaving the Franceschine place (in Verona)" it says: "girls from Pietà orphanage"<sup>39</sup>

Besides, the manuscript mentions " Christian and civic education of the merchant class"<sup>(40)</sup>, a social class more developed in Bergamo than in Verona. In fact, at Bergamo they organized Spiritual Exercises for the "*Merchant ladies*"<sup>41</sup>

With regard to finances, in this Plan (T5 - Bergamo) it is stated that "a noble lady or a rich person of the town should be chosen and bear the title of supervisor...who will see to the finances..."

Even the colour of the dress is specified, grey, as well as the type of material: of "galletta" (silk from silkworm).<sup>42</sup>

### **EARLY EXPANSION OF THE TERTIARIES LIVING IN COMMUNITY**

The "Little House" of the Tertiaries at Trent, which was promoted by Margherita Rosmini began to develop. At the beginning there was only one teacher, as we may understand it from one of Magdalene's letters:

*"With respect to the Little House I must say I am not contrary to your going to supervise it sometimes; but do not go frequently, because being the Superior, you must care first for your house. I must remark one thing only, my dear daughter. You say that you have been asked to welcome to the Little House a 6 years old girl and in another letter of yours, a 15 years old girl. I think it is dangerous to have a small and a big girl with one teacher only".*<sup>43</sup>

When Rosmini died (1833), Angela Bragato replaced her as Superior of Trent and requested the Verona Rules which were just completed. Magdalene replied:

*"Regarding the Rules of the "Little House", I will send them to you together with the habit as soon as we meet. It seems that here, too, the Lord blesses the Tertiaries of the Little House".*<sup>44</sup>

In 1835, the Rules for the Tertiaries as well as the Rules of the Institute of the

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<sup>38</sup>. Cf. Ibid., pp. 17 and 12.

<sup>39</sup>. M.d.C., Piano delle Terziarie dell'Istituto delle F.d.C., R.s.s., Pt.2,p. 58.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 57

<sup>41</sup>. Cf. E. POLLONARA, the Spiritual Exercises..., pp.53-54.

<sup>42</sup>. Cf. M.d.C., Piano delle Terziarie dell'Istituto delle F.d.C., R.s.s., Pt. 2, pp. 57 and 62.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. E. POLLONARA, Gli Esercizi Spirituali, pp. 37-38.

<sup>44</sup>. M.d.C., to Bragato, 29 August 1834, Ep. III/5, p. 3677.

Daughters of Charity were asked for some foundations abroad. A Rosminian Father going either to England or to Ireland had requested them. The Marchioness wrote to Msgr. Traversi on 26 March 1835, in order to know his opinion:

*"When I was in Milan, a companion of Don Antonio (Rosmini) came to visit me. He was coming from Domodossola...One day he he told me that in those lands (England and Ireland) there were girls eager...to start a religious union and I think they were inclined towards something like ours. That Rosminian Father is writing to me, now, that after Easter he will come to Verona, and being assigned to those lands, he wishes that I prepare for him a copy of our Rules and of those of the Tertiaries and of all I wish, in order to spread God's glory over there".<sup>45</sup>*

The spreading of the Institution of the internal and external Tertiaries is confirmed also by the 6 June 1835 letter of Cristina to Msgr. Traversi. It reads:

*"I am asked by various people to spread the Works of the Tertiaries, which are so useful to society since this union has to accomplish many works that the Institute cannot embrace as it would like to, for it has to accomplish only its own. The Marchioness and I have drafted a Plan which the Superiors liked very much. The works is made up of two types of members: the Tertiaries who live in their home and those who live together as a "regular" group. Here, at Verona, as you might know, the second type has been initiated, and up to now it is much welcomed by all for its promising good results"<sup>46</sup>*

What we dealt with up to this point was collected from inedited source through hard work and provides us with a complex picture of this Work which reminds us of the "Third Orders" of old.

The Foundress' basic motivations are very clear:

- To spread the works of the Institute of the Daughters of Charity in places where they cannot go.
- To substitute the Daughters of Charity in duties and places which their Rules do not allow them to.
- To offer to those who live in the world a radical form of Christian life which shows

The history of the "Tertiaries of Mary Mother of Sorrows" developed under other names and in various ways, side by side the history of the Daughters of Charity, and is moving on.

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<sup>45</sup>. M.d.C., to Msgr. Traversi, 26 March 1835, Ep. II/1, p.180.

<sup>46</sup>. C.Pilotti, to Msgr. Traversi, 6 June 1835, C1.I-Pi., Fasc. 3(1c), A.C.R.



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## ***ABBREVIATIONS***

### ***Documents of the Institute***

M.d.C. = Maddalena di Canossa

Ep. = Epistolario

R.s.s. = Regole e scritti spirituali

### ***Archives***

A.C.R. = Archivio Canossiano di Roma

### ***Others***

cf. = see

ms. = manuscript

p/pp. = page/pages

Pt. = part

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