

TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH *The Missionary Travels of Frances Cabrini*

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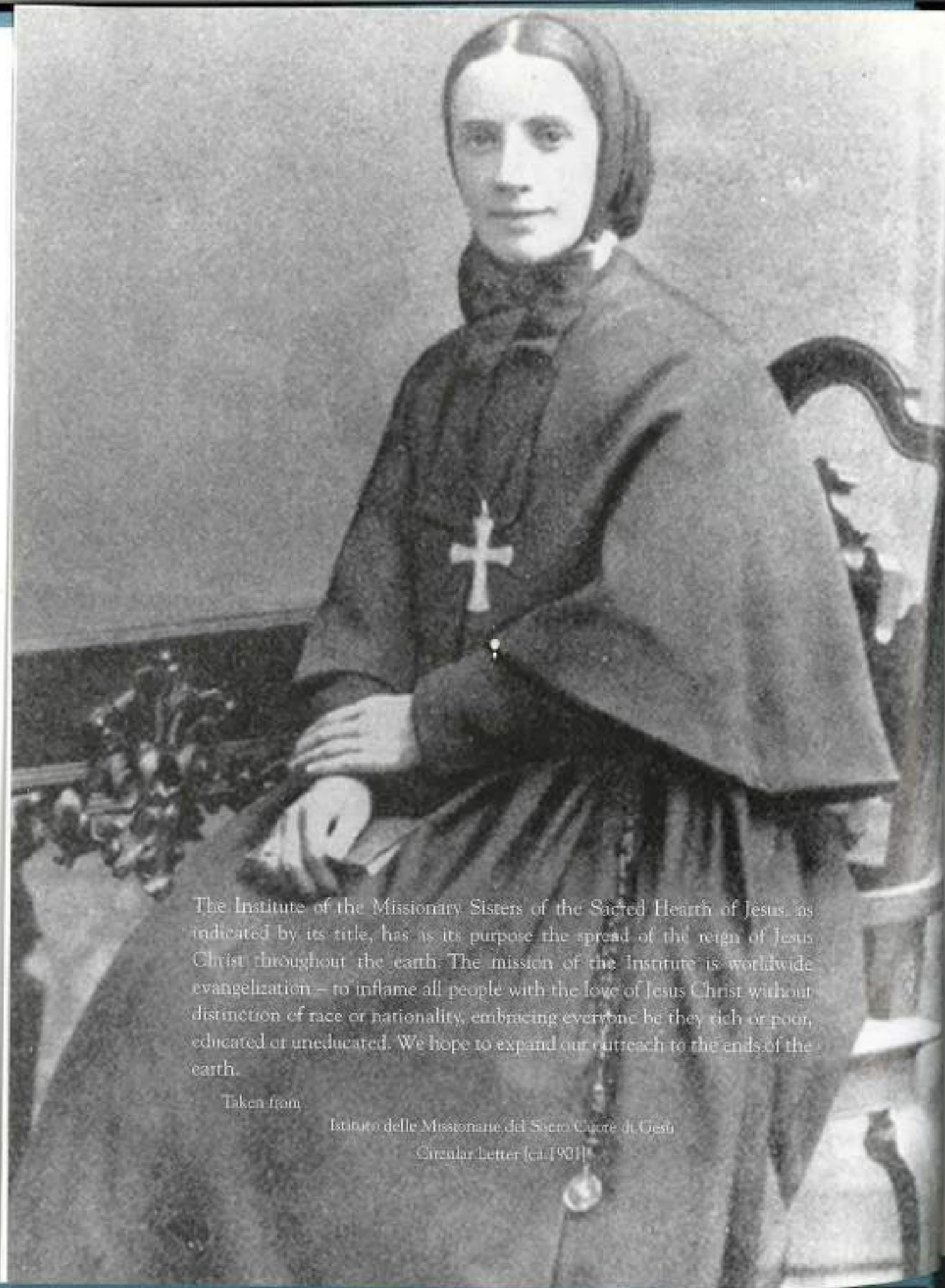


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The Institute of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, as indicated by its title, has as its purpose the spread of the reign of Jesus Christ throughout the earth. The mission of the Institute is worldwide evangelization – to inflame all people with the love of Jesus Christ without distinction of race or nationality, embracing everyone be they rich or poor, educated or uneducated. We hope to expand our outreach to the ends of the earth.

Taken from

Istituto delle Missionarie del Sacro Cuore di Gesù
Circular Letter [ca. 1901]

TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

*The Missionary Travels
of
Frances X. Cabrini*

Translated by
Philippa Provenzano, MSC

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2001

Center for Migration Studies
New York

The Center for Migration Studies is an educational, nonprofit institute founded in New York in 1964 to encourage and facilitate the study of sociological, demographic, historical, legislative and postoral aspects of human migration movements and ethnic group relations. The opinions expressed in this work are those of the authors.

TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH
THE MISSIONARY TRAVELS OF FRANCES X. CABRINI

First Edition

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The Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

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In celebration of
the 150th anniversary of the birth of
St. Frances Xavier Cabrini
and
the 50th anniversary
as the Patron Saint of Immigrants

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FOREWORD

At the dawn of the Third Millennium, the personality of St. Frances X. Cabrini (1850-1917) stands out as a bright, creative and dynamic witness in modern history. Her memory still awakens admiration and prompts imitation on the part of women and men determined to love the needy and poor, to share the joy of the experience of God in Christ, to embrace the world in all its beauty and contradictions.

The two anniversaries, the 150th of Mother Cabrini's birth and the 50th of her being proclaimed "Patroness of Immigrants," have focused the spotlight on an exceptional woman, the first United States saint, whose leadership, spirituality, organizational ability, affected the life of the Catholic Church in Europe and in the Americas in the tumultuous decades at the end of the XIXth century to the explosion of World War I.

In the popular imagination, Mother Cabrini remains the gentle and firm Foundress of a new religious order, the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus; the brave woman who crossed the Atlantic Ocean 24 times; the indomitable nun who, at the time women were not allowed to vote, called politicians to task and mingled with immigrants, orphans, people in jail, miners and workers, providing them with institutional support and the loving care that nurtured their dignity.

In the narrative of this volume, *To the Ends of the Earth: The Missionary Travels of Frances Cabrini*, a window is open wide on the fascinating secret energy that propelled Mother Cabrini to establish 67 schools, orphanages, hospitals, kindergartens, by the time of her death in Chicago on December 22, 1917, and to attract hundreds of young women to follow in her footsteps by offering their lives for the same missionary ideals and for daily service and assistance to immigrants and emarginated persons and to youth in search of education. At the root of such vertiginous action was a great love: "I would sail all the seas . . . to bring the name of Christ to all peoples."

The diaries of Mother Cabrini's travels constitute a unique literary genre. They catch the freshness of newly discovered places and describe the impact of nature's beauty on a receptive woman whose keen intelligence and religious sensibility elevates it to mystical contemplation. As a tool of teaching, these diaries were used to show the spiritual path Mother Cabrini's women companions had to follow if they wanted to find strength for their mission and the same sense of urgency and courage. In fact, long excursus address the topics of prayer and humility, of love and sacrifice, freedom and ascetical life, the example of Mary, the implication of being spouses of Christ, and above all of the yearning for the missions.

As she "writes between one wave and another," Mother Cabrini reveals also autobiographical insights: fear of water, determination ("with prayer, I shall fear nothing"); managerial skills in taking care of business deals, restructuring of buildings, fund-raising, planning new foundations; her

Christ-centered existence. At the same time, the personal attention to each sister, to the details even of the proper arrangement of ship cabins, to the daily discipline of her institutions, show a rare combination of practicality and vision that makes her a mystic in action.

The world is too small for Mother Cabrini. Reading today her spiritual comments and compassionate observations on immigrants and on the peoples of the world not yet evangelized, the modernity of this charismatic figure emerges as a messenger of concern for the whole world; she anticipates an awareness of globalization that, present in her heart, she endeavored to translate in forms of solidarity that are still bearing fruit, remain exemplary, and witness a rich moment of history and spirituality.

The diaries of Mother Cabrini's travels reflect the style of her times. Beyond the historical circumstances of their writing, they preserve a wealth of inspiration and information. They are a valid and multifaceted document of the perennial youthfulness and dynamism the Saints contribute to the world.

Silvano M. Tomasi, c.s.¹
Titular Archbishop of Asolo

¹The Most Reverend Silvano M. Tomasi, c.s., serves at present as Apostolic Nuncio in Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti. He has written extensively on the role of the Catholic Church in immigration, including the recently edited book, *For the Love of Immigrants: The Migration Writings of Bishop John Baptist Scalfarini* (Staten Island: Center for Migration Studies, 2001).

PREFACE

The missionary endeavors of the foundress of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini, required her to make many ocean voyages, although she feared the water, as she discloses in the fourth letter in this book.

At midnight, the sisters wanted to visit the nearby isles, which could be easily done once the tide had gone out and a boat took them over. The trip took only ten minutes and cost very little, so I could satisfy their desire. However, I did not go because, if I must confess my weakness, I am afraid of the water. If it is not for a holy purpose, I do not feel I should expose myself where there may be danger, unless it is in obedience to my superiors. Then all would be blessed by God.

The "holy purpose" was her missionary zeal, which caused her to exclaim, "the world is too small to limit ourselves to one point, I want to embrace it entirely and to reach all its points." Most especially, she desired to go to the Orient to evangelize its people. However, she received a mandate from Pope Leo XIII to go to the United States because of the Church's concern for the Italians who had left their country in large numbers and suffered spiritual neglect. In obedience to him, in 1889, nine years after founding the congregation, she crossed the Atlantic with six sisters to begin the ministry to the Italian immigrants in New York City, and traveled across the United States as far as the Pacific coast to establish other missions. In her quest for universality, she crossed the ocean numerous times to respond to requests for new foundations in Nicaragua, Panama, Argentina, France, Spain, England and Brazil.

Her earliest biographer was Mother Saverio DeMaria, MSC, who acted as her secretary and as a novice crossed the ocean with Cabrini in September 1894. She writes, "Those who have read the letters of Mother Cabrini to her daughters, written during the intervals between 'one wave and another,' to use her own words, know how eloquently the sea echoed her mind and spirit; its communicative sound lifted her to sublime contemplation, and, with gentle accents, caused the delicate fibers of her soul to vibrate with celestial harmony. The days Mother spent on the sea were for her a time of compulsory rest; for she, indefatigable in her zeal for souls, looked upon time as money to barter for heaven."

A voyage was a soothing rest for her spirit. Although always united with God, even amidst the noise and turmoil of enterprise, in the silence of the ocean she was able to abandon herself wholly to prayer. She spent hours communicating with God in prayer. Then, mindful of her promise to the sisters who were distressed at her departure, she took up her pencil to write to them, pouring out her soul in all its sublimity.

How many religious instructions, pious reflections on the saints whose feasts occurred during her journeys at sea, and fervent incitements to keep working well would have been lost had she

PREFACE

not had this compulsory rest. Her favorite activity on board the steamer was writing letters to her distant daughters, spiritually inspired pages of incomparable aesthetics manifesting a direct simplicity without affectation of form.

Nor many women of her time traveled as extensively as she did, and with such an interest in, and passion to learn about, her shipmates on board, as well as the people and the land in the countries through which she passed or gazed at from the deck of a steamer. She described all this for the sisters of that time, who eagerly awaited and circulated her letters. The material they contain is of lasting interest.

We must keep in mind that Frances Cabrini was a woman of her time. She followed the literary style of her era, which today may sound elaborate and stilted. This translation strives to be faithful to her style while smoothing some of the grammar and dropping many superlatives.

We acknowledge with gratitude the work of those involved in translating the letters from Italian to English in the beginning: Sr. Ilaria Povero, MSC, Sr. Catherine DeFranco, MSC, Sr. Catherine Garry, MSC, Sr. Ursula Intante, MSC, and Sr. Mary Louise Sullivan, MSC.

Mother Cabrini's acquaintance with the Bible is demonstrated by the many scriptural passages she uses. In translating the biblical quotations, the New American Bible was used. Some of her religious thought, conditioned by the times during which she lived, may seem strange and outmoded. Her desire to convert all Protestants and her disdain of Protestant ministers who proselytized to the extent that she called them devils, was influenced by the belief of that time that there was no salvation outside the Catholic Church. In one letter, she urges the practice of the "heroic act of charity," to help the poor souls in purgatory, which may be not well-known currently.

She grew to maturity during the time Italy was engaged in the movement called "Risorgimento" (Rising again), an ideological and literary movement that had as its goal Italy's freedom from Austrian domination and its unification. It was not favorable to the Church. Its proponents opposed the temporal powers of the papacy and were definitely anticlerical. Demonstrations, disturbances and uprisings occurred throughout the peninsula and the small town where she lived was not immune to the resulting pressures and factions. Her own pastor was jailed several times because of his loyalty to the Church.

With French help, the Piedmontese House of Savoy defeated the Austrians in 1859 and by 1861 most of Italy was united under their rule. Rome and the Papal States under the archconservative Pope Pius IX resisted any reform and were supported by a French garrison stationed there. The French garrison withdrew and, on September 20, 1870, Italian troops entered Rome. In October a plebiscite declared Rome the capital of a united Italy. The Pope refused the government's offer of settlement, preferring to remain a prisoner in the Vatican. The allegiance and loyalty to His Holiness is expressed by Francesca Cabrini throughout these letters. In October

1895, in Lima, Peru, she mentions that a group of Italians who had immigrated there had celebrated the "feast of the 20th of September." This date in 1870 was when the Italian troops entered Rome, defeated the French, and caused the Pope to become a prisoner in the Vatican. This is followed by her commenting sadly on the disrespect and disloyalty shown by the Italians to the Pope.

These letters will show, as set forth in the Constitutions of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, that "Francesca Cabrini was moved to action by the spirit of the gospels, the word of the Church expressed by the Holy Father, the cry of the suffering, the misery of the poor, the tragedy of the abandoned." Her courage and zeal, rising as they did from her loving communion with the heart of Christ, impelled her to make her own St. Paul's motto, "I can do all things in him who strengthens me." (Phil. 4:13)

INTRODUCTION

Since it cannot be assumed that everyone who begins to read this book is familiar with the life of Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini, we begin this work with some biographical notes taken from the latest biography, *In Weakness, Strength*, by the Chilean pastoral theologian, Segundo Galilea.¹

Frances was born in Sant'Angelo Lodigiano, in the province of Lombardy, on July 15, 1850, the tenth of eleven brothers and sisters, of whom only four survived beyond adolescence. She was small and weak throughout her life. It was feared she would not survive, so she was baptized on the very day she was born. Her parents, Agostino Cabrini and Stella Oldini, transmitted their faith to their children by word and example. Frances was also influenced by the religious atmosphere in her parish, whose excellent pastor had created a center of devotion and a missionary spirit, in spite of the hostile political environment.

In the middle of the nineteenth century, Italy was suffused by a political ideology in pursuit of national unity by way of secularist and revolutionary liberalism, which advocated repression of the influence of the Church and of religious education. To counteract this, a generation of zealous bishops and pastors developed among the faithful pious associations and confraternities combining Christian formation with apostolic and social action. Two particular devotions that had become deeply rooted in Sant'Angelo left their permanent mark on Frances: the work of the missions and devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This devotion was at its peak, providing a spiritual foundation to the work of the missions: the love of the Heart of Christ reaching out to sinners and others far from Him. The accounts of life in the missions from the annals of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith were read aloud evenings by her father. They made a strong impression on her and she dreamed of becoming a missionary.

During her childhood and adolescence, her sister Rosa, fifteen years older, exerted a beneficial influence on her. A schoolteacher in Sant'Angelo, she was responsible for her sister's early education. She was the principal caregiver in the family because her mother was frail and sickly. Rosa was truly a model of Christian life. In the midst of her tasks, she dedicated long moments to prayer. She devoted her free time to works of charity and the parish apostolate, often accompanied by Frances. Frances accompanied Rosa to church, and knelt to pray like her. What start-

¹Biographies of Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini include the following: (Mother) Saverio De Maria, *Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini*, translated by Rose Basile Green (Philadelphia: Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, 1984); Pietro DiDonato, *Immigranti Santi. The Life of Mother Cabrini* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. 1960); Segundo Galilea, *In Weakness, Strength* (Quezon City, Philippines: Claretian Communications for the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Stella Maris Province, 1996); Theodor Maynard, *Too Small A World. The Life of Mother Cabrini* (Bruce Publishing Company Scienza and Culture Series, Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1945); and Mary Louise Sullivan, MSC, *Mother Cabrini. "Italian Immigrant of the Century"* (New York: Center for Migration Studies, 1992).

ed as an external imitation resulted in her initiation in prayer and intimacy with Jesus. She picked violets and played that they were missionaries whom she sent out to the missions in paper boats she crafted.

On the day she received the Sacrament of Confirmation (which in those days preceded First Holy Communion), on August 1, 1858, aged eight, she received a special grace. Many years later, Mother Cabrini (who was never fond of speaking of her spiritual experiences), confessed to one of her religious: "I felt something I could not explain. It seemed as though I were no longer of this world; my heart was filled with glory. I know it was the Holy Spirit." From that moment, she sought to respond to Jesus, not denying Him anything and seeking the sacrifice of her will as proof of her love. In 1863, when she was thirteen, a Franciscan missionary spent a few days in Sant'Angelo. Frances expressed to him her ardent desire to go to China as a missionary. When she shared this with Rosa at his suggestion, she was told to dismiss the idea from her mind. This cross was a harsh blow for Frances, the first of the many vocational frustrations she would undergo. A few months after this episode, she registered at the Normal School of Arluno, a village very near Sant'Angelo, to qualify as a schoolteacher.

The Normal School of Arluno was run by the Daughters of the Sacred Heart. Frances lived with the sisters in the convent for almost five years, sharing their prayer life with the Sacred Heart as the center of devotion. During this time she established her own spiritual identity, grew in maturity, and learned to be independent. Her attraction to consecrated life continued so that when her course of study ended, she asked for membership in the Daughters of the Sacred Heart. Although she saw in her a chosen soul, full of virtue, the superior general decided not to accept her, fearing that her poor health would not allow her to endure the demands of religious life.

Frances saw the deepest desire of her life move farther away. These years prepared her to accept anything, as long as it was the will of God. In 1868, Frances received her teacher's diploma. Like her sister Rosa, she taught in the parish school and dedicated herself to works of charity and to serving the poor. In 1870, within months of each other, her parents died. In 1871, she moved to Vidardo as a teacher, at the request of her pastor, when a substitute teacher was needed immediately.

Gentle and firm, Frances proved to be an excellent educator, in the school as well as in the parish, and revealed a quality that she was to develop marvelously in the future: she was a great organizer. She faced her first serious conflict and the first of many tests of her apostolate when the mayor of Vidardo was opposed to the teaching of religion in the school. Demonstrating an unusual firmness for a young and fragile small-town teacher, Frances overcame his opposition and won over the whole town. In 1872, a smallpox epidemic broke out in the region, and she wholeheartedly devoted herself to helping the victims of this dread disease, which she herself contracted. When she recovered, she again experienced with a compelling force the need to become

a religious. The Canossian Sisters of Crema refused her at the request of the pastor of Vidardo who did not want to lose his teacher-apostle.

The House of Providence was a diocesan girls' orphanage administered by Antonia Tondini and Maria Calza. At the bishop's insistence, the two women reluctantly promised to provide the work with the structure and spirit of a religious institute. Their delay and failure to accomplish the bishop's wishes caused the diocesan authorities to seek someone capable of doing this: Frances Cabrini. On August 13, 1874, she entered the House of Providence in Codogno and lived there for six years. In addition to Tondini and Calza, there were five girls who wanted to become religious and more than twenty orphan girls. A month after her arrival, Frances renounced forever the position of public schoolteacher.

Frances left the world where she had grown her roots to enter a path of consecration to God, although for the present she saw nothing clearly. She became the novice mistress when she and the five girls began their novitiate. Upon receiving the habit, she also chose her name in religion. She kept her own name and added that of Xavier because of her devotion to the great missionary. This shows that her missionary vocation continued intact, if not strengthened. The childhood desire to go to China was still alive in the adult woman. We shall never know the cross Sister Frances Xavier Cabrini bore during the first strange years of her religious life. Her silence during a period of more than six years reveals more than words her painful Calvary. Certainly, bearing this burden in union with the Heart of Jesus rooted in her the secret of sanctity.

When Frances Xavier made her religious profession in 1877, at the age of 27, the bishop named her superior of the community. The hostility toward Sister Cabrini continued more subtly, as Antonia Tondini and Maria Calza tried to discredit her even to the extreme of spreading slander. The interior Calvary of the new superior, accepted once more in silence and in obedience to the Church, continued two more years. She had reached a point in which the humiliations, afflictions and periods of darkness no longer held any power to limit the growth of her love.

The tense situation of Frances Xavier and her community in the House of Providence was prolonged until 1880. The same bishop whom she had obeyed to the point of tears freed her. He realized that the House of Providence could not be made into a religious community. He asked her to found a new religious institute and to take with her the group of young women professed with her. In a few days, they were able to move into an ancient Franciscan convent in the same town, abandoned since the Napoleonic wars. In this house, without a rule and without material resources, were born the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on November 14, 1880. On the following day, the new missionary institute, having chosen Saint Francis Xavier as its patron, opened an orphanage with a school on the same premises.

The new foundress was thirty years old. Her personality represented the integration of the paradoxes that characterizes spiritual maturity. By temperament humble or even reserved, she

resolutely moved forward with an amazing vitality and perseverance in the performance of the service of God. Docile and obedient since childhood, she was stubbornly autonomous and independent when necessary. Contemplative and prayerful, nevertheless she was an inspired organizer, able to establish a foundation within a few days. From never having gone beyond the confines of Lombardy, she became a missionary who traveled tirelessly.

Of her devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, she created a mysticism in the loftiest and most authentic sense, in which were integrated all the values of Christian spirituality. There is no authentic mysticism without asceticism. Her asceticism was based on the mistrust of her own efforts and a trust in the mercy of God who wants us humble in order to purify us. Sacrifice and self-denial grow in relation to the love of Jesus, realized as a response to this love, and for love. Frances Xavier understood very early that the asceticism and self-denial most pleasing to the Spouse is to trust Him always, in every circumstance. If the summit of asceticism is humility, and the summit of mysticism is complete surrender in love, sanctity is the synthesis of both. This was the woman whom the Holy Spirit, across surprising paths, had been preparing to establish an institute of missionary sisters. God granted her the gift of radiating a mysticism which would be transmitted to a group of young women anxious to consecrate themselves completely to God and to His Reign.

The young foundress wrote a simple Rule, which the bishop approved. The Institute was established as a diocesan congregation in 1881. There were some objections to the term "missionaries," which implied a mission abroad, because the bishop thought primarily of a service within the diocese, or at most, in Lombardy. However, Mother Cabrini had other plans. For her, the mission was essential in the new institute. In the end, the sisters were approved as "Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus."

In November 1882, Mother Cabrini established a second foundation and two years later established one in Milan. The Institute was now extended throughout the Lombardy region. She had no intention of restricting the congregation to the boundaries of Lombardy. She thought in terms of an Institute truly missionary and, therefore, universal, with a central house in Rome and pontifical approval. With that purpose in mind, Cabrini set out for Rome in September 1887, the first time she had ventured so far from home. Having just arrived, without being settled, her first action was to visit the Church of the Gesù, to pray at the altar where Saint Francis Xavier's right arm is preserved. Then she went to visit the Cardinal Vicar of Rome. Her naive enthusiasm, expectations and determination were matched against the slow pace and caution of the ecclesiastical authorities. But in the end the cardinal asked her to found two houses in Rome instead of one. On March 12, 1888, the Institute was granted pontifical approval, a surprisingly short time. Cabrini also experienced a decisive encounter with Bishop John Baptist Scalabrini, who was also in Rome at the same time.

Italian immigrants suffered indescribably in the United States. Together with the blacks, they were the poorest and most despised. Uprooted, without pastoral care, they were as strangers in their own Church. They were the systematic target of Protestant proselytism. It is a miracle that the great majority of Italians maintained, despite all, a trace of their Catholic faith. The bishop of Piacenza, John Baptist Scalabrini, founded the Missionary Institute of Saint Charles to minister to them. Seeking religious women to help and complement the priests, he asked Mother Cabrini to go to New York to work with the Italian immigrants. She initially rejected the offer, since her goal was the evangelization of the Orient. If she went to New York, she would end up rooted in the United States.

Scalabrini was persistent. He succeeded in obtaining a letter from Archbishop Michael Augustine Corrigan of New York, formally inviting the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart to establish a house there. Frances Xavier had recourse to Leo XIII. She opened her heart to him and posed her missionary dilemma. The Pope's response would change her life: "Not to the East, but to the West." On March 23, 1889, she abandoned her dreams of going to China and embarked for New York, accompanied by six sisters. They arrived in New York on March 31st.

At her first meeting with Archbishop Corrigan, he suggested that she return to Italy. She refused, saying that the Pope had sent her. To make matters worse, the Scalabrinian priests had made no provisions for them, not even living quarters. The convent that their benefactress, Mary di Cesnola, had prepared for them did not meet the archbishop's approval, and the sisters spent the first night in a dingy tenement in the heart of the Italian ghetto, with beds so dirty they did not sleep in them. Tired, yet peacefully engaged in prayer, they spent their first night awake. Then the Sisters of Charity housed them as long as it was necessary and guided their first steps through the city.

In another world, another culture, without contacts, not knowing how to proceed, not knowing the language, Frances Xavier immediately set out to accomplish her mission. She went back to the archbishop and gained his support and friendship. He finally approved the house the countess wanted to hand over to the missionaries. On Palm Sunday of 1889, an orphanage for Italian children was inaugurated on the countess's property, part of which the missionaries occupied as a convent.

A free school was established in the Lower East Side of Manhattan, where the poorest Italians lived. The sisters taught catechism in the Italian parish. During all this time, Frances Xavier and the sisters constantly walked the streets of the Italian district, visiting families, trying to help and guide them, and bringing God nearer to them. Young Italian women soon joined in helping them. Some asked to join the Institute. To support the orphanage the sisters had to beg for alms because they needed to supplement the help they received from other religious congregations and donations from the rich to support the more than 400 orphans. When everything

was in order in New York, Mother Cabrini returned to Italy on July 20, 1889, with the first North American postulants for the novitiate in Codogno.

Mother Cabrini did not write any letters during these first two ocean crossings. During her September 1890 trip to the United States, she began the custom of writing letters to her sisters in the form of a travel diary. Those letters appear here in chronological order and reflect her intense missionary activity, especially from 1890 to 1902. Chapters 10 through 14 are incomplete, without her usual closing salutation. For four years, from 1902 to 1906, she worked tirelessly in the United States. Chapters 15-18 were written not at sea but from various United States missions. The letters in Chapters 16-18 are addressed to the students of the teacher's college in Rome.

In May 1906, she returned to Italy from New York City, disembarking at Naples. We have no letter from this voyage nor of the subsequent ones when she went from Europe to South America. The letters are resumed in 1909. By this time, her frail health was further threatened and her letters were brief. Especially brief was the last letter in this series, written in March 1912, as she returned to New York. World War I put an end to her travels; she could not return to Europe and she refused to travel to South America.

These letters reveal an intimate side of Mother Cabrini that a biography is unable to reveal. They serve both as a wonderful first acquaintance and means to a more intimate connection with this remarkable woman and saint.



*Letter from His Holiness, John Paul II,
On the Occasion of the
Sesquicentennial of the birth of Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini
July 15, 1850-July 15, 2000*

*To Sister Lina Colombini
Superior General of
The Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus*

1. I joyfully unite myself with you in thanking the Lord that your congregation of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart is celebrating the 150th anniversary of the birth of your foundress, Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini, and the 50th anniversary of her being proclaimed Patroness of Immigrants. These happy occasions, which enrich the Jubilee journey of your Institute, are special opportunities to rediscover the zeal and creative love of your charism in the face of new challenges from a world in continual movement. Above all on this occasion, I want to thank you on behalf of the poor and needy, who experience the tenderness of God in you, dear Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. Together with them, I wish to express my appreciation and recognition for the great good that you untiringly accomplish, following in the footsteps of your holy foundress.
2. Francesca Cabrini was born and baptized on July 15, 1850, in Sant'Angelo Lodigiano in northern Italy, to a family rich in faith and piety. Early in life she began the journey of discipleship in the Lord, bringing her to the heights of sanctity through mysterious and unforeseen pathways.

The turning point of her life was entering the House of Providence in Codogno, where tribulations and difficulties strengthened her missionary passion and her determination to dedicate herself totally to the Lord. She received the religious habit, and while keeping the name Francesca, later added Xavier to it, in memory of the great Jesuit missionary, patron of the missions. Thanks to the encouragement and support of the Bishop of Lodi, Msgr. Domenico Maria Gelmini, St. Frances Xavier, with seven of her companions from the House of Providence, set out to found your Institute in an old Franciscan monastery. They were first called "Salesian Missionaries of the Sacred Heart," receiving diocesan approbation in 1881. Mother Cabrini inspired her sisters with evangelical obedience, mortification, renunciation, vigilance of the heart and interior silence. By means of these virtues, we surrender ourselves to Christ and enflame our missionary desires. A surprising flowering of vocations followed the initial foundation and the Institute rapidly expanded in Lombardy and other neighboring regions of Italy. Only eight years after the foundation, the first house was opened in Rome and pontifical approbation of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was given on March 12, 1888.

The famous words of Pope Leo XIII to your Foundress, "Not to the East, but to the West," are well-known. She yearned to go to China but his command gave her new energy and direction to her missionary zeal. The invitation of the Vicar of Christ directed her toward the masses of immigrants, who at the end of the 1880s were crossing the ocean to the United States, often in conditions of extreme poverty.

3. From that moment on, the untiring apostolic activity of Mother Cabrini was ever more energized by her desire to bring salvation to all – and do it in a hurry! She was in the habit of saying: "The Heart of Jesus does things in such a hurry that I can barely keep up with Him!" With a group of sisters she left for New York in the first of many voyages during which, as a tireless messenger of hope, she would be reaching new apostolic goals: Nicaragua, Brazil, Argentina, as well as France, Spain and England.

Sustained by undaunted courage, she created from nothing schools, hospitals and orphanages for the myriad of penniless immigrants who ventured into the new world in search of work. These desperate men and women did not know the language, could not integrate themselves with dignity into American society, and were often victims of the unscrupulous. Cabrini's motherly heart gave her no peace; she reached out everywhere to hovels, to prisons, down into the mines. Never intimidated by fatigue or distance, she traveled from New York to New Jersey, from Pennsylvania to Illinois, from California to Louisiana and Colorado. Even today in the United States, the name of Cabrini is well known and devotion to her is vibrant and alive. Despite her love for her country of origin, Mother Cabrini succeeded in becoming an American citizen.

She was beatified by Pope Pius XI in 1938, only 21 years after her death in Chicago on December 22, 1917 and was canonized in 1946 by Pope Pius XII. In the Holy Year of 1950, he proclaimed her Patroness of Immigrants. By defending the dignity of those who were forced to live far from their country, this little woman had become a relentless peacemaker.

4. Sister Lina, during this jubilee event which your Cabrini family is celebrating in the Holy Year 2000, may you reflect deeply on the original inspirations of your Institute. Because of them, Frances Xavier Cabrini became an intrepid missionary of Christ. Because of them, she persevered untiringly in her prophetic ministries in favor of her poorest brothers and sisters. Her extraordinary activity – you know it well – was rooted in her prayer life and, above all, in her long periods of contemplation before the tabernacle. Christ was her all! Her constant concern was to discern His will in the dispositions of the Magisterium of the Church and in the events of her life.

Even for you, dear sisters, may the search for the will of your divine Spouse be the center of your existence. At the school of the Heart of Jesus may you learn to listen to the cries of the poor in order to respond wholeheartedly to their material and spiritual problems. This is Mother Cabrini's legacy to you at the beginning of the new millennium, so rich in expectation and hope, but also so wounded in its humanity, especially in the poorest countries of the world.

Recent General Chapters have called you to an incarnational spirituality, as an expression of Jesus' love for humanity. Furthermore, in these years you have made options in favor of the poor and powerless; you have been led to share difficult conditions, for example, in the favelas and the rural zones of Northeast Brazil. You are involved in the care of street children and are working to promote the dignity of women.

Today, you incarnate with creativity and generosity the spirit of Mother Cabrini in the unprecedented and complex shifts of migration. You have opened your houses to immigrant families, and enrolled their children in your schools. You are actively involved in numerous hospitality centers, so needed today because the problems and challenges of immigration seem to be even more acute than during your Foundress' time. You help them to acquire legal status, to learn the language, to become integrated into a new society, and you aid the undocumented in detention centers.

5. This apostolic passion, developed in ever-growing collaboration with the laity, asks each one of you, Missionary Sisters, to grow in awareness of your missionary identity and to labor steadfastly for the protection and promotion of the rights of every human person. May you serve the Lord in relational and hospitable communities, witnessing to the Gospel values that are your hallmark. May you be wise educators of the laity who want to share your charism. Enter with them into a collaboration inspired by the Gospel and the values of sacrifice, attentiveness and dialogue to which the evangelical message challenges you.

TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH

I ask the Lord that, thanks to your example, many young people may become fascinated by the missionary ideals of Mother Cabrini, more relevant than ever in our contemporary society. May the celebration of the Jubilee Year 2000, providentially coinciding with your own commemorations, be the privileged moment in which each member of the Institute may grow in faithful love for the Sacred Heart of Jesus. May each one of you often repeat in your life these words of the apostle, so dear to your holy foundress, "I can do all things in Him who strengthens me" (Phil 4.13)

May the Virgin Mary, to whom Mother Cabrini was devoted, protect and intercede for all of you. May Saint Frances Xavier and all your patron saints watch over you from heaven. I send you my love and with all my heart I bestow a special Apostolic Blessing on you, Sister Lina, on your sisters, your lay collaborators, their families, and all who are recipients of your loving care.

From Vatican City, May 31, 2000

Joannes Paulus II



I

FROM LE HAVRE
TO NEW YORK,
April 1890

Destinations Cited:
Codogno, Italy
Lombardy, Italy
Milan, Italy
Paris, France
LeHavre, France
New York, NY



"For this we have undertaken such a long journey."
— Mother Cabrini

FROM LE HAVRE TO NEW YORK, April 1890

In July 1889, Mother Cabrini returned from New York to her favorite place, the novitiate in Codogno. Soon after her arrival, she suffered the loss of one of her first companions. Then she visited all the houses in Lombardy and notified the sisters who were to return to New York with her to prepare for their imminent departure because she had been notified that the Jesuits would sell her the site which attracted her when she visited West Park. It was a country place on the banks of the Hudson, only a few hours from the urban bustle of New York City. Seven sisters embarked with her when she left from Le Havre.

When I left you from Codogno on Wednesday, I told myself I was just going to Milan. This was so I would not be mastered by the thought of having to distance myself so far from you since I would have immediately felt oppressed and unable to breathe. Then in Milan, when I really had to leave you all, I tried some self-deception to show that I was a strong, true Missionary. Still I felt crushed by an enormous weight only made lighter by the promises each of you made to strive to become true Spouses of Christ, worthy Missionaries of the Sacred Heart.

How this thought, my daughters, relieves all sorrows! It renders sweet all hardships, whatever cross may come my way, and gives me immense delight. Then, if we reflect well, for us there are no distances. The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus are worldwide, and must participate in the spaciousness of this Divine Heart that embraces all, comprehends all, gives life to all, unites and draws all to itself. This is what actually reassures us during these temporary separations, makes us strong with His same strength and communicates every grace to us. He is our true Treasure; let us love Him wholeheartedly, serve Him faithfully, make Him known by all, inspiring all to detach themselves from all persons and created things and themselves in order to succeed in possessing His perfect love which is a foretaste of paradise. Concentrate all your affections, oh daughters, in this Heart, and you will always be truly happy. However, if some private affection binds you to yourself or other creatures, you will always have some vexation, some hours of tedium and melancholy. I beg you to free yourselves and put on wings in order to be always above earthly concerns!

Arrival in Paris. The voyage was most enjoyable. In crossing that high mountain chain, we began a sublime meditation, gazing upon the beauties of nature formed by God for the inspiration of His creatures. Then, too, it was delightful to observe the continuing exclamations of wonder from the sisters making the trip for the first time. Sister Eletta even noticed a change in the color of the water in the boundary between Italy and France, and she believed she was seeing the equator. When we passed over some bridges, she asked if the train were not afraid to make the crossing.

After midnight about two o'clock, while all were asleep, they opened our door and asked us to leave in a hurry. We refused to comply and replied that we were not getting off the train until Paris. Three minutes later, they came back again to tell us to come down in a hurry because our car was broken. I didn't understand, and Sister Ignasia, always asleep, answered, "Close the door." When the stationmaster and many porters came to help us, we finally understood and everyone hurried down. One was carrying her shoes, another was without her cap, one covered her head with a white kerchief. One sister was in pigtails; another had her rosary around her neck. In one

minute, they moved the luggage and all of us into another compartment, in which we traveled in comfort to Paris. We cast our thoughts on our beloved Spouse, once more centering on Him all our affections and thanked Him for having saved us from great danger. We made a spiritual communion and then resumed our rest.

Because of this incident, we arrived in Paris an hour and a half past the scheduled time. We found the kind Mrs. Gabin waiting for us. She led us immediately to the Shrine of Our Lady of Victories, where we all received Holy Communion with great joy in our souls. It was my first visit to that shrine. It seemed to me that the Blessed Virgin, our loving Mother, had invited me there so that I could place the Institute and each of you under her protection in a special way and, through her, in the Heart of Jesus. So you can imagine my prayers and my petitions in the name of each of you. I ask you from now on to pray three Hail Marys daily to Our Lady of Victories and a Gloria to the Heart of the Child Jesus. You will see how many rich graces will descend upon all of us for our sanctification, for the Institute and for the good of souls.

We toured Paris briefly with our hostess on the upper deck of trams for a better view of all the important sights on the principal streets. Midday came and soon after we boarded the train to Le Havre. We arrived at five that afternoon to board the ship where we rested peacefully in our staterooms from Friday evening until Saturday morning. The officers and the crew were glad to see us arrive so early and helped us settle in comfortably.

Saturday morning we went to pay our respects to the captain and the purser who welcomed us with great courtesy and offered their help in meeting all our needs, even though these persons did not know who we were. We used this occasion to appreciate even more the great love Jesus has for His spouses, obtaining for us so many undeserved favors. Oh, the Heart of Jesus is so wide and compassionate; this is why He showers us with so many benefits. Let us be grateful to Him; true gratitude will always obtain greater graces for us.

We went out on deck this morning and greeted the sea, image of God's immensity. We then recited some prayers, which rose spontaneously from our hearts. We recited the *Ave Maris Stella*, which we would also have sung, had we not feared disturbing the other passengers. The Blessed Virgin heard the melody of our devout, filial affection more than that of our voices, and blessed our departure. At nine a.m. our ship raised anchor and, in spite of the fact that it was raining a little, reached the high sea calmly and quietly. It is said that we shall have a good voyage, but we are not concerned. Knowing that we are in God's hands, enclosed in the Heart of Jesus, renders us secure and serene in every event.

As soon as Sister Battistina saw the ship move, she felt dizzy, and half an hour later she became seasick. The others soon followed her example. I alone remained unaffected; I even continue to feel better, gradually breathing easier. I wish the sea were not so rocky so that I could resume my projects, which I have had to abandon. My ease in breathing also seems to lift my soul

ever higher to God. It almost makes me desire to take seriously what I had jokingly remarked a few days before: If the Sacred Heart would grant me the means to build a ship, I would then found *Christopher House* (Christ-Bearer) and sail all the seas with a small or large community to bear the name of Christ Jesus to all peoples who still do not know Him or have forgotten Him. These may be useless thoughts, nor shall I permit them to occupy my mind; they serve as a bit of entertainment among us.

They rang the bell for breakfast at ten-thirty. All came with me to the table but a minute later, one after the other ran in haste to the railing to begin that ugly business. Sister Ignazia tried to resist until halfway through the meal and then followed the others. They left me alone at table and I, like a sailor, continued to the end. As a matter of fact, I have never before eaten with such pleasure.

April 20. Yesterday all the sisters came to dinner and were able to nourish themselves somewhat. We all went out on deck to breathe in air which truly expanded and restored our lungs. At seven-thirty, we retired to our stateroom. After some conversation and prayer, we went to rest toward nine and slept soundly the whole night through, as the sea was so calm. Only Sister Maria Assunta heard a great storm which was only some rain bearing against the porthole. If you could see poor Sister Assunta! She resembles a soul full of cares, so woebegone! (Who knows how she would be if the sea abandoned its present calm!) Yet she laughs heartily when asked what the great concern darkening her brow could be.

This morning the sea is still very calm. I have never seen it like this, smooth as a river. The steamer glides along with speed, but no movement is felt. The sun sparkles; the air is fine. There is no odor in the staterooms because this ship is better constructed than others; we seem to be on land. Yet, not all the sisters were able to come to breakfast and, the few who came left me alone at the end, just like yesterday. The officer in charge of the second class, whose table is near ours, ordered special food prepared for the sick. The poor sisters, at every movement, thought they were seeing a great storm. Sister Eletta wanted the ship halted at meal times. I repeated this to the officer to make him laugh. He is so good and reminds me of Saint Francis de Sales.

What lofty thoughts the present tranquility of the sea inspires! It is an image of the joy experienced by a soul abiding in the blessed peace of God's grace, a place of calm, enduring peace, enabling the soul to rise to the heights of the divine mysteries. It is also a symbol of the vast power of God who commands this sea, so wide and immense, to be as calm as a river while of itself, it would toss about restlessly. God commands; it obeys and it seems as flat as a table. If also in religious life, each sister unreservedly obeyed her superior with perfect submission, oh, what calm, peace and tranquility, what heavenly delights we would experience! Ah, daughters, obey; be obedient and very humble, not persisting in your own judgment. Submit yourselves with great

peace and simplicity. You will then experience in your houses the true foretaste of paradise, which precedes the one that awaits you.

The Risen Jesus seems to have said to this sea, "Peace be with you!" It gives us an image of a soul pure, immaculate, — and detached from everything, solely united to her Divine Spouse, upon whose left arm she rests, while she is being caressed with his right. Ah, my daughters, be pure, single-hearted, selfless, not clinging to anyone or anything not even your own self, your desires and inclinations! Then you will be like a peaceful sea. Yes, you will be like a sea, because a pure soul becomes capable of great things and her mind can roam the infinity of God. The earthly soul full of attachments is always restricted, petty, capable of doing little, cowardly, often discouraged. She is never able to abandon herself wholeheartedly to divine service. May I find no such soul among my daughters, nor even among my friends!

I wish all to have wings to be able to soar aloft to rest in the blessed peace of a soul belonging solely to God. I also desire to be such a soul. Pray, daughters, pray for me who has so many desires, but all sterile and therefore useless. If these desires were talents, I would indeed be in trouble, since I would be obliged to multiply them. Instead I keep them buried and do not know how to make them fruitful. Yet I am consoled by the thought that by humbling ourselves, we may obtain pardon from God. Yes, daughters, let us always humble ourselves before Him, at every instant of our lives. We shall be raised high above all our miseries by the same God, and admitted to taste peace and tranquility. The sea that I am at this moment crossing is an image of this peace.

April 21. Here we are! A seesaw has been set in motion by the hand of the Omnipotent God and, whether we like it or not, we must play. Yesterday afternoon, about four, the sea began to show its true self. No one is able to stand erect without hanging on tightly to something. For the past five hours, Sister Eletta has been begging God to calm the sea. It is now so frightening for her that she is speechless and so upset that she thought it best to go to bed, like the other sisters, where she could tolerate this great bother better. I do not give in, staying always on deck. Only in the afternoon about six, having dined, I went to visit the sisters, and following their example, I succumbed to seasickness. Patience! Twice I had to resign myself to keeping them company. I made them laugh a little and Sister Eletta said that I almost cured her. Sister Assunta looks miserable; she laughs a little only when asked what could be her big problem. Sister Giovannina is always laughing, even when she succumbs to her rumbling stomach. Sister Agostina also laughs but Sister Bernardina and Sister Battistina are like two corpses. Sister Ignazia forces herself to try to imitate me, but then she runs to "pay the price" or hurry to her bunk before she falls.

Of so many male and female passengers, only six or seven come to table. Woe to us if we give in to this! The best thing to do is to remain on deck enjoying the fresh air, and even the rain if it comes. Last night, because a storm was truly threatening, I stayed half-dressed to be ready to

save myself and the others. But the Good Lord, who watches over His spouses, lulled us all to sleep on a great seesaw, rocking us back and forth. This morning I arose early to go on deck to admire the majestic sight! You should see how beautiful the sea is in its great movement, how it swells and foams! It is truly a marvel! But the wind is fine and the ship sails rapidly, as if flying. You should see what waves! At the prow no one can stay because the waves cover the whole ship. It is not too bad astern from where I write to you, stretched out as best I can on a deck chair.

A single wave could drown us all but He who created the seas and commands them to rise up like mountains will not allow His beloved creatures to drown, much less His loving spouses. God loved us before creating the seas; indeed, He created them for our use and pleasure. The love of Jesus is for us a consoling mystery. He called us to be His beloved spouses, and we all ran in response to His voice, captivated by His immense love. Daughters, let us always wholly yield ourselves and be submissive to Him, running swiftly in His footsteps. From all eternity, God has loved and chosen us; let us love and serve Him with joy during the few days of our life. Ah, let nothing be displeasing, nothing seem burdensome for the love of our beloved Jesus.

If you were all here with me, daughters, crossing this immense ocean, you would exclaim: "Oh how great and wonderful is God in His works!" Yet the ocean of graces, daughters, which Jesus showers upon us at every instant of our life infinitely surpasses any natural creation. Even the splendors of the skies are eclipsed before the wealth that God showers upon His beloved spouses. Let us then revere and love our excellent state of life, and examine ourselves frequently to remove every defect unbecoming the Virgins of Christ, in order that soon our beloved Jesus may lead us into His wine cellar (Sg. 2:4), to inebriate us and order charity in us.

April 22. Just a few lines today because I have been so exhausted from what we have experienced. Last evening the movement increased, and the ship dipped so low at the prow that we thought it would capsize, forcing them to strain the engine. Then toward midnight we felt a strong jolt and the ship stopped suddenly. The engine was broken. At once, a whistle, a bell, and a trumpet summoned all the sailors on deck. We heard much noise but did not know what it could be. We saw only that the ship was not moving. We dressed hurriedly, including those who were sick, to be ready for the lifeboats, should they become necessary.

Once dressed, I sought the others. Rather, Sister Eletta was the first to come running to me, all frightened, to ask if I were aware that something was amiss. I laughed heartily to make her laugh and forget her fear. In her cabin all were greatly alarmed, but when I entered the next cabin, everyone was still asleep, and also in the next one, as if nothing had happened. I decided to let them enjoy their deep slumber, and went to investigate what was happening. I was told that we had to stay motionless until the engine was repaired. Meanwhile, the sea became calm and beautiful. The ship was like a house on water, rocking only slightly every once in a while. From midnight until eleven in the morning, it did not move.

While we were at breakfast, the ship started up again. Now we sail speedily toward New York on a most tranquil sea as if nothing had ever happened. If Sister Giuseppina had been attentive this morning, she could have seen the ship in the middle of the clouds while it was not moving. But perhaps she did not think of observing the firmament. All the sisters got out of bed this morning while the ship was standing still, and I finally see them surrounding me on deck. Sister Agostina, Sister Battistina and Sister Assunta are still half dead, unable to eat. But it is good to see them always smiling, ever abandoned to the holy will of God. I am half dead because of my loss of sleep last night, yet I keep moving, eating and writing to you. Tonight I shall sleep unless the good Lord wishes otherwise. We are often entertained by visits of some most beautiful white sea birds who rise up from the water, then dive back in. They seem to be the image of our guardian angels, or still, of so many dear little virgins who will come to our Institute to become brave Missionaries. This is really the first time I've seen sea birds.

