



**OCTOBER 9, 2024**

### **3. WITH YOU MAÏN ON THE PATHS OF LIFE**

#### **3.10 Life that Expands – Mother Mazzarello’s Letters**



***“By this my Father is glorified:  
that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.”***

***Jn 15,8***

*(Chapel of Collegio)*

### **Angelus**

#### **Entrustment** *(alternating sides)*

**Guide:** We entrust our life to Mary, our Mother and guide so that she can help us to joyfully sing of God's love for us, to live our vocation with commitment, renewed in faith, in love with Jesus, eager to communicate with passion and coherence the beauty of the Gospel to the new generations:

O Mary Help of Christians,  
we entrust our journey to you  
of total donation to God.  
Teach us to sing with joy and gratitude  
our Magnificat to the Lord.

Make us attentive to the voice of the Spirit  
because we know how to live with humility,  
charity, simplicity, and trust in our daily life.

Like You, we desire to abandon ourselves to the Father  
to continue to live chaste, poor, and obedient  
and to be, with our life  
transparency of God's love  
and reflection of your maternal goodness  
on the example of Mother Mazzarello  
for the young people entrusted to us. Amen.

## **Mass**

*(Prepare a space before the altar for a Bible, candle and Letters of MM).*

## **Introduction** *(before Mass)*

**Guide:** The Word of God is the source of missionary audacity. The Word allows us to enter into our interior sanctuary... It is an interior dwelling place where our lives are shaped according to the Spirit.

**Voice 1:** In our itinerary, we have seen how much dynamism Don Bosco's life was characterized by, also defined as a *union with God*.

Maria Domenica invited her daughters to preserve the spirit of union with the Lord as much as possible, and she could find the ecstasy of love even in a simple needle stitch.

**Voice 2:** At the school of our founders, we allow ourselves to be transformed by the Word so that it may be the source that enables us to seek the signs of God in the realities of the world and our lives.

*(The Bible and a candle are brought to the altar.)*

**Voice 3: Mother Mazzarello's letters** are a genuine food that nourishes and makes us grow... they are like a true and clear spring that always quenches thirst...

They are the place of meeting and communion... they are a source of accompaniment for every sister, community, and us...

**Guide:** By reading your letters, O Mother, we can enjoy the flavor of a family dialogue, *of a creative and courageous maternal presence (CG XXIV Introduction)*, experience the pleasure of an encounter with the face of a mother, a mother who teaches, accompanies, animates; shows trust and hope.

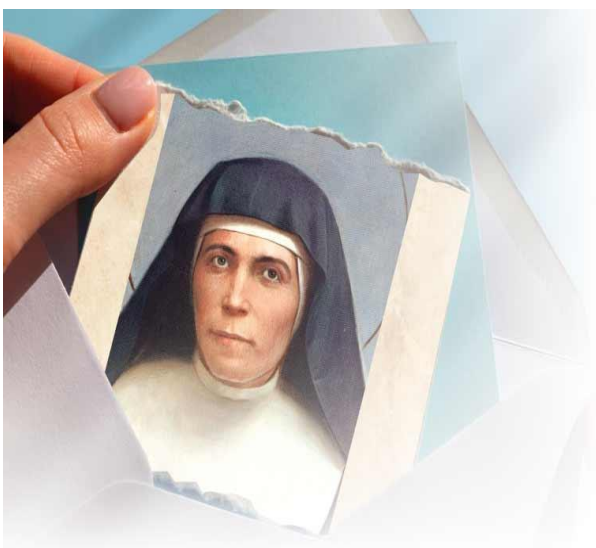
*(The Letters of MM are brought to the altar.)*



*(in room of Mother Mazzarello)*

## **ENCOUNTER WITH MOTHER MAZZARELLO – HER LETTERS**

*(A space is prepared with a candle, Letters of MM and a picture of MM that is covered by a cloth, which at a certain moment will be uncovered.)*



### **Introduction**

**Guide 1:** MM's letters are a conversation beyond space, a meeting place that activates all the energies to respond to the call; they are a revelation of the living atmosphere of the soul.

Mother Mazzarello's letters are a privileged way to delve into the daily fabric of the Institute at the time of its origins.

**Guide 2:** The desire to contemplate the face of Mother Mazzarello accompanies the Institute's history and ours.

**Guide 1:** What was Maria Mazzarello like? It is the question repeated across generations, and many have asked themselves based on their experience of meeting her.

**Guide 2:** "You want my portrait, don't you? I would gladly send it to you, but it is not done" (Letter 29,4)

**Guide 1:** In the past, as today, there was the risk of considering Maria Mazzarello through interpretative and partial clichés or prior judgments.

**Guide 2:** Should we, therefore, resign ourselves to not being able to get to know Maria Mazzarello in a closer and more truthful way?