April 23. We are off the banks of Newfoundland. As is usual here, the ship tosses about violently, which is truly frightening. The sisters are all sick again, half dead, except Sister Eletta and Sister Giovannina, who have more or less already conquered the sea and keep me good company. With her geographical explanations, Sister Eletta is our comedienne. She cannot understand how the navigators of this ship can be so ignorant. They always steer the ship in the middle of the ocean, while the others that we see from time to time are on the edge of the horizon and are therefore more secure. Some of them end up in paradise, or at least in the sky. Yesterday one tried to come to our aid when we were stopped, but this aid was refused because in an hour the engine was nearly repaired. Well, then, that ship ended up in paradise; it was Sister Eletta who saw this. Now she maintains that it must be during the night that our ship changes its course, because by day the circle is always at the same distance, and so we shall never reach New York — perhaps we will get to heaven first!

Our names, like all the others, were printed in attractive leaflets and given to each first-class passenger and to us as a special privilege. Sister Giovannina was newly baptized on the high seas, and named Giovannona. [Giovanna is the proper name; "-ina" is its diminutive, "-ona" expresses bigness]. We always finish making our meditation on deck because the sea arouses in us the most inspiring thoughts and the most noble sentiments. Now the horizon has grown much wider, resembling God's grace that surrounds us on every side. It is like God's love taking possession of a soul, enabling it to perform an immensity of holy works. Oh, yes! Grace is an infinite treasure from God. Those who receive and correspond to it truly participate in God's friendship. It is precious for the unfailing increase of virtue it causes every hour in souls. It is truly an image of the ocean. Let us seek, daughters, to attract it to us by perfect detachment from everything and everyone, from ourselves and from those too-ardent desires that can disturb the peace and quiet that are the effects of that same grace.

April 24. I write to you after having witnessed a spectacle most novel for me as well as for the crew. Toward eleven we saw ourselves surrounded by icebergs on every part of the horizon. At first they seemed inconsequential masses, but as some drew closer, we saw that they were about twelve times the size of our ship. They slowed down the engine and made several course changes to avoid them, but we had them only about sixty meters distant. Now we can still see some peaks in the distance, and it is feared that we may meet more tonight. This would be dangerous. May Jesus do as He pleases. A gentleman who has made twenty-one trips on this ship every month of the year, has never seen such a sight. It was destined to happen precisely on our passage. The icebergs resemble immense, jagged fortresses.

Today the sea is very calm. Everyone is well except Sister Agostina who still seems half dead. Meanwhile, for one reason or another, our arrival has been delayed. According to today's latest calculations, we may not arrive before Tuesday - imagine that! We believed we would arrive in time to celebrate the Feast of the Patronage of Saint Joseph; instead we have to spend it at sea, without Mass, without Communion. Now we begin to feel the austerity of such an oppressive fast. Oh, if only we could go ashore! Certainly we would not look for a confessor first, but for a priest to give us Communion, like last year. Meanwhile, the view continually before our eyes, the work of the One whom we so much desire to receive into the small sanctuary of our souls, serves as preparation for a worthy Communion.

April 25. Today it is very hot, like July. The ocean is very beautiful, but there is a tremendous swaying movement of the ship. Chairs do not stay in place and the stewards have fastened them down so that we can enjoy the open air in comfort. All the sisters are well and to my great joy they were able to enjoy their meal this morning. The women slept late today so that we were able to pray the Hours of the Office of the Sacred Heart on deck. Then we made a brief meditation on the lesson from Saint Bernard where he speaks of the strength and power of the love of God in a soul, how one seized by this love no longer feels the weight of any cross, but only great pleasure and delight. Oh, happy the soul who lives in the true love of Christ! My daughters, be selfless; detach yourselves from everyone and everything, and you will experience the paradise of true, firm, heavenly delight.

Tonight, before we slept, thinking that you were perhaps making a holy hour for us, we joined you in spirit and shared with you the delights of our holy union with God. Indeed, since the ship's movement calmed down a bit, we could almost imagine being in ecstasy. Daily we invoke the Star of the Sea with the *Ave Maris Stella*, and our beloved Mother truly protects us, lavishing on us special favors of grace and protection. Even yesterday, our delivery from those enormous icebergs that threatened our destruction was due to our loving, powerful Mother. We are always modestly cheerful. The passengers enjoy seeing our pleasure and compete with each other for the opportunity to chat with us or offer their help.

April 26. Yesterday, around three, a heavy fog set in, limiting visibility to about ten meters. Fog is the worst weather condition for the captain to encounter. To add to our fear, more icebergs were seen around us. The engine was immediately halted for fear of colliding with some great iceberg. Before evening, the horizon broadened so that the night was quiet again. This incident caused the ship to deviate considerably off its course. During other voyages, it sails more north of the banks of Newfoundland; this time we veered southward. I believe we are at the same latitude as Naples. In fact, it's so warm it seems like summer.

For the last three days I have resembled Bacchus. My forehead is red, almost livid, and the redness extends down my face. At first it was thought to be erysipelas and I would have regretted giving up the fresh air which is my life. Instead, the doctor said it was caused by the air and water to which I often also expose my face. I am reluctant to take flight when it rains and deprive myself of the fresh air. Today my forehead and nose started peeling and my skin is shedding like a snake's. Would to God that I may also change my life a little, and be converted! This will happen if you, my beloved ones, pray.

Oh, the daughters' prayers for the conversion of their mother will always be heard by the Sacred Heart of Jesus! Pray, pray; it is greatly for your interest, because if I am converted and directed on the right path, I certainly shall draw down many graces on the Institute. I rejoice that you have been so good, that in the midst of so many dangers we experienced, especially with those enormous icebergs, we did not sink to the bottom of the sea. Continue to be good, prayerful, generous in sacrifice, humble and meek on all occasions, especially during those moments when your self-love makes itself heard.

Yesterday evening a Protestant gentleman came to invite me and all the sisters to a concert, saying he is happy when he sees the sisters, and would want them to be always in the best places. I replied that I could not accept, since it was not fitting for religious to attend secular amusement. He then spoke with us awhile, and gave us six tickets valued at half a dollar each for the lottery held in the grand salon. He would pay attention for our numbers during the drawing. I am sorry I do not speak English because this gentleman is so good. He loves sincerity and I could at least speak to him about our religion. Patience! I shall pray very much to the Heart of Jesus and to Mary most holy to save him. He is English and has lived in New York for five years. He promised to come with his wife to visit our orphanage. His wife is Catholic. This gentleman says that the mission we have undertaken among the Italians is difficult, most unlikely to succeed. Learning that this is exactly why we have accepted it, and want to succeed no matter the cost, he holds us in even greater esteem and is eager to lend us support.

A famous Milanese adventurer, Mr. De Petro, also travels with us. At first he would not admit that he was Italian but now, seeing how everyone competes to draw near us and favor us, he also came to declare himself our friend, stating how happy he is to know us, and now enjoys speak-

ing the Milanese dialect whenever he can. He also is impressed with the success we achieved within just a few months. He said that in fifteen years he has had enough displeasures and deceptions to fill a book. But the poor man does not know Jesus and the goodness of His Heart. Since he relies solely on his talents, his days cannot always be happy.

April 27. Today is the Feast of the Patronage of Saint Joseph. If there were a priest on board, we could at least attend Mass. Instead, this is already the second Sunday we and about 1,300 others are deprived of it. There are 900 poor immigrants in third class, 700 are Italian, 200, Swiss. Poor people! If only they will end up in cities where there will be someone to break open for them the bread of the Word of God! But who knows where the majority of them are destined? It is certain they will join our other poor brothers who in the New World are called barbarians, exactly because they seem unmindful of their noble origins, the religion which nurtured them.

To compound the misfortune, there is among them an ardent republican who often assembles them. Like a wild beast, he incites them against all order, in such a way that the leaders are hard pressed to watch over and correct them. This is like a small town floating on the waves, threatening revolution in every sense of the word. It is an image of our poor Italy, whose children have lost sight of their goals and incite civil strife among themselves, which will lead them to final ruination at breakneck speed. It is God's just punishment for that great throng which has chosen to forget that Catholicism has been the predominant religion in the country that principally formed the character of the true Italian and distinguished Italy from all other nations.

Ah, pray daughters, pray with all your hearts for so many of our brothers, blinded in this fashion, and see in it a good lesson for us: that of being very faithful in the observance of our Holy Rule so as to console the afflicted Heart of Jesus and to obtain from Him abundance, and unwillingly yield to this or that one. Let each one make it her duty, or even more, feel a powerful need to be subject to all. The religious who feels this way will be the true jewel of our Institute, will be pleasing the Sacred Heart of Jesus and will move Him to shower upon us the greatest treasures. Are you humble, my daughters? Do you like the last place? Do you like being despised, forgotten, and unnoticed by all? I ask the one who feels this way to pray for me, please! She is a truly precious gem, a gift given to me by my beloved Jesus; through her I shall obtain everything. Last evening the purser gave me three lottery tickets, and another gentleman six; now we have fifteen. Today is the drawing; we shall see what happens.

April 28. Today, around three post meridian, we shall see land. Maybe we shall not arrive in port until late in the evening, and shall have to sleep on board again. Our poor sisters will be as impatient to see us as we are to embrace them. We have been subjected to a long delay, but finally have arrived and it is our duty to thank the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We complained that day when

the engine broke down, but it was a great grace. Without it, the encounter with the icebergs would have occurred at night, with great peril.

Yesterday, we were given more lottery tickets, worth almost 100 lire. When I was invited to see the display of prizes, I found that there was nothing of value. Even if we win, it does not matter, because they are all useless things. I hope, however, to gain a different prize, with the help of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, that of converting the Protestant gentleman who was the first to make us a gift of tickets. Yesterday we had a discussion that ended with his agreeing with me on everything. He loves the Pope very much, venerates him deeply. He admires everything about our holy religion. Yet he does not want to consider embracing it because he has seen so many priests without a true spirit. However, on this point also he understood well the reasons I put forward.

You should see with what patience he listens to me and then to the sister who translates in English what he does not understand! He is so intelligent that he understands from my expression alone what I am trying to say. He often urges me to speak English, helping me with some French words, saying he will then understand everything. Now Sister Bernardina is making a novena to obtain for me the grace to speak English, and assures me that I will receive it. What do you think? I fear Judgment Day will come first. Still I trust in Jesus; if He wants me to lead a soul to His heart, He will also grant me the grace to speak the language of the countries I shall visit. A young lady from New York never abandons us. She is very skillful and lively, and in this way talks to everyone about the sisters, and persuades everyone to understand the benefit of our small mission.

Now, I leave you, daughters, with these few lines of ill-connected news that I was able to write between one wave and another. One of you please copy them well, correcting any errors, and then send a copy as soon as possible to Rome and Milan where so many sisters are waiting, and then, without delay, to the other houses. On arrival, I shall have much to do, but as soon as possible, I shall write again. Accompany me always with your fervent prayers, truly powerful when joined, that is, to the practice of the best virtues, especially those that you know I desire to find in each of you.

I often think of each one of you in particular. Live in such a way that your mother's gaze will always rest on you with holy pleasure, because of the fragrance of your noble sacrifices. May Jesus bless you and enclose you in His heart, where you will find heaven on earth. May He make you grow ever stronger in spirit, in perfect self-abnegation and detachment from all creatures and all pleasures. All the sisters send you affectionate greetings.

Your affectionate Mother in the Sacred Heart of Jesus,
M. Francesca Saverio Cabrini

At sea, April 28, 1890



II

FROM NEW YORK
TO LE HAVRE,
August 1890

Destinations Cited:
New York, NY
West Park (Manresa), NY
New York, NY
LeHavre, France



"How many unfortunate people do not know God? How many others reject Him to follow their own passions, blinded by the false goods of earth!... How much we understand the great grace God has given us, calling us to His service, or better, to His love!"
— Mother Cabrini

FROM NEW YORK TO LE HAVRE, August 1890

Mother Cabrini spent a busy three months in the United States. West Park was an ideal, healthful site for the orphanage she established there at the request of Archbishop Corrigan, and for the North American novitiate that opened in 1891. The Jesuits sold it at a very low price because it lacked sufficient water. A few days after their arrival, the sisters discovered an underground spring to provide enough water.

In New York, Mother Cabrini met a Nicaraguan gentlewoman, Doña Elena Arellano, who spoke to her of the lack of a serious Catholic education in her country and the need for good religious teachers. She offered Mother Cabrini a mansion in Granada to establish a school. Mother Cabrini departed in August 1890, to seek approval to open a Central American mission.

M

y beloved daughters in the Adorable Heart of Jesus.
Peace be with you and accompany you always and everywhere.

August 17. Yesterday I felt the previous night's loss of sleep so much that I was unable to do anything. Today, however, I feel better and am able to spend a little time with you. My traveling companions are sensible and very much agree with me in not giving in to seasickness. Anna is always calm and tranquil; Elizabetta feels cold and does her best to cover herself. The weather is really cold, always like an April morning, but the air feels so pure and exhilarating that it is a pleasure to breathe. It is healthful, inspiring sublime thoughts, as if a heavenly aura surrounded us, lifting our mind to that dear, good God Who has created such beauty for His poor creatures, the work of His omnipotent hands. The sea continues to be marvelously calm and still. Heaven seems to be mirrored in it, as well as the features of a soul surrounded by grace-given peace and intimate, unending joy. Some little birds come now and then to delight us. They look like small swallows, but I don't know if they are swallows or sea birds.

Last night I slept peacefully as if in my own little cell. In a dream I received Holy Communion, that Communion which is impossible here. Today I was doubly sad to be deprived of it, having heard, to my great displeasure, that a Protestant minister was scheduled to celebrate. Instead, thank heaven, it is almost noon and the Protestant Mass has not taken place. God be blessed and thanked for having heard our prayers and impeding this act.

August 18. I have no news to report because there is no change in the sea. Until now it has been as smooth as a table and if one did not raise her eyes, she would not believe the vessel ran so rapidly. I am not sick; neither do I feel well, and have no will for anything. I have only the benefit of meditating freely. This is a great advantage for me because in this way I pass the time enjoying the pure delights of the beloved Spouse of our souls. Oh, my daughters, if only all knew the great benefits of medication, of remaining in familiar conversation with Jesus. If they experienced these joys, they would certainly envy our happy lot! Instead, how many unfortunate people do not know God? How many others reject Him to follow their own passions, blinded by the false goods of earth! Upon seeing these poor unfortunate creatures during certain occasions, how much we understand the great grace God has given us, calling us to His service, or better, to His love!

Let us love Jesus, my daughters, and love Him much! Jesus has many graces to give us and is waiting for our love in order to bestow them. Once He told one of His handmaids that if He found souls who loved Him like Saint Francis of Assisi, He would be ready to give them as many graces as He gave that great saint, and even greater ones. Therefore, it is true, let us admit it, that

if graces do not descend upon us, we ourselves keep them away by not loving enough. Unless we give up our self-love, our attachment to ourselves and our will, true love will never come to abide in us.

This morning I had to fuss over a dog to please a lady and befriend her a bit, so I could speak to her about our holy religion. She is a Protestant. I have already been able to speak a few words with her, but she is so much attached to her false religion.

August 19. You are praying too heartily, my daughters, so that the sea is still exceptionally calm. Everyone keeps repeating they have never seen such a continual calm. Stop praying for a moment so that there may be some movement, and I could have some news to recount. Perring that dog yesterday has paid off because the owner has taken pleasure in coming near to speak willingly enough about religion. Naturally, she tries to defend her own, but already doubts whether or not one can make reparation for sins in this world. I wish I were a little better instructed so I could be a real Missionary. What I cannot do will be accomplished by our good sisters in Rome, where this lady is spending the winter. She will go to visit them and asked me for their address for this purpose. I would like to convert all Protestants; it is a mission very dear to my heart.

You, my daughters, who are in a place where you can work very much in this, do it with great zeal and seek to increase the growth of the clusters of fruit on the mystical Vine of Christ. May you know how to employ thousands of ways to convert souls. Be certain that you will never lack in the opportunity and the skill if you ardently love your Heavenly Spouse. The pure and heavenly love of Jesus will suggest thousands of ways to promote His glory. Oh, how melodious is the hymn of that fortunate spouse who can say: "Jesus loves me, I love Him. He is the only object of my thoughts; I have written Him on the palm of my hands and in the innermost depths of my heart." So, courage, daughters, let us please Jesus by working much for His mystical members, the souls redeemed by Him with so much suffering.

August 20. The weather continues to be fine. The sea is enchanting; no one can hardly believe it. The people say it is due to the sisters' merits. It could be so because there are seven Madames of the Sacred Heart who are very virtuous and are going to their Paris motherhouse to prepare for profession. You can imagine their sublime sentiments and what beautiful souls they have. The weather is cool and the gentle air speaks to us of the great bounty and generosity of our good and great God. When standing at the prow, the rainbow can be seen continually reflected in the water, now wider, now narrower. I go there often because one breathes purer air there. This morning I saw some marvelous fish of every color joyfully leaping about in the sea, just like our souls should always swim in God's grace.

If Mother Eletta were here, she would see how the circle is always the same. It never contracts and, in crossing the limits at night, the engine never breaks down. This time we also saw some boats sailing on the edge of the circle (the horizon). I told Miss Elizabeth that, according to Mother Eletta, they will end up in paradise. However, she replied they would instead first go to purgatory because they cannot go straight to heaven without being purified. If we really could understand each other's language, I would have some great entertainment. However, without an interpreter who is not often available because of the various Italians on board, we converse only a little.

Our Protestant lady does not abandon us, she always tries to be near us. Today I gave her a little cross with Our Lady on it which she greatly appreciated and said to me: "Perhaps I'll be a Catholic." Oh, daughters, pray! How happy I would be if she truly entered in the bosom of the Church! Since she is a very influential lady, the benefit would extend to many other women. Pray, with prayer all things are obtained.

August 21. The weather is marvelous to see. Jesus is really too good, lavishing on us all the goodness of His Heart to accompany us on this trip. Last evening I saw a new wonder: phosphorescence, which appears like flames of a thousand colors in the water around the boat. There's no comparison with fireworks! These made by the Creator's hand are much better! Until almost eleven o'clock we remained watching them with great pleasure. This morning I was at the prow at six to make my meditation, surrounded by the fortifying, fresh air. It helped me make one of the finest meditations. I meditated on the happy and fortunate life of those to whom God grants the grace of a religious vocation as He bestowed on me, overlooking my faults and infidelities. He did the same for you, calling you into the mystical garden of the mission of His Divine Heart. What did our loving Jesus ever see in us, oh daughters, to grant us such a precious grace? He chose us in preference to so many other beautiful souls of our acquaintance, who perhaps may have better corresponded to His grace.

Oh, let us encourage and excite in each other a holy ardor in the faithful and untiring service of our dear Jesus! Let us love Him, love Him very much and seek to inflame the hearts of all those around us. Let us offer ourselves as victims for the conversion of so many infidels and sinners who do not know and love our Beloved. Oh, love is not loved, my daughters! Love is not loved! How can we remain cold, indifferent and almost heartless? How can we lose ourselves in mere trifles? How can we put limits on our affection and zeal when Jesus' interests are involved? We are Missionaries, daughters, Missionaries of the Divine Heart! If we do not burn with love, we do not deserve to bear this title that so dignifies and raises us up and makes us great, a spectacle to the very angels of heaven.

August 22. Finally, there is a little movement of the sea, but very little, only enough to break the monotony of the past days. Every day we have traveled from 387 to 403 miles, so that tomor-

row night we shall surely arrive at Le Havre. On Sunday we can fulfill our obligation and receive Communion in thanksgiving for our safe trip, and to obtain always greater graces to serve God better and to be able to procure some glory for Him.

Now I understand that I am far from you while until now I could not believe myself. I realize that there is a great abyss dividing us. It grieves me that I can no longer, not after a day, not after two, or even twenty, speak to you in person, comfort, console you, and, if necessary, correct you. You even love these corrections in the desire to improve yourselves to become dearer to that sweet Jesus Who loves us so much. He has done and suffered so much for us. Away with my sadness! I can always find you in the loving Heart of Jesus, with the same clarity as if I had you present.

My dear daughters, go frequently to the feet of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, to gaze on that divine Heart. He is our comfort, our way, our life. Listen to Him with great faith and devotion. He will tell you all I desire of you. He will tell you how I yearn for you to be pure, immaculate, very humble, charitable, diligent, fervent, detached from all the trifles of this earth, and even more, from yourselves, your own judgment and self-love. He will tell you how I want you to be zealous and truly fervent in procuring the salvation of souls. I also shall see you frequently in that Heart. I shall entrust to Him all your needs and commend each of you to him in particular with all my heart. Yes, I know each one's needs and will keep them all in my heart, you can be sure. Pray much for me, that I may receive the grace of true conversion and learn to serve a little better my beloved Jesus, Who has been so generous with His blessings to His unworthy, miserable servant.

I recommend the spiritual exercises to you. Make them so that they will truly benefit your souls. As soon as the Archbishop returns, go and pay him my respects. Tell him I'm very sorry I was not able to see him before leaving, and that I commend myself to his prayers.

August 23. Here we are, on the last day. The sea is still so beautiful that it is a marvel to behold. There is only a gentle rocking caused by a soft breeze playing with the ship. The ladies are complaining; I enjoy it immensely. They close themselves up in their cabins. At five o'clock this morning, and even a little earlier, I was already on the forward deck to drink in that exhilarating, healthy air for the last day. It was a pleasure to make my meditation there and in spirit attend Mass with you and receive communion. You fortunately have had all this; I did not, but I rejoiced in your happiness! Oh, if only we knew how to appreciate always the benefit of Holy Communion! How much more fervent and recollected we would be, and how many more merits we would gather! In them is the same Christ, the beloved Bridegroom of our souls, Who works in us, gives thanks in us, does all in us for His glory. Have faith, my daughters, great faith, and perform all your works of piety with the same living faith of the saints who knew how to please Jesus and to draw down upon themselves and those around them so many great graces.

August 23. I am at Le Havre, on board the train for Paris. I bid you farewell and leave you. Thank God for this excellent voyage. I will stay in Paris no more than two days, during which I shall see if I can find the heads for the statues of the Infant Mary and will have them shipped to you.

Pray much for me. May the good Jesus bless you all and each one in particular.

*Your most affectionate Mother in the Sacred Heart of Jesus,
M. Francesca Saverio Cabrini*

Train from Le Havre, August 23, 1890



III

FROM LE HAVRE
TO NEW YORK,
September 1891

Destinations Cited:
Rome, Italy
Montmartre, France
Modane, France
LeHavre, France
New York, NY

"The distance between us does not matter; we are always near each other, always enclosed within the small space of this very small world, which sometimes seems so huge to us, to our small and limited minds.... So another four thousand miles more is really very little after all."

— Mother Cabrini



FROM LE HAVRE TO NEW YORK, September 1891

Mary thought it was imprudent for the Missionaries, who were only two years in the United States and hardly well established, to attempt the Nicaraguan mission. However, Rome granted Mother Cabrini the required authorization for Nicaragua and eventual missions in Latin America. This time she had 29 sisters with her when they boarded the steamer bound for New York. Fourteen of them were destined for the mission in Granada.

To my beloved daughters.
 The account of our voyage to America, 5th of September, 1891.
 May the grace of Jesus be with us all. May He enclose us in His Heart.

September 4. Never before this time have I felt so much pain of separation from you, my beloved daughters. In saying, "See you in heaven," in the name of those sisters whom perhaps you will never see again, it seemed as if I were saying it also for myself, although then and even now, it seems to me that I won't be dying so soon. What human weakness! What Missionary spirit is this, you may ask! It's true; you're right. The distance between us does not matter; we are always near each other, always enclosed within the small space of this very small world, which sometimes seems so huge to us, to our small and limited minds.

Oh daughters, you should have come with us to Montmartre! That great church was erected in spite of unbelief and freemasonry. The image of the Sacred Heart, with His arms extended, reigns above a magnificent altar. That day it seemed as if, in His great goodness, He was saying to us: "I protect you with My hands from one sea to the other!" Yes, oh daughters, a small ray of faith shows clearly the smallness of the world compared to God. And what does it mean when we attach such importance to worldly things? By our lack of faith and pettiness of spirit, instead of generously scorning them, we allow all that surrounds us, so many petty and base things, to master us. If we would at least begin to despise ourselves, oh, how much we would accomplish!

But we still esteem ourselves important and want others to think well of us. This is why we can never rise above our misery and raise ourselves up to that air of true purity where the soul may receive the light of the Holy Spirit and understand the true and proper meaning of things. Oh my daughters, if only we were inspired by the spirit of faith! During my pilgrimage to Montmartre I asked Jesus for this grace for me and for you. Are you happy?

Jesus has blessed our voyage in an extraordinary manner. Until now I have not had any worry because at Modane there were some gentlemen who had been instructed by telegram from the Gondrand family to help us. They took care of everything, the luggage, the paperwork, etc. None of our sacks were opened but signed off speedily. They provided us also with a very comfortable train compartment in which we reached Paris. In the evening we enjoyed the sight of Savoy as we spiritually reviewed the principal facts of the life of our dear patron, Saint Francis de Sales. Our fervor was so high that some of us seemed to see a relic in every bit of land, mountain or ancient plant, even in the same water crossed sometimes by the saint. Sister Teresa, in her simplicity, could not stop praising God for such a wonderful heritage given His children.

How I wish that all our sisters would have her simplicity! It is not the foolish kind cursed by the Holy Spirit, but rather that which proceeds from the pure and faithful soul who penetrates

God's goodness and greatly rejoices in it. This is an excellent quality. It renders the soul capable of knowledge, wisdom, virtue and grace, of blessedness and glory, and of all the natural and supernatural gifts God can give her. Oh, my daughters, what an excellent thing a pure soul is, a soul detached from everything and from her own self! She can immerse herself in God and there finds everything. Come, then, let us become pure, simple, without pretension, raised above earthly things! Our true good fortune which has long awaited us will begin, if we desire it.

September 5. Finally we are at sea. It is beautiful and tranquil, promising a good voyage. Also, here instructions were already given for our reception. Though it was almost midnight, we found people waiting to help us. There were large and small vehicles, and someone to look after our baggage so that everything was in good order. We are traveling in the company of Saint Aloysius who desires to favor us so everyone is loyally serving those under his patronage. In a quarter of an hour, everything was done and we found ourselves well accommodated in our cabins, all together as in a little convent. We slept the few remaining hours of the night. At five-thirty, we arose to go to Mass. Since we did not know the way, a servant in uniform accompanied us to the Church of Saint Francis. There, before the altar of the Sacred Heart, we had Mass, Communion and Benediction. We were accompanied back to the ship where breakfast was already set though we were not yet entitled to any meals.

Later, the director of the Transatlantic Company living in Le Havre came to visit us. He wanted to introduce me to the ship's purser so that he would allow us to go on the first-class bridge for air. There was an hour before departure, and everyone wanted to write something to her family in Italy; instead they all watched the ocean, fascinated. I alone was able to write just a few lines to those to whom I owe gratitude for their financial and other help: to our Monsignor and Father, that he may communicate to you the first news about us, to the Bishop of Lodi and to the Archbishop of Milan. I wrote only a few lines in such haste that I do not know if they will understand them. At least they will see my sincerity. I have satisfied the duty of expressing the great appreciation I feel for all those who look kindly upon our poor, lowly Institute and favor it, for the glory of Jesus and His Divine Heart.

The ship is beginning to move and we are all on deck, admiring the sight of this beautiful port. Friends are bidding each other farewell, waving kerchiefs and hats. In a short time, we pushed out into the Channel. All the sisters are happy because they feel very well and hope to pass the whole voyage like this.

September 6. Yesterday morning all the sisters woke up sick. Some thought they were sick enough to die. Sister Cherubina no longer spoke; Sister Egidia was seized by strong convulsions, and the others were all seasick. It was a desolate scene. I alone felt well and had to go around to

all the cabins, encouraging some, comforting others. Some believed me and got up, forced themselves to eat, and in a short time felt better. Others, imagining death at their side, stayed in their little beds waiting for it without opening their mouths all day long. Since not even the doctor could find a remedy for Sister Egidia, I used one of my customary ones: a good scolding, which was a cure-all after which she had no more convulsions. Let us hope that she stays cured. However, I suffered from all my efforts and had to eat lightly, since I could not digest the food. I also had the weakness to give in to seasickness, after which I felt better.

At first, when we saw ourselves so well accommodated, we thought we would greatly enjoy praying together and performing all our acts of piety. Instead, the poor little things did not even feel capable of conceiving one good thought! Sister Cherubina, who actually thought she was about to die, was able only once to say, "My Jesus, mercy." They have all become like little children, understanding nothing. It would be discouraging if I had to depend on them today. I am sure that tomorrow they will be better. I shall be able to take them all on deck to breathe the soothing air and to view marvelous sights: dolphins following us, and birds of all types. They will see white fish such as I had never seen before, the phosphorescent glow at eventide and so many wonders of nature that delight the soul and lift it to meditate on the infinite power, wisdom and bounty of God Who created them for our delight and comfort.

Today only Sister Agape, the most open of all, accompanied me on deck, followed by Sister Mary Giuseppina who obediently eats and keeps herself well and cheerful. Then came Sisters Dionira and Maria Gesuina. Sister Salesia, with great virtue, continually goes from one cabin to the other to spare me, but she herself also feels a bit ill. After many efforts, Sister Stefanina, believing herself dressed, came on deck wearing her habit inside out. We took pity on her and left her there a while, but then led her back to bed where she has remained up to now.

September 7. Today everyone is quite well. At least they were able to get up and take some nourishment. Last night's moon predicted misty weather. From time to time a bit of water makes us flee the deck, otherwise there is really nothing to complain about. The sea is always beautiful, as peaceful as an oil painting. If it continues like this, we are truly fortunate. The *maitre d'hotel* is full of concern for us and has ordered the waiters to treat us well. Indeed, we truly lack for nothing. Some sisters are still not satisfied. They wish the ship would stop every once in a while, at least while they dress themselves and when they are at table, but no one pays them any heed. Yesterday they would have liked to go to Mass, but no one accompanied them ashore. Sick as they were, they were not even capable of doing so in spirit.

September 8. An impetuous wind, tossing our boat up and down, announced since dawn that today would be a great day, the birth of the one who is the mediatrix between God and man, our beloved Mother. What a shame that of the five priests traveling with us, not one is celebrating

the Holy Sacrifice! There are two Sulpician Fathers who seem like saints, but they also did not think to provide themselves with the necessities for the celebration. At Le Havre we procured about sixty hosts, pinning our hopes on these two good men whom we saw arrive on board with us, but to no avail. Patience! Let us, at least spiritually, taste that spark of Divine Love transfused within us and immerse ourselves in the contemplation of the great benefit that comes to us today with the birth of Mary.

Mary most holy is the docile dove of God. In this universal flood of corruption that frightens, saddens, disheartens and seeks to make us lose all hope, Mary appears in our midst with her verdant olive branch. Adorned as she is with her ineffable beauty of original innocence, she inspires in us great trust, softly speaking to our hearts, which she will present herself before God and obtain mercy and healing for us. Oh, beloved dove, your eyes steal and wound my heart. They speak to me in a heavenly language and promise that you will wrap me in your beauty, so that I also may please Him who ought to be all my delight, Jesus the beloved.

Oh Mary, you are the crown of all saints and of each in particular. What a part you had in the salvation and perfection of every one of the elect who now reign in heaven! One day they lived on earth like us, immersed in the same misery about which we complain so much! What motherly concerns you had for each soul, how many graces and lights to the mind you dispensed! How many hearts you stirred, how many favors you bestowed! Each soul has been an amiable and very active work for your maternal love in whom you have sown seeds of virtue and holy works and with whom you have worked assiduously and energetically. Oh Mary, you have reserved crowns of glory for your beloved daughters, for those who love you, for your elect. How excellent it is to love and serve Mary! How sweet and amiable it is to belong to Mary! Oh Mary, you are all ours, and we belong to you completely.

What an admirable example and model Mary is for us! Not yet three years old, the child Mary already abandons father, mother, home, relatives, everything. With the agile feet of a shining dove, she flees the world and takes refuge in the temple, an image of our cloisters. The privileged little virgin solemnly fulfills in God's temple what she had vowed to God since birth. Mary sees herself rich in every grace and fears no encounter, yet she flees the world and secludes herself. Her profound humility is like a thick veil with which she seeks to hide herself and her gifts. The solitary young dove seeks seclusion and silence because she wants to be intimately united with Him Who is her only delight. Mary would have certainly exclaimed, "Oh how lovely is Your dwelling place, my God and my all! My soul is consumed and languishes with love for You! My heart and my flesh exult in You, my God and my life! My God, You are my inheritance, my glory, my joy and crown!"

How prompt Mary was to the divine call! How have we corresponded to God's call? How do we correspond now? What is our virtue, our conduct? What efforts do we make? How generous are we? Mary acknowledged her mission and fulfilled it; what are we doing? We, too, have heard

what our mission is; daily obedience shows us the way. But do we follow it faithfully? Or perhaps we let ourselves be led astray by self-love, corrupt nature, human respect, pride and lukewarmness?

Oh, my daughters, let us not lose time; let us faithfully follow in the footsteps of our sweet Mother! Let us conquer ourselves at whatever cost! Let us conquer ourselves and we will have peace in our souls, and joy will be in our hearts. An anticipated paradise will descend upon us. Let us do our utmost, my daughters, to overcome ourselves! Mary will clothe us with her virtues so that we shall no longer feel the burden of the journey. Humility, daughters, humility, and great charity and detachment from everything, most of all from ourselves! May these virtues accompany us always.

September 9. Yesterday at eleven ante meridian, a strong wind arose, tossing our ship to and fro like the barque of Peter. But it was all caused by the air while the sea was calm. It seemed as if demons had infested the air while Jesus slept peacefully amid the tranquil waves. Some sisters were frightened and asked if it were a tempest. I replied that the sea was like oil and much more was required before it could be called a squall, so they calmed down. The weather was this way all day. Before evening, all the sisters were very tired of the rocking so we withdrew to a little private area on deck near our cabins. Without wanting to do so, rather than sitting they stretched out full length. But we were alone, so it was permissible. Because we were alone, I took the opportunity to give them a little spiritual lesson. Already all felt better and this helped to raise their spirits a little and console them. Not all of our dear Mother's feast went by without some spiritual worship.

Our little corner was near the kitchen and dining room. Through a passageway the steward and the purser were able to see and hear us. They were very happy to see us praying together, hoping that it would bring good weather. Yesterday I was sick too, but it was nothing compared to the others. I was able to stay on deck most of the time, seated in the fresh air. Since they were bothered by the rocking of the ship, no one spoke and I was able to be recollected and unite myself with you in spirit to enjoy the beautiful feast of the Nativity of Mary.

Prayer is a truly great comfort and support. It is the life of the soul, even if we are not always aware of its effects. Of the many waters of grace flowing from prayer, some are known to us, others are unknown. Hidden from us and invisible, they never cease enriching and making our souls precious. All the glory of the King's daughter is within. Of her precious dress embroidered with thousands of graces and of her immense riches we glimpse only a bit of the fringe. In heaven, all the magnificence and majesty of prayer will be displayed. Let us pray, my daughters, pray with great faith, limitless trust, in our every need and difficulty! Let us not grow weary if, during our short life, we do not immediately see the effects of our petitions. Have faith, living faith, certain that not even one of your petitions will go unheard. Oh, faith! How beautiful, great and powerful you are! Faith produces hope, and prayer is hope making supplication. *In Te, Domine, speravi.*

non confundar in aeternum. [Ps. 31:2; In You, Oh Lord, I take refuge, never let me be put to shame.]

Oh, hope of heaven, the more you wait and hope, the more you obtain! Let us not grow weary, daughters, when it seems that our prayers are not granted and our hope is disappointed. No, it is never disappointed, but all is disposed according to the all-seeing wisdom of God. He knows the reason! Trust against all hope and you will never be confused. Repeat often: *In Te, Domine, speravi, non confundar in aeternum.* Say it with all your heart, spread the wings of confident hope which give joy to the spirit, and live in the blessed happiness of the Lord! If you, Jesus' beloved brides, the true friends of His Sacred Heart, do not experience that blessed happiness, who can? May your cheerful faces also put joy in those around you.

This morning, the weather was still not so good, but all felt within themselves a great desire to move, a sign of good weather. In fact, at nine there was a fine calm that cheered everyone. The sisters gathered around me to ask if it would last. I replied that if we deeply humble ourselves before God for all the little faults we commit in our involuntary indolence, Jesus would grant us a blue sky and calm sea. They obeyed and now it is almost evening and the weather continues to be fine. The ship travels fast, giving us hope that Saturday evening we shall reach port.

Oh, how pleasing obedience is to Jesus! Obedient souls are the delight of his Divine Heart. Those who are obedient are the kingdom, the sky, the glory of Jesus. To them He willingly communicates His lights, gifts and graces and often admits them to the intimacy of His secrets and His counsel. He lets the rays of His face shine upon them and renders them fully joyful and satisfied with their state. It is precisely through obedient souls that Jesus accomplishes on earth His sublime designs and greatest works. Jesus is more pleased with the works of these beloved spouses than by a hundred thousand sacrifices of others who live by their own whim and follow their own desires. Jesus willingly deals with obedient religious. He enjoys being in their midst, guides them with His wisdom, comforts them with His exuberant grace, and fills them with His treasures.

Oh happy obedience! Oh daughters, love this virtue, let it be your favorite. If you are obedient, you will be true Missionaries. Thus richly blessed by Jesus, you can save a great number of souls who await your attention. May none of you live by her own whim; may no one ever wish to do her own will. Let no one entertain thoughts against obedience; but may all be submissive, like so many faithful lambs. [Jn. 10:3+] This is the secret of acquiring peace, of obtaining great graces and blessings for our Institute. Love all the virtues, but above all love humility and obedience because precisely through them you give God of yourself.

Be obedient and your sacrifice will be entire; be obedient and you will be true spouses of Jesus; be obedient and you will enjoy a foretaste of heaven. Retain no part of your will and you will not experience again those certain bad intervals that caused suffering to you and made your superi-

ors suffer. Why should you suffer for the devil? To what end make a purgatory for yourselves and make others suffer, too? For what purpose lose peace and spread desolation abroad because of your own ideas and whims? Let us submit to the gentle yoke of obedience; let us love obedience, and we shall become Christ's true heaven, a heaven of peace for us and for all your sisters.

September 10. Last evening the weather was becoming worse, and the sisters asked me if we would have good weather today, as is desirable, since in bad weather one does not know where to stay and what to do. Not knowing nautical science, I replied that if we were deeply humble in admitting as defects all the acts of indolence caused by seasickness, the good Lord would have blessed us and given us good weather. At first some found it hard to admit they were at fault, and would have preferred to complain a little of the tedium and afflictions caused by the sea. However, they recalled for an instance the declaration we made before departure, that we would call that day blessed on which we were allowed to suffer for the holy and merciful cause of the mission and all felt the incentive to humble themselves deeply. Jesus, in the truly merciful bounty of His Divine Heart, bent down lovingly over His little flock, granting us calm, peaceful weather, so fine that we are now enjoying it on deck in a comfortable first-class area where we can all be united.

Obviously, humility works wonders! From the predictions, everyone expected bad weather. Instead it is very good! Daughters, let us learn to be humble, knowing well that Jesus loves the humble, the little ones, while he resists the proud and arrogant and humiliates them even unto dust. If we raise ourselves up in pride, God will draw far away from us and cause us to fall into thick, palpable darkness. Instead, if we are humble, in all goodness He will draw near to us, console us, hear our prayers and send us off justified. No, daughters, Jesus does not make humble souls wait very long. He goes to them quickly, runs, flies and seeks to satisfy their holy, humble, but nevertheless always great and excellent desires. It even frequently happens that He grants some graces unasked, since He is so strongly attracted to humble hearts.

By all means, be humble, my daughters, because Jesus, in the treasury of His Divine Heart, has prepared great graces for the Institute and for each one in particular. But woe if he finds us proud, puffed up, and filled with ourselves! The graces are waiting! Either we are humble, with a simple and deep but true humility so that the graces are showered upon us or we are proud, filled with ourselves, attached to our proud ego so that the graces move away. We shall spend time in vain asking for them, but we shall not be heard, because God resists the proud and withdraws from them, letting them perish in their puffed-up wisdom and pretentiousness. If we are not humble, faithful, and generous in accepting humiliation, the many graces destined for us will be passed instead to so many other souls. There are many, good, pious, disinterested, humble souls, detached from themselves, who live solely for Jesus in the fidelity of their observance.

But let us return to the ocean. How beautiful and majestic it is in its immensity! It is serene and calm, like a soul at peace with God and neighbor. It gives us an idea of great peace, yet it is continually at work without ever resting as if beneath it is a great fire from which it can never be freed. The gentle, rippling waves reflect the sun's rays in a marvelous manner. The sea appears all silver and sometimes adorns itself with precious stones, taking on lovely colors. I wish the sisters could suggest the appropriate terms for me to describe the beauty surrounding us, but all have lost their bearings and seem to have forgotten all they have learned. Be happy, then, and welcome my poor expressions. At least they tell you no one has suffered too much and that we all, safe and sound, hope to reach port to begin to work willingly for His glory in the fields God has destined us, meanwhile not neglecting our sanctification.

We have Sister Maria Gesuina, who goes about joyfully and keeps the others happy. She has recourse to Saint Reparata in her sufferings or difficulties, who always truly repairs her. Only the other day, she cut two of her fingers to the bone while slicing a piece of *panzone* to give to a poor German Sister of the Precious Blood, who is traveling in great poverty in third class. However, since at sea no illness is harmful, even her wounds healed quickly, and she was cheerful in spite of the bloodshed. Sister Maria Giuseppina cannot support the strong waves. When they assail us, she lies down as much as she can. Since she is always nibbling on some snack, a bit of bread, an apple or something else, she stays well and is crossing the ocean peacefully. She would have liked to compose an apt description, but since she feels better not moving around, she often says, "Anyone who wants to know what it's like at sea, let them come and see." Sister Agape is our sea captain; she is always well and runs to and fro to help and serve everyone. She is a true providence and prepares the Catholic Christian agape. Sister Teresa remained in bed for two days in order not to see the others suffer. Yesterday she thought she had lost her head and raised her hands to touch it to see if it were still there.

There is a professor from the University of Washington, an Apostolic Missionary, who often comes to see how we are. Our only complaint is that, with five priests on board, no one celebrates Mass and gives us Holy Communion. Every time we go out on deck we look for a place where we can be alone, if possible. But after a few minutes we are surrounded by passengers from first class who come after us with their chairs. They all seem to be fine people who love the Catholic religion. The captain and the others lavish much attention on us and often come to ask if we are comfortable. All are glad to see us happy and content, even among the nausea of the sea. We have nothing else of value but the joy that truly always accompanies us.

We are at the banks of Newfoundland. The sisters told Sister Teresa that it would be possible to pick some cabbage. She promptly dressed and came out with her apron to get some to make a bit of soup, since she is by now tired of *bouillon* and French *potage*. Some of our sisters who never before took notice of food now, without willing it, converse and complain about the food, poor

little ones, not finding anything that agrees with their upset stomachs. Instead Sister Agape and I savor everything and truly make very little mortification. We all praise God, some by suffering, the others by keeping well so that they may comfort the others.

Today was peaceful and fine. Almost all the sisters feel well and some wanted to try to write something. Yet as calm as the sea is, so that we hardly feel the movement, they find it hard. The first sea voyage is always a bit difficult. After three or four weeks, when we resume our voyage to Central America, all will be easier, especially since we are heading toward the tropical countries. Oh, if you could see the ocean at this moment! What a beautiful, round ball, of an enchanting shade of azure, and a calm that we would have never dared to dream possible, considering the bad weather we had. A lake has never been seen this calm and peaceful. Today, all united, we meditated on the qualities of the humble, peaceful soul who is God's truly beloved daughter, of which the sea gives us a vivid image. What immensity, and yet how calm and peaceful! An ocean that could be frightening and turbulent — how it remains humble and peaceful — at the order of our omnipotent God!

Our holy sisters continue to humble themselves, having proven by experience how much God favors and blesses humility. Through it, immense graces are won, because humility is truly powerful over the Heart of God. This extraordinary, unexpected calmness of the ocean is certainly a great grace. Oh, if only God were truly reconciled with us, if we never offended Him again, never provoked His justice with our continual infidelity to grace! Let us hope in the help of our God, because of ourselves we certainly cannot stand upright, not even worthily pronounce His most adorable name. So let us hope to be faithful through His holy help, through the merits of Jesus and the powerful aid of our great, sweet Mother. She clothes us in her spiritual likeness, and renders us worthy to serve our beloved Spouse Jesus faithfully. He is most faithful in helping us and granting us many wonderful graces. Jesus has promised to help us and He does. We have promised to serve Him and do not always do this with the perfection and enthusiasm we ought to have. At times we are indolent and at other times we do not have that true rectitude of intention without which we tend to serve ourselves, our self-love, vanity or limitations, but certainly not our God. Oh, let us, once and for all, truly begin to serve our beloved, faithful Jesus with total fidelity.

September 11. The weather continues fine, serene. The sea is tranquil and peaceful as an azure flat surface. The air is light, gentle and refreshing. All the sisters feel well. In this placid calm, our first thought was to meditate a while, united in spirit with our sisters in Italy, who at this very hour in each house are adoring the Blessed Sacrament. One of us, who greatly desired to be near the tabernacle for a moment, saw in a dream a great procession of saints coming with Jesus to console her in her great desire. But this privation will last only a little while longer. Certainly,

on Sunday we shall be able to gather in our little church on 43rd Street in New York to satisfy our yearning and receive Communion. We shall open our hearts a while to our beloved Jesus, who is the true Elect among thousands. He consoles, comforts, strengthens, enlivens and sanctifies us, taking away all our misery with His infinite grace and boundless goodness.

Last evening we were distressed by a sad incident. A Protestant minister gathered as many as he could in the first-class grand salon for a conference or, as the English call it, a "meeting" for the purpose of raising funds for the families of the poor sailors who have suffered accidents. We have five very well-educated Catholic priests with us. At least two of them are well-versed in all the languages, but not one of them thought to do anything. I don't know why this is so, but it is truly pitiful to see how the ministers of the devil are more zealous than those of Christ. We have become vile, cowardly and many times, for one reason or another, lazily keep silence. We allow ourselves to be influenced by human respect and fail to show ourselves in public as true followers of Jesus Christ.

Virtue is mocked, and we are silent; truth is trampled upon, and nothing is said. But why the silence? Because we are vile. We need to renew our faith, to stir up in our own hearts a love of the sublime principles of our holy religion. We need to be informed by the spirit of Jesus Christ. In the true charity of His Divine Heart, we need to animate ourselves to a great enthusiasm in always proclaiming the truth. Let us not be afraid of offending those who approach us nor fear of persistently speaking the truths of faith. No, if we know how to conform ourselves to the true, sweet and gentle charity of Jesus Christ, which is also strong and energetic, no one will be offended but will rather be won over.

If there is sweet charity, oh daughters, this is what will certainly truly honor the Sacred Heart of Jesus. How often one does not speak of our holy religion and praises evil rather than virtue, having veered off the course of truth. But if someone with the generous charity and the meekness of Jesus knew how to correct the statement or introduce and insinuate the truth in the discussion, certainly this effort would be successful in winning over that heart to unite it onto the sure trunk of truth from which it was separated unaware. If this is necessary everywhere, oh daughters, I believe that today our poor Italy has the greatest need. Through pride, ambition and a senseless desire for an unattainable liberty, she has let herself be carried away to a place she would not have wished to be. I have already heard various persons on board, say, "But where are these missionaries going while today the Italians are worse than others, scornful of religion and without faith?" These expressions hurt my soul to its very depth. I would be completely devoid of love for my country if I were not wounded by these words that so dishonor our nation, which once flourished and was a model for all because of its true and profound religious sentiments.

Oh daughters, let us begin to humble ourselves; let us begin to clothe ourselves with true and solid virtues. Let us begin to become fervent, true lovers of the Heart of Jesus, making reparation

to Him for so much ingratitude, imploring Him for ourselves and our brothers living in an era ill-fated because it is without faith. Let us learn to be humble and to make sacrifices, but true sacrifices, to the bone; that is, accompanied by true self-denial. Let us sacrifice ourselves; let us immolate ourselves for our dear brethren, who cost no less than the price of the Blood of Jesus Christ, for these brethren who, through great ignorance, have lost the inheritance of the children of God and want to render themselves unhappy for all eternity. Let us do all in our power to snatch them away from the precipice.

September 12. Finally, thanks to your fervent and constant prayer, we have arrived on the last day of our journey. If you saw the ocean today, you would certainly not believe it was that same treacherous element that sometimes really causes so much fear in those afraid of strong waves and breakers. It no longer seems like the ocean, nor even a lake. It is very smooth, like a tranquil brook; the sun is mirrored in it as in still water. I have never seen such calm, not even last year when I was almost tired by so much stillness on the ocean. It is truly extraordinary! Looking at the sea and looking at the sky is the same. They say that so much calm portends a storm, but we shall surely be in port before it arrives. In this way, those destined for Nicaragua will be well motivated to set off on the new voyage without fear.

Since your prayers are so powerful that they obtained such a felicitous voyage for us, I shall hurry to learn the date of our departure for Nicaragua and notify you so you can resume your new sacrifices and prayers to obtain for us a blessing for this voyage. We shall go toward the heat, which I cannot bear at sea. But with your prayers, what shall I fear? Certainly, nothing. And then, it is certain that, no matter how difficult the journey, it is always on that little ball that a true Missionary ought to travel from end to end, out of love for her beloved Jesus. So another four thousand miles more will be nothing at all. I ask you to pray, and that suffices. I'll think about the rest, not worrying, but abandoning everything in the adorable Heart of Him who is our Good, our All, our Governor, Conservator, Master, Friend, Lover and Spouse. Pray, daughters, pray and make generous sacrifices, and you will see how many graces Jesus will grant you.

All our sisters are well now, joyful and content. They are beginning to like the ocean, which perhaps is the reason they must leave it, and soon, because the Missionary must never attach herself to anything, only to the sacrifice of herself and all her inclinations. From time to time, Sister Veronica sees some huge, ugly beasts, and has even believed she saw a sperm whale, another whale and two sharks. I am the only one who has never had the good fortune of seeing anything in the North Atlantic but dolphins and birds. Every night, Sister Alacoque dreams, and it is a delight to hear her talk aloud in her sleep about her mission, her school and her children. Sister Maria Gesuina always keeps everyone happy. Sister Cherubina just started talking two days ago. Before, she lost her tongue and felt she had no more strength because of the sea motion. Now

she is unhappy that the trip is nearly over. Sister Pia and Sister Chiata rested a great deal in their cabin but now they are energetic on deck. Sister Pierina, Sister Angelica and some others with me have wind burned faces, having very much enjoyed being on deck. Sister Salesia has been everyone's nurse and Sister Agape, everyone's helper in all their needs. Yesterday, Sister Maria Giuseppina began to write a description to satisfy her brothers who begged her so much for it, and I shall send it to you first. You will enjoy reading the letter because I have not stopped to write you descriptions such as hers, since by now I am a seasoned traveler, and not so moved by the sights.

All the sisters beg me to thank you thousands of times for all your prayers and your kind care before and during our departure. All feel the physical distance, but this is not true of the heart, which, like that of a true daughter, remains bound to the mother house. Everyone is thinking of you and is motivated to the practice of great virtue. On the second day we were at sea, when I saw everyone sick and acting like little children, I became disheartened, thinking I had erred in my choice of subjects for the rather difficult missions to which we are destined. Fortunately, I suspended my judgment. Today I am encouraged, seeing them again become women: serious, wise, virtuous and full of enthusiasm. It is a pleasure to be in their company. Above all, they are very humble, diffident and confident. For this reason, all their efforts will certainly be blessed and they will be able to show that they are true daughters of the Church by their loyalty and their work. I do not know if I shall take up my pencil again before we go ashore. At any rate, I shall write soon either from New York or from Manresa. I hope to give you consoling news, especially since this year, besides the usual help, we have the help of Saint Aloysius in honor of whose centenary we have undertaken everything. If this dear young saint has always been powerful, he is so in a special manner during this year. As you all know, we have already experienced this. The sisters all greet you dearly and unite themselves to you, to your prayers, good works and sacrifices in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, beneath the mantle of our beloved Mother Mary.

May Jesus' grace be with you and with us all.

[This letter bears no other closing salutation.]

M. Francesca Saverio Cabrini



IV

FROM NEW YORK
TO NICARAGUA,
October 1891

Destinations Cited:

West Park, NY
New York, NY
Colón, Panama
Panama City, Panama
Puntarenas, Costa Rica
Corinth, Nicaragua
Leon, Nicaragua
Managua, Nicaragua
Granada



West Park has evolved and expanded its buildings and campus through the years, serving as an orphanage, novitiate for the Missionary Sisters, home for troubled youths and assisted living facility for the aging.

"They all marvel at the beauty of that villa. Its position is one of the best on the Hudson...."

Every time I am at Manresa, I think that perhaps it is the place where I shall retire to prepare myself for the voyage to eternity after having worked enough for the Institute."

— Mother Cabrini



FROM NEW YORK TO NICARAGUA, October 1891

New York was only a stopover for Mother Cabrini and the fourteen sisters assigned to the Nicaraguan mission. They were there less than a month, just enough time for the sisters to recuperate at Manresa (West Park) from their trip and prepare for their departure.

[Continuing the narration of my voyage to my dearest daughters.]

As you already know from the last account of the voyage from Europe to America, we arrived in New York on September 13, where we were awaited with indescribable yearning by our sisters and by so many people of the city, who seemed so good and affectionate. The next day was the anniversary of my profession, a day memorable and most dear to me and to all my good daughters, who consider important to them such events of my life. We all gathered for a big celebration. There were two Masses and Father Bandini gave a fine sermon regarding the Solemnity of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross applied to the work of our mission. The Archbishop led us to hope he would come for Benediction toward evening, but he was prevented from coming by his many affairs. Rev. Dr. Brann, who is the pastor of the parish of our 43rd Street house gave us the Benediction, and various other priests who had come to celebrate our arrival assisted him. His Excellency, with that fatherly kindness which truly gratifies us, came to visit us the next day.

On the following days, I visited the various houses of our mission. I first went to Manresa with the twenty-nine sisters who came from Europe with me. They all marveled at the beauty of that villa. Because of its position, it is one of the best on the banks of the Hudson. The order and quiet of that house render it even more attractive. The church annexed to it inspires great devotion and recollection and invites us to one of those contemplations that makes us feel abundantly the goodness of our Heavenly Spouse and to understand His will profoundly, instilling in us vigor to fulfill that will faithfully.

Every time I am at Manresa, I think that perhaps it is the place where I shall retire to prepare myself for the voyage to eternity after having worked enough for the Institute. But this may be a tempting fantasy, a childish sentiment. So, let us leave to Providence all thoughts of our future and work day by day in the Lord's vineyard, seeking the greater glory of God in perfect detachment from everything and, more importantly, from ourselves. Often without realizing it, we are the enemies of our own souls, bothered about many things, while *porro unum est necessarium* [Lk. 10:42; one thing only is necessary.] The majority of the sisters remained for a few days at Manresa to rest from the long voyage and recover from their seasickness. Instead, I could stay only twenty-two hours and then hurried back to the city to take care of business, in order to finish everything by October tenth, the date set for the continuation of the voyage to Nicaragua.

On the twenty-first of September, a dear and moving celebration took place. Seven of our American postulants, who for a year had given excellent proof of their good spirit, were prepared to put aside their white veils for the habit of the Institute. His Excellency, our beloved Archbishop Corrigan, returned in our midst attired in his solemn vestments to admit them to

Holy Vestition. He celebrated the service according to our ritual with a very special decorum and devotion and then delivered a moving discourse. His fatherly words fell gently into the heart of each religious. I do not need to describe the emotions which prevailed since you have often been able to witness with me such a beautiful and ever-new ceremony. You recall how happily and heavenly that day was spent in community. Even the Archbishop, in congratulating us, commented that these ceremonies are always as moving as the first time he performed them. In the midst of so many affairs I had to accomplish before my departure, time flew by without my noticing it and without even a day of rest.

October tenth arrived in haste and all was in order for the continuation of our voyage. I had already visited the cabins and prepared the places for the sisters. On the vigil of our departure, the thoughtful Archbishop, who shows so much affection for our Institute, visited us again, to console us with his presence and to encourage and inspire us for the mission which awaits us. His discourse truly came from his heart and touched our souls. Then he imparted his blessing with the Blessed Sacrament, during which the sisters destined for departure sang with great fervor the *Ave Maria Stella* [Hail, Star of the Sea], *Tantum Ergo* [Humbly We Adore Thee], and then a prayer to the Virgin. The Archbishop in his customary kindness afterward spoke informally to us for a while. In holy and consoling words, he assured us that he would pray every day of our voyage that the Virgin and the angels in whose month we were setting out would accompany us and guarantee our happiness. His secretary, Monsignor McDonnell, also assured us of his fervent prayers for a good voyage. That same day was reserved for us to receive the many good and pious people who came until late in the evening to bid us farewell, with thousands of good wishes. Some of them also came to the port the next day to bid us a final farewell.

But while we speak of so many heartwarming experiences, the moment of departure arrives quickly. At ten we are already on board the *New York* of the Pacific Mail Lines. The agent of the line was good to us, assigning us comfortable cabins, one for every two sisters, with a separate one for me. The beds are not as small as those of the Transatlantic Lines, but wide and comfortable. The cabins open onto the lounge so that each one can go from her bed to the sofa without risk of falling even during a storm. We realized that this voyage may not be as smooth and calm as the last one. We are setting off on a new mission and need many graces. We shall have the opportunity to make new sacrifices to render us more worthy. The sisters and some good persons accompanied us. An excellent, distinguished Irish gentleman presented us to the captain and the purser, to whom he warmly recommended us.

At one o'clock in the afternoon, they hurriedly withdrew the gangways and the steamer glided slowly out of port while the sisters and our friends on shore waved their handkerchiefs. We did the same for about a quarter of an hour until the sisters and the people were seen only as an imperceptible point in the distance. Later they were lost to our sight as we proceeded well out in

the bay, fully at the mercy of the treacherous waves. Until evening, we sailed along the coast and I believe we would have continued this all night.

At about eleven o'clock, a violent storm arose, threatening to dash to pieces the ship and all on board. At one point the vessel tossed from side to side with such force as if about to capsize. The sisters, thankfully, did not fall out of their beds. I rose in haste, dressed to seek safety for us all or even to die together. Our luggage slid around in every direction like moving bodies without anyone able to stop them. Nor could anyone stand still without holding on to something or sitting on the floor. The ocean was swollen as I had never before seen it. Mountains formed as if by magic, and deep valleys were seen. It seemed as if the ship were headed for ruin on those momentary precipices. On deck, the wind raged and threatened to shatter the cabins. But God did not permit this, and the wind limited itself to ruining only the doctor's cabin. The next day the poor man had to dress in borrowed clothes, since his own were soaked and ruined.

The captain hurriedly called all hands on deck and even pressed into service the other personnel and led the effort to save us from ultimate ruin, which he succeeded in doing by setting out further into mid-ocean, away from the storm area for a day. By then the sea calmed down and we resumed our course, headed in the right direction. Due to the storm, in two days we had only gained forty miles. But blessed be God! While according to the captain and the officers the storm was one of the worst, no one perished, nor did the crew suffer.

Not one of the sisters was frightened, in the midst of such a terrible storm and all lay calmly in bed disposed to die peacefully, but always under the bedcovers. Instead, I spent the night in the salon, from where I could speak to the sisters as they rested, and we were able to encourage each another. I was attentive to every movement because if it became necessary to save ourselves, I would have obliged everyone to get dressed, ready to save herself. Meanwhile, all prayed to Our Lady of the Rosary, in whose month we were traveling. We lit the Loreto candle, which is very effective against storms at sea. Our Holy Mother, who does not let anyone pray in vain, truly came to our aid, delivering us from extreme peril.

Oh, how good is Mary! How lovable and dear she is! The whole earth is filled with her goodness, her compassion is from generation to generation. All ages have seen the admirable and merciful works wrought by her blessed hands. But this time, we also have experienced in a special way how much she protects and loves us! As a mother has compassion on her children, so Mary took compassion on us all when we invoked her in our time of peril with true confidence. Oh, what joy in our hearts to be daughters of such a mother! We shall always recall the wonders of her love for us! You, oh sisters, help us to praise Mary and remember to invoke her name with great trust for your needs, especially spiritual ones. Let us work much for Mary and with Mary, because actions done for her are very meritorious and are of inestimable value. They are a celestial perfume and a heavenly balm for our troubled hearts.

We also prayed much to Saint Aloysius to send his attendants, the angels of heaven, to free us from the much-feared, imminent shipwreck. He, so merciful with us who are undertaking everything this year in honor of his centenary, immediately sent help. Now, with the help of Mary and the saints, we are enjoying a most tranquil sea, calm and smooth as a table. The other day it resembled a soul agitated either by remorse or pride who never finds rest. Today, it seems like a soul totally at peace with God.

Today is the fifteenth, the feast of Saint Teresa. This dear saint, who had undergone all kinds of tribulations and had long, painful experiences of sorrow, has granted us a splendid day: a serene sky, a vast horizon, a calm and tranquil sea of an enchanting azure hue and a fragrant, light, pure air. Standing on deck is like being at the gates of paradise from which the sweetest comfort comes to us, rendering us participants in some way in that great celebration Jesus holds today in honor of His beloved spouse, Saint Teresa. There is not one priest on board, not one Mass, but we have been able to meditate well and to make acts of spiritual communion with faith. Oh, what good reason that fortunate prisoner had to rejoice at the thought that at least once she had held Jesus in her heart! Entering into the mystical tabernacle of her soul, she enjoyed Him, as if she had only recently received the beloved of her soul. We are much more fortunate for we have received Communion so many times. Only five days ago our hearts beat together with His. He fortified our souls and gave Himself to us as Viaticum. Today it was not difficult to gather around Jesus, so that we may be wounded by holy love, as one fine day He wounded the Seraph of Carmel.

Today Teresa's sweet, gentle voice is united to the melodious voice of Jesus in heaven and enraptures the heavenly host in an ecstasy of love. Oh heavenly voices, oh hymns of eternal love, of ineffable joy, of undying love! The force of the river gladdens the holy city of God. The multitude of voices of the spiritual waters proceeding from Jesus and Teresa burst forth and even reach us, to gladden, encourage and give us inspiration. Oh daughters, let us profit from every kind of aid coming from on high, because new crosses await us! We shall not be dismayed; but rather we shall enjoy being supported by our Beloved. With the spouse of the Canticle, we can say: *Tenui eum, nec dimittam* [Sg. 3:4; I took hold of Him and would not let Him go.]

They say that today we shall meet a ship that will receive our letters. I'll prepare a few lines for Italy and New York to put to rest as early as possible the rumors that would certainly have you believe that we perished in the fierce storm. We were truly in danger but we all felt so calm and confident, trusting in Jesus and in the mission to which He Himself takes us in company with the Blessed Virgin and Saint Aloysius, the patron of the new foundation. It is obvious that we are speeding towards the torrid zone, although we have not yet entered it. We should have Sister Eletta with us to teach us about the equator, the meridians and all the signs distinguishing the zones, states, and seas, because we do not have the required scientific knowledge required for this. We assume this only by the fact of being immersed in full summer. We had to change to lighter habits, but we still perspire. The air, however, is light and comforting.

Yesterday, the fifteenth, we thought we would meet a vessel to take our mail. Instead the whole night passed without any one reaching us. At seven today, we saw a little island, Fortune Island of the Bahamas. A little sloop, the *Columbus*, came for the correspondence. After a few days on the high seas and moreover after undergoing great danger, it was a pleasure for all to see land, which we hailed with great joy. The captain, always good and kind to us, had us placed where we would have the best view. Our eyes searched as far as they could to catch sight of some bell tower in order to greet with double fervor Jesus, present in the Blessed Sacrament, at the same time that many of our sisters were making the hour of adoration, since it was Friday.

Oh, dearest daughters, how fortunate you are to converse face to face with the living center of our life! Blessed are you who listen to His heartbeat and warm word! Following this, you feel a great strength within you. You feel a powerful need to correspond to the love of your beloved by practicing the holy resolutions you made: to be generous in sacrificing yourselves for the glory of God; to overcome yourselves, humbling yourselves in all as much as you can, genuinely loving humiliations. You have resolved to be obedient until death, seeking the perfection of obedience to the point of being sensitive even to the small transgressions against the orders of your superiors who speak in God's name; to be charitable, willingly sacrificing your every inclination for the welfare of others, most of all of your sisters; seeking to console your superiors with the perfect renunciation of your will. It was that will you left at the door of the religious house when, with the cross around your neck, you entered saying, "I bear peace! I have come to offer sacrifice to the Lord!" Oh yes, my daughters, always bear peace by sacrificing yourselves! May it never happen that you embitter your superiors putting thorns in their hearts by your misconduct, stubbornness, or by clinging to your own ideas that, no matter how excellent they may seem, always spring from a poisoned self-love. The more you cling to them, the more you feel attached to those ideas.

Renounce yourselves, and renounce yourselves fully if you want to find the true peace of your souls and to let those around you enjoy it as well. All the more you must do this if you want to work for the good of souls, as you are obliged. If you sacrifice yourselves this way, you will become holy. Having become holy, you will certainly help others be holy too. Whoever is not holy will never make another holy. The saintly person fills the air with a sweet fragrance and all who approach her will feel the breath of something sanctifying.

While I have been writing to you, we have crossed another stretch of the Caribbean Sea. Another island extends out in front of us, Castel Island, so that we too, as fortunate as you, again greet Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, even though from afar, drawing Him close to us by a fervent spiritual communion. Yesterday I told you that we had arrived at the Caribbean Sea. Instead, we entered it only at five o'clock this morning, after passing the island of Santo Domingo, which we did not see since we were still resting. They say that this sea is always stormy, but the good Lord wants to show us that He is master of the land as well as the ocean, and that all the elements

depend upon His almighty finger. So He gave us the storm when we all expected calm and now gives us great calm when all expected a storm.

Today is already the day of one of our powerful patrons, Blessed Margaret Alacoque. It was she, in the ineffable delight she enjoys in the Divine Heart, who certainly obtained for us a drop of that sublime, heavenly dew which, dissolving into the sea we passed, transformed it into another sky: clear, azure, smooth and lovely. Some very white birds, called birds of paradise, lightly soar above it. They really resemble little angels descending to describe, in their mute but eloquent language, the feast today celebrated above in heaven in honor of that candid dove, Margaret, surrounded by the fiery rays of the charity burning in the Heart of Jesus. What a marvel of sublime grace the Divine Heart wrought in the heart of His beloved!

Let us, oh daughters, also strive to be faithful to the work of holy love within our souls. May our spirits be pure, selfless, humble and meek. Then you will see how inspiring and admirable are the workings of the Divine Spirit in our hearts. This Spirit works, and prays with us, becomes tired and anxious with us and supports us. It is He Himself, our beloved, who works, prays, helps us with wearisome tasks, enlightens, teaches, energizes and comforts us with His abundant and lasting insights. His motions and impulses direct us to every holy work. In sum, He is around us with the loving solicitude befitting His eternal, infinite love for us.

From this we can understand all too well that if we are not yet holy, the fault is all ours. Oh, may the soul be faithful to the ceaseless workings of divine love, immersing herself in God in perfect detachment from everything! In a short time, she will not walk but run on the straight and sure way of that perfection which is joy ineffable to the soul who reaches it. Let us seek the direct and sure way of perfection. Let us energize each other to true charity toward God and neighbor; rather, may the one never be separated from the other. Let us seek to attract to the Heart of Jesus everyone we encounter, which is precisely the purpose of the life of the Missionary, the Spouse of Christ. Blessed Margaret saw the names of some people who sought to make Him known engraved in beautiful characters in the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This Divine Heart made her understand they will never be erased, because the fire of His divine love is great and yearns to spread further. For this reason, the soul who seeks to extend this fire is loved in a singular way and showered with heavenly graces. These souls do not lack crosses but it is as if they had none because when the love of God enters a soul, it not only makes lighter every form of suffering, it also showers her with so much heavenly dew, to gladden and inebriate her. Which one of us, oh daughters, would not wish this? Shall we then be like the foolish virgins who, by wanting to live care-free lives, and letting themselves be drawn by their own inclinations, rendered themselves unworthy to see the Bridegroom and enter with him to the wedding feast?

May our lamps, then, burn brightly. Let us never tire. As soon as we see the oil diminishing or turning rancid, let us run to the fountain of life with deep humility. With as much trust and

humility, let us have recourse to our superiors for all of us to renew ourselves and to regain new courage. We have little time left, oh daughters. Let us work in haste because the reward is already prepared; it is what we ourselves have sent ahead. Jesus is with us, we can do all things. By ourselves we shall fall, but with God we shall do all things. Courage, daughters! May it never be that one of us weakens halfway on the journey, lost in the darkness of a bit of pride or that offspring of pride, discouragement. Then, pray much for me lest while I try to encourage you, I do not myself fail, forgetting these lessons and becoming unworthy of the goodness and company of my Beloved, who is our peerless treasure. In comparison, the world and all its delights are nothing, in fact, they are mud and affliction of spirit.

The sisters all feel well. United on deck, they gaze at the works of God's omnipotence and immensity, and implore blessings and graces on the lands around us. Last evening we passed close to Cuba. East of this land with its beautiful heights we saw Haiti on the other side and believed we saw a beautiful big palm tree on that island. The gentlemen traveling with us also thought they saw it and were passing binoculars around for a better view of the palm. Our Sister Paulina enjoyed letting us almost taste the wide leaves waving about. Drawing closer, we realized that the plant about which we had imagined so much was actually a piece of sail spread over the tall mast of a merchant ship. The gentlemen did not yet believe it. Drawing closer by the light of a splendid moon, they finally realized their blunder. This caused a good laugh and merriment in all, lifting the spirits even of those who still suffer from seasickness. In fact, it was impossible to see Haiti while we were too near the coast of Cuba.

But I have not yet told you about a pretty and easy device we found to keep the sea in a good mood and even cause it to become daily more tranquil and attractive. In the evening, I exhort the sisters to make great acts of humility before God, acknowledging our misery. This is easy enough when we live by the truth and not by illusions. With this sort of entreaty, we obtain the grace every day to see the water woven like a beautiful azure fabric, only sometimes rippling lightly, brilliant with such beautiful colors that it is an enchantment. Diamonds, gems and all precious stones are nothing by comparison. Yet if we must admit the truth, during the stormy days we had actually forgotten the great intercessory power of deep, sincere humility.

Oh how powerful and excellent is humility! It is a jewel from heaven! By all means, oh daughters, be humble of intellect and thought, as true religious in the school of perfection should be. Have the lowest opinion of yourself. Let each one regard herself the least of all, the only one unworthy of living with the spouses of Christ, with those beloved by the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Be grateful for the benefits of Jesus, since gratitude is the noble sentiment of humble souls. Never ascribe to your merits those attributes which are God's gifts to you. If at times you feel especially favored with graces and blessings, this should always serve to make you recognize more your own nothingness and withdraw into it.

The more you humble and abase yourselves, the closer Jesus will draw to you. If you cast yourselves under the feet of all, your Beloved will take possession of you, enter into your heart and will always do your bidding. So, be humble always, but with true feeling, loving to be held in low esteem, neglected, forgotten, mistreated, despised, and slandered. But be always calm, resigned and joyful as in a flower garden. Prefer to obey rather than command. When corrected, never justify yourself nor say: "I speak because I am right, or because this is just too much, etc." Rather, keep silent, because we must practice virtue both when we are right and when wrong. Otherwise, we may dream of perfection but never achieve it.

With humility, you will continue to grow from grace to grace, from virtue to virtue. With a serene gaze, you will contemplate the sea of grace and justice, rejoicing to see yourself in the bosom of the sweet love of your beloved Spouse, Jesus, meeting the challenge of your days joyfully and tranquilly. Oh daughters, then the serenity of the angels will then radiate from your countenances. You will not give up in times of adversity nor be swollen with pride in prosperity. Your only thought will be to please Jesus in everything. You will go about filled with joy, like white doves beautiful and lovable in God's eyes. Your voice will be sweet and pleasing to the Heart of Jesus. Your prayers will be as fragrant perfume before the Most High, your life will be a burning lamp in the community's midst. Finally, your death will be that of the just: placid, serene and tranquil, with an immense trust in Him whom you have imitated and who is your All, the center of your every aspiration.

Now I shall tell you how the feast of Blessed Alacoque, our patroness, ended. About four p.m., an alarm was heard. Then we saw a bustle of activity as the crew ran in all directions, shouting "to the fire stations!" From the first to the last, each sailor was equipped with a preserver either over his waist or over his shoulder, ready to jump overboard if the worst happened. But certainly only dien, because, as the captain said, in this sea there are fish called sharks, that eat people. Others ran to raise the sails on the lifeboats. All in all, it was a sight to behold and very enjoyable because a very sweet little old lady, who serves us with so much concern, a little earlier notified us that it was only a drill to accustom the crew to act swiftly in the event of such a disaster. God spare us!

At about six, there was dinner as usual. We saw unusual activity among the chattering and buzzing passengers. We did not know what to think. Finally, a delegation led by a Guatemalan colonel approached us and told us that in a half hour all would gather to honor the captain with a short musical program and they hoped that we would not make the mistake of being the only silent ones. We hesitated a bit, unaccustomed as we were to such a request. We reflected that they were all fine people, very cultured and very respectful toward us. All the personnel have been so courteous and concerned, showing a truly admirable respect for religious. Since after Our Lady of the Rosary, we owed our salvation from the storm to our valiant, courageous captain, we

agreed. We begged the colonel to put us at the beginning of the program so that we could retire after fulfilling our duty. They graciously consented and in half an hour, the captain and the other officers awaited us in the salon next to our cabins. We sang at the piano a brief song honoring the captain's valor, which the audience appreciated and applauded.

Then we withdrew on deck, leaving the others to continue the celebration in a staid and dignified manner. The captain, however, did not let it end there. Accompanied by the doctor, who is another fine character, and some other important gentlemen, he ran in search of us on deck, to thank us and express his great pleasure for our little tribute. At the same time, he asked us to please him by letting him hear some of those songs we had sung in a low voice a few days earlier, unaware that anyone had listened. Since we not only had the permission of the "king" of the ship but also since he so desired, with full voice we sang together *Gesù mio ver conforto* [Jesus, my true comfort], followed by *Maria che dolci affetti* [Mary, what sweet affections]. Our voices, harmonizing with the echo of the peaceful waves, rose up in true harmony to heaven. The faces of the listeners became joyful with a new, innocent, pleasure, perhaps never before experienced by many. It was Jesus and the Virgin who passed with one of their heavenly rays over those beautiful souls. We secretly invoked for them the precious gift of the Catholic faith, which is a source of happiness for those who possess it, since it is the one sure prelude to eternal happiness.

The captain, not knowing how to express his appreciation to us when the two songs ended, invited us to the command deck. He showed us the tricolor lanterns, white on top, green on one part and red on the other, which are used for avoiding collisions. He let us see the compass. To show us how the needle always pointed in the same direction, he gave orders by telephone to have the vessel make a complete turn. Then he also showed us the sounding line, used to measure the depth of the sea, and he told us that the Caribbean is a mile deep, and that the Pacific Ocean near Nicaragua is said to be bottomless, because no one has yet been able to measure it. Let us hope, however, that I may return in your midst without seeing that deep abyss. There, perhaps beneath a thin crust, lies the origin of the many volcanoes of that country which will soon also become our homeland, since soon some of our dear sisters will live there. They set out on the journey with true dedication and will surely zealously fulfill their mission as true, good daughters of the Institute. Then we saw the captain's bed, which is a boat-shaped net suspended from the ceiling of a room from which he can steer the vessel. He has very little rest for his weary members if the weather is not good. It seems that he takes to heart this responsibility for the lives of so many as if they were his true family.

Yesterday, the 19th, at seven in the morning we reached Colón, a port that everybody says is very ugly and unpleasant because of the sultry air that oppresses the passengers and may possibly give them yellow fever if they linger long. For us, however, it was not so. The air, which for five days was becoming cooler, contrary to every natural law, turned even cooler on arrival at the port.

so that we all marveled at this. We enjoyed our first sight of the many palm trees and palm groves that give the bay an enchanting appearance. The railway that was to take us across the isthmus was near the boat, but the captain did not allow us to disembark until the moment everything was in order for the departure, which was at 1:30 post meridian. In this way, we had no concerns about where to wait or where to eat. When the hour arrived, we were served royally and were escorted to the train with all our baggage, which alone took up six places. At the recommendation of the purser, who had been so good to us during this first sea voyage, we did not have to pay anything.

At the hour of departure, the captain, followed by the other officers, came to bid us a last farewell, while we were all settled comfortably on the train. Like a good papa, he told us to be good and wished us a good, peaceful voyage on the Pacific. By good, he meant that we should not get seasick. Almost all the personnel came also, especially those who had been assigned to take care of us. With our departure, it seemed as though they were being separated from their family. If on one hand it pleased us, it also made us sad to leave these people who had been so respectful and affectionate, with whom we could have had a good mission. However, Jesus did not want us there.

We resigned ourselves, and a few minutes later a whistle blew the signal for departure. A bell rang and the train was already in motion, carrying us across the isthmus. At first we passed through a wide row of palm trees, and then over fields where the work of nature in the vegetation is immense. Tall palm trees laden with enormous coconuts and royal palms adorn the plains and mountains. Banana trees burdened with seeds at the base almost touched the ground. There were other wild banana trees, also beautiful with their broad, long leaves. We saw breadfruit trees, tamarind plants with beautiful branches of tiny leaves, and other trees called in Spanish *asquiera*, the roots of which make good flour. We saw thousands of other leafy, fruit-bearing trees, which are enchanting. Some were loaded with the loveliest large and small flowers, others had enormous, umbrella-shaped leaves.

In a word, this time I indeed saw new things that greatly interested me. I had never seen them before but had read their description in the *Annals of the Propagation of the Faith*. We almost believed we were in the East Indies or China, all the more so since the train passed through villages and towns with wooden and straw shelters. The majority of these were inhabited by Chinese immigrants or Negroes. Both the indigenous men and women wear trousers. The only difference is that the women wear on top a loose shirt, longer than the men's, but are all very modest. Among the blacks, the lower-class women do not sufficiently observe the rules of modesty. These are truly mission lands; the further inland I travel, the happier I am that I have come. It is true that we have been sent to an uncivilized country, but I hope that we may establish there the cornerstone of a large structure from which we shall detach ourselves gradually to go every-

where to make Jesus Christ and His holy law known in the countries where the missionary has not yet reached. In fact, churches are not seen here; the few that we see look more like pagodas or Protestant churches.

The sight of this great spiritual poverty has greatly touched and enkindled our hearts. Since we can do nothing else now, we were moved to pray much for those wretched brothers of ours who are still in so much poverty and darkness. When we do not know what else to do, we pray the rosary for them, entrusting them to our heavenly mother since, according to the Church she says of herself: *Quasi palma exaltata sum in Cades et quasi rosae in Jericho* [Sir. 24:14; like a palm tree in Cades, like a rosebush in Jericho, I am raised aloft.] To succeed in this, oh daughters, we rely greatly on your prayers. Pray, pray without ever tiring, but know how to render your prayer effective by accompanying it with thousands of small sacrifices which you can make every hour, especially by perfect observance which requires of you the true denial of your self-love. I invite you all to this practice because Jesus wants it from you. He Himself wishes to bear you in the mystical small barque of your good will.

Already two and a half hours have passed and we have arrived in Panama City, at the bay of the Pacific Ocean, which stretches before us with a calmness worthy of its name. Here a vessel awaits us and we are the first to board it, while persons to whom we were recommended by the captain carry our baggage. It is hurriedly filled with the passengers continuing on this line. Soon we are transported on board the ship *St. Blas*, which awaited us at the head of the bay, unable to enter the port because of the great shoals. We arrived on board two hours before night fell and believed we would continue our voyage at once. Instead, we learned that we had to wait a day which soon became two nice, long days. But even here, Jesus thought of His beloved ones. Since there is also danger of malaria in Panama, He set us on the high sea to spend two restful days in the midst of very healthy air. We would have preferred to hurry to our mission, but if our kind Lord wants us to enjoy like others a couple of days of leisure, let us enjoy it in blessed peace. See to it that this rest, this exhilarating pure air and charming sights serve to refresh us in order to serve Him better and always glorify His fatherly goodness.

After ten days of perfect fasting from Holy Communion, we felt an overwhelming need to draw close to the center of our life. Our sighs increased this desire, which was converted into action as a small vessel came alongside us. For a negotiated price, we boarded it to cross to the shore. It was the first time I had been in a small boat. To tell you the truth, I was a little fearful, finding myself so intimately close to the waters of the largest ocean. It was also frightening since the small open boat seemed about to capsize every time someone stepped into it. Yet the purpose for taking this risk fully assured me and I took my place at the bow, encouraging the others. A minute later, we were already amid the waves which rose up lightly but always majestically and then receded, as if to greet their Creator. The oars moved us rapidly amid these waves toward Panama, as we sang

hymns in preparation for Holy Communion. At the sound of our voices, a great number of birds appeared and accompanied us to the city lining up by two's on both sides like a double procession.

We were able to satisfy our ardent desire in the cathedral. Jesus came to dwell in us, to strengthen us with His flesh, and assure us that He will always be with us, provided that we abandon ourselves to Him with full trust, not relying on ourselves. Then we visited the Bishop's residence. The Bishop was absent and his secretary received us, a priest from the Piedmont who has been living in Panama for some years. Around ten thirty, we returned to the shore to find that within the last three hours the waters had receded about half a mile, so that we had to go on foot to reach our little boat. Like the Hebrew people, amid reefs, rocks, and sand, we walked dryshod through the sea. In this way, we were able to admire the beauty of the stones and the fine marble which the salt water covers and enjoy gathering the most beautiful large and small shells of every species, some of which looked like pearls.

We returned amid the waves, raising our voices in songs of thanksgiving. I don't know whether it was at the melodious or raucous sound of our voices, once again a large number of birds followed us in a great procession. It seemed as if in their mute language they wanted to venerate and adore the thrice-holy God, the God of love, whom we bore in our hearts as in His own tabernacle. The sisters, either a bit superstitious or for fun, wanted to know from me the meaning of the procession of birds. I replied that they represented all the religious from these countries who will enter our Institute. But, some sisters were not so convinced since there were about a thousand birds, and remarked "Are they not instead the souls we must save?" I replied in the negative. At that instant as if to confirm our innocent game, there suddenly burst on the scene an undetermined number of other aquatic birds, like a great army, certainly numbering in the thousands. So it was argued that these were the souls that during the course of the years would be entrusted to us to lead to salvation. This was truly a novel sight which I had never seen in my five previous sea voyages. Before this, we would marvel when about fifty birds came in sight. This wonder was destined to be ours in the Pacific.

We returned on board amid the acclamation and joy of the ship's personnel and passengers who treat us like a true family. Then some of them who had frightened us a little by asserting that so small a boat would not reach land, stormed us with questions to determine how we had made the crossing, especially since a dark cloud had caused a downpour on them. It only tried to reach us, but did not succeed in wetting us, because we immediately intoned the *Ave Maris Stella*. At this sound the spirits of the air retreated and all we had was a little tossing of the boat, which did not frighten us since Jesus, the master of the little barque, had infused us with courage and this alone separated us from the deep abyss. Seated in the bow, I held my hands in the water while I had the opportunity, but I withdrew them quickly when I felt something touch them. Perhaps it was one of those sharks, two meters long, which eat people whenever they can.

We spent the day in spiritual reading, occasionally interrupted by some boats bringing new passengers and by fishing boats loaded with coral for those who wished to buy it. Now we amuse ourselves by watching the beautiful, mountainous islands. They appear either small or large according to the ebb and flow of the tide and are united by narrow stretches of land. At low tide on one of these stretches of land, or better said a shoal, we saw the remains of a ship wrecked an unknown number of years ago. Its ruins lie beached on the sand in such a way that no tide will ever again remove it. Who knows how many victims that shipwreck caused! Those poor victims were a lesson to us not to create obstacles. This thought stirred up some compassion in us and caused us to pray wholeheartedly for their souls.

Yesterday, the 21st, we desired to return again to Panama to receive Communion but the small boat cost too much. Not to spend another twenty lire or more, we satisfied ourselves with having welcomed Jesus within us the previous day, and remained recollected within our mystical tabernacle with fervent spiritual communions. At midmorning, the sisters wanted to visit the nearby islets which could be easily covered since the tide had gone out, once a boat took them to one. The trip took only ten minutes and cost very little, so I could satisfy their desire. However, I did not go because, if I must confess my weakness, I have a great fear of water. If it is not for a holy purpose, I do not feel I should expose myself to where there may be danger, unless it is in obedience to my superiors when all would be blessed by God.

Oh blessed voice of Obedience! When she has spoken, the Missionary crosses the immensity of the Atlantic or Pacific without concern about the movement of the clear waters, the billows that dance and sparkle in the air and cast themselves deeply into the abyss. In her sight, the oceans become a magnificent, sublime spectacle, enrapturing her with wonder and admiration. They fill her heart with God, and lead her to praise and bless the Creator of so much beauty and wonders. The sisters enjoyed their visit to the islands very much. They enjoyed a very pure, refreshing and healthy air, sitting beneath the shady plants and exploring the caves. There they found new shells, but not as pretty as the ones of the Panama coast.

At last, the two days of recreation passed and, at seven p.m. on the 21st, the ship began to move, amid the exchange of greetings with the people in the other ships also moored there as if in a town square. The sailors on the hundreds of moored boats exchanged greetings with the others as if they were neighbors for years. This voyage is a pleasure cruise, like the ones from New York to Manresa or Boston by ship. We are always coasting and at times the sight of mountains or islets delights the eye of the passenger. It seems as if the ship is not moving, yet it is sailing rapidly and the engines hardly make a sound. The waters of the Pacific are truly pacific; it seems like a bay or a river and certainly not the great ocean that it really is. We realize it only at eventide when the magnificent display of phosphorescence proper to this immense ocean begins. A myriad of stars surround the ship. They move about in thousands of forms of the most beautiful

designs, igniting and extinguishing themselves very quickly. Beneath these brilliant stars, another phosphorescence stretches out, clear and rosy, like a great sail moved by an impetuous wind. Yesterday at five post meridian, just at the first vespers of the feast Saint Raphael, we reached Puntarenas on the Gulf of Costa Rica. The ship stopped here for a glimpse of the first republic encountered in Central America. Since it was low tide, the ship could not go into port but remained about 200 meters offshore. From small boats a few passengers came on board, some of whom came to greet friends. Among these was a gentleman who approached us. He understood that we wanted to send a telegram for Doña Elena Arellano and offered to dispatch it. Then he said that only a few hours ago the Bishop of Costa Rica had arrived in Puntarenas for the Feast of Saint Raphael and that he would now notify him of our presence, certain that he would come aboard to greet us. We appreciated this news very much as we saw that in a country so foreign to us we found someone to take an interest in us like a friend.

In about ten minutes that gentlemen reached port and after about a half hour, a sloop started out. We were unable to distinguish clearly who was coming, but two black shadows made us hope for a special visit. In fact, we gradually were able to distinguish the robes and insignia of a prelate. After a brief instant, the cabin boy grasped the bar and the Bishop climbed the ladder and came among us, like a father who for a long time had been waiting for his daughters, anxious to see them again. Everybody made room on the deck for His Excellency and a circle of chairs was prepared. He sat in the middle, interesting himself in our voyage and the work we were about to undertake. Often he would whisper in the ear of his secretary: "We shall have to get them to come to Costa Rica too." The other replied, "Why don't we keep them now?" He encouraged us very much, adding that we would encounter many hardships, but if we maintain our true spirit, we would overcome all obstacles and accomplish much good. At the end he told me that if we encountered serious hardships in Nicaragua, we should write to him and he would do everything to accept us in his diocese. He blessed us and departed, leaving in our souls the happy impression that he was a truly holy and zealous pastor. He is German, very intelligent, fine-spirited, a person equally robust and energetic of character, truly worthy of inhabiting these lands.

Today is the last day of our voyage. Saint Raphael, the very one who accompanied Tobias to his land of fortune, is bringing us to these lands where we can gather great treasures for eternal life, toiling and sweating among so many abandoned souls. From time to time even on board, occasionally a gentleman or lady comes to speak to us of the great need in these lands for missionaries to work with true zeal among the people. Oh, may the good Lord bless our intentions, instill in us true zeal for the salvation of our neighbor and communicate to us that true enthusiasm that knows no measure and overcomes every difficulty, trusting wholly in the Adorable Heart of Jesus Christ! Yesterday afternoon we suddenly saw multicolored rivulets with a vehe-

mence all their own coursing like brooks among the salt water. We asked the captain about this novel sight, and he replied it was phosphorous and at night we would see a display of the true phosphorescence very common in the Pacific Ocean.

In fact, as soon as the sun set and darkness fell, we saw a most enchanting scene. The artificial fireworks of the Milan Arena are nothing in comparison with these natural ones in the Pacific Ocean. The ship seemed surrounded by red flames from which occasionally darted foaming waves of green fire. This again separated into lights like a comet, flashing like lightning in the black waters, rendered even more dismal by the blackness of a darkest night. These comets first seemed spent and grew then brighter in lovely hues like falling doves. The scene often changed. It seemed that the ship was always on fire because its motion ignited the water's phosphorous - as if a piece of the sky had fallen into the sea, all starry with the most brilliant asteroids. Later we saw what appeared to be the brightest *aurora borealis* rushing towards us, surrounding us momentarily as if to transport us into the air with Enoch and Elijah.

In the beginning our imagination caused us to fear a little, because it was truly hard to understand where we were. Only the splashing of the waves assured us that we were at sea. We wanted to flee to the salon, but the surprising sight held us fast. Also I can assure you that I was very curious to view the whole spectacle in order to describe it to you later. I wish I had a gifted pen to make you experience it as I did and, at the same time, express how magnificent is the God who creates such wonders. Later, a thick rain fell. This will occur frequently for six months since winter has just begun in these regions. It consists exactly of that bit of freshness that a good rainfall brings daily. The first spectacle ended to make place for another as each drop of water seemed a small piece of gold that struck the water like a star. When this ceased, the first began again. It continued like this all night long, even as we slept a very deep, peaceful sleep. The sea was so calm that we hardly felt any movement.

Here we are at full equinox: twelve hours of perfect day and twelve hours of perfect night. It is a pleasure to see how it happens. At six post meridian, we still see the sun. At six-thirty not only has it set, but we are in total darkness. The same happens in the morning: at five-thirty we are in total darkness, at six it is clearing, and by six-thirty, the sun is already high in the sky. There is a difference of seven hours from Granada to Italy. While we shall be at Mass, you will be making your particular examen. When we are preparing to rest after making our general examen of conscience, you will be getting up to go to chapel for your meditation. In this way, what I have greatly desired will soon come to pass: we shall never cease praising the Lord.

While we are conversing, time passes quickly and we are reaching the end of our voyage. On the morning of the 25th, the ship entered one of the most beautiful gulfs we have ever seen, the Gulf of Nicaragua by the town of Corinth. It stopped around seven, about eighty meters from the port. Soon, amid the very harmonious sound of a band, we saw that two small, flag-draped ships

guided by soldiers were the first to row toward our ship. Everyone asked what it could be and we also stood by watching with the others. When they reached the ship, a priest and an old gentleman climbed the ladder, followed by other priests and other gentlemen accompanying the first. They were the representatives of the President of the Republic and the Bishop sent to meet us.

Everyone made way for them to come to us, who were standing apart, far from thinking such honors were for us. They presented their respects in the name of the most important personages of the republic and asked us to go with them, leaving them the care of all our baggage. We bade farewell to the captain and all the passengers, some of whom were crying to see us go, and climbed down into the two small boats taking us to the port. In Corinth, a good breakfast had been prepared for us, which we ate with gusto. Between one thing and the other, it was already ten and the morning air had sharpened our appetite. Meanwhile, a lengthy telegram from the President of the Republic arrived, welcoming us and granting us and our baggage a free voyage on the train and lake. After having received some visitors, we boarded the train at three post meridian, accompanied by the same persons who had come to meet us aboard ship.

At six we arrived at León, where a large number of people waited to catch at least a glimpse of us, but the crowd was so great we could not leave the train. It was a task to back up and try another route but all was in vain, because the people wanted to see us. Meanwhile, the Vicar General came on board. He improvised an address of welcome as instructed by the Bishop. We certainly did not deserve such a tribute. This was delivered in the midst of all the people who did not want to get off the train and leave our company. Finally, we had to leave the train to board the carriages, accompanied by guards to avoid being crushed. They took us to a hotel where the Bishop had reserved an apartment for that night. The hotel manager was a Florentine Italian who gladly treated us the best way he knew.

In the evening, the ladies and gentlemen of León came not only to pay their respects but also to entreat us to divide into two groups. They proposed sending only seven sisters to Granada while the others would remain there to open another school. It took a great effort to explain that this was not possible for now. They were finally resigned when I made them hope that in a few years I would be able to give them the religious. The morning after, the Bishop sent for us with several carriages, since he very much desired to see us. Even though he was seriously ill due to an apoplectic attack which had paralyzed him, especially his tongue, he got out of bed and wanted to stay with us. He forced himself to say a few words to assure us that as soon as he was well he will come to Granada to see us.

At half past eight, we reboarded the train and at ten we were at Momotambo. There we descended to take the lake's small boat, after having a second breakfast which the Bishop the day before had ordered prepared for us. At eleven, we boarded the boat, which crossed a very beautiful lake with an impressive view of some volcanoes, one of which was active. We saw only

smoke from it, nothing more. When we reached Managua around four, the train was ready to take us to Granada. At Masaya, a senator and a deputy, together with many people who wanted to see the religious, came to greet us at the station.

At about six, we arrived at Granada, where the entire population awaited us. I believe no one remained at home; everyone was at the station. The people prevented the carriages from coming to us because they absolutely wanted us to pass through their midst so that they all could see us. The crowd was so dense and disorderly that for a moment I was seized with the fear of being suffocated. Even more I was oppressed with worry about some of the sisters who were not feeling very well. In short, I believed they wanted to make us martyrs at our first entry, to venerate us in their excessive devotion. I begged that the soldiers who were there to keep order be allowed to come close to us. They did not dare to approach us out of respect but they did so as soon as they understood our desire and order was established. A large procession was formed, ending at the parish where the parish priest waited to sing the *Te Deum*. Then they accompanied us to the house destined for us, where, to our great pleasure, we are already trying to put everything in order to open the school.

The whole city wants to come to our school and those from nearby cities would like to come as boarders. At the moment we can satisfy only about fifty boarders because, although the house is large, it is not roomy enough for these tropical countries where hot weather is the norm. During the winter now, we have about 35 centigrades of heat in the daytime, and from 15 to 20 centigrades at night. However, a providential breeze comes occasionally, like the beating of angel wings, greatly restoring us with its purity and coolness. We have three courtyards, one of which is rather large, surrounded by wide cloisters. In the middle there are many tall trees laden with great quantities of oranges, then other shorter plants loaded with flowers of every shape and color. It seems that spring is beginning now; it will also be like this on Christmas Day.