**Guide 1:** The look of Maria Mazzarello in the letters emerges with precise clarity. The letters allow us to take a symbolic journey into the inner world of the Saint and to discover the typical notes of her face that no photo could portray with such fidelity.

**Guide 2:** The letters lift a slight veil edge covering this face. The passing of the years and the not-always-vivid memory of her daughters have protected her from prejudices and partial interpretations.

**Guide 1:** Maria Mazzarello's correspondence helps us overcome an image and perhaps a myth transmitted by some biographies or "distorted readings" of the saint's life.

**Guide 2:** Without the letters, it would be almost impossible to know certain distinctive traits of her personality and her typical communicative art; ultimately, it would be difficult for us to know her true face.

**Guide 1:** Let's approach the letters with the love of daughters; let's express our desire to know them more deeply to enter into a vital relationship with her, Maria Mazzarello.

Let's say together: ***Mother Mazzarello, we want to know your face.***

**Voice 1:** She does not have a photograph to give you, but she will give you her word; listen to it, and you will discover her face.

### **Instrumental Music**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j4OuCMnY43E>

*(The book of letters passes from hand to hand; each one brings it closer to her ear as a gesture of openness to listening.)*

**Guide 2:** Letters are like pieces of a mosaic that contain written moments of interiority, fragments of intimacy...

**Guide 1:** Let's discover the face of the Mother! She will reveal it more transparently if we listen with attention and depth.

*(The cloth covering the face of Mother Mazzarello is removed)*

**Guide 2:** The face of Maria Mazzarello that emerges from the letters is a face not yet with the halo of sanctity, but it has within itself all the potential to become such. It appears with the unmistakable notes of a beautiful and integral humanity. Here she was, the woman, the educator who sought the good of others with clear transparency. The letters allow us to meet her on the earthly wavelength, with her difficulties, problems, interests, and hopes.

### **Listening to the Word**

**Guide 1:** The simple and straightforward heart is filled with the Spirit of God. It sees things as they are. The heart is simple when it has become one with God.

## **Lk 10, 21-22**

In that same hour, Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said: "I praise you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and have revealed them to little ones. Yes, O Father, because so you have decided in your benevolence. Everything has been given to me by my Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, nor who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him."

*(brief pause)*

**Guide 2:** Let us pray with the words of the Mother:

**Chorus 1:** Even if such a great distance separates us, we form one heart only to love our beloved Jesus and Holy Mary.

**Chorus 2:** ... we can always see and pray for each other. (L 18,2)

**Chorus 1:** Take courage; it is proper that we are capable of nothing, but with humility and prayer, we will keep the Lord close to us

**Chorus 2:** ...and everything is fine when the Lord is with us. (L 42,3)

**Chorus 1:** Take courage, my good sisters; Jesus must be all your strength...

**Chorus 2:** ...with Jesus, the burdens will become light, the hardships sweet, the thorns will be converted into sweetness... (L 22,21)

**Chorus 1:** Always be cheerful, be very good, work heartily and everything for Jesus

**Chorus 2:** ...and courage, may God bless you and make you all his. (L 19,2-3)

**Chorus 1:** Do you get annoyed when the fire doesn't light?

**Chorus 2:** ... have patience and try to light up with divine love, stay cheerful and pray for me. (L 23,5)

**Chorus 1:** Never be discouraged by any adversity; take everything from the hands of Jesus...

**Chorus 2:** ... put all your trust and hope in Him. (L 65,1)

### Concluding prayer

**All:** Lord, who gave us in St. Maria Domenica Mazzarello a model of total availability to the voice of the Spirit, for her humility and her ardent charity, grant us to walk today along the paths of her teachings, to respond to the cries that rise from the heart of contemporaneity, in particular young people. Amen

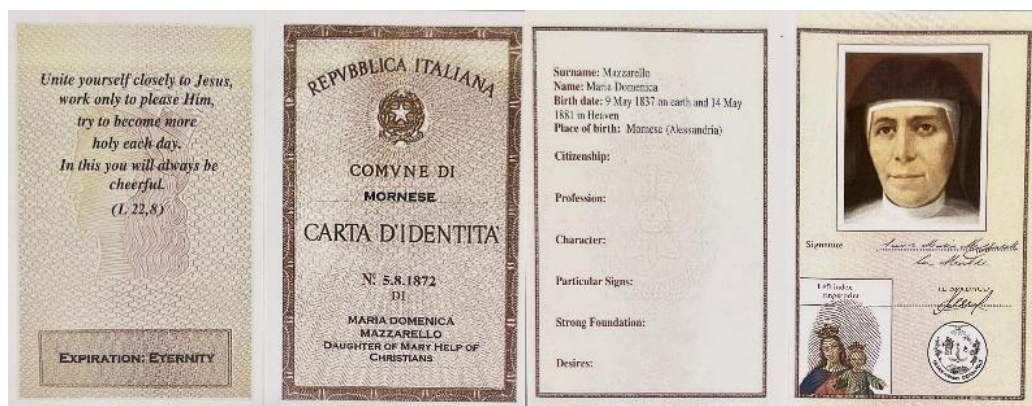
*Suor Maria Mazzarello*

### PERSONAL REFLECTION

*(The following suggestions are provided for personal reflection.)*

At this moment, Mother Mazzarello wants to speak to your heart.