Doña Elena Arellano, in her kindness, let us find the sisters' sleeping quarters in good order. She also had prepared for us a well-ventilated chapel so that the first morning the director of the seminary at León who, at the Bishop's request had always accompanied us, was able to celebrate Mass and immediately give us the company of our beloved Spouse, the sacramental Jesus. In the afternoon of the same day, he gave a beautiful discourse to the assembled women and invited them all to thank the Sacred Heart for the grace of granting them the religious. Then he celebrated Benediction.

Now Doña Elena is preparing the desks and everything for the schools. Meanwhile, we are preparing the programs, which are being examined carefully by the Parents' Council which has now joyfully given its full approval. They have increased the tuition much more, indicating that they understand from the program that we bring them the true progress that until now they have been unable to obtain. We hope that this will serve to do some good for their souls, the only tear-

son for undertaking such a long voyage. May the adorable Heart of Jesus and Saint Aloysius, patron of this new foundation, help us achieve this.

All of you, oh daughters, help us with your prayers, especially during these early times. We want to dedicate our efforts to remove a serious widespread defect which has become commonplace here among the feminine sex. The women of the poor class go about very much uncovered, while the upper-class women cover themselves even more than is our custom. We have already experienced this. At first the serving women had many excuses, but some have already understood. To please us, they covered themselves. Then they approached the sacraments with great joy, declaring that only now were they able to approach the Lord worthily.

The sisters are all well, working diligently to prepare to open the school soon. Perhaps we shall initiate it in mid-December. Those sisters who feared earthquakes no longer fear anything, although we have felt one shock and there is a volcano very near. Some ladies have already come to offer to take us to see everything in this country that would be new to us. I accepted this invitation for later, in order to be able, on my return, to give you some news about this country and also not to be like those who go to Rome without seeing the Pope.

Now, in conclusion, I urge you to strive to become true Missionaries, capable of performing all the sacrifices which, with Jesus, your sisters have overcome. Try to deepen yourself in spirit and in the perfect observance of the Holy Rule, because you need to go holy to the mission; that is, perfectly observant. The person who goes holy to the mission finds many occasions to become more holy. Whoever goes lacking in virtue and weak in spirit, risks losing the little she has, and also risks betraying a trust. Every day I am more convinced of this. Therefore, my daughters, since experience is a teacher for us in some things, let us benefit from it and not let a day go by without a rigorous examination of our conduct and without making serious resolutions about the virtues we need.

May Jesus bless you and enclose you in His heart, imprinting on you His holy love and perfect self-detachment. All for the greater glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Your most affectionate Mother in the Sacred Heart of Jesus,
M. Francesco Saverio Cabrini

November 3, 1891



V

FROM NICARAGUA
TO NEW ORLEANS,
March to April 1892

Destinations Cited:

Granada
Rivas
Savalo
El Castillo
Guiz
Macciucca
San Juan del Norte
Bluefields
Mosquito Reservation
New Orleans



"The few Catholics living here, as soon as they saw a religious habit, ran to kiss the cross and hear a word of encouragement, poor people!"

— Mother Cabrini

FROM NICARAGUA TO NEW ORLEANS, March to April 1892

There was sufficient environmental and culture shock suffered by the Missionaries, immersed for the first time in a tropical climate and dealing with customs and morals so unlike their own. Yet the parents resoundingly approved of the curriculum as well as the strict moral code that was enforced. The school was well established and flourishing when Mother Cabrini departed for another eventful journey. She proceeded inland through the interior of Nicaragua with the sole intent of gathering firsthand documentation of the environment, customs and mode of living. The journey lasted about a month and was fraught with hardships and privations which she welcomed with missionary enthusiasm.

She finally arrived in New Orleans and found that the Italian immigrants suffered from discrimination and the added pain of the recent lynching of eleven of their compatriots. She accepted Archbishop Francis Janssens's invitation to open a mission there. Two months later, she sent three sisters to found a mission in that city. During this time, she also established Columbus Hospital in Manhattan and agreed to open Saint Charles School in Brooklyn.

About September 25, 1892, she departed for Italy. There is no account of this voyage. Her stay in Italy was marked by consolations and desolations. She rejoiced in the audience she had with the revered Pope Leo XIII. She grieved when she was notified of the expulsion of the sisters from the school in Nicaragua on August 22, 1894. She sent the sisters a telegram to go to Panama, but their fate still weighed on her when she left Italy in September, 1894.

To my beloved daughters and to the worthy friends of the Institute:
The narration of my return from Central America. All for the greater glory of
the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

May Jesus be always with you and gather you in His Heart to give you a long
day of heavenly joy.

March 25-26. A memorable day was this when I had to make one of the
greatest sacrifices ever, leaving Granada and abandoning seventeen of our beloved religious alone
in a country new and alien to us.

It seemed that a fog had spread over the land and a thick, palpable darkness was falling.
Everyone was a bit worried since it looked like our little ship was headed for a big storm. But the
day was too beautiful, dedicated to her who came forth into the desert of this world like the rising
dawn, beautiful as the moon, elect like the sun, terrible as an army in battle array. This is the
Heavenly Mother whom we had already greeted at midnight as is our tradition. In that solemn
moment we asked her to grant us many graces, especially that of being strong, true Missionaries in
our separation, to really give us sufficient strength to overcome all the weaknesses of human nature.

It was ten in the morning when a Nicaraguan postulant, Mercedes Cepeda, and I boarded the
ship *Victoria*, which just a few minutes later separated us from our dear sisters of this mission as it
rocked gently on the waves. We slowly lost sight of them as we advanced on the great lake that I
dare to call the "sweet Nicaraguan Sea." The weather was slightly cloudy and it seemed that a
storm threatened on the distant horizon as often happens during this season. Some superstitious
people feared that it would storm, since our departure fell on a Friday. The threat of a storm was
nothing but an echo of our affliction and lasted a few hours, after which the sky and sea became
wonderfully calm. Cepeda, who had begun to feel seasick, quickly recovered and continues her voy-
age with great joy, desiring to arrive at the novitiate soon to learn to be a good, holy religious, a
strong Missionary willing to make any sacrifice necessary. This is as it should be if she wants to live
up to her family name which makes her a relative of Saint Teresa and our incomparable, valiant
Pope Leo XIII.

Almost all day long I felt a little ill, thinking of my daughters whom I left behind, especially the
directress, who had recently recovered from a severe attack of typhoid fever from which she was
miraculously saved by the Blessed Virgin of Lourdes through the intercession of Saint Aloysius.
Then I reflected seriously how we should always abandon ourselves to the Sacred Heart of Jesus
with limitless confidence in His help. After humbling myself deeply because of my weakness and
little faith, I immersed myself in my beloved, entrusting all the sisters to Him. Even better than I
can imagine, He will keep, defend and help them for me in this great mission and in becoming holy,
as is our strict obligation.

This trip is new for me and until now more enjoyable than the one I made coming south. The
view of the Cordillera range and of some volcanic mountains covered with green forests is an
enchanting one. It is rendered even more attractive by a good woman acting as our tour guide
who almost makes me wish I could visit each part of the country we pass if I had leisure.

Everyone says that the journey by way of San Juan del Norte is very taxing since it is neces-
sary to change boats frequently to go from the lake to the San Juan River, then from the Rio
Grande to the Rio Secco and from there to the ocean. I hope I will enjoy it because of the nov-
elty of all the things I could describe to you. I am only sorry about the baggage because they do
not guarantee its safekeeping as in Europe or the United States. At every stop, each has to watch
out for his things. In fact, at the first stop in Rivas, had I not attended to my trunk, they would
have put it on the coach for Rivas even though the New York destination was written in very
large letters on it. I had to run down in a hurry to have it unloaded and returned aboard. Now,
aware that there are some stops at night, I was a little worried since it would not be opportune
at that time to leave my cabin. But my preoccupation came from a lack of faith, because at that
moment I was approached by an excellent gentleman, a certain Mr. Felix Pedro Alfaro of
Granada, who offered his services, since he was traveling with us to the Rio Ramas. He seemed
to me an apparition of Saint Joseph and, explaining to him my concern, immediately accepted
his offer. He generously took charge and is taking such good care of us in everything that we have
nothing to fear, not even in passing through the region of "pure Indians" who, since they are
without religion, are robbers and cheats. May Jesus and Mary be blessed forever and help us to
have great, unlimited trust. The captain is an Irishman, who is so good. Wanting to do something
special for us, he satisfied and amazed the passengers by ordering finer and more ample service
for us.

October 29. We lost two days at S. Carlos waiting for the *Managua* to take us to the river. It
finally came and we also were quite comfortable in it, because the first captain recommended us
to the second and we received the best cabin and the best treatment. Navigating the river is stu-
pendous, enchanting, and something like the ride on the Hudson River from New York to
Manresa. I would almost like to have a villa for the school in Granada along this path. But
enough of this, the Sacred Heart will take care of this and wherever He chooses will be the best,
most pleasing place.

The trip, however, lasted only six hours and we arrived at Savalo where we spent the night
on board the same ship, *Managua*. In the morning we resumed our voyage on the steamship
Norma. Yesterday evening, after dinner, the captain took us to see a spring on some property that
he has near Savalo. It is a hot spring containing sulphur, iron and sodium, boiling at its source as
in a pot, too hot to the touch. The captain offered us a glass to drink and it was very good for the

digestion. The water is very clear with a very pleasant taste. I think that later, if the canal is opened, Savalo with its spring will become a place where people will go for treatment in that precious water which, according to an analysis, is said to be excellent for various illnesses, especially for the rheumatism that afflicts so many in these countries.

This morning we arose early to resume the journey, thinking we would make connections at El Castillo. We arrived at nine o'clock and learned that the other steamship had left. So we must lose a day and night here, too. This is the bad part about this trip, but as for the rest, I tell you it is very enjoyable, a true pleasure cruise. The river banks, sometimes flat and sometimes mountainous but always verdant, are beautiful and seem with a gentle force to raise one's spirit to praise the Creator of so much beauty in this place, where the hand of man has not yet reached to violate anything.

Yesterday for about two hours, the journey was amid palm growth and palm trees which seemed to gladden us with their majesty and carry us along in triumph. One would say that we are in the middle of spring, so abundant is the vegetation and flowers, while here it is really verano [winter], the driest season possible. This morning the ship struck a rock, but we hardly realized it, because the capable captain made a quick maneuver to save us. However, even if things had gone badly, there is no danger here as the river is very low, although it doesn't appear so to us. The river bed is very wide. Now we have arrived in El Castillo, where we disembarked and were welcomed by a good lady with whom we will spend the day and night.

April 1892. What do you think, oh daughters? You will say to me: and where have you been all this time, in ecstasy or in fetters? Neither one nor the other, only a little affliction. Because of the constant stops and some water I drank, I developed a fever in San Juan that robbed me of all my energy and the will to take up my pencil. I felt so sick I thought it might be contagious or the so-called "yellow fever." I had already resigned myself to God's holy will, although with a bit of sorrow, not being able to bid a final farewell to my beloved daughters, and to leave them those memories that arise at a decisive point before eternity. Trustingly, I asked Jesus at least to let me finish the journey. In His goodness, He heard me and finally today I feel well and have all my energy back.

From the ship *Managua* on the river, we boarded the ship *Adela* to Guiz and from Guiz to Macciucca we continued on a schooner where the water drenched us. At Macciucca we boarded the *Olembach*, which took us to the bay of the deep Atlantic by way of the Colorado River.

Early in the morning of the 31st, the *Coburg* transported us to San Juan on a stormy sea that tossed us from side to side. Mercedes suffered immensely but I did not; rather I enjoyed the novelty very much and saw many fish and ants that I had never seen. At San Juan we spent four days in a hotel, where we were comfortable enough. The authorities and important people of the city

came to visit us, and with them came that fever which sapped all my strength.

On April fourth, the steamship *Corazzo* was finally ready to take us to Bluefields. All the authorities were on the shore and came on the launch to accompany us on board. By coincidence, the governor of San Juan traveled with us as far as Bluefields. Because of his hearty recommendations, we were well served in everything. Also traveling on the *Corazzo* were two of the chiefs of the Mosquito tribe, who approached me. I was able to speak at length with them and make all the recommendations I wanted to about religion. They listened to me with great joy and promised to do everything.

The Mayor of Cavo, who listened to the whole conference, marveled at the contentment and attention of these two distinguished persons. Later he told me that if I had wanted to go to the Mosquito Reservation, he was sure that they would have let me enter and go where I wanted, and that I would have obtained everything. God willing, later we shall also save these people who are "evil" only because no one has yet borne them the voice of truth. As for the rest, they have a very capable nature and I believe the outcome would be excellent.

But let us for now pursue the journey. We arrived in Bluefields, and there we had to wait two days for the steamship *Gussis* of the Morgan Line. We stayed in a hotel, where we were well accommodated. I wanted to visit the beautiful small city, with a style very much like a city in the United States: clean, orderly, and rather charming. Almost everyone here is Protestant. The few Catholics living here, as soon as they saw a religious habit, ran to kiss the cross and hear a word of encouragement, poor people!

[At this point the manuscript ends and the account is incomplete. The letter that follows was written during the same voyage.]

My dearest daughters, a word also about Bluefields, where we had to remain two days waiting for the Morgan steamship to be readied for New Orleans. We are in the Mosquito Reservation, an area I had wanted to visit, but I had already satisfied my desire when at San Juan two chiefs of the Mosquito tribe boarded our steamer. In fact, one of them was with the group who accompanied the "Rei-o-Cif" when he was baptized. I spoke with them at length and gave them medals which they accepted with great veneration, promising to wear them always around their necks. On the same ship was the Vice-Governor of Cavo di Gracia, a Mosquito Reservation, an excellent gentleman from Cinandega, who listened to my whole sermon. I recommended to him that the mission continue in order to convert all of them into good Catholics, the only way to civilize them well. Pray for them with all your heart and continue your mission well, all according to the Holy Rule, with holiness and holy joy that you may form exemplary youth.

You should see how pretty this town is! All the houses have two stories, built in the American style of the United States. It is truly beautiful, overlooking a charming bay, which gives it a con-

tinuous, cool breeze. The only disadvantage is that it lacks a Catholic church and Catholic schools, while there are five Protestant ministers who do everything. I left behind some holy water and gave small medals to some of the Catholics. I was amazed to see how a fifteen year-old Catholic girl kept herself in good faith, persevering and firm, while living with a Protestant relative. Oh, with the Sacred Heart of Jesus, all is possible and no difficulties are encountered. Pray for this poor country.

Mr. Alfaro is leaving us here, but since Jesus never leaves us, he has already designated another gentleman to accompany us to New Orleans, who is already very attentive to us. He is Jewish and a great landowner in San Juan, which does not matter to me. Jesus, if and whenever He wishes, can have us be served even by the devil who must serve us well in spite of himself.

I recommend to you, my daughters, to do everything well and to be observant and diligent in everything. Be holy, my daughters, do not waste time, and pray for me that I may do the same.

A greeting to all of you and to each one in particular and a sweet little word which the Child Jesus will say to you from the arms of Mary most holy. I fondly greet the children and remind them to pray for me. Best wishes to all, and to Doña Elena especially.

May Jesus bless you and help you, giving you always a strong desire to die rather than to fail in your observance and your ardent love for him. Always pray for my intentions! Mercedes is fine and comports herself very well. One of her relatives will come to give you my regards.

Your affectionate mother in the Sacred Heart
M. Francesca Saverio Cabrini

Bluefields, April 5, 1892



VI
FROM GENOA
TO NEW YORK,
September 1894

Destinations Cited:
Genoa, Italy
Gibraltar, Spain
New York, NY
Washington, DC
New Orleans, LA



"Have faith... prayer offered in faith can do all,
save everything, recover the lost, redeem the past
and make all things right!"
— Mother Cabrini

The original Columbus Hospital in New York is
now Cabrini Medical Center. Then and now, this
health care ministry fulfills a mission of providing
quality, compassionate care to meet the needs of
individuals and the community.



FROM GENOA TO NEW YORK, September 1894

On the 13th of September 1894, Mother Cabrini, boarding the *Fulda* of the North German Lloyd Line, for the first time sailed from an Italian port, Genoa, where she had opened a house. Arriving in New York on the 25th, she was to face arduous labors and untold suffering because of opposition by civil and ecclesiastical authorities, petty rivalry and antagonism from religious and other charitable institutions, and a distrusting and hostile attitude toward Italians.

The right of Columbus Hospital to exist was being contested. Our saint confronted numerous obstacles with her customary firmness and attained for the hospital broader recognition and the status of charitable institution from the State of New York. She journeyed to Washington to visit the Apostolic Delegate, with whom she established a firm friendship. She next made a visit to New Orleans where the sisters were doing a much-needed and appreciated work.

M

y dearest daughters,

May the peace of God be with you and accompany you everywhere, in the charity of the adorable Heart of Jesus.

Two years ago I left the mission of Central America and the United States and returned among you. Now for me to leave you again is very difficult. I felt like one who has formed the habit of experiencing the gentle sweetness of gathering daily varied, fragrant

bunches of the beautiful flowers of your virtue, and who now goes wandering in an endless desert space, finding only thorns and weeds. But my spirit immediately lifted, reflecting that when I was near you I gathered bunches of flowers that edified me, now from far away the memory of your regular, virtuous practices that rendered you exemplary religious, true spouses of Christ gives me the sweetest comfort. I seem to hear a voice repeating in my ear and engraving in my heart the words, "Mother, go and fulfill the mission that the Vicar of Christ has given you. Let not the thought of your distant daughters disturb you because they have all resolved to console your heart with reassuring news. Yes, all have promised this to you and none will go back on her word. They will be faithful to every single promise made to you."

Am I to believe, oh daughters, the whispers I hear? Yes, I believe you. You have a good heart and would never wish to wound the heart of a mother distant from you with even the least bad news. You have common sense and good spirit and will not go back on your word. Rather, you will make every effort to grow every day in virtue, to make sacrifices - real, true sacrifices - to the end that I may not waste time or make steps in vain, but that I may find the soil in each country well disposed, good seed, and the harvest plentiful. *Euntes ibant et flebant mittentes semina sua; Venientes autem venient cum exultatione portantes manipulos suos.* So wrote His Eminence, Cardinal Parocchi in one of his tributes that he kindly sent us.

But the first part of that verse no longer applies to me, since my daughters follow me with the sweet odor of their prayers, sacrifices and admirable faithfulness. Shall I fear winds, storms, privation, ill treatment, injustices or any other imaginable disaster? No, because a Missionary must not fear anything except sin and the slightest offense against God. What, then, can alarm me? Oh, there is one thing. What is it? It would be to receive news that one of you has lost her spirit and has become weak and unfaithful. This would truly be a sea of bitterness and disturb me greatly. Yes, oh daughters, a knot binds us tightly together; charity links us. We are a true family in the Heart of Jesus. This is the reason I maintain all I have said and assure you that the vehemence of the waves that move this ship almost as if in flight seems to me nothing, compared to the strength of this sentiment of mine.

Away with dismal thoughts! You want me to drive them away. Well, then, I trust and obey you and regain the joy customary to a Missionary so to be good company to the group of sisters

around me. We are fifteen, a Marian company of the fifteen mysteries. Our Lady of the Rosary is our guide, our star and comfort. We each drew a mystery and the one that is my favorite fell to me: the coming of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, I shall stay in the Cenacle for the entire trip, and from this precious solitude I'll send you a thought each day, providing you recite the *Veni Creator* for me.

At Genoa, we received every mark of attention. Many well-wishers came with the sisters. The distinguished De Maria family came to say goodbye to their daughter, Sister Saverio, who showed the true Missionary spirit. It was admirable how both the parents and sisters restrained their feelings, though their emotion was great. A half-hour before the departure, Mr. Lamp, a representative of the German Lloyd Line, introduced me to the captain and warmly recommended us to his care. He promised to do all he could for us. All cargo was on board, and the *Fulda* had raised anchor. We saw a small boat carrying Colonel De Maria and his family and the four sisters of our house in Genoa who continued to follow and wave farewells until the steamer left the harbor. The *Fulda* is now out of port and our adieus are ended. We are all united while we sail beneath Our Lady's mantle, enclosed in the adorable Heart of Jesus. You must pray and offer sacrifices to God for us so that Jesus will smile upon us and bless us. Pray, pray much, for we depend on your prayers. We trust in them, assured that you will obtain for us a very happy voyage and abundant graces.

September 14. Today is the commemoration of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. The sisters, not being able to honor the day in any other way, decided to feel a little sick, I think. The ocean is beautiful, tranquil, the breeze soft and the climate very mild. The service satisfies our needs, so what can it be? Toward nine this morning, one after the other became seasick. As in a procession, each had to return to her "box," as they call their bunk beds. At the dinner hour, I wanted them to come to the table, knowing well that fasting is worse. They obeyed but soon took flight, so as not to invite others to imitate them. At the hour in which I now write, fifteen hundred hours, they already feel better. All have come on deck to admire the Balearic Islands along which the *Fulda* is coasting, almost grazing them. We saw Majorca, the native land of Blessed Alphonsus Rodriguez, where we directed our sights, praying for some of those sublime and profound virtues that I would wish to see engraved in me and on all my daughters.

This morning they all wanted to make the regular meditation as had been proposed the night before. Very soon they had to set aside this thought to take care of their previous illness. To some it seemed of consequence, since they felt so much stomach churning. Now they are making their contemplation in the enchanting presence of sky, land and sea, although this is certainly not the beauty of Liguria that we saw coasting along the splendid Riviera coast. There a veritable spectacle unfolded, from the steep summit of the Appenines sloping to the sea: mountains, hills, the

beach, sharp peaks, stately pines, lush greenery and undulating slopes, the peaceful olive, thousands of fruits and flowers as well as the palm, forests and fruit orchards that extended to the sea and delighted our senses. It was beautiful, very beautiful, to view this scene from the deck. From Genoa to Nice, the cities seem to pursue, and hold hands with each other. Each moment the scene changes. I can truthfully say that I did not know the beauty of Italy until I saw the eastern coastline of Genoa, and even more the western. I am pleased to have seen it in order to be able to describe this beauty to people I meet in other countries through which I shall pass who may ask me particulars about Italy.

The sisters, remembering that today is the anniversary of my profession, were sad, thinking if I were on land, I could have received Communion. I appreciated their compassion but, on the other hand, only a day ago Jesus came to rest in me and I seem to feel His presence within me yet. And then, we recall Jacob's mystic dream. Sleeping on a stone, he saw a mysterious ladder reaching from earth to heaven, on which angels of God ascended and descended. From the top of the ladder the Lord manifested to him many secrets and mysteries and assured him and his descendants of His protection. Even though we are at sea, far from the holy tabernacle of love, here even at sea there is also that mysterious ladder that touches heaven. The angels also ascend and descend for us, and from the summit Jesus watches over us and makes us generous promises. We too, like Jacob, can repeat, "Truly the Lord is in this place and we did not know it."

We are in the bosom of the Catholic Church, and are comfortable within this holy space, our head always resting on the dear, mysterious stone which is Jesus. We comply with His wishes in all things, never saying "no" to Him. We lean solely on Him, peacefully and securely. By so doing, we merit to participate in Jesus and for Jesus, in all the benefits and graces He hears. Therefore, even at sea I am happy to celebrate the most cherished anniversary of my life. Jesus, at the top of the ladder, watches kindly over me. I invite Him, and He immediately comes to me spiritually, deigning to come down to our ship, the *Pulda*, to grace us and all our fellow passengers. What a great grace! What a wonderful scene, oh daughters, beyond our thinking!

September 15. Today, we are even more fortunate than yesterday. It seems that rather than being on the water, we are riding on a cloud like that of the Transfiguration. An enchanting shade of blue does not allow us to distinguish sky from the water. Some sisters say that maybe we have been transported to the third heaven. To another, it seems it is in the seventh because a radiant light each moment renders everything more beautiful, causing the passengers to often exclaim, "Oh, beautiful, oh beautiful, how beautiful it is!" It is as if we glimpse the gates of heaven, which do not close at day's end, because there day never ends, since the light that comes forth from the Divine Face of our Beloved never falls. Oh, no, there is no night, no ignorance, nor blindness because everything is viewed in God. There are no adversities, no tears, no sorrows or

sighs. Ah, no, my daughters, in heaven no cloud can darken our Divine Sun, the Eternal Sun of Justice!

The origin of fear is excluded there, because it is far from the danger of losing God. There are no enemy snares because the devil has been vanquished; the world is distant and dispersed. The body is spiritualized entirely in harmony with the soul. No, no, there is no night in heaven; the gates remain always open. Enemies do not reach there and friends arrive every hour, every instant, arriving in a manner that does not disturb but rather renders repose more soothing, sweeter, and gentler.

O! sublime city! Shed your light upon the nations, and let the rays of the faith penetrate the base regions of darkness of ours, in these shadows of death where we still abide in misery. Come, oh supernatural light, unveil for us the beauties of that blessed homeland! Detach us from the troubles of the world and grant that our eye may be always pure and may always see, through the shining crystal of faith, those eternal joys which await us after a little sacrifice to overcome ourselves. Whoever does battle will be the victor; to the winner the victory, and paradise.

September 16. Between one thing and another, yesterday we arrived at Gibraltar. The ship headed toward the port entrance and weighed anchor about a half-kilometer away. Two small steamers came to get the passengers who were going to Spain and those who wanted to visit the city. Two of us got off to pay a visit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. It was 1:30 p.m., but the churches were closed. The cabman told us they were not open at that hour because the priests had gone to dinner. Patience! We looked for a bookstore to buy some Spanish books for our Spanish-speaking missions, but all we were offered were English novels. The driver took us to other bookstores but none had what we wanted. Desiring to console us, he said to be patient because in Gibraltar there is not much religious devotion, and took us to show us all the points of interest along an avenue of gardens all the way to San Rocco Village. Along the avenue some plants stood out, called in Spanish *pimentas* with their lovely branches rich with minute leaves and clusters of bright red berries. The driver, who explained everything to us, picked some for us, which we brought on board to the sisters, a remembrance of Spain.

Gibraltar is grand, with a magnificent shoreline reflected in the gulf. Its mountains and rocks make it one of the most beautiful and robust fortresses England was able to acquire in the Mediterranean. Six thousand English military with an immense reserve of artillery and unusually huge cannons are stationed there. The city is not big. There are three Catholic and three Protestant churches. Even though I was told that there was little practice of religion, I was able to understand that the Spanish people are good. Many came around me at a word directed to them to tell me that all who speak their same language are good apostolic Catholics, an expression that consoles me very much. They wanted to take us to visit some sisters of whom they were

very fond, but time was pressing. Our captain had allowed us only two hours and we had to return on board, where we were welcomed with great joy, as though we were all one big family. We are truly fortunate to have this good company: fine gentlemen and gentle, courteous women, and, more importantly, very respectful.

We have among us a Conventual Franciscan Father whom I met in Hoboken about four Lenten seasons ago. We made him suffer, poor man, because we wanted him to celebrate Mass, at least to fulfill the obligation today. As much as he wanted to make us happy, he did not have the necessary vestments and vessels. Therefore, once more we must make the whole trip without the comfort of Holy Mass and Communion. Patience, it is our good Jesus who wants it this way! We know how to treasure that last time He came to us in Genoa as food for the journey. Yes, daughters, I can truly say that we all feel Him very near, helping, consoling, strengthening, and comforting us. We represent the Marian Company of the fifteen mysteries. Our good Jesus, in His immense goodness, can't and does not wish to distance Himself from us. He is our paradise whom we enjoy at every opportunity.

Yesterday, we left the grand gulf of Gibraltar. The ship resumed its course to enter the strait. There we ceased admiring the beauty of Spain and turned our gaze to the opposite shore, Morocco. We directed our groans and sighs to the poor land where we would willingly go in search of those poor souls upon whom too slowly has flowed the mercy of God. Yes, it is true that there is a great movement now in Africa by the powerful new Crusaders of Christ, but that land mass is enormous, with extreme barbarism, and the help is insufficient! Multiply your numbers, missionary men and women! See how the harvest abounds and now there is a lack of workers to gather it. I appeal in a special way to the zeal of the many young Christian women who love Jesus, to stir into action the sacred flame burning within them, moving them with compassion for our many poor, abandoned brothers who also have been redeemed by the Precious Blood of Jesus. May each one of you join our ranks to seek a good number of souls to present to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Today is the time for love not to be hidden but become operative, alive and authentic. Jesus, as from Golgotha, repeats *Sitio* (Jn. 19:28; I am thirsty. I thirst for souls). If you love Jesus, then arouse yourself, come forward with courage! Know that the devil laughs at the weak and timid, but is frightened and takes flight from brave, energetic souls. Do you perhaps fear dangers? Bear in mind that whoever distrusts herself and trusts in God has nothing to fear because, stripped of self, she has become strong with the strength of God. With humility and trust, she defies every hardship.

Even more, remember that dangers are for those who court them and for those who would mingle the things of God with the things of the world. Whoever is completely empty of earthly cares and seeks only God's honor and glory never encounters dangers. Worldly persons are quick

to recognize those who do not enjoy their pleasures and they regard these souls with reverence and respect, and trustfully go to them in time of need. Oh, what glory, oh virgins, if God is calling you to expand His kingdom! Come forward! Run! Do not refuse because you may incur the reproach of the foolish virgins, passing up all the excellent opportunities the Institute offers you to cooperate in the salvation of souls and thus gain merits that in heaven will gain for you an immeasurable weight of glory.

Virgins are the chosen spouses of the King, queens who have a special place in the ministry of peace. As queens, they must have a people among whom they exercise their heavenly mission of peace. In the measure that the virgin, laboring as a Missionary, gains souls for Christ, much more will His dominion be extended and His scepter will grow more powerful and glorious. Oh, come, prudent virgins, increase the ranks of Missionaries! Come, embrace all the nations and give them the kiss of peace of the loving mercy of Jesus Christ. Come, the boundaries of our realm extend to the limits of the whole world. Be of stout heart and come! May the glory of your heavenly Spouse be your food. May your glory rest in increasing mightily the precious talent of this sublime vocation, to cooperate with Christ in the salvation of souls.

Come, for in the Father's wheat field we must gather by the armful the rich, copious sheaves. There may be someone who will say, "I am weak, poor and ignorant and do not dare undertake such a task." Have no fear and, as I have said, distrust yourself and trust in Jesus. *Omnia possum in eo qui me confortat*. The one who calls us is the same Jesus who said, "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." How shall we attain such perfection? By the grace of Him who imposes this on us. With God all is possible. When the virgin of Christ is humble, mistrusts herself and entrusts herself entirely to Jesus, she becomes powerful and can repeat at every instant, "With God I shall do great things."

Let us return to the narrative, oh daughters! Pardon the digression that, without my knowledge, flowed from my pencil. It arose from my desire to see your numbers increase ever more, so that we can hasten to the aid of so many nations whose plight truly arouses my compassion. Today I am alone on deck. Everyone remained in bed because as soon as we passed through the Strait of Gibraltar and entered the Atlantic, the usual tossing motion of this ocean began, accompanied at the same time by a bit of pitching and rolling. The sisters thought we were in the midst of a storm. Sister Alfonsina tried to be strong to come to keep me company, but soon fled to her "box" in the cabin. Then Sister Saverio felt brave. Truthfully, she does very well because she goes to lie down a while and then returns on deck. By so doing, she will master the sea in a few days. Sister Alacoque has attained the victory. She supports her head either on a chair or table but then generously runs to nurse the others. Sister Giovannina tried to do the same, but now the poor thing is condemned to her "box." Sister Costanza did her best to stay on deck at all times and not miss a meal, thinking, with reason, that by not missing a meal she would

stay well. But, today, the poor dear is confined to her bed and can take only what they bring her. Sister Benedetta moans from time to time and fears she is sick. The truth is that each day her complexion grows smoother and shinier, with such a fine color showing how much good the sea is doing her. In general, all are very happy and know how to offer the various small discomforts generously for the benefit of souls.

Today, the captain and head steward, sorry to see the sisters ill, sent word to tell me that if the sisters need anything I should not hesitate to speak. In short, we are surrounded by thousands of kind concerns, which I am at a loss to describe. We have always, thank Heaven, been treated well by the Transatlantic Line. The kindness and care shown us by this honorable North German Lloyd Line are not less. The firmness and earnestness of the captain, together with his great kindness, give us all the security to be desired on a ship. This fine captain's name is Thalenhorst.

September 17. Today I stayed to rest a little longer, thinking that everyone else would stay in bed and I would not have to stay with them on deck. I hoped to recover from the fatigue of the last few days, during which there was no respite. Instead, to my surprise, I found them all on deck, joyful and calm as the sea which is beautiful as a lake on a fine day. Her enchanting azure hue represents a soul totally possessed by God, a joyful, peaceful heart, a face reflecting paradise. This soul, made always more beautiful by Jesus, listens to His words and delights in them, because they are pure and more precious than silver or gold. She listens to the precepts of her Beloved and feels them giving her life and strength, because they are replete with the fragrant aroma of grace and heavenly wisdom. "Oh, sweet Jesus," this soul should exclaim, "shed Your light on my mind, illumine my intellect, help me with Your grace that I may swiftly cover the paths of Your lovable ordinances. Oh, do not permit me to stumble along the way but make me strong with Your virtue so that I can faithfully fulfill Your holy will. Strengthen oh, Jesus, my weak and wavering will so that it may actively desire what You desire and know how to reject what is displeasing to You. Guard my tabernacle which is already consecrated to you."

For this beautiful soul consecrated to God, every gesture of Jesus is of incalculable importance. She not only carries out what is asked of her at every hour but she joyfully seeks to anticipate His wishes. She no longer lives for herself but only for her Beloved. She has winged feet to fly [Ps. 119:32] wherever the heavenly Spouse directs her, happy to act or suffer something for her Jesus. This dear soul learns immediately from Jesus her life's norm. As she sees Him obedient unto death, so she imitates him with a perfect obedience to her superiors. To this soul, everything is easy, every order sweet because she knows that in obedience she finds the security of her steps, the firmness of her works, the fortitude of her spirit. She is forever joyful, content and smiling. She seems to be nourished with heavenly flowers. Oh, how many, many graces she acquires every hour, how many merits! She treads the way of the saints.

It is obedience, oh daughters, that distinguishes true piety from false. The obedient religious always sings victorious over her enemies. Since she submits her will to the superior, she holds sway over the demons who fell from heaven for their disobedience. You have promised, oh daughters, to give your blood and your life, if need be, to conserve your fidelity to your beloved Jesus. Well, in the exercise of obedience, you will discover the merit of martyrdom. Yes, because in martyrdom the body is sacrificed; in obedience the will is sacrificed, one's own freedom, the highest faculty of the soul. Obedience is a discipline of the reason; therefore, it is a sacrifice immensely more acceptable to God than any other sacrifice voluntarily chosen.

Jesus loves one degree of obedience in us more than a thousand other acts of homage we intend to give him. Saint Ignatius teaches us that it is of more merit to God to eat a meal out of obedience than to fast according to one's own will. Saint Mary Magdalene de Pazzi used to say that a simple drop of obedience is worth one hundred thousand times more than the highest contemplation. In fact, we read in her life that when she was in ecstasy and heard the voice of obedience, she would immediately return to herself and when given an order, she would smile radiantly, her face was transformed and she went joyfully.

Oh daughters, love this eminent virtue that forms the true character of religious life. Let the promptness of your obedience indicate the interior readiness of the heart, because the feet and hands run when the spirit is fervent. You serve Jesus Christ; then see Him in the person of your superior. Carry out everything joyfully and wholeheartedly. Never sigh, lament nor entertain suspicions, but conform yourselves perfectly to the will of the superior. Remember that what she orders is not only well ordered, but is the best for you. If thoughts against obedience come, drive them away as readily as those against faith or chastity. See in the superior not only the authority of God but also His will. Remember, my daughters, that obedience is commanded by God in the Divine Scripture. Therefore, it is a sure guide, a matter of faith in which there can be no deception or illusion.

Always conform your will and judgment to the superior's and you will reach the summit of religious perfection. Do not look at or consider the superior's qualities, gifts or her manners; otherwise, you will exchange divine obedience for human. See Jesus Christ in her, and that is enough. Make all your actions, even the least, more valuable by always doing everything for obedience, never through self-will. Pray to Jesus often to give you the spirit of obedience, and do all you can to merit such a great grace. Blessed will you be if you obtain such a singular gift. Hope for it from that Divine Heart, which has always beaten in response to obedience.

Daughters, to a mother distant from you whom you don't want to sadden you may never say "no." So, pay great attention to this digression that you have kindly permitted. All of you seek to clothe yourselves in the regal robes of dear and holy obedience. I need to gain many victories in the near future, all of which I shall obtain through you if you are truly obedient. These dear

young angelic sisters whom I am taking to the missions seem to me distinguished in obedience. For this reason, I travel joyfully, without feeling the burden that unfortunately weighs on me.

Between one thing and another today, we have also almost reached evening, traveling 389 miles in twenty-four hours. The sisters are well enough. They work, pray and meditate, a bit with the book and a bit on the various sublime thoughts that the sea presents to the mind. If I wanted to write about all of them, I would need a huge volume.

Sister Alessandrina, fearing she will lose track of time, marks the date and the day of the week every day in a notebook, and with each morning scrupulously reminds the sisters of it. Sister Constance, who was staying in bed yesterday, asked for some chicken and they brought her soup. She repeated her request and was brought salad. Since they saw that their guess was incorrect, they asked her to speak English. She replied that she could not do so because she had a European tongue. Sister Claver believed she was so sick yesterday and kept saying she would never make it to New York if they did not stop the ship. Instead today she is fine but has another preoccupation. She tore her habit and worries about what Sister Agustina will say, since she had admonished her so much, up to the last moment when we departed from Genoa as the ship hit the waves.

Our good traveling companions take more care of us than of themselves. They offer us whatever they have that is more comfortable, so they may see us suffer less. They treat us very respectfully and hold in veneration our religious habit. Some merchants come to ask us for a better way to handle their interests and we answer them with whatever Jesus inspires us to leave them comforted. The service personnel could not be more attentive and seem to enjoy whenever we ask a favor. Yesterday the only regret the cabin-maid had was that she could not understand the language so as to serve the sisters better. She came to me every time to translate into English what the sisters had requested in Italian. You well know how I could answer, since I don't know much English. I did my best, and know enough so that we do not starve to death or lose the way. When we are on deck, a gentleman who knows all the languages is attentive to our every need and acts as interpreter. It seems that our voyage has been superabundantly blessed by the adorable Heart of Jesus Christ, who through His Vicar, has sent us on this voyage. Oh daughters, help us to praise and bless Him who guides and strengthens us with such care and ineffable love. Tomorrow, toward ten, we shall see the Azores and be able to tell you something about them. We are unable to visit there as we did at Gibraltar, because the ship does not stop.

September 18. It was five thirty this morning when a whistle ordered by the captain called everyone to rise to view the Azores, which we had already reached. Not knowing the reason for the whistle, we remained resting, puzzled by so much bustling on the bridge. Only a few minutes passed before our good friends, not wishing to be alone to view the scene, came to knock at our

cabins, urging us to hurry and come if we wished to see something beautiful. A truly splendid sight spread before us!

Some called the Azores azure and they truly look like a piece of the sky dropped in the middle of the Atlantic. What beautiful mountains and hills! What stupendous slopes, richly covered with a laughing green that changes hue about every twenty meters, now symmetrical, then in various designs! The fruitful meadows, fruitful vines, thick forests, and the enchanting residences truly arouse in us a desire to visit those islands. More than one passenger wanted to ask the captain to stop the steamer for at least an hour to descend to at least touch those very fertile Spanish estates. We see the Azores filled with towns, cities and country homes all so well built, pretty and clean. It is evident that the property is owned by persons not only in comfortable circumstances, but rich. Our good captain, who enjoys seeing us happy, steered the ship so that all could get as near as possible to the cities and the most beautiful points of these islands.

We had a good view of the city of Ponta Delgada with its towers, steeples and monuments reflected in the sea. It spreads out majestically, and slopes gracefully down to the shore. Just where we were passing, a resplendent rainbow, its colors sharp and vivid, extended across the sky from the ship to the city as though uniting together those on board with those in the city. It announced to both the peace of the Divine Heart of Jesus, which embraces all people as one in His ardent charity to form one flock under the same Shepherd. From that rainbow, another one was reflected, brighter and much wider. It was a new display, which briefly held all our spirits in suspense. It was as though a hand from above was extended over us, to purify the mind and enable it to raise itself to praise the Creator of these immense, fascinating phenomena, incapable of being imitated by man. The stripes of color of that beautiful rainbow widened even more. When this admirable view, which seemed like an ecstasy, made us heady, large shining drops fell on us with the speed of lightning and forced us to retreat. The marvelous display, a gift from Jesus, ended. Everyone says that the Azores, besides being beautiful as we can also attest, are also uniquely salutary. Our compatriots afflicted with chest problems would certainly regain their health and strength there, but for others, it is probably too far to travel. How good God is to create so much for us!

The rainbow this morning reminded us of our heavenly Mother, the true rainbow guiding our Marian company across the seas. Oh, Mary is a lively, ever serene sky, continually reflecting the rays and splendors of the Divinity. She is like a sparkling wave burning with love for us. Yes, burning, because the splendors descending to her from the face of God are not only ineffable light, but also an ardent fire of charity. Oh, what marvels can be found in the love of Mary! How many gifts and graces issue from her beneficent hands, all sealed with great love. One glance from her, one thought directed to us, causes us to feel within us the effects of her burning charity. Mary, our sweet Mother, is a sea of honey, an ocean of goodness, a fire of charity always burning, ignit-

ing and transforming all in itself. She is a perennial sun of light, grace and goodness. No one is excluded from her beneficent warmth because her charity is universal and continuous. She opens the bosom of her ineffable goodness to all, always ready, even anticipating those who desire her. Mary is a beautiful olive tree in an open field, where all can see and easily have access to her. From her field flows a continual stream of water, where all who are thirsty may come to drink. Oh no, we must not be surprised if we find ourselves sometimes overwhelmed by Mary's grace and tenderness although the great gifts and immense benefits she dispenses are but a narrow stream from the immeasurable ocean of love she has for us.

September 19. After dinner yesterday at two we saw the last of the Azores. The large island of Saint George seemed to us not as beautiful as Saint Michael, but still smiling and green, with enchanting mountains, valleys and slopes. In one of their great cities we saw a cathedral impressive in its artistic design, but no one could tell me the name of the city. We were so close to land that they greeted us with flags from the government buildings and forts, and we reciprocated from the ship. Various sailboats were filled with people who were not able to come close to us because of the large waves the *Fulda* made. They waved handkerchiefs, hats, or, lacking these, waved their hands back and forth. If we had been able to get a little nearer to them, we would have asked someone to go to that beautiful church we saw to greet Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament for us. Certainly, they would have complied with our request, because it seems that on this trip everyone is disposed to carry out all the wishes of the religious. No one ever contradicts us when we speak about God. As a matter of fact, we notice that they all have a great respect and reserve in their manners and speech. We directed our sights to that church, uniting ourselves to the fervent Portuguese and Flemish of that city.

We also saw some volcanoes. Some were already spent. By their very sharp cones, others gave indication of soon bursting open with their gifts of lava, stones, ashes, gold, boiling water, or whatever unknown material they contain, which no one can guess. If yesterday I encouraged anyone with a chest disease to come to this enchanting land, let them first make sure they are not afraid of unsteady land movements, since near the volcanoes the land sometimes rolls under your feet like the sea itself.

The dazzling display of the Azores ended, in the midst of new rainbows, following each other in twos, to the great amazement of the passengers. It did not surprise us, who saw in it the loving concern of Mary wanting to console us. Another sight awaited us, which caused great stupor and a certain fear in the sisters unaccustomed to the sea. Many sea birds appeared; then the foaming water was filled with white caps and the sea swelled as the north wind blew. The vessel began to move in a manner to which the new travelers were unaccustomed. Some began to murmur, first in a whisper and then aloud, "the storm, the storm!" Just like Saint Peter, they gathered

around me saying, "Mother, tell the sea to be calm." I also had to respond that they had little faith and less courage because the weather would have to be much worse to be a storm. Yet in the event of a storm, since we are traveling in the name of Jesus, under Mary's mantle, what is there to fear? The ocean, the winds, the storms? Oh, no, we shall not fear. Our faith that obliges us to trust in God will make us strong until death.

A little agitation lasted all night and still continues. The barometer indicates good weather, and soon we shall have the extraordinary calm that accompanied us from the Mediterranean to the Azores. Sister Costanza wanted to grumble and asked if I would permit it. I replied that it is better for us to say always, "Oh what a marvel! Oh what a marvel." So she often repeats this, even though she has had her fill. Sister Pia cannot stay up but is fine in bed, where she accepts with a good appetite whatever she is served. Sister Saverio does not feel very well; she has got up and does not want to stay in bed and meanwhile keeps me company on deck. Sister Alacoque is like a sailor, healthy and fast-moving and is everybody's infirmarian. She sweetly coaxes them to eat, which is a big help. Woe to those who refuse food, because at sea nausea grows and causes more suffering. Sister Francesca suffers silently, is always cheerful and obediently forces herself to eat. Sister Gesuina does likewise. Sister Claver is the one who suffers more than anyone else.

Although confined to bed, our little sisters have made a paradise of their cabins. In their brief dreams, some go to Mass but can never receive Communion. Others see now one saint and then another coming to console them. They pray always and since the goodness and compassion of our Jesus is great, He relieves them in a thousand ways. Oh, how many ways the Lord provides and enriches us!

Have faith, Oh daughters, and you will obtain whatever you ask in prayer. Yes, prayer offered in faith can do all, save everything, recover the lost, redeem the past and make all things right. If our prayers sometimes do not always have the desired effects, let us examine ourselves. We shall find that perhaps we have not prayed with the required conditions and qualities, perhaps without spirit and fervor. We may have prayed without a supernatural motive, mechanically, giving only lip service, in tedium and hurriedly, without being recollected or persevering in our prayer. Ah, my daughters, there is nothing that prayer, animated by live faith, cannot attain! Prayer can do everything, absolutely everything. Faith and prayer, united together are powerful beyond all thought. If the saints worked so many wonders and signs, believe it, they did so through faith and prayer.

Faith, daughters, have faith, because the one who prays with faith prays with fervor, and fervor is the fuel of our prayer. It is this mysterious fire that has the power to consume all the defects and imperfections in us, and restore vitality, beauty and merit to our works and prayers. The fervor produced by lively faith is like a shower of limpid, crystalline water that restores and gives life to our actions, suffering and pain. Whatever is found defective or earthly in our prayers is purified and made resplendent with its proper value and virtue. But understand, daughters, I do

not intend to speak of sensible fervor, but about substantial fervor, the ardor produced by a living faith. It is a fervor and ardor consisting of a true union of the soul with God, in true perfect conformity of our will with God's will. You will obtain this fervor by recollecting the powers of the soul and by vigilance over yourselves, energetically scorning all that is yours, all useless, vain and importunate thoughts. The soul recollected in God receives His fervor in praying; therefore she obtains from God what she wants and can desire.

Develop the habit of always uniting your prayers with those of Jesus so that yours can be enlivened and sanctified. Be assured that Jesus Himself, after having purified them, will present them to the Eternal Father together with His. Oh yes, always pray with Jesus and your soul will be full and satisfied. The soul united to Jesus can do everything. *Omnia possum in eo qui me confortat.* [Phil. 4:13] With God I shall do great things. Have faith; pray with faith and it will be given to you in full measure, pressed down, shaken and overflowing. Oh, Faith, beautiful daughter of heaven, come, descend in us, and grant that we honor you who have wrapped us at Baptism in your beautiful mantle and have always enriched us in the other sacraments.

September 20. This day dawned in beauty, splendid and serene, and it continues so well that we hardly notice the motion of the steamer. Everyone feels fine; no one suffers any more. Last night, tired by the double movement of rolling and tossing that upset us, the sisters prayed special prayers. They all began with acts of humility, well knowing that in humility lies the secret of penetrating the walls of the holy city of God and of reaching the Omnipotent. Yes, just as humility is the foundation of each virtuous and worthy work, so it is of prayer. It is impossible to please God without the heavenly virtue of humility. It is the golden scale that measures the quality and strength of our prayer in the mind of the Lord. The one who is more humble obtains more; the less humble receives less. It is written, *Deus superbis resistit; humilibus autem dat gratiam* [1 Pt. 5:5; God is stern with the arrogant but to the humble He shows great kindness.] In charity, daughters, let us drive far away from us all sentiments of presumption, pride and inordinate self-love, if we want God to stay near us. If we are humble, God will be our strength, and then our prayers will rise like fragrant perfume to the throne of God, and will not depart without being completely heard. The humble religious is like a bouquet of sweet-smelling spikenard that among the flowers is the most humble and lowly, yet is also the most fragrant. Oh, daughters, spread about you this perfume of humility. Study deeply this heavenly virtue until you have perfect possession of it to be able, on the other side of life, to repeat with the Spouse of the Canticles, *Nardus meo dedit odorem suavitatis* [Sg. 1:12; my nard gives forth its fragrance.] Jesus, taking pleasure in this sweet perfume, will enclose you in an embrace of eternal bliss.

The good Conventual Franciscan Father who is on board with us, comes every day to see how we are and to remind us of the saint of the day. He helps Sister Alessandrina in this way. When

she was ill for two days, thinking that she was very sick, she did not note in her journal the date of the month or the day of the week, and we ran the risk of never knowing the correct date. I have never seen a captain as good as this one, even though we have been fortunate on all our trips. He is like the father of a family, continually making rounds to see that everything is in order and everyone is well provided for. When he sees someone not feeling well or one who cannot eat certain foods, he provides for their needs. He has been especially attentive to us; those who serve us are prompt to serve us generously in every need.

Now that the sisters are well, they have decided to have recourse to the souls in purgatory before the weather changes. Those blessed souls can no longer do anything for themselves, but we can do a great deal for them. Let us have compassion on them. May they be the principal object of our prayers because the abbreviation and alleviation of their immense suffering depends on our charity and our prayers. It can be said that the golden keys of that place of atonement have been consigned to us. See, those souls have perfect love for their heavenly Spouse. They desire, sigh and yearn for Him, but need a helping hand to pay their debts in full. Those pure doves want to fly to their center, the bosom of God. Woe betide them if there are no compassionate souls to shatter their chains of fire!

Come, daughters, let a heavenly dew descend upon those souls to relieve and calm that indescribable fire. Yes, your prayers will be that dew, that mystic rain which will extinguish those consuming flames lit by divine justice. Fulfill the just desires of those souls. It will be to your great advantage to offer your communions, indulgences, masses and all your good works for the souls in purgatory. This, you see, is a work of perfect charity, giving the highest glory to God and bringing great joy to the three Churches, Militant, Suffering and Triumphant. With your prayers and indulgences, you introduce into the realm of heaven many illustrious spouses of Jesus. Do not fear that you will lose anything by offering your prayers and good works for the poor souls. Rather, be assured that this generosity will gain rich graces for you on earth and sublime glories in heaven. Be assured that the intrinsic merit of your prayers for the suffering are all of an inalienable nature and remain with you always. They do not receive grace and gain merit, having left this life. Only the atoning part goes to the holy souls.

By giving up this portion of our work to the holy souls, which many do by means of the heroic act, we do nothing less than convert all this into merit. In God's estimation, one degree of merit and grace is worth more than all the works of atonement we may apply to the holy souls. Do not deny your heart, your prayers and good works to the poor souls, or you will lose something. Regarding those souls be very generous. Be assured that the one who is charitable will receive charity; whoever shows mercy will receive mercy. The souls thus liberated by the heroic act will become for us so many advocates and protectors, who will pray and intercede for us to obtain all we need, even the calm sea we have now. But what is more important, they will interest themselves in our eternal well-being.

September 21. The ocean continues to be peaceful and quiet, as smooth as a board. We are making good time. The passengers are very happy and frequently come to thank us, attributing such a pleasant voyage to our prayers. The captain says that each of us brings a good day; thus, since we are fifteen, and the *Pirkla* takes only eleven days from Genoa to New York, we hope the trip ends well with a surplus of four days.

The sisters are now all well, accustomed to the life at sea. As for me, I always feel better here than on land, so that the men told me that I am like a sea wolf. This is what they call certain Genoese captains who overcame enormous difficulties and dangers not only fearlessly, but unruffled. This morning, however, for a change, I got up with a cold in my stomach that soon compelled me to pay tribute to the sea. Perhaps it was because the fish demanded it, and really they had been asking me for it since yesterday. Everyone was surprised that I should do this at the end of the trip, when all have become used to the sea. Our good Jesus is master and does what He wills. Our duty is to praise Him always and thank Him for everything, because all He does or permits is good.

Since yesterday, we have entered in the Gulf Stream where, they say, the water is always very rough. Instead, we are enjoying a surprising calm, at which all marvel. Certainly, we have reason to praise and thank Jesus, who arranges all things for us with great sweetness. Let us love, let us love God, because sky, earth and sea constantly repeat, "love God." The immense ocean, which surrounds us on every side with its varied rines and marvelous gems, clearly reveals to us the ineffable care our beloved Creator has for us as He surrounds us on every side with His graces and blessings. Oh daughters, here we now gaze at the sea and it speaks to us. You gaze at the earth with its inexhaustible fertility, the spacious firmament smudded with stars. Contemplating the universe attentively, see how the attributes of God shine in it: His power, wisdom and goodness. Full of holy wonder, you exclaim: "How good and admirable is the Lord in all his works!" [Ps. 104:24]

Since today all the sisters are well, I led them on deck, where we found a truly marvelous spot in the middle of a large space. Everywhere the horizon was limitless, and there, all alone, we did a little spiritual reading on humility. Then we read about charity, the sublime virtue that enables us to experience an anticipated paradise. Oh yes, souls united in charity rest peacefully in God and await with certainty many great graces from the goodness of God. Souls united in charity are magnanimous and generous because they are as borne as by God. They fly always higher in spirit, and the soul reaches to heaven, to rest at the feet of God's throne. God, taking pleasure in them, showers upon them the most select graces.

Ah, daughters, be charitable. Love one another in the holy love of the adorable Heart of Jesus. Sacrifice yourselves willingly for your sisters. Be always gentle with them, never harsh, rude or resentful, but calm, meek and sweet. Vie with one another in spreading the oil of goodness and the balsam of healing. Know how to use the precious gem of the charity of the Heart of our Jesus to alleviate pain, anoint wounds, heal injuries, console the troubled and strengthen the weak. Love

the good in your sisters; envy no one and sympathize with them in their misery. What a beautiful sight, oh daughters, to see so many different nationalities and languages, united in one religious family, joined together in a bond stronger than family ties, the gentle bond of the sweet, sublime charity of the Heart of Jesus.

The farther each day I get from you, the more my heart is united with you. Not a moment passes that I do not think of you and unite myself with you in all you do. Do the same and follow me in holy charity. Help me with your prayers and fine, generous sacrifices. When you want to console me a little, let each of you withdraw within the cell of your heart, and in this mystic sanctuary, examine yourselves to see if you have grown in the spirit of gentle, giving charity, because that's what I desire most of you. Love each other with holy love within the adorable Heart of Jesus, like the saints in heaven. God will think of the rest. Learn charity; love each other in charity. Let charity take possession of you so that you may gloriously repeat, *Dotavit me Deus dote bona* (God has given me a goodly heritage.)

September 22. Last evening the ship's personnel made extensive preparations to defend itself from the billows since tonight we would pass near the banks of Newfoundland, still in the Gulf Stream. But such precautions were unnecessary. The Holy Virgin covers us with her mantle, the souls in purgatory intercede for us. So all ended in a storm that bestowed much rainfall on us almost all night. This was most helpful in quieting the turbulence of the ocean.

See, then, oh daughters, even salt water, when fresh water enters it, becomes calm. In their mute language, the elements teach us how to act toward those who are angry with us or want to harm us. Let us set our sights a bit higher, never fixing our gaze on the creature. Let us try to see, instead, the disposition of the Most High, never criticizing or complaining about the person who hurts us. Let us pity and excuse the person, as David did when he felt gravely abused. He did not allow any retaliation but said: "Let him say what he wants, because it is God who allows this against me and it is less than I deserve." This is how a soul conformed to the Heart of God acts. May such fine, great virtue be ours! Let us ask for it with great urgency. May it enter in us, unite itself to our bones, our marrow! Then holiness will become easy.

Do not criticize, do not complain. If sometimes you get the itch to wag your tongue, wag it against yourself. Better still, practice the lesson taught by our lovable saint, Francis de Sales: keeping silent about others, speak neither good nor ill about yourselves.

This morning we gathered in that spot that I described yesterday, all by ourselves, to offer our morning prayers and meditate. While we were in contemplation it seemed that from the sky full of graceful clouds, there appeared randomly a small view of Mary's mantle, in stripes of sky of such a marvelous shade of blue that seemed an enchantment. Now and then, to some sisters it seemed that Mary, the dear, most perfect image of Jesus, was looking down on us.

As a small cloud, radiant in the sun becomes beautiful and luminous so that the copy is indistinguishable from the original, so Mary appears to us in her divine beauty. She seems to be totally identified with Jesus. Meditating on the Transfiguration of Jesus, we seemed to see Mary in him, beautiful and very brilliant, on this day sacred to her, inviting us to become also transfigured in Jesus through her intercession. But how do we gain Mary's intercession? Do you know how? By imitating her. Write Mary's life in your souls: her sentiments, habits, immaculate purity, her steps, words, actions, manners and composure. Entrust Jesus to copy Mary in you with the fire of His Heart, to make you a living image of His Immaculate Mother.

Mary, oh daughters, is the mysterious book of your predestination to glory. She is most lovable; love her. She is sublime and glorious; praise her. She is good and merciful; pray to her. She is your mother, teacher and foundress; obey her and always carry out her orders and her will. Yes, Mary speaks, and speaks clearly to you as an open book. Always read this golden book because you will always find new doctrines, new riches and new graces. Entrust to Mary all your affection that it may never be directed toward creatures but fly intact, like the purest angels, to the Heart of Jesus. Offer yourselves often to Mary. Pray, work and suffer with her, always serene. Eat, recreate and rest with her. Always walk under her loving gaze and may you never sadden her in the least.

September 23. Yesterday, the captain wanted to surprise us again, and we were guided on a tour of the ship. I wish I knew the science of navigation well so that I could explain well the structure of this beautiful steamer that transports thousands of persons from the old to the new continent. I would like to describe the engine, the equivalent of fifteen thousand horses, with all its complicated and marvelous apparatus with the strength to move this massive structure. The genius of man! Yet it is only a shadow of one ray of God's wisdom, which He deigns to communicate to man. I wish that I could explain the rudder to you and the reason for its huge gears, the propeller and its motion and why it makes a loud noise. When it rotates out of the water, it causes us to bounce irrespective of person or our place in our chairs, bed or at table. I would like to explain to you the various navigation instruments that mark the latitude, the miles traveled, the ocean depth and its temperature, etc. I want to explain the compass to you but how can I, oh my good daughters, when I myself understand nothing?

If you want clear information, go to Sister Francesca. She will explain all the physical and mechanical phenomena, either from her own knowledge or by consulting certain ancient and new volumes of reference works. In my mind's eye, I seem to see her reading one now as she is in some fashion stretched out on her bed. Perhaps among the museum collection in her drawer, she may find some instrument to explain these phenomena to you. Even the kitchen maid's kettle, in the hands of Sister Francesca, can show you how the power of steam is so easily able to move this small city of the *Frida* across the waves of the mighty Atlantic. I called upon Sister Saveno

who could well describe this for me. However, she, too, like the others, says that whoever wants to know about the sea should come and see for themselves. We need to take pity on this poor little one; this is her first ocean voyage. Sister Ignazia started out bravely the first day with a lion's courage to write four lines. She thought she would send you in the end one of those narratives which would leave all of you open-mouthed. But the account did not grow beyond the sixth line.

Since the weather was so splendid this morning, our captain asked Father Marzetti if he wanted to celebrate Mass to comfort us but Father does not have a Mass kit and we have no altar bread. It was, therefore, impossible to experience the joy of having a Mass on the high seas. Nevertheless, we put together another service. Taking advantage of the captain's exquisite kindness, we gathered everyone in a suitable space and said the rosary. We alternated the decades between us and the priest, as we do in our houses every Saturday when we recite the solemn rosary for the benefactors of our missions among the infidels and for those inscribed in the bulletin blessed by His Holiness Leo XIII. We then sang the litany and it was a truly fine choir. Its echo, resounding in that vast space, seemed to invite a gentle shower of holy, unusual sentiments in the souls of the thousand persons around us. After the antiphon and prayer, Father improvised an inspiring sermon on the Sunday gospel. He was able to do this with a zeal and ardor that touched hearts. In fact, many shed tears. We then sang a hymn to Our Lady, said a few more prayers and closed with a hymn to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Partly because of Father's Franciscan robes, which made him seem Saint Anthony reborn, and partly because of the solemnity we tried to give this pious practice, our congregation felt as though they were in church at a festive celebration, even though no cross was raised. After the blessing from Father's hand, various people turned to us to ask why we had not sung the *Tantum Ergo*. We satisfied our Catholic obligation in this fashion and the joy that descended to comfort their souls was reflected on all their faces.

Now we are sorry that this trip is ending. These people, who have become such good fellow passengers, have shown confidence in us as in their mothers, and we were able to do a little good among them. Oh, if we could only gather them together again to meditate on the eternal truths! If we could talk to them about the blessed bliss of heaven! If they are faithful in uniting themselves to God through prayer, He will enlighten them and save them through the sacraments. It could help them well understand that paradise is the joyful dwelling place of the Lord who fills, consoles and delights the blessed with His divine beauty and love. We would tell them that heaven is the place of eternal, imperturbable peace, of joy and every consolation.

Heaven is the reward God has solemnly promised to all good Christians faithful to Christ's laws. Oh, paradise! Paradise! No one can conceive nor express the fullness beyond measure of those delights that God has prepared for those who love and serve Him with the required interior and exterior worship. With good reason the Prophet went about exclaiming, "Rejoice, leap for joy,

oh all you who love the Lord, drink large draughts from this river of peace." [Is. 60.1] Be intoxicated with joy, glory and happiness because the Lord has said, "I will cause torrents of glory to flow on the heavenly Jerusalem to fill you abundantly with the purest joys and consolations." [Rev. 22.1]

On that blessed, eternal day, we shall be always as if ecstatic with love, gratitude and immense jubilation, contemplating the divine face just as He is. We shall be enraptured by His infinite beauty, enlightened by His light, full of His peace, immersed in the torrent of His divine consolations. To see God, to contemplate the divine beauty, will be the same as loving Him with the purest, most perfect love. This love will immeasurably increase the contentment, exultation, joy and festive spirit of our souls. Speak, daughters, speak often of heaven! Try to make all you approach fall in love with the virtues needed to reach that blessed homeland. If you know how to open the Gates of Paradise to souls, first by the example of irreproachable religious conduct, and then by your zeal, be certain that you will find them also opened for you.

September 24. I wanted to return to heaven, but between one thing and another, we have arrived in the New York harbor. The doctor and the customs officers have already boarded. We have been summoned to give our name and destination to a representative of the city of New York. Slowly, slowly, no longer by its own power, but towed by three fine tugboats, the *Fidda* is approaching Hoboken, where we shall disembark to be welcomed with great joy by our American sisters. A kind customs officer came promptly to see our luggage. Without requiring us to open them, he stamped them all, very happy to help us join our community as soon as possible, and asked us to say a prayer for him.

I have found all in order here with much to console me. But I shall not now go into the particulars because the many visits of our good friends prevent me. If I am unable to do so before, I shall write you all the news when I again resume my voyage on the Atlantic to go south. In the meantime, I urge you never to cease praying and praying much for my intentions, that Jesus bless all our plans for the increase of good in souls, for His greater glory. I shall work with alacrity, and you, by your prayers, hold up my arms, like the Israelites did for Moses. I ask each of you, add a worthy sacrifice to your prayers, especially that of overcoming yourselves. Be always vigilant in this, to be able to offer a perfect holocaust to the adorable Heart of Jesus, who loves us and favors us so much, to the extent of winning for us such a beautiful, precious vocation.

May Jesus bless you and enclose you in His Sacred Heart.

Your affectionate mother in the Sacred Heart of Jesus,
M. Francesca Saverio Cabrini

New York, September 14, 1894



VII

FROM NEW ORLEANS TO PANAMA, May to June 1895

M

y dearest daughters,

Peace be with you so that you may always be enclosed in the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

May 14. I do not fail to keep my promise of dedicating all my traveling time to you, describing all my small adventures and impressions. Even though the steamer is not yet at sea, but is gliding down the Mississippi, I have already put on wings, and fly to you, wafted by the gentle breeze surrounding me, experiencing, at least in spirit, the joyful consolation of visiting you.

You are the elect portion of Christ's flock, destined to console his Divine Heart and procure for Him all the glory you possibly can, either by your works or by your prayers, according to obedience. As long as you are faithful to your sublime vocation, you will at the same time be the elect portion of my heart. I travel, sweat and grow weary, bear my illnesses, encounter thousands of difficulties. But all this is nothing, so great is the comfort I receive when you show that you are true daughters of our Institute, faithful in observance of the rules and outstanding in generosity.

At four-thirty this morning, the alarm was already calling us out of bed to finish the last, small preparations for departure. At five-thirty our chaplain went up to the altar to celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, to give us the dearest pledge we could take with us: the one who is, at the same time, Creator and Ruler of the immensity we cross. Escorted by our loving Jesus, Mother Gabriella and I went forth serenely and cheerfully, accompanied by our beloved sisters and our lawyer, Mr. Marinoni, who insisted at all costs on taking us on board in his own carriage. We departed in spite of a raging storm and a downpour that seemed to inundate the land. The city streets seemed like rivers and the horses went forward with difficulty. Admirably, with generosity and courage our able lawyer strove to overcome these difficulties, mindful that the ship waited for no one. It would depart at the scheduled hour of eight o'clock, plunging into the waves of the Mississippi which, because of its vast riverbed, are not unlike ocean waves. However, Mr. Fallon, the head of the maritime line on which we are traveling, thought it would be impossible for us to cross the city on time in that terrible storm. For this reason, in an unusual move, he delayed his arrival an hour and a half. He well knew that the steamer could not leave until he gave the signal on his arrival. But, we, who did not expect such kindness in our regard, were already on board at seven-thirty.

Oh, what an excellent gentleman Mr. Fallon is, so generous and good! Oh, daughters, we must never forget him in our prayers. Beg the Sacred Heart of Jesus to bless him and his family for his generosity. As soon as he heard of my arrival in New Orleans and my intention to cross the Gulf of Mexico to visit our home in Panama, he sent word that he would be happy to offer

passage to us on his steamers going to Port Limón, Costa Rica, only sixteen hours distant from Colón. As you may well imagine, I quickly accepted the generous offer, by which we saved one hundred dollars. Not happy with this, Mr. Fallon had the best cabins assigned to us and warmly recommended us to the captain and purser, asking them to give us the best possible service. We have already experienced abundant proof of this since we seem like the queens of the ship. At table, we are assigned the first places and served the choicest morsels; on deck, the most comfortable place. The servants are prompt and smiling at our every bidding.

May 25. Man proposes and God disposes. This time I have reckoned without the Host, as did some of the sisters who had prepared for me a quantity of well-sharpened pencils and lined paper, enough to write a fine volume. Vain hopes! I have never suffered at sea, but rather, it has become my favorite form of relaxation. Today I am having quite a different experience. Since last evening, I began to feel a cold in my stomach foreboding that all was not well. But I refused to believe it. In fact, at supper, I tried to do honor to the captain's exquisite concern, who took pleasure in seeing that I appreciated what was served. I tried to be strong, but a secret desire made me wish that the meal would end quickly, so I would not lose face so soon, since only an hour earlier I had asserted that I never suffer from seasickness at all.

Fortunately, I made it to the end of the meal. Immediately afterward, there began a severe upsetting of my stomach and a diminishment of strength so that I had to join M. Gabriella as her faithful companion and enjoy the same privileges of complete bed rest and not moving, except to pay the tribute that the fish demanded at all costs. Now as I write, it is evening and I have rested a while on the captain's deck where the movement can barely be felt. My stomach feels much better and I hope to be able to resume writing tomorrow. However, I shall not promise, lest I fail on my word.

Together let us do God's holy will, fully abandoned to His loving care. Let us fear nothing, knowing we are enclosed in His sacred embrace so long as, mistrusting ourselves, we renew our promise to be all His. How good the Sacred Heart of Jesus is to us! What does He ask in return for so much love? Nothing else than perfect abandonment in Him and a continuous effort to conform our lives to His crucified life, taking Him as our model in every situation and action and uniting all our steps to His. Our goal is to walk only by the way of His holy love, as is proper to us who are uniquely consecrated to His divine service. Blessed are we if we are thus constantly all His, forever, the beloved of our soul, letting Him possess all our heart, love, affections, inclinations and tenderness! Know then, oh daughters, that the Heart of Jesus wants us to be wholly His. He does not want a portion; He does not love divisions. All or nothing! Woe, if we still harbor anxious affections for creatures or ourselves. Everything, everything without exception must belong to the Heart of Jesus.

May 26. A sweet, deep sleep in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, lasting all night, wonderfully restored my health. Today I again seem to have mastery over the immense elements, beneath and around us. The sun shines in all its splendor and the heat of its rays is tempered by the purest air, which surrounds us in a breeze and creates for us a delightful resting place under the awning that the captain reserved for us in the best place on deck. The sky is serene, ruffled only by some of the whitest small clouds. From time to time the clouds change into broad, luminous rays, as if to remind us that we are in the novena of Pentecost and that our good Jesus is also calling us, as He did His apostles, to withdraw from the tumult of the world. In fact, He has removed us from the world and placed us in the immensity of the ocean, where the clamor of people does not reach us. We can pray more freely for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Our beloved Jesus promised us His Holy Spirit. Yet, we know that the divine promises are fulfilled through prayer and the sublime exercise of charity and union.

This excellent virtue of prayer, while it signifies the union and charity we necessarily must have among ourselves, who are united by the same bond of religion, binding us into a true family, signifies still another unity each one must have within herself. As our Lord said, prayer will be heard when two agree in it, that is the exterior self in agreement with the interior self, the body and soul integrated. This is accomplished by the true mortification and submission of the body to the soul. Both must be in accord with a third, called spirit, so that in prayer the body with its feelings and the soul with its imagination, memory, intellect and will are gathered and united together. Christ will then be in the midst of these united in His name to help them to pray effectively. But whoever is divided, that is, with the body in the prayer position, the soul disordered, and the spirit wandering about in a thousand vain, useless and anxious thoughts, can never claim to have truly prayed. The spirit of God will distance itself rather than draw near to such a soul. The poor little one, deprived of help from above, will gradually languish, finally losing even the will to set herself to pray once more.

Do we need the novena to the Holy Spirit? If the Blessed Virgin, the Apostles, and other disciples made it by order of Jesus Himself, imagine how necessary it is for us to make it if we also yearn for it to renew in us that same fervent and generous spirit that animated the first Christians, that spirit which ought to render us true disciples of Christ and Missionaries of His Divine Heart. Oh, if the devotion to the Holy Spirit were to be rekindled in the world, we would see the face of the earth renewed and faith and love triumph everywhere! *Emitte spiritum tuum et creabuntur Et renouabis faciem terrae* [Ps. 104:30; send forth Your Spirit and they are created, and You renew the face of the earth.] If you long, oh daughters, to correct your faults, if you feel lukewarm within, if it seems that you are unable to succeed in doing good, and yet still desire to give yourself over to a fervent life, try to be devoted to the Holy Spirit. Often invoke the Spirit wholeheartedly, arouse in yourself strong desires to receive the Spirit and say frequently: *Cor mundum*

crea in me, Deus, et spiritum rectum unice in visceribus meis. Redde mihi laetitiam salutis tui, et spiritu principali confirma me [Ps. 51:12,14; a clean heart create for me, Oh God, and a steadfast spirit renew in me. Give me back the joy of Your salvation and a willing spirit sustain in me.]

If we invoke the Spirit with a humble and trusting heart full of lofty desires, He will descend to penetrate the depth of our hearts with His blessed light and burning fire. He will purify, strengthen, enlighten and inflame our hearts with the fire of holy, divine love. Yes, as soon as we begin to desire Him, He will begin to favor us. Holy, pious desires are like harbingers who welcome God in the soul. As soon as we, by the grace of God, conceive this holy desire, the Holy Spirit, as Saint Paul says, will pray in us and for us with unspeakable groaning. Let us beg the Holy Spirit to fill us with ardent desires to prepare us to receive Him well.

You, oh daughters, know by experience what value our desires have with the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Many, great distinctive graces have been granted you by Almighty God from the first moment you wished, through a heaven-sent inspiration, to consecrate yourself wholly to His divine service. You, yourselves, surrounded and overcome, if I may say so, by the sweet burden of the innumerable graces you received from him, went about exclaiming, "Why to me so many graces and this foretaste of heaven?"

Our loving Lord was wounded in the depths of His Divine Heart by your burning desire to be unreservedly His, to make Him known and loved by all, even at the cost of shedding your blood and losing your life. He came to place before your eyes, like a victorious army in admirable sequence, the immense array of special benefits and distinctive graces, He lovingly lavished on you. You were thus always ever more captivated by the strongest bonds of His ardent love for you. And that Lord who destined you all for Himself, following your sublime desire, what loving care has He not continually taken of you? Has He not granted you many lights to your mind, many insights regarding your beloved and many holy affections of the heart?

He surrounded you on every side with His holy fear, removed and uprooted from your heart love of earthly things and placed within it His holy, divine love. He freed you often from the snares of the infernal dragon, strengthened you when you wavered, and raised you up again, restoring you to your former state of peace. How comforting, oh daughters, is the memory of the benefits of the Lord! The holy prophet David often mentions in his psalms the benefits of God which stir up profound gratitude in his heart, created according to the heart of God. Oh, yes, every distinct grace you have received is a distinctive act of Jesus' love for you. Neither the multiplicity nor the frequency of divine graces diminish their value; rather the value is increased and rendered more precious.

Blessed are you, oh daughters, by acknowledging God's gift, you render yourself more fit and worthy to receive greater ones. Know that gratitude for God's benefits is the wealth of souls, while conversely, ingratitude and ignoring the gifts dries up for us the source of divine grace. Oh

daughters, render often your tribute of appreciation for what your beloved Jesus does for you. Review your past life frequently and recall both the general and special graces you have been given. If you know how to meditate on them well, you will see that a rushing torrent of saving graces has flooded over you and delighted you in the various stages of your life, and during the various circumstances you endured. Oh, with what loving care has Jesus watched over your days! How admirably He has guided you on the path to eternal salvation! Yes, admit it! God has worked many wonders for you because of His great love. But know that all you have received until now is but a pale token of His constant love. Yes, He loves you even more and if you are faithful to Him in your loving service, He will work new prodigies in you. Be faithful, be faithful, oh daughters, in the path you have chosen and you will understand the prodigies of divine love. You will learn the language of the saints who, when looking at the sky, the earth, the vast, starry firmament, heard them all repeat that precious refrain, "Love God and serve him with all faithfulness!" Oh, how great and admirable is God in all His works. Oh, how we must love Him, dear daughters!

But while I have been talking with you, the steamer, carried by a favorable wind, moving swiftly as though flying through the waves, has covered much distance. We have reached the latitude of the great island of Cuba without being able to see it, since the Phillips Line, on which we are traveling, takes the most direct route from New Orleans to Port Limón. This is good, because that country at this time is experiencing a civil war involving revolutionary insurgents. Perhaps, suspecting us, they would fire their cannons, as they have already done to an American torpedo boat that seemed suspect to them. We are on the high seas, surrounded only by the immensity of the waters and a vast horizon. The waves are mild and tranquil. Like an obedient soul, the waves respect the wish of their Creator who has enjoined them to let us have a peaceful trip.

On the first day, I told you that the waves of the Mississippi were not unlike those of the ocean. Now I must say that those of the ocean seem like those of the Mississippi, they are so calm and peaceful. The ship is very long and narrow, so that it moves well and without swaying, except for a little rocking when the wind is strong. Other than this, we can barely feel the movement. Yesterday, when there was some movement, I was sprayed in the face a little by the foaming waves. I paid no attention, well aware that ocean bathing is healthful and that many go to great expense to swim in the ocean. However, during the night I felt all the skin on my face stretch and could not imagine what it could be. This morning I arose with my face so swollen and scarlet that I look like a drunk. What a surprise! I certainly did not expect it. If I did not feel so well, I would think that I had a good case of erysipelas and would retreat to my cabin to avoid the open air. I have never had erysipelas. I hope that this is no more than a trick of the sea, just for a change. I shall not refrain from staying on the deck to enjoy the pure air, my beloved God's immense gift, comforting me physically and spiritually.

May 27. Today dawned more splendidly than ever. As if respecting our weakness, the sea is very peaceful and the ship sails rapidly, without any movement that may bother us. Regardless of this, M. Gabriella does not abandon her bed, because only when stretched out on it is she free from seasickness. As soon as she feels her stomach settled, she comes to keep me company, always smiling and calm. We have the captain's servant who makes sure we lack nothing and even tried several times to find a new remedy to relieve the discomforts of seasickness. Would you like to know something about me? Oh, if you could only see me! My face is enough to frighten anyone. When I awoke, it was so swollen that my eyes were sunken and smaller, my color scarlet red, like yesterday. We have neither doctor nor nurse on board; no one who understands illness. We do not even have a veterinarian such as Saint Francis Xavier once met. Patience! I don't know what it could be but, at least, I have no fever and do not feel so sick. Neither am I afraid, so I make the best of it and stay on deck to admire the beautiful white flying fish playing on the waves, and enjoy myself writing to you before my eyes are swollen shut.

Why would you want me to be afraid while I am traveling under the influence of the Holy Spirit? We are traveling during the Spirit's novena, in the company of the apostles, under the immediate direction of the Most Holy Virgin, our tender mother. Then, too, do I not have the blessing of the Holy Father, which accompanies, strengthens and comforts me? As though the blessing this Holy, Venerable Pontiff gave me before my departure with such fatherly tenderness was not enough, he sent it to me again by means of the illustrious and excellent Msgr. Radini Tedeschi, always encouraging me on my journey and on the mission to which I must attend, a mission which the Sacred Heart of Jesus develops and broadens each day for His glory. As you see, I race on land and sail on the seas with the speed allowed by the progress of science, which daily develops faster steamships. But, believe it, they are flights made by heavy bodies, too limited and short, compared to the speed with which the Sacred Heart of Jesus works in the vineyard entrusted to us.

Oh, how fruitful is the blessing of the Pope! I wish that all would understand this and place their trust in him. Who is the Pope? He is the representative of God, the authority and majesty of God made visible among men. The Pope is the instrument of the Holy Spirit, the faithful depository of the treasures and secrets of God. He has the keys of knowledge for teaching the Christian people and the keys of the supreme power to bind or to loose. The voice of the Pope is the voice of God; his word is the word of God. The Pope is the living ark of the New Covenant in which are found the divine law, the manna of heavenly doctrine, and the precious gold vase containing the purity of the Catholic faith.

The Pope is the light of the world, the guide of the peoples, the ark of salvation for all. In the name of Jesus Christ, he has the power to bring salvation and new life to a sick and erring society in the event it wants to recover and be healed by him. The work has begun in the land of the angels, England, and has spread throughout the Americas where the greater part of Protestants

revere, respect and venerate the Pope. How often one does not dare to mention the Holy Father among Catholics for fear of hearing some contemptuous remarks directed to his august person. Today that is not so among the Protestants. I have experienced this, since the best news I could give to the twelve physicians of our Italian Hospital in New York was that the Holy Father sent his blessing and words of encouragement. Also, the best gifts I have been able to give Protestants were religious articles blessed by the Pope. It seems that there is indeed a new era of peace on the horizon, during which many will bow before the Cross and the gospel of Jesus Christ, and run speedily in the observance of the divine precepts.

Believe it, daughters, many Protestants are good and they have nearly all our same practices, which they observe faithfully. They lack only submission to the Pope and loyalty to this ark of salvation. It seems that the hour has now arrived. Pray, pray much that all these good brothers may heed well and deeply understand the harmony and heavenly relationship between Jesus Christ and the Pope, so that they will all be united to him and join us in forming one family, one fold, under the same universal shepherd, to whom our destinies are bound by the express will of Jesus Christ. Pray with all your hearts. As true Missionaries, offer yourselves victims to the Sacred Heart of Jesus to obtain such a great grace, because while the harvest is increasing, the enemy does not cease to sow weeds.

If the people seem well disposed to unite themselves to the true flock of Christ, many pastors who are not pastors but mercenaries have not the same mind, such as bishops of the Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians, Anglicans, Evangelicals, Lutherans, Calvinists, Baptists and the leaders of various sects too numerous to name. They do not feel themselves called to be Catholics and be thus united to the one true Church in which alone is salvation. The greater part of them, not legitimately consecrated, could be united to the Catholic Church only as simple faithful, thus losing the positions that have enriched them. Imagine, then, how they do their utmost among souls to keep them far from uniting with Catholicism, so they will not lose their followers and their income. It is necessary to pray much that the Holy Spirit enlighten each soul in particular so that all, before the brilliant light of this divine sun, know and confess the one true faith, the supreme truth. In union with the Pope, may they all be healed in their ideas and aspirations and healed of their tendencies and desires.

Pray, pray untiringly. The salvation of these people is not in physical force or vain learning that befores and dries up the mind, nor in armies' arms, human industry, sterile and diplomatic congresses; finally not in anything worldly or terrestrial. The grace of their salvation must come only from the adorable Heart of Jesus, from this loving heart of the Supreme Shepherd, who gathered together the apostles and has promised grace and blessings to all their successors who remain faithfully united to the cornerstone, the Pope.

Pray, oh daughters, pray much for our sisters in the various missions of the United States, that Jesus will assist and enlighten them and make their work fruitful for the conversion of many souls.

Yes, pray with great faith during the hours of adoration, because if our labors and words are not made fruitful by Jesus, we shall never be able to do any good. The conversion of sinners and sanctification of souls does not depend on cold, sterile human eloquence, on elegant, flowery style and research study, but on the generative grace of Jesus Christ. Yes, Jesus alone is the life of our holy discourse and advice. He enlightens minds, moves affections, sows virtue and inspires holy and perfect works. It is Jesus, concealed in the voice of the zealous and faithful teacher, who works prodigies in souls, renews miracles, does wonders. Oh, with what wisdom does Jesus penetrate the sanctuary of human hearts! While He respects everyone's liberty, He then enlightens with His truth and with His divine light, deeply moves and sweetly invites all to the heavenly reward.

Yes, it is Jesus, oh daughters, our beloved Jesus, who conquered hell and sin by His death, and the heavenly Father gave Him all the nations as His inheritance. How consoling is the thought that we, and all those whom we wish to convert, are part of the kingdom of Jesus, the elect portion, the precious inheritance of Jesus! How Jesus rejoices when a sinner is converted, what joy His divine heart experiences when He recovers His lost lamb! What glory when we are able to lead a lost soul back to His loving arms! Shall we not multiply these joys for the loving Heart of Jesus by procuring, either by prayer or works, new souls and hearts to love Him much? Oh, let us imitate the charity of the adorable Heart of Jesus for the salvation of souls. Let us become all to all to gain all for Jesus, as He does continually. If we do this, oh daughters, what a rich harvest of merits and virtues, since what we do for souls Jesus considers as done for Himself. He notes in the book of life all the labors and crosses we endure for the salvation and sanctification of souls. He numbers the days, hours and minutes we employ in this exercise, which will all be paid at great interest by the sovereign goodness of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Even a single spoken word of charity will be amply repaid, because anything done for Jesus and with Jesus is always great.

September 28. Yesterday at noon my eyes were almost shut from the swelling, so I stopped my writing to you. Today the swelling has greatly diminished and white scaly blotches begin to appear on my forehead, making me look like a leper. How strange and puzzling! No one can tell me what it can be. But it is so consoling to be abandoned in the adorable Sacred Heart of Jesus, while we are far from our dear sisters, between heaven and earth, where creaturely comfort cannot reach us. But there is an abundance of comfort from Jesus for his spouses. Tomorrow morning we shall arrive at Port Limón, where the remedy for my illness will be quickly found by the good people to whom we have been recommended by our kind protector, Mr. L. G. Fallon. If we could then get to Panama to our own house, all Mother Gabriella's worries would end. She feels so sorry for me, not knowing what remedy to use to give me the relief she yearns for me.

Yesterday at three in the afternoon we passed Swan Island near Honduras, which means island of big wings. Some call it the big bird. It belongs to the United States and is inhabited only

by fifty men, who spend most of the year fishing. Last night we passed over some very dangerous shoals that seemed almost to capsize the ship, which several times seemed to bump against something. It was a very dark night, and fear made it darker. Despite all this, we stayed peacefully in our cabins, resting as best we could as the rocking continued. We could not be afraid, because the captain had informed us of what was likely to happen and had said that he would have to stop the steamer several times to measure the sea depth to be sure of the route he was sailing. He told us to fear nothing because he would watch throughout the night, and that the entire crew would be on the alert.

We had every reason to feel secure because the captain is one of those persons who inspires full confidence. He is highly esteemed and respected. He is Swedish; his surname is Welin, and he has sailed around the world, almost always as captain. Most of the staff are Swedish also. It grieves me not to be able to say a good religious word to these poor men, abandoned always at sea with no one to instruct them on how to take advantage of the few days that they are at port to satisfy their religious duties. I gave them medals which they all accepted as though they were rich treasures, even the Protestants. I told them that the medals were blessed by the Holy Father and they appreciated them even more, putting them away with great care so that the medals would help them during storms. These Swedes have many good qualities; they are sober, simple, cordial and intelligent. They have great respect and veneration for us religious. When they hear us sing the *Veni Creator* for the novena of Pentecost, the *Ave Maris Stella*, or other hymns to Mary, they stand at attention with special reverence and it seems as though a gentle ray from heaven penetrates their souls. Poor men! What a shame that we cannot develop this spirit!

This morning about nine, we passed near Cape Gracias a Dios where the coast of the Mosquito begins, almost touching it. Shortly after, we seemed to enter a new, light green sea. It was the Rio Grande current that, leaving its bed, rushes into the sea with such a force as to continue for some miles without mixing into the salt water. Sailing always along the coast, as we do now, tonight we shall pass Bluefields, tomorrow morning, San Juan del Norte, and, at about eleven, God willing, we shall arrive at Port Limón. I never thought of making such a trip, and assumed that from New Orleans we would proceed in a straight line to our destination. At dinner, the captain told me that the ship cannot go in a straight line because it would encounter many dangerous coral reefs. For my part, I am not sorry that it sails along all the coast. Better still, I wish it would stop for a few days in these towns of the Mosquito tribe, because I love these Indians very much since visiting them about three years ago, on my return from Nicaragua.

In order to visit the Mosquito that time, I made a much more eventful journey than this one. Passing through Lake Nicaragua and the San Juan River before entering the sea, I had to change boats nine times in twelve days. We never sailed at night for fear of going aground. At one point, ships could not navigate the Rio; we had to travel on a raft for four hours. To make matters worse,

rain began to pour down in torrents that we could not escape, having no way to shelter ourselves. In other small steamers on Rio San Juan, a large number of mice and other little animals made their nests. Since I place little trust in these little adventurers, it happened that some nights I was constrained to stay on my feet, barely leaning on some couch. Yet, Sister Mercedes Cepeda and I were very happy at all times and were able to find reasons for more joy in these small adventures.

We were richly repaid when we arrived at Bluefields and had to spend several days there, waiting for the ship from the Morgan Line to take us to the United States. There was no Catholic church there, not one priest to come even once a year to instruct those poor Indians of the Mosquito reservation. They are considered less than animals by the government, and the Church has not been able to get to them yet. Taking advantage of this stop, we walked up and down through the town and homesteads, smiling here, saying a good word there. Finally, these poor people overcame their shyness, and the awe and respect they had for the "black robes," as they called the priests and sisters, and they began to approach us. When I talked to them about our holy religion, they rejoiced and begged me to send some sisters and a priest to save them.

Poor creatures, they really touched me and I would have liked to start a house there immediately. But how could this be done without resources? If only I could persuade some rich people, to whom the Lord has given generously of the earth's treasures, to open their purses! I wish that I could help them to understand the abundant reward that awaits them if, moved to compassion by a well-informed heart, they would be generous in giving us the necessary means to help the poor creatures who unfortunately still lie in darkness. Thus they would place their generous gift in the bank of heaven, which will yield a hundredfold if not in this life, certainly in the next, to make them happy with eternal bliss in heaven, where God has prepared a profusion of immense, incomparable treasures for the merciful! *Beati misericordes quoniam ipsi misericordia consequenter* [Mt. 5:7; blest are they who show mercy, mercy shall be theirs.] Mercy, the sister of charity, covers a multitude of sins.

May 29. Yesterday, between one thing and another, we reached another part of the coast which held our admiration until evening, so that I cut off in the middle the narrative of my adventures so earnestly begun. Have patience with me if I do not continue now. The ship is making good time and we can already see the harbor, which appears to be coming to meet us. Before entering the harbor, we go by a tiny, beautiful island called Paseo. It is a resort where those from Port Limón go for recreation. The lighthouse that dominates the center looks from afar like a gigantic statue of a broad-chested man with a red jacket, a black head and a white hat. A few well-built houses are scattered here and there with various porches built in the shape of Chinese hats. They are set in the midst of the varied shades of greens of this country, and offer a splendid sight, rendering that resort more pleasant.

Here we are already at the harbor, and two small boats are approaching. In one is the port doctor with an uncle of the president of Costa Rica; in the other, the representative of the governor and other gentlemen. The former are coming to inspect the ship and to inspect goods and persons who are disembarking; the latter are coming to pass the time and exchange news. The doctor has looked me over from head to foot. Instead of shutting myself up in my cabin as it seemed prudent, I persevered in staying on deck in the bracing air, exposed to the frequent spraying of salt water. My leprosy, from yesterday to today, ended with a change in all my facial skin. The new skin is as delicate and smooth as silk, giving me a complexion and color I never had before. The doctor immediately said, "all right," meaning all is well.

When the other gentlemen were through talking to the captain, they came to greet us and offer their services while we had to wait here for the ship that would take us through Panama to Colón. Dr. DeCastro, the president's uncle, told us that, since we had to wait nearly seven days, we would be better off if we went to San José, the capital of Costa Rica for three good reasons: 1) the climate of Port Limón is not so healthy; 2) he has a sister there, well-born and pious, who would very much enjoy receiving us and being our hostess; 3) this way, we would save hotel expenses. I could not refuse such kindness, and we promised to go after a day of rest. The captain encouraged us to stay on board during the time the boat was in port. However, there was an enormous quantity of bananas ready to be loaded, so the next day the boat had to return to New Orleans. At Mr. Fallon's request, Mr. Huber, the representative for English affairs, arranged good accommodations for us in the Grand Hotel and went to get us a free ride to San José. This was indeed a big favor, because the cost would have been eight pesos each, or eighty lire. The president's uncle, Mr. DeCastro, had already given us a warm letter of introduction to his sister. We asked the owner of the hotel, who is Italian, to take care of our luggage and to have us awakened at four thirty because the train was leaving at six.

Everyone wished us a good journey when out of the blue, a representative of the governor arrived to announce that he had received orders from the government to be sure that we do not enter the republic. Their congress had passed a law forbidding entrance to Jesuits and sisters with the title of the Sacred Heart, suspected of being in league with the Jesuits. I laughed heartily at the unexpected announcement and asked to visit the governor immediately. His residence was very near to the hotel, and we went there. The governor received us with exquisite courtesy. He expressed regret at having to be the bearer of the communication and showed us how to have the injunction reversed for us. I said that I would not make such a move since I had no need to enter the republic. But one thing only caused me regret: to see a country that would boast of being so progressive have such retrogressive laws, contrary to the liberty about which much is spoken. In my case, they seemed to me to appear inhuman, because they forced me to stay in an unhealthy environment that could endanger my health and that of my companion, who was coming to these trop-

ic countries for the first time. The governor was very impressed. Yesterday evening this was everyone's topic of conversation, with heated shouts and discussions in their gatherings. Meanwhile, we went to bed at our regular hour, quiet and content, because we had the opportunity the next morning, the last Friday of Mary's month, to receive Communion.

What zealous citizen was responsible for this? A Freemason, upon seeing two sisters on board when the ship anchored, immediately telegraphed the minister of police to give strict orders that the two obscurantist reactionaries be forbidden to enter to harm the country. Today, everyone points a finger at the poor man as the one who treated two women in a most unseemly way. The level-headed ones are working to get the minister himself to send us a permit allowing us to go wherever we please in the republic so we will not leave with an unfavorable impression. I told them that by now it was useless, since we had to depart on the fourth to reach our destination.

Meanwhile, we have been able to attend to all our devotions, not excluding the closing of the month of May, in the small church here in town. It is kept with sufficient dignity by the pastor, who belongs to the Congregation of the Mission (founded by Saint Vincent de Paul). Those who frequent the church are Negro converts, immigrants from Jamaica. Costa Ricans rarely go to church; some never go. This is a practice from the last century, not good for them who have progressed so much in this century, who as they say, continue *adelantándose cada día*, daily making progress. What a disgrace! Poor people! They are far away now from their former good spirit, that distinctive spirit of their Spanish forebears. And all for what reason, poor things? Because the Masonic influence daily penetrates these countries and dominates them terribly. The devil has comfortably erected his throne here. Under cover of thick darkness, he casts about that net seen by Saint Anthony. With it, he effortlessly captures them like so many fish. The wicked word, progress, is like a siren that bewitches them. Making them drowsy with a secret poison, it taints them and leads them with a sickness of the soul to true regression.

May 31. The closing of the Marian month was beautiful. In the morning, after Mass, they had a procession in church with the singing of the litany. At three in the afternoon, after some hymns and an inspiring and fervent discourse by the pastor, the Madonna was crowned by a little girl dressed in white and wearing flower garlands. After this, the mothers presented all their children at the altar for the priest's blessing; then each child presented a flower to Mary. It was lovely to see those women dressed splendidly in their best! Some dresses were of various bright colors, very short-waisted with a long skirt and a train a meter and a half in length. They wore small colored shawls about their necks and on their heads turbans, white or in a contrasting color. Their black faces stood out like ebony. Some had tattoos, others did not. All the children were dressed in dainty dresses either colored or all white, accentuating even more the blackness of their faces and hands. But their souls were truly white in their innocence and simplicity. Our Lady was pleased

and seemed to extend her heavenly protective mantle over those people, complying with God's plan to help and save all.

Oh, Mary is the true honeycomb of sweetest honey, a divine balsam. Her piety and sweetness is ever ancient and ever new, like the bounty of God. She welcomes us every day when we go to her, listens kindly, comforts and enlightens us. She guides us along the way we must tread to arrive at the perfection of love to which God calls us. We are fortunate to have her as Mother and Foundress of our Institute. With her we have the abundant graces she continually showers upon her children. She is a ship laden with precious merchandise, safely sailing the deepest seas, the most stormy oceans, always at full sail because the Spirit of God guides her as she protects us. Let us open wide our hearts to Mary with great trust!