#### 1. Complete the "Identity card" of Mother Mazzarello



2. Read the *Acts of General Chapter XXIV: Presentation*
3. Read *With Main on the pathways of Life: From Life to the Letters, From Letter to Life*
4. Read The Letters of MM ppt (*found in Resources*)
5. With the help of the Holy Spirit write a letter from Mother Mazzarello address to you. Seeing you in your reality, what advice would she give to you?
6. Presence of Mary in the Letters of MM
  - Discover in MM's letters the characteristics of her relationship with
  - Mary Help of Christians. (*can be done in pairs*)
  - In a second moment... PRAY and check your relationship with the Madonna and with Mother Mazzarello.

*Marian dimension*

- L 3, 5
- L 7, 2
- L 13, 1
- L 16, 1,3
- L 23, 3
- L 26, 10
- L 27, 7,10
- L 44, 3
- L 47, 10
- L 48, 7
- L 52, 2,3,6
- L 64, 1,2







## **SMALL GROUP WORK** *(afternoon)*

### **Prayerful Reading of Letter 37**

*(in meeting room; in groups of 5; each Sister receives a ribbon; once the instructions are given the groups can decide on a location for their prayerful reading of Letter 37; within each group a guide is chosen to lead the experience)*

*"Oh! I would still write so many things to you, but I don't have paper.  
Go into the Heart of Jesus; you will hear everything I want to tell you" L 29, 3*

**1. Invoke the light of the Holy Spirit** *(song, prayer, etc.)*

**2. Brief presentation of Letter 37**

**Voice 1:** The content of letter 37 presents the community of Nice, a mission community of fecund women through a strong experience of Jesus, the source of living water, and the strength of the Spirit that generates life around them.

**Voice 2:** Letter 37 is original, written in MM's handwriting; it is collective because it is addressed to the Directress and the sisters of the small Carmen de Patagones (Argentina) community.

**3. Prayer**

St. Maria Mazzarello,  
let us by reading your letters  
enjoy the flavor of a family dialogue,  
experience the pleasure of an encounter  
with the face of a mother.

A mother who entertains familiarly  
with her daughters, a mother who teaches, accompanies, animates, manifests  
trust and hope,  
but she doesn't spare the corrections.

Maria Mazzarello, teach us with your wisdom  
the path of humble adherence to the mystery of God,  
the only one who can make us wise.

Show us your face that harmonizes authority and familiarity,  
contemplation and constant activity, tolerance and firmness, gentleness and  
strength, solitude and communicative solidarity, submission and freedom.

May your face remind us:

the wisdom of the masters of life,

the discreet and sweet company of friends,

the tenacity of those who work hard,

The concern of a mother who guides life. Amen.

#### **4. Reading the letter: what does the letter say?**

- Slow and careful reading (*different voices alternating paragraphs*)
- Silent rereading of the letter

#### **5. Contemplating: what does the Lord want?**

- Remain silent so that Mother Mazzarello's words can be internalize
- Repeat a word or phrase in the text remembering everything that has been read
- Silently apply it to the situation you are experiencing in our communities as a woman called to generate life.

#### **6. The meaning for me: committing what does the letter tell me?**

- Silently, read the most significant part of the letter again,
- Summarize everything in a sentence that can enrich my being a consecrated woman who generates life. (*within the group share the sentence*)

#### **7. Celebrate**

- Each Sister chooses a word from the Letter that touched her heart and can accompany her in this stage of life. Write the word on the ribbon.
- Find a psalm, a psalm, gesture, song or prayer that expresses what the group experienced

## 8. Concluding prayer

O God, You gave us in Saint Maria Domenica Mazzarello a model of total availability to the voice of the Spirit; for her humility and ardent charity, grant us today to follow the path of her teachings. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.



*(room of Mother Mazzarello)*

### **PRAYER**

#### **Resonances of the experience of prayerful reading of the letters**

**Guide:** We invite each group to first share a psalm, gesture, song or prayer that expresses what the group experienced and then each sister within the group is invited to share the word on her ribbon.

#### **Magnificat**

*(from song sheet in App)*

**Guide 2: Let us pray together,** We pray to you Lord that, with humility, tenacity and hope, we know how to commit ourselves to the search for the will of God, in fidelity to the spirit of the origins for a passionate following of Christ and a new apostolic dynamism. Help us to let ourselves be guided by the Mother of Jesus, to be like Main, a sign of joy, hope and audacity to do what You tell us. Amen.