I have not told you yet about our accommodations. We are in a room with balconies on the east and on the west. By its position it moves us to the most apt contemplation, as if we were on the high seas. The wide gulf dominates one part, and the eye roams over the immensity of the sea, interrupted at some points by beautiful small green islands or by small vessels. These belong not to fishermen, because few care for fishing, but to vacationers. Some reefs directly in front of the hotel cause the foaming waves to sound like Niagara Falls. On the other side, we are above an immense park with kiosks and fountains certainly worthy of a large city and not a tiny town as this. As they say *se adelman cada día* (every day they make progress); therefore, to demonstrate progress, it is necessary to make parks and fountains for foreigners to admire. Meanwhile, we enjoy the pure, comforting air that we may have often longed for and never found. Think of it: in New Orleans the thermometer registered 28° centigrade; here it is only 25°! Of course this is when we keep the doors open. If we close them, the temperature quickly rises to 30° but not too much higher.

They say that this is fever country but I was assured by the doctors who have become our friends these days that the region is very healthful. This is where many with chest diseases come to be cured. We are truly faring well. Our only regret is that we are idle here and only sixteen hours away from our sisters in Panama, unable to fly there, except in our desires. I really hoped to be in their midst to receive the Holy Spirit with an abundance of his gifts and fruits with them and through their merits. I feel a great hunger and need for these graces which instead, we must prepare ourselves to receive here in Port Limón. Blessed Will of God, how dear and lovable you are when you reveal yourself to us with such clarity!

When we go for short walks to stop here and there to talk with the black people who listen to us with such pleasure, we direct our steps toward the pier to the boats waiting for their connections. To them we express our deep longing and desire that if at least one of them be directed toward Colón, we would immediately leap on board. No one responds to this yearning; rather, as if in scorn, today one moves, tomorrow another, headed in different directions. As the waves break, they seem to say, "Learn to be patient. Clip the wings of your strong desires." The one from the Royal Mail

Line that is to take us has arrived from England and always stays motionless on the high seas, as still as a rock. It cannot come near the pier because of its huge size and the shallowness of the water.

June 1. A beautiful, sublime view is offered today to our spiritual sight. The favored month of June is here in which we all, near and far, united in heart and animated by the same faith and trust, honor the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We try to give Jesus all that glory possible for us to give, with that fidelity proper to loving hearts, to make reparation for so much ingratitude He receives and about which He lamented with deep sighs to his beloved Margaret. Like the Samaritan, we shall pluck the thorns one by one which so deeply pierce His loving Heart and bring Him some relief by renewing our total offering and by our devotion and prayers. We shall make reparation by our small and great sacrifices, in the measure by which He Himself deigns to require them of us, to better prove to Him our love.

This is the month of love: love ought to transform us all. What are the necessary means of acquiring this joyous transformation? 1) approach the Sacred Heart of Jesus in a spirit of humility and confidence; 2) allow grace to act in us, following its inspirations faithfully and consistently. Jesus, through the goodness of His Heart, will often enlighten us to recognize our misery in our prayers and acts of love. Rather than taking flight from this self-knowledge, let us humble ourselves, and beg Jesus to free us from our misery. Let's not be discouraged to see ourselves so far from the perfection of holy love. Let's not be discouraged to see ourselves so far from the perfection of holy love which Jesus wishes to communicate to us. He is ready to help our efforts. What He wants is for us to have recourse to Him with a sincere will to correspond to His graces, entrusting ourselves completely to His love. Let us fling ourselves into the blessed flame of the Heart of Jesus and allow that holy flame to penetrate the intimate reaches of our spirit to purify, renew and sanctify all our thoughts, affections, feelings, intentions and desires.

What have we to fear if the Heart of Jesus protects us? And what can we not hope for, entrusting ourselves to the Heart of such a compassionate and powerful advocate? Let us keep our gaze fixed on the wound of the Heart of Jesus. We shall read in characters of blood the width and depth of the love He bears, which will encourage us, as we always and everywhere hope for everything from His infinite goodness. Our prayers are often so imperfect that they deserve to be rejected by God; but the loving Heart of Jesus corrects them, and turns them to noble ends. He Himself asks for what He sees us for our greater good, mercifully covering our unworthiness with His merits. From the secrecy of the tabernacle, the loving Heart of Jesus observes what we need in order to help us. He expects nothing more than to see us at His feet, trustingly uniting our prayers to His.

Let us recall frequently what Jesus said to his beloved Gertrude, "Here is My Heart; know how to avail yourself of it to supply all that is missing in your prayers." Another time Saint Gertrude,

so deeply in love with Jesus, prayed fervently (a prayer that would be good for Missionaries to adopt) that if it were necessary she would run barefoot throughout the universe until the day of judgment to lead all men to His Divine Heart, generously bearing each one in her arms to present to Him. She wished to be able to satisfy, at least partially, the infinite desires of His sweet, divine love. Even more, if it were possible she would have liked to divide her heart in as many parts as there were men on earth to communicate to all a holy will to serve Him, and thus bring perfect joy to His Divine Heart. Then Jesus appeared to her to show her that He was presenting the offering that she had made to the august Trinity in the form of a precious gift. While the gift was being raised up to the heavens, angels seemed to bow down in its presence. By this she understood clearly that when prayers or holy desires are offered to God, the entire heavenly court gathers them and raises them to His throne as gifts pleasing to God. As soon as their merits are united to the merits of Jesus, the saints themselves pay homage.

Let us run frequently to the tabernacle like a thirsty deer runs to the living stream of clear water. As long as we dwell in this land of exile far from our heavenly homeland, let us give ourselves no peace if we do not draw closely to the Heart of the One whom we ardently love as His true spouses and Missionaries of His Divine Heart. Let us always be attentive to this Heart, think of Him, run to Him, sigh always for Him alone. The force of Jesus' love for us, the wonders His loving heart prepares for us, are something marvelous. Let us respond to them and often say to him: "Oh only love of my soul, you enlightened me with Your light, and I knew You. You drew me with Your gentle charity, and I came to You and followed You. You told my heart 'love me,' and I dared to respond: 'I love You and want to love You evermore.' You, oh Love, love me independent of me, because you are God. I can love You only with Your help because I am Your creature. I drink at the fountain of water which comes to me from You. I desire You, think of You and am all Yours because You are mine." Oh, my, my beloved can do all, knows all, possesses all! He is immortal, unlimited, immutable, incomprehensible, ineffable, inestimable, and His beatitude is eternal!

If we could only understand the admirable wisdom of Jesus in the prodigy of love in the Sacrament! The queen of Sheba, hearing so much praise of Solomon's wisdom, traveled from the Orient with a rich retinue and came to Jerusalem to present herself before the wise king. How amazed and shocked she was in hearing the immense wisdom of the great Solomon! "Oh, Sir," she exclaimed, "the reports I heard in my country about your wisdom are true. I have seen this with my own eyes and found that not even half the truth was related to me." What will the soul say of You, Oh uncreated Wisdom? What will my soul say of You, finding herself before Your adorable, majestic presence in the most Holy Sacrament of the altar? What sentiments will not be aroused in me as I gaze at the marvels of Your wisdom and love in this most august mystery? Oh, Heavenly Solomon, Your wisdom has no limits because You are the Father's uncreated wisdom.

Your love is infinite because You are God. No one can fathom Your loving wisdom in the mystery of the Eucharist.

Oh, my beloved, who in Your goodness have made me a Missionary of Your Heart, instruct me as I stay at the feet of Your tabernacle and I will instruct others. Reveal to me the prodigy of Your love, the marvels of Your wisdom in this Sacrament, and I will tell the story to all the nations so that all may know and love You more. *In universo mundo narrabo mirabilia tua* [I shall tell of Your marvels throughout the world]. Jesus said, "Take and eat, this is my body; take and drink, this is my blood." [Mt. 26:26] He spoke, and the Sacrament came into being. Through the words of consecration, spoken by the celebrant of the Holy Sacrifice in the name of Jesus, the bread is converted or is transubstantiated into the body of Jesus, and the wine is converted or transubstantiated into the blood of Jesus. The body, as well as the blood of Jesus, are contained under the species, or accident of the bread and wine by a miracle of the Almighty. At the consecration, bread and wine substantially disappear. Only their appearances remain. Behind so many veils of love and wisdom hiding from our earthly gaze, Jesus is gloriously present to give us the opportunity to exercise our faith, hope and courage in approaching to receive him in our hearts.

The sacramental presence of Jesus remains as long as the sacred species are conserved. When they are consumed or spoiled, the body of Jesus withdraws and disappears. What marvels, then, are worked on our altars! There are innumerable priests who throughout the twenty-four hours offer the Divine Sacrifice in so many towns, cities and villages, making Jesus present in His Sacrament of Love in a hundred thousand lands. Could there have been a plan more loving and holy than this of the Divine Sacrament? Could our loving Jesus more tenderly have shown His love? But, remember, oh daughters, that the Blessed Sacrament is like the pillar of fire that was light and guide for the Israelites to the land of promise but darkness to the Egyptians. This mystery of the Eucharist, like that of the Cross, is a stumbling block to unbelievers, foolishness to the worldly wise. To humble believers it is the strength and wisdom of God. Only to the little ones, to the humble of heart and the docile of mind and heart are these ineffable, incomprehensible truths of the Blessed Sacrament revealed by the Heavenly Father. They alone welcome these truths in their hearts because they have first obediently accepted them in their intellect. They alone enjoy all the immense riches and sweetness of this august mystery of wisdom and love.

These precious pearls are hidden from the wise and prudent of the world. Those ill-fated ones have them before their eyes but do not see them. They hear others speak of them but do not comprehend, because they have blocked their ears not to hear the voice of humble faith and love. If only everyone could understand what treasure we have in the Blessed Sacrament! What greatness, what sweetness and joy! Oh, if only all, or at least part, understood the marvelous love of Jesus in the Sacrament! Oh Father, oh Shepherd, oh Jesus, how admirable are Your works, how lovable Your tenderness! You are in the Blessed Sacrament for me and for everyone — just as in

the Host You are all in all, entire even in each particle. Oh love, how can this be? You are for all people and yet give each individual Your whole attention. That same zeal and tenderness which You have for the universal Church is the same zeal and passion You have for each soul united to her holy mother, the Church. Her Mystical Body is one just as Your body is real and substantial in heaven and in the Holy Eucharist. No one can take part at Your table who is not first a member of Your Church. Nor can one come into Your Church unless, in Your mercy, You draw and join them to You. Oh, mystery, oh majesty, oh Sacrament! Oh yes, we shall say to all people, "Come and see the works of the Lord, *quae posuit prodigia super terram*" [Who wrought wonders on earth.]

What shall we Missionaries do to draw the mercy of God on the earth so that all may be united in the Catholic Church, the tree of life and salvation? We are poor, miserable, small, capable of nothing! What is more, our scope is restricted. We shall make frequent, fervent Communion and we shall obtain everything for sinners who are our dear brothers. We are unworthy, but drawing near to Jesus in receiving Him, He will bestow on us the kiss of peace. While we give Him our filial love, He will warm us with His love, purify us with His blood, enliven us with His heartbeat, and adorn and beautify us with His graces. *In me manet et ego in eo* [Sg. 2:16, my love belongs to me and I to Him.] In communion, the purpose of love is fulfilled. God is sacramentally in the soul; what an ineffable moment! God touches her, draws her to His breast and, contemplating His image in her, is delighted. He sees the work of His hands, the work of the cross, and is very pleased. Oh God, Oh soul! What a union! God is in the soul and the soul is in God! The soul is in God and God is in the soul! *Qui manducat meam carnem, in me manet et ego in eo* [Jn. 6:56; the one who feeds on My flesh . . . remains in Me and I in him.] Oh loving Jesus, oh, beloved of my heart, remain with me and in me always, never depart from me! Oh, my God and my every good, place Yourself as a seal on my heart and my arm [Sg. 8:6] so that I may never love anyone but You, and labor and spend myself only for You.

But, our thanksgiving for Communion, oh daughters, must be very extended. It must never end, because gratitude is the extension of the Communion. When I remain with God within me sacramentally, I know Him more, become more aware of His greatness and perfections. Loving His blessed presence in me, the life-giving frequency of receiving the sacrament follows. To know God is to love him. In thanksgiving, the Spirit of Jesus lifts me above myself, separates me from earthly things and introduces me to that blessed oasis of increasing grace and beatitudes. He opens His breast, shows His heart inflamed with charity, and says "See, how I long for you! See how much I love you!"

Oh yes, I already see Him whom I have so much desired, and have so much awaited! I already possess the One for whom I have yearned! Lucky me! I am bound to Him with the closest ties of holy love, identified with Him and made one with His heart and one soul. You have given me Your blessed Body which suffered so much for me. Your Precious Blood to adorn and beautify my

soul so that I may be always worthy in Your sight. You have given me Your holy soul, your divinity, all, oh my God, all You have and are. Oh my beloved, how I rejoice and exult that You are who You are! You are my God, my Lord, my greatness. You are the Holy of Holies, King of Kings, Creator of all things visible and invisible. You who have given me this greatest of gifts will, without doubt, grant me the lesser, that is, the graces I ask of You for the souls so dear to me, my beloved sinners and infidels.

The foundations of the firmament tremble before Your divine majesty; the Powers and Thrones reverently adore You and all the Virtues bow down before You. Your power has no limit, Your wisdom no end because You are who You are. You are the Ancient of days, oh my God, but always new for me. I thirst for You, my Father. My Jesus, I thirst for You, my Spouse, my Love, for You Beloved!

But why is it that many flee from You? As soon as they receive You, they leave You, thinking of things having nothing to do with Your love. Oh, if they only knew the infinite gift You have given them! Oh, if they heard just one word! What grief, oh Jesus, not to see all prostrate before Your infinite majesty! What thorns in the heart when with my own eyes I see that all do not love You alone! Rather, they love the gods of their earthly passions! My Jesus, I intend to adore, love, and bless You for all! My Jesus, I offer myself as victim of Your Divine Heart for all. Oh, save and make all holy. You often say, Oh Jesus, to my heart, "Love Me and ask; love Me and hope." Yes, I love You, oh Jesus, and with Your grace I want to love You very much. I love You so much and ask for the conversion of all sinners and infidels. I love You and want Your ardent Heart known, loved and glorified in all the world. I want Your glory and majesty extended and exalted, Your desires and designs and those of Your holy Church fulfilled, every hour and always.

June 3. Yesterday we were visited by the most tender and valiant of friends, the Holy Spirit. Oh how beautiful, gentle and lovable is the Holy Spirit! He loves us tenderly, immensely, constantly. We, the portion and inheritance of Christ, washed clean in His blood, have become the living temples of the Holy Spirit, that is, living members, home and dwelling place of the Divine Paraclete. His breath gently blows around us constantly. His light enlightens our minds so that they are able to lift themselves to God, and contemplate His perfections, attributes and infinite marvels. His grace abundantly enriches our souls. The Holy Spirit, who first descended upon the apostles, always descends upon the Church and upon our souls because our loving Jesus merited for us the precious gift of the Holy Spirit. By the merits of Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit, we have become rich in grace and every heavenly gift. Oh transcendent, infinite gift, superior to any created merit!

"When the Holy Spirit comes in you," [John 16:13] Jesus said to his apostles; "then you will know the truth which I have preached to you." Jesus Himself could have well communicated to

the apostles the knowledge of the truth but did not wish to do so, in order to glorify the Holy Spirit. This glory He wished to reserve to the Divine Paraclete, substantial love of the Father and the Son, uncreated light, perennial fountain of grace and virtue, and the source of all good. The ineffable mysteries that the Holy Spirit works in our souls are totally hidden to us because they are a divine work, impenetrable to human sight, and often unseen by the angels. It is a daily work, delightful, glorious.

Oh, the soul in the state of grace is a true theater of the grandeur and riches of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a sun whose light is reflected in just souls, a bottomless, shoreless ocean whose waters are beautiful, transparent, crystalline and life-giving, and flow continually and abundantly over souls who place no obstacle and do not oppose the Paraclete. Oh, the just souls who live in these saving waters are always happy, joyous, secure, peaceful and full of trust and great confidence in God. They fear nothing and undertake all tasks with great courage. Their works are always fruitful. Oh, they are the true sky enlivened by God, who tell the story of God's marvels by their virtue and works. They are the splendor of the Church, the honor of humanity, the fragrance of Jesus Christ, and form the delights of His Divine Heart.

Love the Holy Spirit, oh daughters, and invoke often upon yourselves and upon me this blessed, eternal, uncreated light, a true, life-giving immortal light. Beg Him to visit our minds often to illustrate, illuminate and sanctify them. Beg the Holy Spirit to dispel the darkness that today covers the earth like dense clouds, almost palpable, which do not allow the discernment of the true substance of good. Beg Him to send His light to save the many souls who are the precious inheritance of our dear Jesus. Oh, Lord, save those who so much hope and trust in You. Grant that the precious inheritance of Your redeemed, whom we wish to lead to Your Sacred Heart, may not fall in the hands of our fiercest enemies.

Think, oh daughters, that the apostles, filled with the Holy Spirit, spoke in various tongues. If you are truly detached from yourselves, true lovers of Jesus and animated by the same spirit, you will announce the marvels of Christ in as many ways as the Spirit gives you grace and opportunity to speak. How pleasing it is to the Holy Spirit to see zealous souls seeking to commit themselves to spread the kingdom of Christ! It is a totally divine act of worship we give Him each time we lead a sinner to conversion or introduce an insight or a more clear, more distinct, idea about Jesus in Catholic hearts. Work, work unsparingly, without tiring, for the salvation of souls, in order that the grace of the Holy Spirit may work with you and pray in you, and may communicate to you His lights, graces and treasures.

If you are truly zealous, He will enlighten you with His divine light, assist you in all your tasks and work, uphold you in trials, defend you from all internal and external enemies, and strengthen you with His virtue. Have confidence, great confidence, faith and trust, oh daughters, and constant prayer! The Holy Spirit with His immense charity will be diffused in our hearts, in our

souls, to make them strong with His own strength. *Ignem veni mittere in terram, et quid volo nisi ut accendatur* (Lk. 12:49; I have come to light a fire on the earth. How I wish the blaze were ignited.)

Yesterday, the Holy Spirit also wished to console us visibly. We received many visits from persons who came to express their regrets for the affront, as they called it, that we received on our arrival in this port. They tried by all means to make us forget it, fearing that I would publish such a thing in the newspapers and bring dishonor to the Costa Rican society, which prides itself on being the most illustrious in all of Central America. Two representatives of the president of the republic also came to offer apologies in those fine words in which they were skilled. They said it was a misunderstanding. We could have gone to the capital and would have been welcomed anywhere we desired. They begged me to stay longer and gave me and Mother Gabriella train tickets good for twelve days to use at our pleasure.

By this time, a yearning to be with our dear sisters greatly filled our hearts. I thanked them all the best way I knew and told them that our departure had already been arranged for the fourth, and I could not accept their gracious offer. They asked me to come soon to start a foundation in their country so that they could show how much they know and want to do in our favor. Since the railway ticket was made out in my name, I accepted it, even though there was no time to use it. I am keeping it to show you this token of the exquisite gentleness and generosity of the Costa Ricans when I return among you. I may even make a gift of it to Mother Assunta, who, I know by experience, has a way of using old tickets to go around the world and to work the wonders that only she can.

But the favors of the Holy Spirit enhancing the feast did not end here. Since everyone was in our favor, I thought I would take advantage of this to see if I could get free passage from Port Limón to Colón. I did not feel like spending fifty dollars for the two of us for an overnight trip. After having spoken to one noncommissioned officer and another, I spoke to the captain of the steamer of the Royal Mail Line. I explained to him that since we were able to travel gratis from New Orleans to Port Limón, perhaps he too could think to help us in some way. He listened attentively and said, "Mother, give me about an hour and I will get back to you." He returned shortly to say that he did not succeed in obtaining all he had asked for, but that I should buy tickets for the lowest class, which cost very little. On boarding I should hand the tickets to no one but him. He would then assign first-class accommodations to us, which he, in fact, did, to his great satisfaction. The joy of doing a good deed for the first time for a religious was visible on his face. Not satisfied with this, he wanted to send his own small boat to bring us aboard at the opportune hour, and ordered all our baggage loaded on board without our paying a penny. May the Sacred Heart of Jesus bless that fine English captain and reward him for his good, generous deed, with spiritual and temporal graces for him and his family.

June 4. Here we are on board the large and beautiful English liner of the Royal Mail Line called *City of Paris*. It is already beginning its majestic course, making a complete turn and will sail along the coast until Colón. We shall not enjoy the beautiful view presented by the Cordilleras with their high peaks, bays, marvelous slopes, age-old plants and carpet of various shades of green. The sun is setting, and night advances rapidly in this zone, without the pleasant gradual darkening to dusk to which we are accustomed. A bell calling us to the table is already ringing, as is customary on all vessels. The first thing they do as soon as the steamer moves on the waves is to call everyone to the dining room, and we must leave whatever beauty can still be seen. The meals served this time are delicious, all cooked Italian style. But, how did this happen on an English ship? Four Italians, Milanese and Piedmontese, are employed as cooks. They became aware that we were Italian. Seeing us favored by the captain, they also wished to do something to please us, and, in this way, they gratified all the passengers, since Italian cuisine is being esteemed and enjoyed everywhere. Oh, if only Italians would gain a good reputation in other things, such as moral and religious observance for which they do not lack the capacity and opportunity, what a great thing it would be! Italy would become the great nation it should be, and would no longer be ill-treated by all, like it is now.

Today, among the other favors, one much welcomed was reserved for us. His Excellency, the Bishop of Costa Rica, the robust champion of the Church, Monsignor Thiel visited us. I had the pleasure of meeting him about four years ago when, passing through the port of Punta Arenas with the sisters destined for Nicaragua, he came on board to greet and bless us. Now he has come as a good friend. A close relationship developed between him and our Institute as a result of several visits he made to us in Rome regarding a foundation in his diocese. He would have liked to have us open a school soon, taking advantage of the good number of our sisters exiled from Nicaragua, but now it is too late. When the sisters passed through Panama, they were detained by a thousand entreaties. Already with the approval of the Motherhouse, they have opened a fine school under the best auspices. I deeply appreciated that holy pastor's visit since I would have liked to pay him a visit. Regrettably I was prevented from doing so because I was not allowed to travel to San José, the capital of the republic, because of the reason I explained to you.

But now I hear some voices, like sisters grumbling, impatiently asking why the sisters were exiled from Nicaragua. It is no surprise, daughters. You know well that these countries are newcomers to civilization and are always racked by turbulence and revolution. There are those who studied a little abroad, either in Paris, or London, or Germany or the United States. They all think they know better than the others. Thinking so highly of themselves, they look askance at the person heading the government as president, one whom they believe their inferior. So they seek to make friends and instill in them their smug ideas. These, imbued with the same ideas

become their followers and help increase their number. As soon as their ranks increase a little, one is chosen to go against the president to topple him and take his place. More often than not, one of his followers, having been taught well by the proud usurper, will avail himself of the opportunity to unseat the one he only recently helped to install. This goes on and on. Someone still more ignorant, not versed in the supposed value of knowledge and wanting to show himself capable of something, invents the diabolic action of religious persecution at all costs.

This is what happened recently in Nicaragua. The sisters continued their school and the number of students grew larger all the time, most of them coming from the leading families of the country. I was at peace on their account because, having experienced three revolutions, one more terrible than the other, they had gained courage and ever greater assurance of their safety. After revolutions and wars, great epidemics often occur because of the unburied bodies of victims. Fortunately, all escaped without incurring great harm, as it often happens with such a large family. Except for the small disturbances inevitable at any time, neither the sisters nor the students were affected by the epidemic. When all seemed to proceed quietly and calmly, the sisters heard vague rumors here and there that priests and sisters would be expelled from the republic. Without fail, someone went to the sisters to warn them to take it seriously because the danger was real. Some liberal foreigners had come to Nicaragua to incite the liberals, who were already fiery enough.

Added to this, at that time a young society lady who never missed any parties was touched by grace and was instantly converted. After a ball, she abandoned everything and ran directly to the convent, begging to be admitted. The directress did not accept her either on that day or afterward, because she could not do so without the permission of the Mother General. The young lady went to Doña Elena Arellano, the foundress of our house in that city. She was able to keep her with her because of the authority she naturally holds in that country. The triumph of grace in that young lady was attributed to us by that group of predatory, worldly men who could not countenance the loss of their principal victim. From this arose louder voices that the sisters would soon be exiled.

The Mother Directress thought it best to go to the president of the republic to hear from him what importance to give those voices. He received her most cordially, saying that he loved us very much and highly esteemed the work we were directing, that the republic was fortunate to have a school of such high caliber. He said he would be as a father for us, and with a thousand other expressions left the religious greatly relieved. To confirm his words and show his kindness, the week after he sent a case of books to be used as awards and gifts for the students, accompanied by a letter in his own handwriting attesting to his appreciation and offering his support. The sisters were accustomed to the previous president, Dr. Roberto Sacasa, who was faithful in keeping his word while he was in power. They thought that the incumbent, Santos Zelaya, deserved their credibility.

Destinations Cited:
New Orleans, LA
Bluefields
Port Limon, Costa Rica
San José, Costa Rica
Colon
Panama City, Panama

Mother Cabrini was particularly fond of the mission she founded in New Orleans. The house and space on Saint Philip street, located in the heart of the French Quarter, was looked upon as a "patch of Italy's soil" for the Italian immigrants who found religion, parish, education, childcare and recreational activities there. Mother Cabrini also bought property on the nearby Bayou St. John for an orphanage and school, which is now the site of Cabrini High School.



FROM NEW ORLEANS TO PANAMA, May to June 1895

Arriving in New Orleans Mother Cabrini wrote, "New Orleans has a special blessing. The archbishop is a true and compassionate father; he prepares everything for me. All I have to do is observe and accept. Therefore, I finish everything immediately and peacefully." She spent only twenty-four days there and then embarked for Panama, where the sisters expelled from Nicaragua had taken refuge. Her purpose was to be present to comfort her daughters who had suffered so much and to evaluate their position, since they had established a school in a building donated by the government. The sisters were loved by all. The bishop had given repeated signs of his paternal good will during his first four months in Panama.

This turned out not to be the case. Because of his weak character and weaker religious sentiments, Zelaya let himself be strongly dominated by the liberal party. They succeeded in obtaining from him *carte blanche* to launch the most fierce cruelty against all that savored of religion, which they found so contrary to their diabolical liberties.

A month after the president made his promises, the sisters were peacefully going about their duties. Some were in their classes; others were putting the finishing touches on a new school uniform. At about eleven in the morning, they heard an announcement to assemble at the door. Mr. Pedro Pablo Bodan, the new city prefect, and the governor, Mr. Rivos, came to order their immediate expulsion. The directress asked to see the written order giving the motive. They raised their voices and declared that this was not the time to ask for papers, that they were obeying the command of their superiors, without asking the reason. They told the sisters they must hurry: the vessel to transport them out of the country was ready in the lake. The Mother Directress tried to explain that two sisters were confined to bed and it was imprudent to move them. Those brave men were unmoved, repeating it was no use, they must leave immediately. In less time it takes to say, the house was surrounded by soldiers armed with guns to impede the sisters from talking with anyone for fear that they would telegraph the president or another influential person.

The men and women who at any cost wanted to enter, no longer were allowed to leave the premises before the departure of the sisters. As soon as the students realized what was happening, their cries and screams were pitiful. When the parents learned the sad news, they ran hurriedly to the convent to try to prevent the expulsion. But all was in vain since the guards had orders to use force against anyone who resisted. Screams, cries, petitions and brawls filled the air in the convent and outside. It was a truly desolate scene; it seemed like the end of the world. Only the prefect remained unperturbed in his determination to carry out the inhuman mandate. Amid such turmoil, it was exemplary to see the sisters, all calm and serene, packing the few clothes they needed. They tried to calm the students and their parents, explaining to them that it was necessary to accept this trial from the hands of God, who always knows how to draw good from evil. In time, they would return among them again.

The two hours passed quickly. The prefect made the sisters board the carriages that he had already ordered. Surrounding them with guards, he gave the signal for them to move toward the harbor while he followed in his carriage. You would have thought it was a funeral procession. The news had spread, and all the city ran after the sisters in a great crowd, tearfully begging them not to leave, because their departure was a sign that a great punishment would come over the country. Many were crying for mercy for their sins.

At the harbor, the military barricade impeded the crowd from drawing near the pier. They made the sisters pass in single file, checking them off against the record they had of all the religious. A few minutes later, two priests arrived surrounded by guards, the pastor and the chaplain,

also destined for exile. The previous day, six priests were exiled by way of Cominrh on the Pacific. Doña Arellano, who loved the sisters so much, could not bear to see them leave without following them. Since it was forbidden under pain of exile to go onboard with them, she voluntarily chose exile. She accompanied and stayed with them at San Juan del Norte, until the Mother General assigned them to another mission.

Afterward, every ship coming from Granada brought some Nicaraguans who sought comfort in the presence of the sisters, whom they loved as dearest, venerated mothers - as family - and brought them some help to relieve their distress. As soon as they heard of the harshness with which the Missionaries were expelled, even the Indians from Rama, a small tribe near San Juan del Norte, collected among themselves a fair sum of money and brought it to the sisters through Mr. Felice Alfaro. Also, in Granada, Mr. Costantino Morenco, whose daughters attended the school and who loved the Institute, took to heart the interests of the sisters. He collected small accounts due the school and faithfully sent the money to the sisters. It could not have been so much, because the trimester was coming to an end. As usual, the tuition had been collected in advance and used to maintain the school. Yet, it helped them to take care of the sick among them. Jesus did not abandon His beloved spouses, who were oppressed, troubled and ill. He knew how to pour balm on their wounds, as I recently learned. I have good reason to praise the Sacred Heart of Jesus highly, who wished so soon to grant the honor of exile to our Institute, so young, poor and lowly in the Church's eyes.

Oh, how outstanding is the special quality of our holy religion! It maintains its distinctiveness from every other, confounding the dictates of all supposed science and the sects it condemns. It has the power to rescue its children from error, one after the other, no matter their social status or belief. By cruelly expelling our sisters, the Freemasons and unbelievers in Nicaragua performed a good mission, and betrayed themselves by the very means they presumed to use. The exile of our sisters was like a heavenly dew descending in so many souls, transforming mad frenzy and impiety to solemn homage to our most holy truths. It was like a divine light, dispelling the darkness in its brilliance. Let us thank Jesus, who made us worthy of such a great favor.

But you are in suspense, and anxious to know what happened. I willingly satisfy your holy curiosity. The expulsion of our dear sisters from the Republic of Nicaragua made a vivid impression on the souls of not only good people who found no peace in seeing them conducted away by force, but also on unbelievers and those of evil repute. In the latter group, a member of the Masonic sect, touched by grace at the sight of so much cruelty, experienced a total conversion. He was an unrestrained Freemason, one of the most relentless enemies of our faith, attacking it in writings and speeches. After that moving scene, he became one of the best defenders of the Church, to the extent that he refused the office of deputy when the government, appreciating his intelligence and rare qualities, offered it to him. He replied that a true Catholic could not enter into a relationship with such a brutal, impious and cowardly government. The govern-

ment's heroism consisted in oppressing the weak, trampling down religion, and offending the sisters, whose only crime was to work to rescue youth from ignorance at the cost of untold sacrifices.

This renunciation brought him much criticism and ridicule, and many enemies. Nothing made him retreat. He knew well that all hell would break loose against him from the moment he undertook to defend the holy cause. He was well prepared for the combat, saying that the example of the Missionary Sisters encouraged him. He said if they, innocent victims suffered that humiliation, affront and barbaric treatment with admirable resignation and peace, even glorying in being found worthy to suffer something for Jesus Christ, why should I, who deserve far worse punishment for having been an enemy of truth, not do the same? Death was preferred to forsaking all the obligations which a true follower of Christ should profess.

He handed all his Masonic decorations over to the bishop as well as his entire library, which was considerable. In thanksgiving for having received such a singular grace, he had a solemn Mass celebrated to which he invited everyone, his relatives and Catholic friends, and received Communion with his entire family. Now he continues to be a good, true and exemplary Catholic. He rises to pray at four in the morning, goes to daily Mass between six and seven, and receives the sacraments weekly. His new library has been replenished with books of sound doctrine and Christian piety, among which are *The Imitation of Christ*, *The Christian Year*, *the Martyrology*, and similar books which he wants all his family to read at certain times and hours.

Our exile has had one of those results that truly consoles me. I beg the adorable Heart of Jesus to deign to permit that the ill treatment that the members of our Institute must suffer for the glory of God may always produce salutary results in souls such as occurred in Nicaragua because that is not leaving the mission, but changing it for the better. We have been away from Nicaragua eight months, but the Institute lives on in the souls of all. The various letters I receive frequently, now from one family, now from another and more often in the name of the same president of the republic, testify to this. If God pleases, in time we shall return, but not presently, because the government in power cannot, according to its new constitution, give us the guarantees that we are obliged to require to allow us to work with holy freedom for the good of souls.

June 7. Yesterday, at six in the morning, the lighthouse of the Port of Colón was in sight. Soon afterward we saw the monument of Christopher Columbus, and, at seven-thirty, the huge English ship was already docked. Already friends came to meet friends; relatives came to embrace their relatives. My eyes roved in search of either the sisters or someone else to lead us off the ship and across the Isthmus. No one appeared, because our sisters in Panama had been assured that we would not arrive until the afternoon. They believed they would arrive in time on the first train, which reached Colón at eleven antimeridian. Meanwhile, we knew nothing and I had to make my own plans, since I was determined not to sleep outside our own house another night. For a moment that place

seemed like a desert to me, seeing that no one was coming for us, despite our sending various notifications first by letter and then by telegrams. In a few minutes, I regained my composure, and asked the captain to let us stay on board with our baggage until we could take the next train. Then I went by carriage with Sister to the prefect of the city to ask for free passage for us and our things to Panama. The newness of the city and having to deal with unknown persons was certainly difficult. Nevertheless, a firm will and the courage that I felt coming from above helped me to overcome everything. I felt very pleased because the prefect not only granted me everything I asked for, but added that he was happy to favor our school in Panama in some way.

When we had everything well in order and had already returned on board to dine, our two sisters arrived with free tickets for us all. I asked the captain to let the sisters dine with us, and he consented to this with his usual generosity. By two in the afternoon we were comfortably seated in the train. For three and a half hours I enjoyed the scenic crossing of the Isthmus with its beautiful, enchanting view of the Andes, whose jagged peaks of various heights playfully appeared and disappeared. We arrived in Panama City, where other sisters greeted us at the station. In a quarter of an hour we reached our house. We blessed the Heart of Jesus for giving back to their Mother her daughters after four years of separation. I rested awhile and then wanted to tour the house, which a group of distinguished men had obtained from the government for our school. A good number of young ladies from the leading families in the city are already enrolled.

The house is beautiful, in excellent taste. One gets the impression of being on a ship rather than in a city. On the south and southeast, the house is surrounded by the ocean, whose waves, impressively, come to beat against our garden wall to form proud billows. Their foam is whiter than milk, forming a type of lovely little bubbles that our little girls thought were delicious candy. The room our good sisters prepared for me is surrounded on two sides by huge orange trees that unload their abundant fruit on my window sill. One window overlooks a picturesque drive, at the end of which I can see the bay, with colorful islets that seem to play in the middle of it. The islets serve as natural shelters for ships coming from California, from all the southern ports, and from Europe through the Straits of Magellan. However, it is such a long voyage that only battleships use this port and, on rare occasions, a transatlantic steamer. There are six different kinds of palm trees in our garden, plus banana trees, coffee trees, and several different fruit trees that I still cannot name.

Today I wanted to visit the bishop, but he told the person who went to ask at what hour he could receive me that he would let me know. A little later, he came in person. He is a very dear person, very respectable, who at the same time inspires great trust. This is fortunate for our mission, which seems to have developed a certain importance. Several ladies and gentlemen have already visited me. Nearly all of them say that they have been highly favored by heaven in getting our sisters. For a very long time, they have wanted sisters, without being able to obtain them,

for various reasons. One reason is that everyone thinks yellow fever is rampant in this country. I can assure you that it is a healthful place, and our sisters give proof of this. They have been here almost nine months and no one has been sick; rather, they have become healthier. The heat is not more than was tolerated in Nicaragua. We frequently enjoy a refreshing, healthy breeze that seems to restore life and vigor.

Before closing, I would like to give you extended news about the enormous good our sisters have done in New York and how the Sacred Heart of Jesus favors and expands that mission. But you well know that the only free time I have is when I am in the middle of the ocean waves, so I will tell you more about it during another voyage on the Atlantic or Pacific.

Here on the Isthmus of Panama we straddle the world. The position of this house helps to keep me in a sublime state of constant meditation. I seem to see all the points of the earth within that immense space of ocean before me. The contemplations are not separate from my ardent desires to press into service, the earlier the better, one of the many boats sailing through here to fly to wherever the need is greatest. Where shall I go? We have many requests. Even though, as it had been pointed out to me in Rome, I cannot go everywhere, I shall try to obey and do as much as I can. Pray, my daughters, from your heart that, with heaven's help, we can do all that the Sacred Heart of Jesus wants from us. In the meantime, strive to become more observant, because only by perfect observance will you truly become saints. Try to multiply your numbers so that I may be able to expand the missions for the good of so many souls, who, I assure you, are well disposed, however savage they are called at times. They lack only someone to break open the bread of the holy word of God, someone to instruct them.

Tell that to so many youths to whom God has given knowledge and the good qualities to be Missionaries. Tell them to bury their talents no longer but to respond to the sublime grace of vocation. Let them come soon to join your ranks, to be formed quickly into good, holy religious so that I may soon call them to work in these boundless fields. The harvest abounds and there are no hands to gather the sheaves into the mystic storehouse of our most holy, august religion. Tell all the good people, our friends, to be untiring in helping us with their financial support. Rather, ask them to be generous in aiding a work that extends in proportion to the resources available. Blessed are those whose charitable sums are deposited in this treasury. They will receive a hundredfold, with a thousand blessings on their work and on their families in this world. At the end of life when all they can count on is their good works and their generous gifts, they will be consoled with heavenly blessings.

I send a greeting to all from my heart, imploring from Jesus a special blessing for all, with the assurance that I shall never forget them in my poor prayers. I shall make sure that the same is done in all our communities. My good daughters, I leave all of you in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, our sure refuge, in whom we must always be united even though four or six thousand miles sep-

arate us. The Missionary recognizes no distance. For her, the world is small and space is an imperceptible point, because she is accustomed to consider that infinite space of eternity to which she would lead with true joy all the souls redeemed by the Precious Blood of Jesus. Enlarge your hearts, oh Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, widen your souls and do not be satisfied with less but seek to become great saints, to make holy all those whom you approach through obedience. In this way you give comfort to your Mother who is so far from you and knows only to enjoy herself in the pretty garden of the fragrant flowers of your virtues.

May Jesus bless you and enclose you always in His Heart where, every day, every hour, I come to visit you in spirit.

Your affectionate Mother in the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.

M. Francesca Saverio Cabrini



VIII

FROM PANAMA
TO BUENOS AIRES,
October to December 1895

Destinations Cited.

Panama

Ecuador

Lima, Peru

Callao, Peru

Ports of Peru

Ports of Chile

Iquique, Chile

Antofagasta, Chile

Coquimbo, Chile

Serena, Chile

Valparaiso, Chile

Santiago, Chile

Los Andes, Chile

Cordilleras of the Andes Mountains

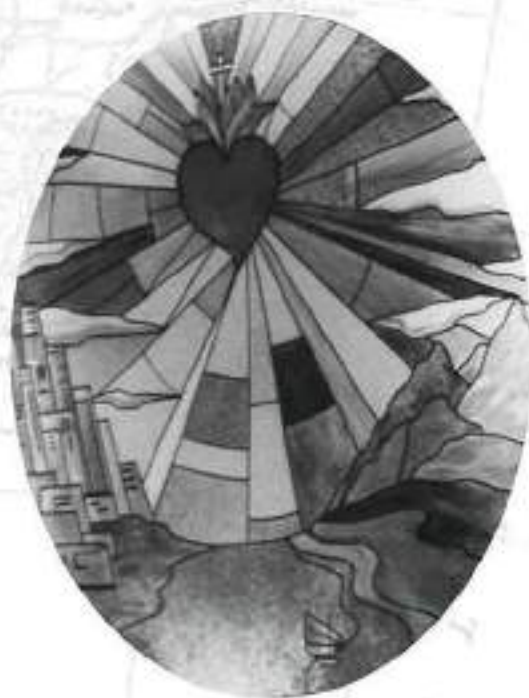
Mendoza, Argentina

Buenos Aires, Argentina

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35
36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45
46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55
56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65
66	67	68	69	70
71	72	73	74	75
76	77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84	85
86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95
96	97	98	99	100

FROM PANAMA TO BUENOS AIRES, October to December 1895

This time, our saintly missionary undertakes a long and fatiguing journey, from Central America to Argentina. First, there was a slow ocean voyage along the coast of South America, followed by a difficult mountain crossing. She and her companion waited in Chile to attempt the first crossing of the season, which was extremely perilous because a path had to be made. The goal of this adventure was the city of Buenos Aires, where her missionary zeal would find a vast field of action.



"When it was my turn I described it (Impressions of the dangerous pass across the Cordilleras) to everyone's surprise, as one of the most beautiful and fondest impressions of all my voyages... I was satisfied and happy to have ventured so high in my lifetime."

— Mother Cabrini

M

y beloved daughters.

May peace be with you and may it cause you frequently to repeat: "Omnia possum in eo qui me confortat." [Phil. 4:13]

How wide is the opening in the wound of His breast where the harbor is prepared! Banish, oh daughters, every fear.

To the Virgin I am clinging; I shall soon enter the harbor.

October 1895. "What a long and difficult voyage Mother is now undertaking!" This is what I seem to hear you all exclaim. I see expressions of fear and sadness on many of your faces. It seems that I am the calmest of all, and I truly am regarding my journey. Jesus still lives and our Lady of Grace, Mother and Foundress of our Institute, is always my most tender Mother. They have accompanied me always through thousands of difficulties; would they abandon me now? I would never do them the wrong of having no faith in their power and protection.

In the fifteen years that the Institute has existed, they did everything, accomplished great marvels. If at times there have been failures, it was only because I put in too much of myself; while, when I allowed them to act, I never found anything about which to complain. Therefore, like a child in its mother's arms, in the safe ship of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, I go forward to fulfill my mission, accompanied and reassured by obedience and the blessing of the Holy Father. I fear nothing, continually repeating our motto, "Omnia possum in eo qui me confortat." [Phil. 4:13]

The wind howls; the sky darkens; the treacherous waves rise. The steamer rolls and pitches, upsetting every object, which tumble about like moving bodies. A most terrible storm threatens. . . . It does not matter; I have promised fidelity, and I must keep my word. With faith and trust I hope, through God's grace, to go on, always repeating "Omnia possum in eo qui me confortat." We are Missionaries, oh daughters, and the Missionary must never falter because of difficulties and dangers. Rather, confiding in Jesus and leaning on Mary, she does not feel difficulties and passes through danger without noticing it.

Difficulties! Difficulties! What, oh daughters, are they? Children's pranks, exaggerated by our imagination, not yet accustomed to fix and abandon itself in Almighty God. Perils! Perils! What are they? They are specters that surprise the souls who, having given themselves to God, or supposing they had done so, actually live with the spirit of the world, or at least with many worldly sparks that, in the guise of coals beneath the ashes, rise up and burst into flame at every contrary wind. Therefore, daughters, we need to be invested with a true spirit and live a true life of faith, a living faith, and never deceive ourselves or doubt the grace that accompanies us wherever we go.

In baptism we solemnly promised to renounce the world, Satan, and the flesh, but we must prove this daily by our deeds. Entering religious life, we said, "I am crucified to the world and the

world is crucified to me." These must not be for us empty words. In reality, we must live like people of a holy nation who no longer belong to the world. Accepting the Missionary Cross, as if made more generous, we declared with all the fervor of an ardent soul, "I am ready to give my blood for Jesus and to declare blessed that day on which it befalls me to suffer much for the holy cause of the salvation of souls, for the glory of God." Sublime words! And who will fail to maintain the vow she was so privileged to make? Daughters, let us meditate profoundly on the sublimity of the state to which God has called us, that of cooperating with him in the salvation of souls! Before such a contemplation, oh, let us not falter or succumb to the judgment and reasoning of the world.

"But, I am weak!" With God, one can do everything. [2 Cor. 12:19] He never fails the humble and faithful soul. "But I am fragile!" If you are humble and constant [Col. 1:28], God will always be your strength. Made strong by the strength of God, of what should you be afraid? "The demon is terrible!" The demon is a chained dog [Eph. 6:16]; he can neither harm nor molest us if God does not permit it. Therefore, the humble, faithful soul need not fear even the demon. "But I have failed to be generous and have fallen in the face of the first difficulties! Now I can do no good!" Did you fall? Well, then, humble yourself and in the lively contention of your soul [1 Cor. 10:13] humbly ask pardon. Promise God anew, and whomever is His representative, and then go forward with stronger courage than before, to repair even the defeat you suffered.

October 12. Yesterday was one of those outstanding days that always mark an epoch in life because the various impressions and emotions they evoke become etched forever in the memory. On the occasion of my departure from Panama, after I had been there four months, I was sad to leave the dear sisters whose example greatly helped my spirit. Their virtue was like a sweet odor in the house of Panama, making it a pleasant habitation. It was difficult to leave the fine group of young ladies, the students, who, with true nobility, respond in a singular fashion to the concern the sisters have for them and the sacrifices they make. Daily they surrounded me, listening with tender, filial hearts to those words I poorly expressed in their language. I saw the daily efforts they made to overcome their small faults and be more virtuous, and their generosity in trying to guess my wishes and to satisfy them. In short, all this served to make my departure more difficult.

The ship on which we were to depart was three miles distant from the city. All the students and their relatives came to see me board. Mr. Ernesto Icaza, father of one of our dear students, generously put his fine, comfortable tugboat at their disposal. The representatives of the Panamanian families and the patrons of the school also came to escort us on board, and to warmly recommend us to the care of the captain and the purser. These gentlemen had already made a good impression on me, either by their competency in discharging their government duties, or by their strength of character and generosity.

From my arrival in Panama and during all my stay, the school's patrons tried to find the best way to have the school develop as I desired, to better assure me of its progress and permanence. To achieve this, they sacrificed their own interests, with all the generosity which distinguishes them. As if not satisfied with all they had done, they gave another demonstration of their noble character, and came in a body on the eve of my departure to show for the last time that, in my absence, they would make every effort to see that our dear sisters were well cared for and protected against danger. As if their word, which I honored, was not enough, they attested to it in writing, adding letters of recommendation to introduce me to their friends in Ecuador, Peru, Chile and Argentina.

Many women who were our good friends came to the port to see us off. The bishop's secretary and the pastor of the cathedral also came with their wishes, which are always valuable because they carry a priestly blessing. Invited by our zealous, concerned chaplain, the pastor of the cathedral had come to the house in the morning for benediction with the Blessed Sacrament to invoke a safe voyage for me. The venerable Vicar General and our chaplain, with fatherly hearts, accompanied us on board and thus blessed the vessel that would bear me for twenty-one days. So many warm sentiments truly moved me, making the pain of leaving Panama, a land of so many noble, generous people, even more difficult to bear. On board, the Messrs. Icaza, Epimsoa, Della Ossa and Lewis introduced me to the captain with many recommendations. To crown it all, Mr. Icaza himself paid the fare, which he had procured on easy terms, so that I had nothing, exactly nothing, to attend to, but only to begin at once to enjoy the benefits they obtained for me.

A comical incident was not lacking to help soften the sorrow of the final moments. The consul, Mr. Della Ossa, seized the captain by his jacket and said, "Mother has not had supper yet and you must give her something." "Yes, yes," the captain answered, "She will have supper." But Mr. Della Ossa, holding him even tighter, replied, "What do you mean, 'yes, yes'? You must go prepare her a good meal," as if the captain himself had to go to the kitchen to serve me. The captain enjoyed Mr. Della Ossa's lively remarks and immediately called the assistant purser to accompany me to the dining hall. I begged him to be patient for a while, because I wanted to say goodbye to the sisters and students. Their boat was quickly returning to Panama, since it was already past six and getting dark fast, as it usually does in the tropics. There was a brief waving of handkerchiefs because, already at a distance of fifty meters, nothing could be distinguished.

Mother Chiara and I went to visit our new cabins and accommodations, and we seemed to have found a small convent. We were given two cabins with access to each other, and both with access to the deck, which is like a huge lounge more than four meters wide and about one hundred meters long, where we could stroll freely and enjoy the fresh air. The dining room is very neat. All is comfortable and accessible. We might have wished for all this, but to expect so much, no.

Supper over and having prayed a bit, M. Chiara went to rest while I sat facing the lighthouse in Panama, fixing my gaze to the left, where I seemed to see the sisters. First they were at recreation, eyes fixed on the *Mapocho* [Mother Cabrini's ship], then absorbed in fervent prayer in their chapel where I even seemed to see the five lamps burning: three in front of the Blessed Sacrament, one to the Madonna and the other to Saint Joseph. Their flames rising and falling seemed to unite themselves with you in praying for a safe trip for Mother. I united myself to your fervent prayers to implore upon you the choicest graces and that true spirit which must always accompany you so that you may very well accomplish your mission, that of sanctifying yourselves and leading to God all souls you approach.

Between nine-thirty and ten, the ship began to move quietly. It turned around completely and you might have seen it pass in front of Monte Flamengo and head directly south. I continued looking intently to the left of the lighthouse, but little by little, even it became imperceptible and finally there was darkness all around me. Having abandoned all hope of seeing you again for now and of hearing your voices, which a little earlier had sung the *Ave Maris Stella*, I, too, retired to rest.

October 14. On the morning of the 12th, as soon as I arose and said my prayers, I ran to the railing to scan the horizon all around to see, if not Panama, at least the coast, to determine the direction. But, all around, the water was like a great sheet of lead. The cloudy sky did not permit me to fix the cardinal points and thus determine the direction. So I fixed myself in the Heart of Jesus, where I could see you wrapped in contemplation, with great fervor, like Seraphim preparing for Holy Communion. It was a consoling scene for me, and I hurried to unite myself with you by means of a spiritual Communion, offering it to the Eternal Father together with your Eucharist. M. Chiara immediately began to stay in bed, not even wanting to try to get up, convinced she could not hold up her head. We tried Father Junguita's suggested remedy, which truly helped me, but, for M. Chiara, it was as though she had never taken it. She eats and has good color, but she cannot get up. I have placed my table at the door of her cabin so we are good company for each other.

The nature of the atmosphere seems to have changed, as we advance toward the equator. As a matter of fact, we now are crossing it, and instead of the intense heat that everyone predicted, we feel cool, or actually cold, so that we had to keep well covered. We almost thought that the steamer took the wrong direction, heading toward the North Pole instead of the equator. Two wool blankets were not enough in bed. On deck, "plaids" and shawls are necessary, and still we feel the chill. I would have liked to use the pillows that you prepared for the trip with so much concern but as much as I stretched out my arm from the ship, I have not yet succeeded in reaching Panama to get them. I imagine that all the sisters are also sad, because not even their arms are long enough to get them to me, who had forgotten them. There is no cause, however, for you

to feel too much sadness, because everyone on board takes good care of us and we never want for anything.

As we cross the equator, we should not desire too many comforts, because we are near Quito, home of Blessed Marianna, well known for her austere penance, more to be admired than to be imitated. Oh, may that dear lily of Quito bestow a kindly gaze on these countries convulsed by a thousand revolutions, where immorality wreaks great havoc! What a pity that M. Gabriel is not with me on this voyage, now that we are about to cross the equator, because she had a great desire to see the line. It is truly a beautiful sight: a broad azure band, very dark and shiny as if wrapped over a ball where it seems the ocean ends, or if it doesn't end, a great leap must be made to enter it. Some merry conspirators lent a pair of binoculars to a woman passenger desiring to see the equatorial line, indicating that it could be seen better with them. They secretly ran a thread across the lens so that the lady believed she was seeing something like a great beam dividing the two hemispheres. But what I have described, I see with the naked eye, and so do the women and men gazing at this truly new and lovely scene, caused by the combination of air and mist.

Here, where the north ends and the south begins, it seems as though a double-natured climate meets simultaneously and mysteriously. The thermometer registers 27° centigrade, and the air is so frigid it makes us shiver. However, don't think it is always like this. Rather, this is very unusual and everyone is astounded by this new phenomenon. Yet, I am not surprised, accustomed as I am to see so many unforeseen good things happen often. They always come from the gentle hand of that God who, in the economy of His Divine Providence, always has new marvels for souls who know how to rise above the earth and fully abandon themselves in Him. Meanwhile, I enjoy writing this new description of the equator for you, beloved daughters. Until now I have heard talk only of the excessive, insupportable heat. It could well be that the Lily of Quito, Blessed Marianna, from the height of her burial place on the Andean Cordilleras, or, better, from heaven, where she happily sits at Jesus's side, has sent a puff of her heavenly breath to refresh us and so bless the intention of our voyage from Panama to Lima as a pilgrimage to honor Saint Rose, the protectress of America. We shall visit her grave and receive Communion at her altar.

October 16. Yesterday, at seven we arrived at Guayaquil, where we had thought we would go ashore to receive Communion, but it took two hours for the harbor master to arrive with the doctor and customs. Then a Peruvian priest boarded, who was expelled as soon as he arrived in Ecuador. In view of this, I thought it best not to move from the ship, and not give the police the burden and trouble to suspect us by our inopportune arrival. While Mr. Alfaro has not yet been well established in his position as head of the government, everyone is suspect.

The port of Guayaquil is beautiful. It is entered by way of a river that resembles the Mississippi where it enters New Orleans. It is said that this river, on which we sailed for about

six hours to reach the port, has some enchanting vegetation on its shores, but I can't describe it to you because we arrived at night. The city reminds me somewhat of Genoa, except that it is less high and less healthful, because it is not kept clean and because of the inhabitants' fondness of their good fruit, of which they eat quantities sufficient to cause fatal indigestion and yellow fever.

Viewed from the ship, the city, with its attractive houses built in a certain similarity of architectural style and brightly painted, forming a natural semicircle reflected in the river water, appears very beautiful, not inferior to a European city. At night, all illuminated, it has a quality that is surprising and truly cheerful. There must be many beautiful churches judging from the beautiful spires rising above the houses. But now, within those temples, all is desolation, because those allied to the revolutionary Mr. Alfaro have wanted to distinguish themselves by banishing as many priests and sisters as they could as soon as they took power. A great number of sisters came about two months ago to take refuge in Panama, and from there to think of returning to their motherhouses. It is said that some who were not exiled were ill-treated by soldiers, who entered their convents with military troops, looting everything that was useful to them and destroying the rest in such a fashion that the poor frightened sisters had to flee the country.

When I saw some of these poor sisters, they were in very poor health due to the ordeal they had suffered. But all this should not cause dismay; rather, from this we should always take new courage. If today they do not want us in one country any more, we shall go to another, shaking the dust from our shoes just like the apostles. [Mt. 10:14] Should we be expelled from the second, we may even return to the first, thus not abandoning the still great number of souls who yearn to benefit from the good which can be done. Meanwhile, since I had nothing to do in Ecuador for now, I satisfied myself with praying fervently to Blessed Marianna to look down from the heights of Quito where she lies, to protect her native land, so that there will be an end to the dominion of darkness, so that the light of truth, by which only recently it was well guided, will be seen again.

October 17. Having left Ecuador last night, we entered the waters of Peru and, at seven this morning, we were already entering the port of Paita. It looks like the land of desolation and at first sight, is heartbreaking. Not one plant, nor a blade of grass, nor a spring can be seen. It is surrounded by small, arid mountains, like a veritable desert. Yet, it is one of the most healthful ports, and many, even from Ecuador, come here to be cured of many illnesses, especially those related to the blood. In fact, one breathes an air so pure and mild that it truly soothes. The sea is tranquil in its cove, and they say that it never rages at this point, and it is such a beautiful shade of blue that it looks more like a piece of fallen sky than a treacherous sea. For us, it could not have been more beautiful and special. While we were looking around to distinguish a steeple toward

which we could direct our gaze and our heart to the Blessed Sacrament, a flock of the whitest birds came to hover playfully around us, emitting certain sounds, as though they wanted to tell us something. M. Chiara broke the silence saying, "Oh, Mother, what could this be?" "They have come to invite us to these countries, as they did in Panama three years before we went there. When we can, we will come."

As we conversed in this manner, enjoying ourselves talking to the birds, a venerable priest boarded who quickly approached us. After we exchanged greetings he asked about our destination. Without further ado he said, "This is your place. I will conduct you to a nearby city where you will open a beautiful mission. I am going to arrange your disembarking." It took a great effort to convince him that I could not stop at this time, but that if the Sacred Heart of Jesus willed it, I would come later. He was disappointed and departed. After a short time we saw him return, but with reinforcements: the prefect, the mayor and other respectable gentlemen accompanied him. He renewed the assault with a thousand promises, talking about stipends and who knows what else. For a moment it almost seemed to me like a bargaining session, the kind that takes place when ships stop in ports, only this time it was to bargain for sisters. However, their ardent pleas and great desire to provide their citizens a solid education founded on pure, religious sentiments, completely assured me of their good, holy intentions. In spite of all this, I replied as before. They had to be satisfied with a mutual exchange of addresses so that later what they anxiously desired could be accomplished.

But, meantime, two feast days have passed, that of Saint Teresa the other day, and today, Blessed Margaret, without Mass or Communion. If we did not have the comfort of prayer, a long journey like this one would be truly unbearable. What a beautiful gift is prayer! It is the veritable treasure of our souls, for by it we can offer God a perfect cult of adoration. Prayer is the channel through which the precious waters of grace flow to us, constantly and abundantly, from the loving Heart of God. These are precious waters, daughters, because while they sanctify us, they also gladden the Church, whose worthy daughters we daily strive to be. Prayer is never useless; its spirit has power to penetrate everywhere. Where there is misery or poverty, prayer brings life, grace, comfort and health. Its zeal is that of an angel of the Lord. Its action is greater than a raging fire, swift as the thoughts of a cherubin.

The spirit of prayer knows no obstacles, brooks no delays, despises all danger. Its end is always the glory of God, and the promotion of Christ's interests, the extension of His reign, our personal holiness, and the sanctification of our neighbor. Oh, daughters, what happiness! I go about accompanied by this great means, this powerful resource of prayer. I am, therefore, the happiest person, even among the foaming waves of the sea! And you, daughters, pray, pray always, and incessantly invoke the spirit of prayer that must form your happiness. But what is the spirit of prayer? It is to pray according to the spirit of Jesus, to be animated by His prayerful spirit, to pray

in Jesus and with Jesus. The spirit of prayer means praying according to His divine pleasure, to desire all that Jesus desires and to want nothing not pleasing to Him. It means keeping our spirit always intent on prayer, every time and every place: working, walking, eating, speaking, in suffering, and in joy to pray habitually and always.

October 20. On the 18th we had two stops; one at Puerto Eten and the other at Pacasmayo, and yesterday morning at one named Salaverry. We are still here, even though to judge by its appearance and facilities, it does not seem to be a very important port. They have loaded on much cargo here: sugar, cocoa, rice, and cotton, which form the wealth of this region, not to speak of the mines of gold and other metals that abound in Peru, although not as before. However, now Peru has another rich product, natural guano, the manure of sea birds. All the coastline from Ecuador to Chile, be it plains or mountainous, is all one desert, not a blade of grass, nor a plant or hint of vegetation is seen. It cannot be cultivated, because rain falls only once in every five to seven years. Meanwhile, providentially, millions of birds deposit their droppings in specific places where large quantities accumulate, from which guano is produced, valued throughout the world as a high-grade fertilizer.

At home, when an object is held in esteem or considered valuable, it is usually said to be worth a Peru. In fact, Peru is very wealthy, but, seeing it from the Pacific coast, one would certainly not be inspired to use it as an example of a precious object, but would be more likely to compare Peru to something ugly and dismal.

We have seen some ingenious inventions in these regions. The sea is so turbulent that it is not always possible to come in from the small boats up to the ladder of the ship. So, how do they get passengers on board? It is curious and truly ridiculous. They take an upright barrel with one side cut out, accommodate the person in it, suspend it from the chain that is used to load merchandise, pull it up high and then lower the passenger on board. Meanwhile, the poor creature, suspended between sky and water, must feel not a little fear. This is obvious by the way, not only the women but also the men, grasp the chain and cord tightly with all their might and huddle in the barrel. When their suspension ride is over and their feet are firmly planted on the ship, they seem as in a trance, not certain that their ordeal is over.

Yesterday an intruder sneaked on board, taking advantage of the boats loading cargo. As soon as the expert officers who guide this ship noticed him, they forthwith enjoined him to return to the boat from which he came. He had contrived to climb aboard with a great deal of effort, but now he was unable to descend as easily. They fastened him to the chain like a sack and with a hoist lowered him to the boat. He must have been accustomed to this, because he seemed fresh as a rose.

This port of Salaverry is so important that we were held up for two days to handle all the cargo. But it is as inconvenient as it is important. A few years ago, a large pier was built that

greatly facilitated the embarkation. When the work was completed and they had just begun to experience its convenience, a severe storm arose. The waves were so strong that they completely destroyed the pier. Not a trace was left of so much work and expense, and they decided not to rebuild it a second time. Here the sea is always troubled and swollen. It strikes with such vehemence against the rocks of these high, arid mountains that it is terrifying to see. They transport the merchandise to the ship in huge, heavy boats, but even these sometimes seem to submerge, as mountainous waves sweep over them and often hide them from sight. We are left in dread suspense until we see them rise again on the swollen waves. They go back and forth, often rocking from right to left as if to capsize, even though they are manned by ten robust oarsmen, armed with long, broad oars, while another with an even larger oar, works with all his might, steering from the stern. Others come on "balsas," primitive rafts which are like boards, made of huge, tall, thick balsa trees, light and spongy like cork, very resistant to water. Bags of charcoal, used extensively in this area, are the most common item transported on these balsa rafts. They say that this method of transportation is much safer than any launch. To be honest, I would not entrust myself to one so easily, unless it were for the sake of obedience, which alone causes all fear to disappear [Sir. 2:15], to be replaced by great faith in one's safety.

Obedience, oh cherished word! Obedience, revealed word, ray of living light descending on us from the Father of Light [Rom. 16:19], manifestation of the divine will by means of God's representatives on earth. [1 Pet. 1:28] The one who knows that she is doing God's will feels great peace, experiences a foretaste of heavenly joy in her soul. What joy, oh daughters, for us who live in the religious state or under holy obedience, certain that we are truly, actually, continually doing God's will. *Ego quae placit sunt ei facio semper* [Jn. 8:29; I always do what pleases Him.] The one who lives by obedience travels the secure path because [Jn. 5:30] in obedience there are no errors, deceptions, delusions or darkness. Obedient souls are the delight of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, who has declared that His treasures are always open for these faithful, beloved spouses of His. He makes them the dispensers of His treasures both in heaven and on earth. Daughters, do you love Jesus? [Jn. 4:34] Do you want to be His faithful spouses? Love obedience and obey always for Jesus' sake. Every command will be easy for you who trust in holy obedience.

Only in obedience will you recognize the safety of your steps [Mt. 7:21], the firmness of your work and the strength of your spirit. In this way, you will not only walk, but fly, like royal eagles along the path of the most robust virtues. Your life will always be peaceful and happy, always being able to repeat to yourself, "I am sure of doing God's will." Remember that no one became a saint without obedience. As a matter of fact, the favorite virtue of all the saints was obedience. Do not do things by halves, oh daughters, but let your obedience be complete and perfect like that of Jesus. First of all, in carrying out an order, fulfill all that was requested by the superior completely, promptly and joyfully [Jn. 6:38]. Secondly, submit your will to that of the superior.

Thirdly, conform your judgment to that of the superior. Let your lives, oh daughters, be an uninterrupted fabric of obedience, certain that this virtue renders perfect even the most indifferent acts and is an excellent way to pay our debts. Which of you, oh daughters, has not incurred debts with God in the course of her life? The surest way of paying them is by living a life of perfect obedience, which has more value than any penance you can imagine. *Melior est obedientia quam victimae* [1 Sm. 15:22; obedience is better than sacrifice.]

October 25. Always late, we arrive at Callao only on the morning of the 22nd. I arose at four and awakened M. Chiara at a quarter after five, so she could dress in the hope of being able to go ashore at six and immediately take a train to Lima to complete our pilgrimage and to fulfill our vow of receiving communion at the grave of Saint Rose. Our hopes soon vanished, since at seven-thirty customs officers had not arrived and no one could leave before their visit. Not even the small boats were allowed near the ship, without incurring a substantial fine. They finally arrived but, to our great disappointment, we learned that the next train to Lima did not leave until after nine. What were we to do? M. Chiara had battled with the waves long enough and did not feel she could keep on fasting much longer. Whatever the cost, I did not want to miss receiving communion in honor of Saint Rose, as I had promised. I had made many pacts with her and had entrusted to her the remainder of our trip and the work that I was to undertake. I could easily fast since I had not battled but only played with the waves, delighting in their powerlessness, in the shattering of their proud, surging billows and their frequent rising like foam or smoke, often resembling part of Niagara Falls, which I saw three years ago, near Buffalo in the United States.

We took the train and arrived in Lima by ten o'clock, where we hired a carriage, and were soon at the Dominican church, where we were able to fulfill our devotions. At the altar where I received Communion there was above the tabernacle an image of the Divine Infant with open arms and a truly heavenly smile of extraordinary beauty. He seemed to fix His gaze on me and say, "I was waiting for you here to favor you through the merits of My beloved Rose, whom you have come to honor." The Holy Infant's vivid glances penetrated my very being. So great was the relief I experienced that it made me forget I was still fasting. Before I knew it, it was one past meridian, without my having taken even a cup of coffee.

If Jesus so rewards a small sacrifice made for His love, what will he not do for truly faithful souls? Jesus, this divine sun, [Jn. 2:5+] is not outside the faithful soul, but within her, residing in her as on a throne of love. The uncreated light of Jesus penetrates the soul in every sense and manner, according to her dispositions, especially of humility, purity and charity. The soul finds herself before this divine light like a seraphim, filled with amazement and loving admiration. All her faculties, without her being aware, are wholly recollected in a sacred silence. In such a state

of heavenly peace and serenity, she desires nothing other than to please more and more her beloved Jesus. She delights only in Him and takes pleasure in His infinite happiness and beatitude.

The mindful prayers of this soul ascend like a sweet odor [Ps. 141:2] to the Heart of Jesus, who has already taught her how to pray. The soul before this divine sun is in a continual, loving ecstasy. Yet, she lives in the world and of necessity works in it, always seeking new means to procure the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Her life is closed and perfectly buried in the Heart of Jesus. The Heart of Jesus, to a soul faithful to her consecration, is like an unalterable sun aiming divine rays toward her, lighting her path in the ways of justice and holiness. Even one ray within her continues to multiply its effect gently and powerfully. At times, the mind is so admirably enlightened that the pen cannot write what the mind sees. [2 Cor. 12:4] This Divine Lover becomes the teacher of the loving, faithful soul, and always guides all her steps, consoling her with His gentle, loving, saving light. Oh, most gentle light! The soul, having once seen this sweet light of the Heart of Jesus, does not know how to detach herself from His action and influence, feeling herself gently drawn toward this sun, identified and bound to it. In this state, the soul finds herself as in its center. She fears nothing, hopes for every grace and loves her Beloved with perfect love. As if beside herself with heavenly joy, she goes about exclaiming, "Happy the soul who is rooted in and upheld by You, my Beloved, for not expecting anything from the hands of men. Blessed is she, a hundred times blessed, is she who begins everything from You and in You." Blessed is the soul who builds her life on this cornerstone [Ps. 118:22], the Heart of Jesus. Her edifice will certainly not collapse when the winds of tribulations, temptations and passions blow. Unmoved, it will rise up to the presence of the supreme God. So let us also begin, oh daughters, with humble trust in Jesus. Leaning on His Divine Heart, we shall grow, through His grace, in Him and with Him and so crown our days in His most gentle love which will envelop us for all eternity.

But let us return to Lima, to the large Dominican basilica. After Holy Communion, the Reverend Fathers had someone guide us to visit the altars, beginning with the one at which is venerated the head of Saint Rose in a silver urn, placed upon a larger urn in which reposes the ashes of Blessed Martin de Porres. The altars are all adorned with large statues, some of which are truly beautiful, such lifelike representations of the saints that they seem to speak to you. But among the others are some that are truly grotesque, not becoming the holy place, especially those dressed inappropriately. For the most part, these are dressed by special devotees, who adorn them according to their taste and tribal customs. You can imagine how certain Indians love to dress the saints, especially those whom no one has influenced to change their style of dress. When the male or female saint is dressed to their taste and, moreover, has the same skin color as theirs, they bestow on the saint much love and devotion, while they favor the others less.

Leaving the church, we saw many women, one by one, place an index finger on a lead seal propped against the opening of a lead pipe emerging from a pillar supporting the holy water basin. They prayed devoutly as they held their finger there. I asked what they were doing. A woman, astonished at our ignorance replied, "My, how is it that you do not know that this is authentic, from Rome? When we place a finger here and pray one Our Father, a soul is freed from purgatory." Not to astound those good people more, I was silent. When it was my turn, I too placed my index finger on the spot and said an Our Father in good faith for the holy souls in purgatory. To tell the truth, I never saw anything like it in Rome, and when I return there in a few months, I will try to verify this devotion, which I have encountered for the first time in my voyages.

But we were not content with paying homage only to the head of Saint Rose, so the guide recommended that we go to Sta. Rosa de los Padres, to find the rest of the relics. We took the way he showed us and, in a short time, arrived at the designated place, where there is a beautiful new church, well kept and conducive to devotion. With great care, the good sacristan showed us all the saint's relics, which are venerated at different altars. In a well-enclosed chapel, there is a large crucifix on the altar and, under the mensa in a beautiful casket, are the ashes of Saint Rose. The crucifix is the same one the saint had in her home. On either side there are two glass containers, each holding an arm of the saint. On another altar, we saw a wooden cross on which she used to lie face downward in prayer. When she was not suffering other crucifixions, those of the spirit, she would frequently ask to be tied to it so that she could more closely imitate her Spouse. The crucifixions of the spirit, if they are true and substantial, well serve to purify souls and unite them always more intimately to their Beloved. This is what Saint Rose had to suffer for a long time. At another altar, we saw the hair shirts, the disciplines, the instruments of her penance, and a framed letter in her handwriting. On this same altar there is a painting of rare beauty, ravishing the soul on sight, depicting Mary with the Infant in her arms. They say that this may be the Infant who gave Saint Rose the mystical wedding ring, and to whom she always went for advice before doing anything.

The sacristan then took us to see where the house of Saint Rose was located, adjacent to the church we visited. It is a spacious area, on which are the foundations of a large church in the shape of a Latin cross. When the tall, strong, ornate pillars and the strong walls had reached the cornice, a terrible revolution broke out, putting the city of Lima in turmoil. Religious were mistreated, many were exiled, and a great number of convents were reduced to ruins. From then until now, there was no further consideration given to continuing the stupendous work. It is truly a pity because it would readily become a celebrated shrine. The Saint's well, which corresponds to the center of the church, still exists. The grotto in the garden where she withdrew to pray corresponds to one side of the choir. There are also those precious relics already mentioned above, others which I do not remember well, and those in the various convents of the sisters.

Having satisfied our devotion toward the saint, we went to visit the Apostolic Nuncio, Monsignor Macchi, who welcomed us with much kindness. He fully agreed with the reason for our visit, and gave us a warm recommendation for the manager of the South American Steamship Company to obtain the lowest fare possible. We discussed our trip, and he gave me instructions to stop in some cities to take care of some affairs concerning our missions. He knows all the coastline well as far as Valparaiso, having made this trip precisely on the same ship, to visit Monsignor Casanova, Archbishop of Santiago. With the blessing and good wishes of this kind prelate, we went to visit another part of the city to be able to tell you something about it.

Lima is beautiful, if compared to the South and Central American cities I have visited until now. But more beautiful than the rest I cannot say, even going about its best streets, which can be compared to those in the old part of the city of New Orleans in the United States, inhabited by the lowest class of that great city. We saw beauty only upon entering Saint Peter's. Oh, yes, Saint Peter's, if one wishes, may be compared to other churches in Genoa! It seems as if grotesque statuary was banished from there, and it is kept with order, decency and also with a certain richness. It was after one o'clock when we entered St. Peter's, and they were celebrating Mass, which we heard with pleasure, after a long fast of ten days of being deprived of the Blessed Sacrament. The architecture is splendid, a different style, with rich and varied marble. Cloths richly embroidered in fine gold covered the altars. Statues of saints abound even here, but they are beautiful and seem alive and are all arranged in fine order. It was the eighth day of the octave of our dear Blessed Margaret Alacoque. At the side of the main altar there was a temporary altar in her honor. It was well decorated with a profusion of lilies and roses, placed against a backdrop of delicate pink gauze highlighting the lilies, which seemed to form a tent over Blessed Margaret. Dear Margaret stood there, in the midst of that fragrant garden, which clearly spoke to us of the beautiful virtues of her life. How it pleased me to see her on that triumphal altar truly suited to the virgin whom Jesus, in His goodness, preordained from eremity to establish and spread devotion to His Sacred Heart, after showing her the joyous marvels of piety, mercy, power and love!

How fitting it is for you, oh daughters, who do battle under the precious title of Missionaries of the Sacred Heart, to have Blessed Margaret for your special protectress. The dear virgin, worthy daughter of the Salesian, corresponded with such rare fidelity to the loving designs of her heavenly Spouse. With such ardent, generous zeal she fulfilled her mission, drawing the admiration of heaven and earth. No words can express how much she worked and suffered in order to spread such a dear, healthy devotion. The devil, who well knew the incomparable advantages this devotion would work among the people of all nations, moved against our dear little virgin protectress with all satanic vehemence, so that by human standards it seemed impossible to overcome and conquer him.

But truly faithful and loving souls are not discouraged. Thus our Margaret, knowing that the work she was chosen to establish came from heaven, lost neither her confidence nor her courage.

Completely abandoned to the infinite mercy of her beloved Jesus, like a true, strong Missionary, with luminous and generous charity, she knew how to triumph over all obstacles and was rewarded by seeing the Sacred Heart of Jesus known, loved and glorified by a great number of devotees before her death. As a reward for such generous action, Blessed Margaret Mary now contemplates in heaven the beauty of the Divine Heart of Jesus, enjoying peace, joy and sovereign delights. She can talk to Him openly at any moment, can implore and obtain even prodigious graces. She will certainly implore them for you if you honor her as your true protectress, but more so if you imitate her. From heaven, as she contemplates the sight of what your charity accomplishes in continuing the mission that she exercised on earth with immense benefit to souls, she will console you with her powerful intercession and present your fervent prayers to the throne of God. As a reward for your zeal, she will place all of you in the loving shelter of the Heart of Jesus and obtain for you the grace to live, as she did, a life of humility, meekness, obedience, sacrifice and love.

Blessed are you, oh daughters. Do not forget that you are truly fortunate to have the pure virgin Margaret Mary as a special protectress, the soul most dear to the Heart of Jesus. Through her intercession and merits, you can make rapid progress in the way of perfection, console the Heart of Jesus, make Him known and loved, as is your obligation, and thus assure for yourselves those treasures of grace of which He is the everlasting and inexhaustible source. Also, be certain that having this seraphim of love as a special advocate in life, you will have her also at the difficult moment of death. She herself will accompany you to heaven, and lead you by the hand to place that longed-for kiss of love on the Heart of Jesus, which will immerse you for all eternity in the torrent of His infinite delights.

In St. Peter's, we found the reverend fathers of the Society of Jesus, who administered it with much decorum. Certainly, it is owing to them that we found there something truly European. One of the Fathers told us to visit the Madames of the Sacred Heart, where we would get some rest. They have a government school, in a very beautiful house adjoining Saint Peter's. Years ago, before the great revolution upset everything, it belonged to the Jesuits, who operated there a very renowned school and novitiate. Now, instead, they have a much smaller house in front of the Madames' school. In time, it will doubtless be enlarged, since they have the sons of the leading families in the schools.

The Superior of the Madames of the Sacred Heart welcomed us most cordially. While the sisters prepared some refreshments for us, she gave us a tour of the whole house, which is truly fine and well adapted for the orderly division of the different levels of students who attend. The good Mothers wanted us to stay at least overnight, but I could not stay there in peace, since I still had to travel a distance to Callao to arrange the rest of our trip. I would have wanted to see the cathedral, but was dissuaded because they said it is as ugly outside as inside. The exterior looks like

ruins because of the rounds of ammunition fired at it. And why is that? This is the reason: during revolutions, the cathedral of a city becomes a target; the first of the two opposing parties who gain possession of it is the victor. Perhaps their intentions may be holy, that is, that of declaring the winner the one who has the good fortune to capture the sanctuary. But, in the meantime, they damage the temple of God, and ruin even the most beautiful monuments. They define themselves as *adelantados mucho*, which means very civilized, but, in truth, certain of their customs and manners are still those of primitive Indians.

It is lovely to see the women who have not yet learned to dress according to the latest fashion. They cover themselves with a long, wide shawl serving as head covering and mantle, but I cannot explain how they wear it. Some fasten it over one shoulder and others in the back. Then, those who have adopted the latest styles seem like so many Parisians, as they flaunt silks, velvets, ribbons and feathers, forming a garden when a group of them are together.

I liked the custom of having the daily Mass at one in the afternoon in all the big churches, where many men and women assist with a devotion truly edifying. There is a society in Lima especially for the purpose of maintaining the cost of these Masses celebrated at a late hour. In Lima there is a fairly respectable colony of Italians who are well liked. However, a few days ago, they have been looked upon a bit unfavorably because some fanatics wanted to celebrate the feast of the 20th of September with enough solemnity to cause a bit of uproar in the city. The president of Peru, a resident of Lima, has also lost some esteem for having allowed the Italians to raise their flag on that day, making their festival so public.

Most of the Peruvians are openly Catholic, and can tolerate none of those things that directly or indirectly harm the august person of the Holy Father. What these Italians call the great event of Italian unity is, instead, the cause of her disorder, which is dividing her and seems to be dissolving her. The 20th of September is a mark of shame for Italy. May God grant that her fate will soon change so that as before we can travel with our heads held high and not be ashamed of being children of a nation that has always been great. Even today it could excel all others, not only in intelligence, industry, arts and science, but more so for having the Vicar of Christ, the universal leader of all Catholics, dwelling in her midst. Yes, the Pope is the glory of all of us Italians. The glory of Italy will find its source in the good treatment it will give to the Venerable One of the Vatican.

Toward evening, we returned to Callao, where our steamer, the *Mapocho*, had already entered the dock, so that we could board without having to go on a boat. The officers and servers were waiting for us as though we were dear family members, and eagerly surrounded us to inquire how we liked Lima, how our trip went, etc. The next day, the captain accompanied us to the company's office and spoke so convincingly with Mr. MacKennie, the superintendent in Callao, and with the English home office, with whom they must always remain in accord, that he obtained

for us a thirty-three percent fare reduction. We, who could not harbor any pretensions, were well satisfied, but not so the good captain. He said that on arrival in Valparaiso, he would introduce us to the general agent, in the hope that the agent will grant us at least fifty percent, because he said he has a deep respect for our life of sacrifice, which merits every consideration. This is how he feels, because he has a very noble and generous heart. Unfortunately, not all are like him, nor can we expect them to be, desirable as it may be. Callao is a very important port with a large, powerful dock that encloses arriving ships and is only opened to those permitted to depart.

October 29. From the fifteenth until today, after leaving Guayaquil, we have always traveled along a dry, sandy beach. If we were not sure of being in the waters of the Pacific, we would have thought we were condemned to travel the great Arabian desert. Not a tree nor blade of grass is to be seen, but some varieties of rocks. The last two days we have been coasting along certain steep mountains, all the same height, that seem like a long, extended wall, interrupted only by some valleys, which some waterfalls coming from the Andes irrigate, refresh and make green again. These falls rush into the sea, where they form fresh water streams that eventually must succumb to the force of formidable waves and mix with the salt water. In these valleys, towns and cities arise from which vegetables and fruits are exported to the dry areas, where people are unable to cultivate even a garden and their many efforts have not succeeded in keeping alive one tree. This occurs especially in Chala and Antofagasta, where the mountains contain much potassium nitrate, which evaporates and rises during the day and then falls down at night in the form of a thick mist, burning all vegetation.

We are now coasting along these great walls rising like impregnable fortresses. They frequently take the form of a mountain whose slope seems to extend itself like a mantle, ending in a scarcely perceptible bay. Here and there, a town appears with a port where many ships, especially with sails, lie in the harbor for entire weeks to load a cargo of potassium nitrate to transport to Europe. If steamers, they will go by way of the Straits of Magellan. If sailing vessels, they will go by way of Cape Horn, a voyage of about four months. This is the potassium nitrate widely used in Europe to fertilize the soil. The familiar saying well applies here, because, giving us the soft part of the bread, these towns are left with the crust, always in dryness. Yet, the proverb does not apply to the purse, because this is where everyone profits great by the many mines of gold, copper, iron and potassium nitrate and from processed guano.

During these days, we have docked in sixteen ports: Guayaquil, Tumbes, Paita, Pimental, Eten, Pacasmayo, Salaverry, Callao, Tambo de Mora, Pisco, Chala, Quilca, Millendo, Ilo, Arica and Pisagua. What a sight it is to see the train in the mining towns winding around the cliffs that undergird the snaky lines! At some points, they also have funicular railways; so great is the height and so steep the incline. But, disasters are very frequent there because distances from top

to bottom are not always understood. Missing their timing adventurers fall headlong, creating always new victims. Yet, this never stops avid enthusiasts from continuing the task of seeking the treasures buried there.

These high mountains are called small hills by the natives, and so they are, compared to the Cordilleras of the Andes. Similarly, in our country the hills of the Piedmont would be so called, compared to the highest peaks of the Alps and the Appenines. To reach the Andes one must cross all this desert, which extends for nine or more miles. In themselves, the Cordilleras are awesome and highly impressive. Beginning outside of the islands of Diego Ramirez, southwest of Cape Horn, they enter South America by way of Patagonia and run northward, forming a reef first around the Pacific Ocean, whose waters at frequent intervals penetrate the Cordilleras, forming deep bays. At this point, however, the Andes are not yet high, measuring only from two to three thousand feet at their lowest height to nine thousand at the highest. Entering Chile, the chain begins to get higher until it reaches its highest peak in Bolivia, where peak Mt. Aconcagua, which is twenty-three or twenty-four thousand feet above sea level (6,960 m.) can be admired. At heights of twelve to fourteen thousand feet, these formidable Cordilleras continue through Bolivia and Peru, where frequently from these heights rise other elevations or peaks, with perpetual snow. There are occasional passes through the mountains established for communication between countries. At this point the lowest pass is sixteen thousand feet above sea level.

At this height, there are extensive plateaus, like wide plains, since the Cordilleras are four hundred miles wide. The famous Lake Titicaca, the highest lake in the world, is on one of these plateaus. The Cordillera continues along the Peruvian coast. Nearing the equator, there is a concentration of very high volcanoes, famous among which are Chimborazo and Cotopaxi. There one can admire certain peaks that seem to touch the sky and very often seem cut by the clouds, or reduced to evaporation. Then the Cordilleras separate into three chains: one descends westward and ends in the Antilles Sea with one of its branches at the foot of the Isthmus; the other through the center which is united with the first and enters in the land of the Antilles; and one follows a northeasterly direction surrounding the eastern end of the Orinoco River entering into Venezuela, ending at the coast of the Antilles Sea. They say that the burning mass boiling in the depth of the earth has its major furnace along the Pacific coast near the equator. Those on the isthmus say that the mouth of the inner fire that is, hell, is in Panama, just as from there the soul not immersed too much in earthly things goes straight to heaven. Otherwise, by its very weight it will plunge into the interior depths where, among other evils, it will encounter gnashing of teeth.

There are active volcanoes throughout the length of the Andes. Cotopaxi, a forceful volcano near the equator, has spewed so much debris that it has built another mountain at its side. The mountains continue into Colombia, presenting to the eye graceful and impressive sights, and then enter Central America and Mexico, where from their heights, they release a volcanic force.

They continue in the western United States as the Rocky Mountains, cross into Alaska and reach Asia by way of the Aleutian Islands. In this way, they form a very strong, compact backbone from the Arctic to the Antarctic Oceans with the Pacific Ocean on the west. North of Asia, they branch off to the other side and throughout all the west is another volcanic chain that seems to lose itself in the ocean waves. It reappears then in Australia, with very singular and famous volcanoes, often crowned by fiery lakes. In this way, the Pacific Ocean is as if enclosed, east and west, by a continuous band of volcanic mountains.

I have described to you the course of the Andes because these good gentlemen, our fellow passengers, have been telling me much about them these days. Interesting themselves during our trip, and knowing that we must cross the Andes above Valparaiso, they speak to me about the Cordilleras, all of their points of interest, their beauty and the reasons for their fame. Often with the map at hand, I seem to touch with my hands all the places they describe. Since I have to cross the Aconcagua, I will tell you more about it.

Meanwhile, it seems to me that the Cordilleras present a good lesson for the Missionary. They go around the whole world without fearing the terrors of the sea, the weather, unhealthy regions, etc. They preach unceasingly, as their majestic peaks are elevated to the sky or as they very humbly abase themselves even to hiding under the waves. In preaching, they produce from time to time fire, lava, thunder and lightning, adding force to the winds which lash in their gorges. In Boyacá, for example, and especially in Popayan, where we have been invited, it thunders fiercely everyday. The thunderbolts seem to threaten to reduce one to ashes, so that death is meditated with much ease, even when one is not in the purgative way of the Exercises.

October 31. From the other day until now, we have docked four times, at Iquique, Tocopilla, Cobija and Antofagasta. We were looking forward to arriving early in the morning at Iquique so that we could receive Communion. However, since the ship arrived a little late at Pesagua, the port captain would not receive it. We had to pass the night there and load and unload cargo and passengers the next morning. As a result, we arrived at Iquique in the evening, where the steamer took on fuel hurriedly and left, in order not to lose another day. We had enough time to disembark before sunset to carry a message to the bishop, as requested by the Apostolic Nuncio, Msgr. Macchi. Thus we did not lose the opportunity of knowing that worthy prelate, who is a true missionary in the midst of a population of twenty-five thousand inhabitants. At first he built a splendid church, inspiring great devotion. He has already laid the cornerstone for another that he plans to complete in six months, which is possible here, where everything is built out of wood. We visited the Blessed Sacrament, but in a bit of a hurry, because night was approaching and we did not feel like entrusting ourselves to the open, foaming waters of this port, rowing five miles to the ship on a small boat.

M. Chiara, to whom the trip seems so long, thought we were going on a mission to Africa. The water of the Pacific in this harbor is truly unusual. It takes on such a reddish color, giving the impression that blood is mixed with it. Perhaps it is a reminder of the fierce battles between Chile and Peru, which in 1880 claimed many victims, especially Peruvians, who were defeated and lost the richest part of their country. The Peruvians defended themselves on the formidable mountains that, like a wall, border the coast. The Chileans, surrounding them with their proverbial land and sea forces, closed in on them at the coast, tossing horses and riders into the waves, which received them with such precipitous splashes that they were plunged to a depth which here reaches several miles. The Peruvians could not even salvage their combatants' ashes.

Liquique, with its wide, straight streets, is attractive because of its fine houses, not too tall, its many well-kept stores, especially those owned by a good number of Italians, who have already achieved a comfortable and respectable status. But no matter how far to the left or right one gazes, not a plant, neither wild nor cultivated, nor even a blade of grass is seen. The ground at that point is all rock, and the surrounding mountains all potassium nitrate. There are no streams or wells in sight. Water for daily needs is brought in by boat, a day's distance away. Also grains, flour, fruit, vegetables, wine, oil, sugar, coffee, forage for livestock, in short, everything imaginable must come by sea from other places. You can imagine how much it costs to live in this city. Fortunately, it is inhabited by many rich people. The poor are very well paid for their services so that everyone lives well, as if their land were productive. What is lacking is the pleasure of seeing green vegetation, which is a great thing. The air is good, although the natives of the country do not have a long life. It is said that those from other areas, if they are not very robust, gradually dry up.

Yet, considering all this, Satan's emissaries did not fail to penetrate here and do grave harm. How is it that Satan's emissaries are less fearful of dangers than those of Christ! We reflect on this only to our humiliation. Often we weigh safety and danger and give priority to these rather than to God's service, the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Since Panama, we had on board a Protestant minister, one of those who are believed to be the most dangerous. They are Irishmen from the Western United States, who hate the good Eastern Irish Catholics and have become ministers as terrible and dangerous as those of the Masonic sect, who go here and there wherever their leaders send them to spread disbelief. This one came from Chicago and disembarked at Liquique.

On board, you should have seen with what satanic zeal he tried to convert now one youth, now another, with every sort of insidious trick. He stayed up with one until midnight to preach his falsehoods. Luckily, the next day that youth, with the others ridiculed the minister and, as they said, his nonsense. When the minister realized that they were making fun of him, he preached freedom of conscience, but even then all he did was heap coals on his head and final-

ly got nowhere, even though he went about zealously with his big Bible in hand and his diabolical interpretations. It ended with everyone ridiculing him and his wife, who also seems like a lady minister. This conclusion was consoling, since, instead of meeting simpletons and those who would drink in his doctrine, the minister encountered certain good Spanish-Americans who are excellent Catholics to the bone, who from infancy were raised in a sound, deep religion. But in Liquique where the persons who converge there because of its large and important mining industry practice freedom, lack of restraint and licentiousness, I very much fear a disaster. There is hope only in the zeal and strong heart of that bishop, who will do his utmost to remedy the situation.

See, daughters, how in every respect the times are most perilous to the faith, to our august religion and good morals. The emissaries of Satan, true apostles of unbelief and licentiousness, with the power of their free unbridled speech and all types of seductions and snares, scatter, not only in the cities but even in the most obscure villages, corrupt maxims, pernicious errors and doctrines condemned and censured by the Church. Truly, it seems as though diabolical forces have united against the Church with a satanic furor to do battle and persecute the Church, her doctrine, morals, laws, cult, ministers and all that she holds holy and venerable. Meanwhile, the weak, the tepid, and especially the imprudent, drink from the poisonous fountain of error the fatal maxims that pervert minds, and corrupt hearts, miserably dragging innumerable souls to eternal perdition. One cannot help weeping with pain and dread, witnessing this ruthless war the devil wages unceasingly against our august and holy religion, and to tremble at the frightening fate in store for future generations if God does not soon offer the effective remedy, which must be as extraordinary as the evils which presently afflict society and the Church.

Having resumed the journey and after having docked at several ports, we arrived at Antofagasta, an important stop for the merchants of Sucre and Potosi in Bolivia. It was a fine morning, and our desire to receive Holy Communion helped us to overcome the dangers and force of the foaming waves, threatened to sink the boat at every movement of the oars. Antofagasta is a beautiful, rapidly growing new city, with fine edifices, squares and promenades. It has a splendid church, truly lovely, with an environment helpful to prayer and recollection. The Mass was ending as we arrived and another began immediately, just for us, so that we could receive Communion and be restored a bit after the long fast we have been compelled to undergo. When we finished our devotions, we visited the pastor, a very pious and zealous priest, who welcomed us warmly, thinking we had come to start a mission. When he learned our itinerary, he was greatly disappointed, and took information about our schools in the hope of having us there some day. We also stopped at Tocopilla, Cobija, Taltal, Caldera, Cannigal, and finally Coquimbo, where we spent almost a day, enjoying very much finally seeing some green after so many days of coasting along dry, arid shores where at night we were not even able to enjoy a

healthful sea air because it was driven off by a fog that rises from that land full of potassium nitrate. That fog then descends like a very fine rain which, instead of restoring, dries everything: all the plants in its path, even the exotic ones, and the very inhabitants, who in this region can't have a long life. At Coquimbo, we encountered late spring and from Serena, the nearby city renowned in Chile, delicious fruit in abundance: peaches, pears, figs, watermelon, melons. There was everything one could desire, not only in spring but also in summer and autumn, except the grapes, which even there ripen only once a season, in the month of January, when it is full summer there while we freeze like the crows in Lombardy.

Our steamer, the *Mapocho*, finally headed toward its last stop on the morning after we entered the port of Valparaiso. After having passed through that long desert, it seemed to us the valley of paradise. What a magnificent port! It resembles the one in Genoa, very favored by nature. The city seems charming, and sprawls enough to look larger than it is, because it is built on the slope of a hill, or better said, at the foot of the Cordilleras. It is rather steep, so that traveling from the lower part of the city, which consists of a straight row of houses, one ascends to the upper part by a funicular railway resembling a residential elevator. Looking out its small windows, we can see that we are going up a steep precipice. M. Chiara closed her eyes to avoid getting dizzy.

As soon as we arrived in Valparaiso, we went to visit Mr. Emilio Escobar, one of the leading men to whom we had been recommended. We found sorrow and desolation in that family because Mr. Escobar was seriously ill and they feared for his life. Nearly all the relatives who had come to help and comfort him were ill also. As sick as he was, Mr. Escobar wanted to see me and interested himself in us. He sent us to the excellent pastor, Father Manero, who recommended us to the Religious of the Sacred Heart, who have a fine school there. They welcomed us like their own sisters and would not have wanted us to leave again. Yet we had to claim our baggage from the boat and arrange for our trip across the Cordilleras.

We next went to see Mr. Severin, another gentleman to whom we had been recommended. There we found Mr. Santiago, who courteously and quickly took care of transferring our baggage, storing it in his place of business until the right time to ship it to Buenos Aires. Since his family was in Santiago, he asked us to go there to meet them and tour the city, which was worth seeing. The good sisters also said the same, and at once wrote to their sisters in Santiago to prepare a place for us. Four days later, we were already on the train, riding past a good stretch of the magnificent coast, very much like that of Genoa's west coast. Then we passed through attractive vacation spots, then entered the mountains, always at the base of the high Cordilleras, and through extended grasslands. In four hours, we arrived in Santiago, where we directed our steps quickly to the convent as though it were our own home, and were truly received very warmly.

The next day we went to visit the archbishop, His Excellency, Msgr. Marrano Casanova, a man respected throughout the republic. He received us with great kindness. He believed that we

had gone there to establish a foundation. When he heard of my intention of departing at once for Buenos Aires, where I was expected, he adopted a loud, authoritative tone. "What! You want to go, when you have barely come! After your long trip you must rest a bit. Stay here a few months to know the city well, in order to return as early as possible to establish a foundation." As much as those words pleased me, they were yet a thorn in my heart, in considering that so much of my time was lost in traveling, while I have so many affairs to conclude and time is flying so fast.

But it is useless to worry about it, because the Cordilleras Crossing Company cannot give us passage, since the pass was completely closed by the high snow reaching as much as three meters in height. They say that the steep and difficult pass will not be opened before the end of November. What are we to do? We need patience. Since nothing happens by chance but all is disposed by Divine Providence, I think that God has His own designs which require that I stay here and become well acquainted with the remarkable republic of Chile. We are getting to know it very well because of the good sisters and the Severin family, who come nearly every day to take us in their carriage.

Santiago is beautiful and interesting! It has marvelous churches, attractive buildings, beautiful plazas and magnificent gardens with every sort of plant from all climates and from every nation, and a zoo with an aquarium. The inhabitants are lively with open, robust and energetic character, loving progress to excess. When we showed them our various programs of study and outlined the regimen and education of our schools, they tried to exert pressure for us to stay and open one there, assuring me that they would quickly fill it with students. Among others, a gentleman, highly placed in the government, who has a four-year-old daughter, told me, "Since you will not change your mind, and insist on going to Buenos Aires, go ahead. But if you do not return here within two years, during the next war that we have with Argentina we will come and take you prisoner and will not free you until you start a school here, because I want to send my daughter to it."

Twenty-five long days passed, truly drawn out for me, because I seemed to be there to lose time. It was finally announced that the pass through the Cordillera was opening for the first caravan to leave. Those ladies and those good sisters again tried to keep us back, saying that the first trip across the Andes is always dangerous. If bad weather takes us by surprise, we run the risk of dying among those mountainous precipices. For me, there was no reason valid enough. I felt ready to face the greatest hardship rather than endure the burden of involuntary rest. First, we went to the shrine of Saint Philomena, the wonder-worker, greatly venerated there. We received Communion at her altar and sincerely begged the saint to join with Saint Rose in protecting us. We were making our thanksgiving at the back of the shrine, near the altar where a representation of the saint being martyred is venerated. While I was absorbed in prayer, confiding all my

burdens and needs to the saint toward whom others have aroused in me so much trust, a low, gentle voice whispered above my head [*Esta es un pequeña limosnita de S. Filomena.*] As I was so immersed in prayer, I thought at first I imagined the voice and did not move. Then I heard the same voice repeat more gently the same words. I moved my head, raised my eyes and saw a hand moving down toward mine, placing in them some gold coins. I turned and saw it was that holy man, Canon D. Marchian Pereira, the custodian of the shrine, who kept repeating humbly, *Es pequeña, es pequeña, mas es Sta. Filomena que la da* [It's small, very small, but it's Saint Philomena who offers it.] and withdrew hurriedly. It was a sum equal to about one hundred lire that he felt inspired to give, without being asked. So we received it with more appreciation of the saint, who had already begun to favor us while we had not yet completed our prayer to her.

When we finished our thanksgiving, we went to thank the worthy canon, but he would not hear of it, saying that it was enough for him to know that we were missionaries. He gave us holy pictures and booklets and also devotional cords of the saint which those devoted to her wear at their sides. Then he took a small photograph of the wonder worker and asked, "Do you have a billfold?" He wanted to put the picture in it himself saying, "If you always keep it there, Mother, you will never lack money for all the needs of your Institute." Those words made a deep impression on me because, while he was saying them, he seemed inspired. You can imagine that I will always keep it as a precious relic.

On November 23, with large baskets of sweets, fruit, wine, palm honey, etc., and accompanied by various ladies and some sisters, we boarded the train that would take us to the town of Los Andes, at the foot of the Cordilleras, where we spent the night, to be ready on the 24th to continue our trip after attending Sunday Mass. At Los Andes, we were welcomed by a group of sisters called Hospitaliers who, having received advance notice of our arrival from the ladies in Santiago, welcomed us in a celebratory way and assigned us the best room in their poor convent. The next morning more sisters of the same Institute came from the nearby town to celebrate our crossing and to accompany us on the train to that height where the Chilean railway has been able to reach on those high mountains that, the more we advance in climbing them, the more it seems they want to oppress us by their immense, steep elevations.

That morning we satisfied our Sunday obligation and received our beloved Jesus in the Sacrament, who, like a valiant giant, was to take us across those rugged heights. We had a good breakfast that in the keen air, seemed to taste more delicious than usual. The pastor of the town blessed us and gave us his best wishes for our trip. We boarded the train at eleven in the company of a good number of those Hospitalier Sisters, who were reluctant to detach themselves from us. The train soon hurried along a river that originates in Aconcagua and runs between the mountain ranges. Pleasant, picturesque areas and also horrid scenes were presented for the fascination of the passengers. We went over a small bridge called the Soldier's Leap, which is much

feared by everyone. It is across a hollow between two mountains of solid rock, so narrow and so deep that all that can be seen is a great darkness from which the water is heard tumbling in a strange way. Whoever fell in would not see light again and no one would ever know the manner of his death.

It did not make a great impression on me, because it seemed that I had already seen other dangerous passes. But I was amused to see the impression it made on the sisters, to hear how enthusiastically they talked about it, both before and after the crossing, and how sorry they felt for us about the rest of the trip ahead of us. Shortly after this important crossing of the Soldier's Leap, the Transandine train stopped, and we stepped down to take our place in the various stagecoaches waiting to take on passengers. After helping us to get as comfortable as possible, those good sisters returned on the train.

With six good mules for each stagecoach, we climbed up amid those immense mountain ranges, always riding along the same river. From time to time there appeared only some natural pine trees of an austere, somber shade of green. Frequently we found the river very swollen and in several places the foaming waters with their milky spray roared fiercely. Farther up, it seemed as if we were going to be covered up by the mountain as part of it seemed to fall into the river. At some points, the heights were imposing. At the bottom, the river descended like a precipitous waterfall, then suddenly grew narrow like a small torrent. The river seemed to mount over the huge rocks and then widened again and bent in a thousand ways which we constantly had to follow faithfully, since the current was the only secure guide for the route. Finally, after having traveled like this for five hours or more, we reached Juncal, a hamlet of a few small houses in the midst of mountain peaks, which was to be our grand lodging for the night. Some had arrived earlier, others came later. Among us, we were forty-five passengers. Early tomorrow in a caravan, on the rumps of good mules we would cross the most difficult pass of the Cordilleras.

When our stagecoaches arrived, all ran to get a bed for the night. We also ran, M. Chiara and I, to the door of those hovels but others more experienced than ourselves had occupied all the places. Not knowing what to do, we then approached the one who was to lead the caravan the next day. Since he did not inspire too much confidence, we exercised the best worldly manners we knew. At first he was not very courteous toward us, but due to our persistence, his heart softened. Pointing the direction with his finger, he told us that farther along the mountain there were other rooms with more comfortable beds where he and his wife were going. If we went there after supper, we would be well accommodated. Shortly after, an elderly shepherd of kindly aspect, resembling Saint Joseph, came to us and said "I am one of the mulereers assigned to guide you both in the climb tomorrow. I also will go to sleep on the other side of the mountain, take courage." His good-natured attitude and serious demeanor reassured us and so we went to supper with a joyful spirit. We ate that rustic supper of badly cooked tough meat and hard black bread

as though they were exquisite foods. The air of that village and the trip had sharpened our appetites in an extraordinary manner. At table, all talked about tomorrow's climb. Some talked about the serious dangers we would meet, others about the difficulty in crossing the snow. Others spoke of the fear of the fog, which can be fatal, or of getting frostbite from the extreme cold encountered in some of the narrow passages. Others spoke about the air, which affects the eyesight and causes the skin to crack and bleed.

Truly, a gruesome description! If I must tell the truth, this discouraging picture inspired within me a deep sense of security and a secret joy: security because I felt that our good Jesus, who had blessed our voyage until now, would see us safely to the end; and joy because I thought that at last I would finally have something new to describe to you. It seemed to me that everything was old to me by now, after four long voyages in which I had seen and experienced a bit of everything. I was sorry that M. Chiara, hearing all this, would be disheartened. When I asked her, she answered the same way as in Valparaiso when I gave her the choice of going to Argentina either through the Strait of Magellan or across the Cordilleras: a hundred times the Cordilleras but not one more day at sea. So I said to myself all was well.

When our frugal supper was over, we took some air, under the glow of a very brilliant moon. The mountains seemed to touch the sky and seemed covered with a blue mantle by which they seemed to be lifted in a sublime ecstasy. The earth had the color of the sky and the two appeared to be one. The mountain tops, which were spotted with a darker shade of blue, gave us the idea of marvelous clouds going to greet their laughing queen. [Rev. 12:1] And in the moon that night, truly we really seemed to see represented the beauty of our heavenly Queen, our Mother Mary, *Pulchra ut luna* [beautiful as the moon], who came to console us with her motherly gaze. Whoever works and sweats in the vineyard of the Lord from morning to night is well remunerated if, at the end of the day, she receives only one loving glance from her, who, after God, is the joy of the blessed in heaven. We wanted to prepare our points for our prayer the next day, but they seemed to be prepared spontaneously for us. As we looked at the moon and the sky which seemed to envelop us, we seemed to hear Mary's sweet, soft voice blending with the most melodic voice of our dear Jesus, enrapturing us in an ecstasy of love. We seemed to see the purity and holiness of Mary and the pleasure of God in her.

Oh, what mildness, sweetness and joy there is in contemplating Mary, and seeing in her our most beloved Jesus! But night was approaching, and we needed to get some rest, even though we seemed to feel no need because of the air that filled our lungs so well. We abandoned ourselves to the care of our good Mother and her messengers, the angels especially assigned to pilgrims. Happy and peaceful, we headed toward the shacks on the far side of the mountain. At a certain point, we experienced shortness of breath. It seemed as if a heavy weight oppressed us, but we did not understand the reason. We saw the good, elderly shepherd, our Saint Joseph, hur-

rying toward us to tell us to quicken our pace because at that point there was the *puma*, a Spanish word meaning a lack of air or deficiency of breath. We hurried as we were told, and a minute later the air was as pure and elastic as before. A cruel joke indeed is that *puma* in those mountains, and if we had stopped there we could have died. But the silvery, sparkling moon kept shining and told us in its mute language that Mary was watching and protecting us with incomparable tenderness. On arrival at the lodging, we found what we truly never would have expected in the heart of those rugged mountains: fine, comfortable beds with clean linens for each one, which the old shepherd showed us with a certain air of satisfaction and contentment. He told us there was a key and a bolt so that we could lock ourselves in, but we should be at peace because he was sleeping in the stall next to the mules and would be ready if we ever needed him. As you can see, it was an admirable example of God's providence, and we truly slept in peace! But the night flew. At half-past three, we were already awakened by the noise of the muleteers preparing the mules and loading the baggage. We felt more tired now than last night, from the not-so-delicate bumps endured during our five-hour stagecoach ride. Nevertheless, we braced ourselves and rose at four, putting on a certain style of cloak: very long, made of brown cloth with ordinary fur pelts, a gift from some Chilean women of Santiago. We looked like two Capuchin Friars, but the cold was beginning to be felt in those gorges and the coats served us admirably.

We went down to the first building, where everyone was already having a breakfast of coffee with milk and dark, hard bread. We also took our portion and ate hurriedly, for everything was ready for the ascent. We went outside and saw two fine mules in the front line of the caravan with comfortable, new saddles on them. We thought they were for a stage singer and her companion, who were part of the caravan. But this time we did not guess correctly; the finest mules were assigned to us by the express order of the head of the Transandine Company of Santiago. As much as we appreciated the consideration shown us, we did not accept it too happily, since in this case we were to be the first ones to mount. Without previous experience, we would have very much preferred to see others mount first, so that we could learn this art, but it was not possible.

The Saint Joseph of the previous night, who was assigned as my guide, invited me without further ado to place my feet on his crossed hands and mount. Quite a scuffle ensued because I refused, and the whole caravan waited to see the outcome. The poor shepherd, always good and patient, entered the house and brought out the highest chair he could find to show it to me to use instead of his hands. I accepted this and was seated quickly in the saddle. With my feet in the stirrups, I took the reins and turned the mule, while the guide mounted his beast and went ahead to open the path. M. Chiara followed my example, and came up behind me led by another shepherd who, if he did not resemble Saint Joseph like the first one, was also very kind. All the others mounted with far less difficulty and the procession began.

The mountain was steep, but for about the first hour the path was comfortable and smooth. It was a pleasure and almost entertaining to see that long line of people, who seemed to be ascending with a sort of devotion. So much did it resemble a devout pilgrimage that I took my rosary in hand and was about to invite everyone to pray the rosary in honor of our heavenly Queen who had graced us with such a perfect day, certain that they all would have joined willingly. Many had already shown pleasure in having two religious in their company, feeling assured, in their goodness and deep faith, that they would have a safe trip across the Cordilleras. Soon enough my project vanished, because the bearn path disappeared and we had to make our own way across high piles of snow. Two of the muleteers ran ahead. Finding the pass possible, they shouted the signal for us to follow in their traces. We would no sooner get through one accumulated mountain of snow than there was another. I would try to keep my mule from getting too close to the edges of certain precipices, several kilometers deep, over which we often found ourselves. But the poor animal, who knew she had an inexperienced rider, would not obey me and kept going straight, no matter how hard I tried to pull either to the right or to the left. At times, she would hang her head and neck over the edge of the precipice, and I would yell at her and try talking to her in Spanish, but to no avail. The only way she would obey was if I acted as though I were about to alight, the only thing which seemed to displease her.

Those terrifying gorges made M. Chiara dizzy. No matter how much I told her to sit up straight, the poor dear could only slump down like a sack of flour with her head almost resting on the neck of the patient animal. Fortunately, the muleteers were good, incredibly good. Since under those difficult circumstances it is enough to look after one's self, I could be at peace, knowing that the sister was in good hands. Meanwhile we kept advancing, always climbing higher. Then from a distance, the scout called for everyone to alight. What was it? What could it be? A large crevice, formed by melting snow, was impeding the pass, and we had to proceed very cautiously. There was general alarm. The men complained loudly at the imprudence of leading the caravan along that route, and the women cried desperately.

M. Chiara kept profound silence; she had lost her speech and already deeply regretted having chosen the passage through the Cordilleras rather than the one through the Strait of Magellan. The only ray of comfort she felt was when she often raised her head and saw me happy and smiling, as one who is admiring a beautiful scene. It was truly beautiful in spite of the terror it inspired. We were at a respectable height dominated by a very deep precipice on one end and bordered on the other end by a slope seemingly infinite, covered with snow as with a vast, immaculate mantle. On the other side, more very high peaks awaited us, and in front of us was the crevice. Like a long, deep, well-prepared opening, it stood ready to bury the whole caravan. The muleteers, not without trepidation that they prudently attempted to conceal from us, tried to get some of the mules to leap to the other side. Seeing that the ground held up, they felt it was safe to allow the passengers across.

As you have already heard I was the first in line and wanted to be first also here, even to encourage the rest because, to tell the truth, I felt peaceful and without the slightest fear. My guide was already holding a long staff with a pointed end to brace himself for the leap, thinking that he would have to carry me across. When he offered himself, I said "Oh, no, no, my good man, I can jump even farther than that; I'll cross by myself." He respectfully offered little resistance and watched closely, prepared to help but understanding from experience that I would not have permitted it. I jumped, thinking that it would be easy, as usual. Instead, because of the cold and the thin air that had depleted my strength, I saw too late that my leap was like that of a feather, which does not go far no matter how hard it is thrown unless carried by the wind. I would have certainly been buried alive if my good guide, truly a Saint Joseph, had not thrown himself quickly on the ground and stretched his body across the fissure, stopping my fall with his back on the edge of the other side. Afterward, with the help of his staff he stood erect on the other side and pulled me by the arms to safety where all that I had undergone caused strong palpitations in me, so strong that I thought I'd die. The good muleteer accompanied me aside a bit and I finally fell exhausted on a heap of snow, unable to speak because of the frequent palpitations. By the way that good man watched me, it seemed that he feared the worst.

As soon as I could pronounce a word, I told him to go help the others. He did not have to be told twice, for the need was truly great. Alone, I stretched out on the soft bed of snow and helped by the pure air, the palpitations gradually ceased and I was as spry as before. I got up and saw that everyone was safely across the dangerous pass. The muleteer was already near a mound waiting for me with the mule so that I could mount. We set out on our way again. At a certain height, we had to pass between snow drifts about five meters high, cut for the passage by the Transandine Company. It was a fine sight to pass through a fortress of snow but not very pleasant for me because I felt that I would not be able to withstand all that cold. We were told to keep our glasses on so that the cold air and immense whiteness would not harm our sight, but I was more anxious in seeing where my mule put its hooves. Not trusting what I saw through the eyeglasses, which I disliked, I put them on now on my forehead, now slipping the elastic on my chin, never on my eyes, except when there was a stop or there was no need to be so attentive to the path.

When it pleased Jesus, we reached the Cumbre, the highest peak that can be crossed in the vicinity of the volcano Aconcagua. We made a brief stop that I wished would have been longer. What an imposing sight! How majestic! It seemed as though you could see the whole world there at the boundary between Chile and Argentina. With gratitude, we said goodbye to that country where we had been guests for a month, and where such concern and exquisite kindness had been lavished on us poor strangers. We wanted to see the ocean, but the air was already misty, cutting off that enchanting sight. The muleteer urged me to mount in a hurry. I begged him to let me stay a little longer because I felt truly inspired to sublime meditation. He was a bit

perturbed and begged me again to mount my saddle. The poor man had every good reason. It was already after eleven. In about a half hour, it would have been fatal if the weather had overtaken us there.

Just then one of the intrepid employees of the Transandine Company arrived from the opposite direction. Greeting us courteously, he said that he had orders from Santiago to come to render any possible service to make our trip easier. Quickly taking the reins of my mule, he led us the shortest way down the mountain. The descent was very steep. I felt I would fall at any moment, and the mule also slipped a bit now and then. But that fine gentleman urged me not to fear, he was experienced and it was necessary to follow that steep path to reach the safe inn quickly.

In fact, we arrived by midday as the snow was already falling in large flakes that seemed not big butterflies but large, big ominous birds. The mountain had disappeared in the thick fog. The kind hostess welcomed us with a maternal heart and soon had us seated at tables where the meal, which we truly enjoyed, was already set for us. It helped us recover from the cold we suffered. At the end of the meal, the head of each family was called one by one to a counter where there was a huge register for each to record his own impression. You can imagine what was written by some of our companions who were so upset by the dreaded fissure! When it was my turn, I described it to everyone's surprise, as one of the most beautiful and fondest impressions of all my voyages.

The innkeeper said it was the first time anyone had spoken well of the pass across the Cordilleras, especially in that season, when it was somewhat dangerous. His astonishment was all the greater since the author was not a man.

The fact is that I was satisfied and happy to have ventured so high in my lifetime, to have another reason and motive to ascend the mountain of perfection, a greater height than that of Cordilleras. The Heavenly Spouse, with good reason calls His beloved by the fond name of dove: *Una est columba mea-dilecta mea* [Sg. 6:9; one alone is my dove, my beloved.] He calls her a dove not only because she must be warm, meek and loving, but also because she must fly continually in the ways of the Lord without wavering, raise herself heavenward by an ever more perfect detachment from earthly things, and soar with silver wings, that is, with purity of love and intention. She will be invested with that generous strong, charity of the one who can bury herself with ever increasing ardor in the eternal Sun of Justice. She exposes herself without fear to the burning rays of this sun, by comparison with which gold is pale.

At about two post meridian, stagecoaches were ready to take us to the station of Punta de Vaca. We set out without delay, up mountains and down valleys along the Mendoza River. The route was perilous and not very comfortable either because of the mountains that threatened to fall over us at any moment or the breaking waves of that frightening river into which we might fall and which seemed so deep from our height. About seven in the evening, we reached Punta de Vaca, where we hoped to enjoy a much-needed peaceful night's rest, after the rough bumps we

endured that day mounted on the mule, as well as those not less severe which we experienced on the coach. The caravan from Argentina going to Chile via our same route arrived one hour before us and had occupied all the available places. What could we do? It was suppertime; a bell rang and we hurried to take our places at the table, keeping our baggage at our feet since there was no other safe place. The frugal meal over, I begged the manager of the inn to give us a secluded corner where we could rest. He courteously told us that he had received strong recommendations in our regard and not to worry, for soon he would show us the place.

Meanwhile, night advanced, and the men kept drinking in the only salon of the station. Around nine o'clock, I again returned to plead with the manager and he still gently replied, "Yes, yes. Now, now." After about a half hour he came to apologize saying that all the beds were already occupied. There was only one left for him in a hallway, which he sincerely offered to us. Needless to say, I did not accept it and went back to sit with M. Chiara at the table in a corner of the room. Ten o'clock came and went. The men continued to drink, and the alcohol began to take effect. Some were seen staggering, some raising their voices, and others singing.

To tell the truth, I began to be a bit fearful. What were we to do? I saw in a corner of the room a fine American gentleman from San Francisco, who made the crossing with us and had also suffered the same fate of being without a room. He was the only one in that whole gathering who inspired trust in me, so I asked him to join us, as we were beginning to be fearful. He felt sorry for us, ran to the manager, and was so insistent that he succeeded in getting him to make a place for us in a room with two women and a young boy, who later moved out to make room for us. Blessing that good man with all our hearts, we retired, falling as dead on the bed from sheer exhaustion and remained immobile until morning.

We were at the station by seven the next morning to board the small Transandine train which continued along the Mendoza River, across new mountains and breathtaking valleys. In the afternoon we arrived at Mendoza, the first and finest city encountered in Argentina as one comes from Chile. We were welcomed by the kind Sisters of the Good Shepherd, and it was a great relief to find ourselves safely in a religious house after that perilous journey and fearful nights. We visited the fine churches of that city and the Jesuits, who pleased us with news they gave us from Buenos Aires that greatly encouraged us to work in that country. We also visited the Franciscans, who heartily blessed us as Third Order members, and went to visit *las Esclavas del Sagrado Corazon de Jesus* [the Slaves of the Sacred Heart of Jesus], an institute recently founded in Cordova. They also welcomed us most cordially and wanted us to stay a few days. But we already had arranged our trip with the Argentine Railroad Company. The following evening, we were speeding across the pampas. The trip lasted two days, with very few short stops. The pampas are beautiful! They are vast plains, interrupted only occasionally by the sight of a poor farmhouse that looks quite lost. Herds of horses, cows, goats or sheep can frequently be seen pastur-

ing freely without a guide in those immense fields. The owners of these properties do not recognise or care about boundaries. Occasionally, whole skeletons of beasts or men were seen, stripped of flesh by the intemperate weather. But the train flew on, heedlessly, amid the lush green, virgin fields, until the morning of the first of December, when we reached the capital of the Argentine republic.

I end here, promising to write again when I have completed my work for this foundation, and resume my voyage to return to you, or, should obedience will it, to go elsewhere. Meanwhile, let us live abandoned in the adorable Heart of Jesus. I shall work in this vineyard while you sustain me with your fervent prayers, in which I place so much trust. Oh, prayer, trust and total abandonment to God must always be our secure defense. Of ourselves we can do nothing, but with God we can do everything: *Omnia possum in eo qui mi confortat.* [Phil. 4:13] May Jesus bless you and enclose you in His Sacred Heart, the throne of peace, paradise anticipated. Love Jesus very much and think of nothing else. Work much for the glory of God, always under the protection of holy obedience. Do not aspire long to rest here on earth, but aspire to die on the battlefield in the company of Jesus, certain that the more you struggle, the more beautiful your crown, that crown that in eternity no one will ever snatch away from you.

These are the wishes of . . .

*Yours affectionately in the Sacred Heart of Jesus,
M. Francesca Saverio Cabrini*



IX

FROM
BUENOS AIRES
TO BARCELONA,
August 1896

Destinations Cited:
Buenos Aires, Argentina
Lujan, Argentina
Montevideo, Argentina
Las Palmas, Canary Islands
Barcelona, Spain



"The Sacred Heart was first to arrive in the new house. I thought I would actually go into ecstasy the first evening when I recollected myself before the lovely image, which seemed to speak to me. 'Be at peace my daughter, live trustingly, never setting limits on your trust, because I will see to the needs of this house.'"

— Mother Cabrini

FROM BUENOS AIRES TO BARCELONA, August 1896

The memories of the period which she spent in Argentina follow her throughout her voyage and constitute the principal subject of the that which Mother Cabrini sends to the sisters. She wrote to the Superior in Panama, "I have to struggle with the problem of the language, not having anyone to talk for me, and with the difficulties of keeping the house clean while Mother Chiara attends to the kitchen On the first day I swept the parlors, my hands were full of blisters." Twenty-five days after they received the telegram from Argentina, the sisters arrived from New York to get the school ready for the first pupils. Mother remained with the sisters for three more months to see them all ready for the work she had chosen for them, and left on the eighth of August.

M

y dearest daughters, May Jesus be with you and with gentle peace draw you to his Heart and always keep you there with His superhuman strength.

August 8. What a joy it is to travel beneath the mantle of the Immaculate Virgin, robed in white and blue, her lips rosy, who sends forth splendid, silvery rays! It was one post meridian on the eighth day of August when, after eight months spent in the foundation of the School of Saint Rose, so blessed by the Heart of Jesus, I took flight in order to come among you, yearning so much to see you after a two-year absence from our beloved motherhouse. It is the center of all our sublimest aspirations, where we drank in the essence of the most inspiring virtues which should enable us today to be a sight to the world to convert it. "You are the light of the world," said Jesus, and added, "you are the salt of the earth," when he spoke to his apostles from the mountain. [Mt. 5:13] And you, oh Missionaries, are also of the family of the apostles. Should you not continue Christ's mission? Then you too must be salt of the earth and light of the world. And how will you carry out such a sublime, arduous mission?

It will be very easy for you, oh daughters, when you imitate the Argentine Virgin, prodigious in the midst of the people of Buenos Aires. She is dressed in white and blue, with her rosy lips set in a heavenly smile. She sends forth rays of silvery light which, illumine, convince and affirm without harming the sight. She is white like the snow because of her immaculate purity. She is blue because of her actions, her heavenly majesty, lofty thoughts and the profound height of her concepts. She is silvery because of the rays of continuous light shining forth from the heroic virtues she practiced, which form a halo and render glowing her holy, majestic face. After the death of Jesus she acted as a missionary, going about animating and comforting the faithful. When he saw the Holy Virgin, Denis the Aeropagite had good reason to say, "If I did not know that there is only one God, I would have prostrated myself to adore Mary as a divinity."

We shall find the help to imitate her if we place ourselves with abundant faith under the mantle of her protection. Mary herself will give us the strength to walk in her footsteps. If you find Mary, you find everything, oh daughters! *Invenia Maria, inventuntur omnia bona; ipsa enim diligit diligentes se, immo sibi serviensibus servit* [Having found Mary, you have found every good, for she loves those who love her.] If we venerate many saints and see many wonders wrought in souls, all, yes all, comes from that inexhaustible channel of grace that is Mary. Oh daughters, trust in Mary and strive diligently to imitate her, because this Mother of fair love constantly repeats the words which the Church puts in her mouth, "I produce sweet smelling fruit. My flowers are fruits of glory and abundance."

Take care that these words may never be for you reproof for the sterility of your works. By heavenly grace, you were transplanted by baptism into the fertile field of the Church and in that

glorious field of religious profession, what fruit have you given? Perhaps many leaves, and sometimes maybe a few flowers that soon withered, drying off your plant the same day they spread their petals! Oh, no, daughters, from now on may true devotion to the Holy Virgin, our Mother and foundress, shine brightly in you. This consists in the faithful emulation of her eminent virtues.

But let's return a bit to the story. I carry back unforgettable memories of Buenos Aires. I arrived on December first, after having crossed the immense pampas that stretch from Mendoza to the Rio Plata. I did not know where to turn, not knowing anyone except Father Brogi, whom I had met two years before. As he was passing through Genoa to sail from the port, he came twice to celebrate Mass in our house, sent by the superior of the mission, Father Rinaldi, our chaplain in those early days of our foundation in Genoa. Hiring a carriage, M. Chiara and I went in search of Father Brogi, whom we found after circling around a good two hours. He received us with that charity and gentleness so characteristic of him. After restoring us with an excellent Italian dinner, he accompanied us to the archbishop's residence to meet the new archbishop. Most Rev. Msgr. Ladislaus Castellano welcomed us with the heart of a true father, delighted to start his bishopric with the founding of a religious house in his very vast new diocese. We also met one of the vicars-general, Monsignor Antonio Espinosa, who greatly encouraged me, and gave me his calling cards to use to introduce me to the leading people of the city. When I asked him to write some words of recommendation, he replied with charity as big as his heart that he gave me *carte blanche* to write on them whatever I desired. Father Brogi then introduced me to the secretary-general of the curia, Rev. Canon Terrero, a highly respected person, who knows the whole city very well and enjoys everyone's esteem. He, too, greatly encouraged me and, in his great kindness, later provided a chaplain for our house, smoothing a more or less insurmountable obstacle in this vast country with a scarcity of priests.

On that day, the archbishop and his staff were engaged in much activity, preparing for an extensive pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Lujan. It was scheduled to take place in two days to celebrate the installation of the new archbishop and to honor the archbishop of [Santiago] Chile, who had come for the purpose of conferring the pallium on the archbishop of Buenos Aires. The occasion would also finally serve to commemorate a great patriotic event: the peace initiated between the two republics, Argentina and Chile, which for a time were in much conflict over a border dispute.

Among the many persons on the archbishop's staff and the many priests who had a word of comfort for me, one distinguished himself: Father G. Nepomucene Kieman, a holy man, full of charity and enthusiasm. He was surprised by our title of Missionaries of the Sacred Heart and felt compassion in seeing me, as he said, a bit forlorn and sickly. At that same moment, he decided to help me all he could to establish a good foundation. He followed me while I made the

acquaintance of all in the curia. When he saw me at a loss for words and seeming to show some fear, he would encourage me from afar, saying, "Take courage, Mother, we shall all help you." He truly did not go back on his word, because he was a companion to us during all the hardships of the foundation. He gave us all the help possible and did not leave us until he saw the mission was well under way.

Father Kiernan is a fine man and knows how to combine broad knowledge with admirable simplicity. He seems to have appropriated the expression of Jesus Christ who said, "Be simple as doves and wise as serpents." [Mt. 10:16] How inspiring it is to see souls who fly like doves over the land, doing good without becoming entangled in its affairs! They fly, fly with renewed anxiety to do good, fly without tiring or to phrase it better, without noticing their weariness, even when they lack material resources. An aura of heavenly light surrounds them and their works, and their beneficial influence is always very helpful because they are always blessed by God.

When we had completed the business at the curia, Father Brogi accompanied me to a good Italian family, where we spent the night. The next day, we took up residence with the Sisters of Mercy of Savona, who have been in Argentina for twenty years or more. Father Brogi, who, in his great charity and nobility of soul, had obligated himself to give me all the assistance I needed to make the foundation, came every day to take me around to introduce me to the principal families and all the parishes of Buenos Aires. This greatly helped me to determine a good location for the foundation.

After becoming somewhat acquainted with the various positions and having visited about sixty houses, I decided to take one in the center of town. It pleased the adorable Heart of Jesus that I should come across one that was lovely, spacious and well lighted so that at first sight, it gives all a certain illusion, and appears much more than it actually is. In fact, various ladies dissuaded me from buying it because it was a little expensive, saying that for the first two years, until we had gained the confidence of the residents of Buenos Aires, we would not have more than six or seven pupils. But within me I felt a secret persuasion from an unknown source and thus decided to purchase the house at any cost. That courage to assume this heavy obligation resulted in making on all a good impression, and the first families began to enroll their children. They continued in such a manner that, at my departure, the house was already filled and plans were already under way to secure another.

As soon as all was negotiated with the owner of the house, we began to think of a memorable day to occupy it. I chose Christmas Day for that purpose. The good Sisters of Mercy, unaware of my intention, did not want to allow me to leave them on such a solemn day, but I was firm. On December 25, at ten in the morning, M. Chiara and I left for our destination. Thus, the true founder of the first house in Argentina was the Infant Jesus, in whom I placed all my confidence, fully abandoning myself to the goodness of His heart, which would think of overcoming all dif-

iculties. The Holy Infant well knew how to do this marvelously. On the eve that we were to occupy the house, I sent two telegrams, one to Codogno and the other to New York, to call the various sisters who were already prepared and well disposed for the new foundation. They set out to travel at once. One month later those from New York and a day later those from Italy, already were in the new house, where I and M. Chiara awaited them with true anxiety as we were unable to continue to keep the house open much longer with only the two of us. Every day greater demands were imposed on us, because of the relationships and clientele our dear Founder had won for the new foundation.

The school opened on the first of March. Immediately the enrollment greatly exceeded our expectations, and with another telegram, I had to call for more sisters in a hurry. These were not less well disposed than the first and within a short time were in our midst. Early in May, since those little girls, so intelligent, were already prepared to make a public presentation, we planned the solemn inauguration of the school. In keeping with the custom of the country, we formed an honorary committee of eight chosen from the most outstanding women. They were headed by the one who was "Godmother" of the school, Mrs. Leonora Teranos Pinto, the wife of Mr. Uruburo, the president of the Argentine republic.

It was the eighth day of May. The evening before, Mr. Buoje, mayor of Buenos Aires, sent various gardeners from the public parks to decorate the whole house with flowers and ferns. The superintendent of the Catholic Club sent men to decorate the church and salons with the best they had of everything: curtains, carpets, fringe, etc. At eight in the morning on that auspicious day, when the small church and adjacent salons were already crowded with people, Archbishop Ladislaus Castellano arrived to celebrate the Holy Mass, accompanied by the orchestra. As soon as it ended, the vicar-general, Monsignor Espinosa, delivered a fine inaugural discourse, speaking much about our Institute as if he had always known it, all from the goodness of his big heart. In the afternoon, the archbishop returned with diverse priests. The members of the leading families were in such large attendance that they filled not only the salons but also the various courtyards. The archbishop presided and the solemn opening was enhanced by the presence of the wife of the president of the republic and various educational authorities. The girls performed a musical-literary program, closing it with a full choir and a tableau in which Saint Rose and the Sacred Heart appeared amidst brilliant clouds and colored lights. Blessing the new foundation, Jesus placed a gem symbolizing the new school in Saint Rose's crown. It was so well received by all that to satisfy them we had to take a photograph, which turned out very well. I'll bring one of them to the motherhouse so that you all can contemplate that scene, which in Buenos Aires they called "heavenly."

In the morning, before the ceremony began, His Excellency the Archbishop had blessed the artistic altar, which was shaped like a small temple and was very graceful. It was a gift of the Rev.

Father John Deleye, pastor of St. Michael's. He is a very pious and generous priest who does so much good. A lover of true virtue, he is one of those souls who form the true joy of a country because he lives to do good. He saw us in the beginning when I was alone with M. Chiara and the house was only a huge receptacle, stripped of ornaments. He promptly sent us two candelabra and a beautiful lamp for the lifelike statue of the Sacred Heart given us by Mrs. Marie Bandon. This kind lady generously gave of herself in the early days and always accompanied me in the visits I had to make in the city. The Sacred Heart was the first to arrive in the new house. I thought I would actually go into ecstasy the first evening when I recollected myself before that lovely image, which seemed to speak to me, "Be at peace, my daughter, live trustingly, never setting limits on your trust, because I will see to the needs of this house through the intercession of my beloved Rose of Lima."

Oh, the Sacred Heart, how good, dear and loving He is! One sole glance, only one word of His, engraved in the depths of the soul, suffices to reanimate and reassure. He is a sweet remedy and the inexhaustible source of all good in which we can lose ourselves with immense trust. He is an abyss of love, our true home, our rest where we can be sheltered in all our most trying circumstances. He is an infinite, hidden treasure who always seeks to manifest Himself to us, to speak and give of Himself to enrich our poverty. He is our true haven of peace and delight, the one thing necessary for our heart, our all in all things.

We named the school after Saint Rose to fulfill the vow I made to the saint when I had the good fortune to venerate her precious relics in Lima. She maintained her word, blessing the voyage, the arrival in Buenos Aires and the foundation. She continues to concern herself with her school so that I have now left it with true peace of mind. The name pleased everyone very much, because Saint Rose is the Patroness of their republic. I would like to perpetuate this title, building a beautiful shrine to honor the saint. I would do so immediately if I could find a kind, generous soul who would lend me the necessary means. Since I do not know where to find this soul so fortunate as to have made the Wonder-worker of Lima an heir, I will assign Saint Rose herself the task of finding and leading this benefactor to me.

While I have been telling you some of the story of the foundation, we traveled a good distance and have passed Montevideo, where the ship stopped. After he had earnestly recommended us to the care of a fine gentleman to show us the best way to the cathedral, my angelic companion and I disembarked and boarded the captain's private launch. In fact, within a short time we found ourselves in God's house, where we could receive Communion and our hearts could be satisfied by being united with that heavenly, substantial manna that the Divine Heart gave to us, and that was to accompany us during all our voyage, or, at least, until we reached Las Palmas in the Canary Islands. There we hope to approach again the altar of Jesus Christ to receive again the living God, our dear love, to gladden and comfort us for the remainder of the voyage.

At Montevideo we were also able to hear Holy Mass and satisfy the Sunday obligation. Afterward, we assisted in a part of the grand pontifical ceremony held to honor the Venerable Giannelli, the founder of the Sisters of the Garden of the Passion, who was recently elevated to the honors of the altar. Afterward, we toured the city which with its picturesque streets, spacious plazas, magnificent monuments, and lush gardens, was worth seeing. All this stands out the more since the city is built on a moderately high hill, almost completely surrounded by the ocean, which gives it a healthy climate and an enchanting setting. Because of its proximity to Buenos Aires, which draws most of the trade, with its busy commercial life continually growing to its advantage, the city, although large enough, is not well populated and has little commerce.

Montevideo is beautiful and we liked it because of its European style, but Buenos Aires is large and beautiful. If today it is not to our taste, it is only because so often within its vastness, beauty is mingled with wretchedness. Imagine this: one may walk ten blocks, equivalent to about one kilometer, and feel as though you are among the most elegant buildings of Paris. Immediately afterward for some twenty blocks, or two kilometers, you find yourself among the indigenous houses, or rather the primitive ones, one story high, and some built so low they seem to sink into the ground. After having traveled this far you again encounter luxurious, magnificent buildings such as *la Recoleta* and, more especially the *Calle Alvear*, which is enchanting. You will marvel even more if you visit Palermo Promenade and the public garden, which equals the best in Europe, with its conservatories and extraordinary collections of both plants and zoo animals.

It can be said that the city of Buenos Aires has existed only ten years. If it continues like this, in another ten years and at the most twenty, it may rival New York as long as factions do not rise to hamper it. This is always a risk because of the character of its inhabitants: good, yes, but also very unruly. Now, for example, there was a threat of a war with Chile over a border dispute. Buenos Aires claimed its rights when Chile, since its territory is so limited, wanted to appropriate some land. By the grace of God they reached an agreement. Argentina ceded part of its immense extension next to Tierra del Fuego. A great contributing factor in this was the mediation of the two archbishops, Monsignor Casanova of Chile and the new one of Buenos Aires.

Just at the time of my arrival in Buenos Aires, the two prelates organized a pilgrimage to the Virgin of Lujan to commemorate this agreement. This was made in the company of General Rocca, interim president in the absence of President Uriburu, who, because of illness, had to seek the fresh, healthy air of the renowned Cordoba Mountains. Also present were various state ministers and an immense crowd of people. The eloquent orator, Monsignor Hara, Vicar of Valparaiso, preached and was applauded repeatedly by the representatives of both republics and all the people. Finally after having spoken in praise of Mary most Holy and of the sensational miracles wrought in Lujan, he said that Chile could not present any gift worthy of that wonder-

working Virgin, already covered with gold from head to foot. The most precious gift would be to leave the flag of the Republic of Chile in the shrine as a sign of friendliness and peace with her sister republic. This statement was widely applauded by everyone. It gave us a sense of uneasiness to see the shrine turn into a theatrical scene. But this was soon overlooked, when we considered that only recently has true civility risen to join with religion. In conclusion, their faith is good, leading them to decide their political destiny in the shadow of the shrine and to invoke God's blessing and that of the Virgin.

M. Chiara and I also joined the pilgrimage, because as soon as we arrived at the curia, those good Fathers, surrounding us with concern, gave us first-class tickets so that we could participate in their grand new feast. I accepted and we went there to join our voices with theirs as they prayed for peace in their country, a country that I had already considered my own from the moment of my arrival. In the midst of that great racket of those who thrilled and exulted at the destinies of their republic, I recollected myself and recommended the foundation I intended to make to that miraculous image, promising to return to thank her before I left Argentina if all went well. In fact, the outcome surpassed every expectation, and one week before we sailed, I went to fulfill my promise. This brought me much consolation and comfort because, while I was entrusting to Mary the house I was about to leave, it seemed to me that dear powerful and miraculous Mother was assuring me of her continual protection.

Oh, how good and lovable is Mary! She is our favorable morning star, our true guide and leader in all our deeds. For this reason, the Missionaries ought to fear nothing. Our great Mother and Foundress is near God, next to, even joined to God; therefore, whatever she wants she can obtain from God. Oh, grandeur of Mary! She has been appointed by the Lord the fountain of all graces, channel and safe aqueduct of the divine mercies, ladder of heaven and gate of paradise. Mary, oh daughters, is that mysterious holy mountain overshadowed by the Holy Spirit, mountain from whose summit gushes forth a spring of limpid waters dividing into an infinite number of brooks, irrigating the whole world. Therefore, this includes our houses and all our works, provided that we invoke her always and show ourselves truly devoted to her by a great trust and the imitation of her virtues, which are truly worthy of a Missionary. Invoke Mary because she is that small cloud rising from the sea seen by Elijah (1 Kg. 18:44), which gradually extended itself until it covered the whole sky, bursting forth in copious rain, soaking every corner of the world, benefiting even the last of its inhabitants.

Yes, yes, in Mary you will be able to do all because she is able to uproot heresies, do away with schisms, topple down idols. She can triumph everywhere for the Catholic faith, to augment and spread the flock of Jesus Christ. Her mystic waters refresh and enrich. Entrust yourselves to her, always remain with her, do everything with Mary, and do not distance yourself at all from her. Invoke her always and she will first refresh your hearts to render them worthy of the Missions,

purify your hearts and make them holy, plant in them all her virtues and enrich them with holy works. When you are weak, she will strengthen you. When you are strong she will urge you onward, and when you imitate her, she will make you perfect.

And meanwhile the voyage continues well; it is a marvel. We hardly feel the movement of the ocean; it is so placid and serene. I cannot write much because the passengers are so good that they do not leave me a moment. At times with my little angel, the little postulant who is my companion, we retire to one side to pray. But we do not finish a rosary because already a chattering group has again formed where we are. We can no longer find a place to hide and be alone. Have patience, this time I write less than usual. I have also become a language teacher and once a day I must give lessons to Mrs. Maria Tezanos Pinto de Coiseres, the sister-in-law of the president of the Argentina Republic. She wants to be able to speak Italian well on her arrival in Italy, especially in Rome where her husband is going to occupy the Peruvian Legation.

These people have been seated with us in one of the main tables in the dining salon near the Captain. A fifth person, a Neapolitan scholar, has joined us and so the conversation always ends up in discussion about history, literature and science, etc. Occasionally, when the Neapolitan gets out of line, I am silent up to a certain point. Then with gentle firmness, I expound the truth as best I can and, almost without his noticing, induce him to approve the good and to declare that true happiness is found only in what God deems true and good. One day he wanted to assert that if he were converted he would have to suffocate and extinguish the ardor of his spirit and the vehemence of his human passions, and would be reduced to a frigid mountain of ice, indifferent to everything, even the most beautiful and majestic. I helped him observe how the flames of human passions leave emptiness and desolation in the spirit, but, when changed to heavenly flame through grace and the supreme light of heaven, they grow prodigiously and increase until they become a veritable furnace of the love of God, a true fire that no human creature can extinguish, as long as it is sustained by good will.

We have some excellent examples: did Augustine and Magdalene become icebergs at their conversion? On the contrary! We would never have had those prodigies of conversion and admirable sanctity, if those two souls had not changed the flame of human passion into a furnace of immense love for God. But the present generation is too miserable, too disgraceful. It studies and studies the profane sciences but not religion which, with the approval of legislation, has been removed from the schools. In this way, we rush faster than a runaway train, headlong toward a ruinous precipice.

Oh most beloved Jesus, do you not see how much destruction there is? Do not turn your face away from us. Arise, arise, like a giant, oh my Beloved, arise, and come to the mission field of Your beloved spouses who yearn to add to Your kingdom all the souls possible. Come, come, we await You; we desire and sigh for You. Come, as a resplendent sun with vivid, luminous rays, to

enlighten the land now covered by thick darkness. Oh, my Jesus, desire of the ages, inflamed with love for Your children, quicken Your pace and come to bring life to those residing in the darkness of death. By Your most holy Heart, heal the ruinous wounds of languishing humanity. We, Your Missionaries, keep our gaze and hearts always fixed on You. If You will it, all the souls whom in various ways You have entrusted to us will be saved. But yes, of course, You do want this, because Your very name means health, grace, unction and love. Oh, the more I invoke Your name, the more I find it always new, dear, sweet, lovable. You are my life and my all. Console, then, one who loves You so much. Console Your poor servant and save a languishing generation that You have entrusted to us. See these souls redeemed by Your precious blood; gaze on them with eyes full of compassion and love! Wound them with a burning arrow of Your immense charity; inflame them and transform them into Your likeness.

Having crossed the equator after traveling four hours, we encountered Pinedo de San Pedro, a rock of notable size. It is a beautiful sight with its sharp points rising like pinnacles and pines. Then, seeing it as night fell, it looked like a floating citadel, so that the postulant soon asked me if some day we would go there to start a mission. I asked her if she wanted to convert the birds, the only creatures who find refuge there. She replied that it seemed to her if we went there, we would find someone to evangelize. In short, she would like to convert the whole world. In her zeal and enthusiasm, she thinks she already has the faith of Abraham who saw his spiritual children multiply like the dust of the earth, even among the sharp points of the ocean's rocks.

Between one thing and another, we have reached the Canary Islands, disembarking at Las Palmas. The gulf is magnificent and so is the city. We arrived there at six in the morning of the twenty-third. Since it was Sunday, we promptly arose from our beds to be the first to get down to fulfill our Sunday obligation and have the happiness of receiving Communion. In fact, the health authorities did not make us wait much and our good captain, Mr. Boccelli, who does not neglect any means to satisfy us and make our voyage more pleasant, gave us enough time to satisfy our desires. At six-thirty, we were already descending the ladder, clinging to the rope support, and hired the first boat approaching us. The four priests on board, seeing us descend, took courage and rushed after us and we took them in our boat. In ten minutes, we were already on solid ground. Together, we boarded a vehicle that I do not know how to describe, neither, carriage, omnibus nor cart. The fact is that it was a primitive vehicle, drawn by a horse so small and lean that at first sight the postulant asked me if it was a donkey and feared that it could not pull the six occupants, especially since one of the priests, the good Franciscan, weighed enough for three.

Soon enough we were persuaded that rather than a donkey, it was a steed with a good trot. Running with the fastest, it carried us first to the church of *los padrecitos*, as our coachman called it. It was a very simple, beautiful little church that inspired devotion, kept by the priests called

the Servants of Mary. The priests celebrated their Masses while we could go to confession and Communion and assist at three Masses. We then boarded our vehicle and hurriedly toured the city, also passing through the marketplace, perhaps to show off our new kind of coach. Since one of the priests with us was a Lazarist, we went to visit the Lazarist Fathers, who have been established here for two months. They greeted us with their usual cordiality, and with breakfast gave us a taste of the first grapes of 1896. For us this was a welcome surprise, having left Buenos Aires in the middle of winter. Then we visited the cathedral, where the fine architecture and rich interior surprised us, since this was a rather poor city. The altar, instead of the pallium, has a table of finest silver with a most elaborate design. In the middle of the sanctuary is a lamp of singular value. Valiant are the inhabitants of Las Palmas and fortunate, while some religion triumphs in their midst.

Having visited everything, we returned to the harbor, where our little boat was waiting to transport us on board. As soon as the postulant viewed the mountains, she asked me with surprise what those huge mounds of earth were and how they could stay up so straight without falling. Then she wanted to know the reason for the various colors, and how the houses could stand firm on such a height, which she would never venture to visit. Then her marvel grew even more when she understood that our little horse had taken her to those very houses. We sailed around a mountain near the harbor and, seeing a stretch of beach with yellow sand so smooth that it looked like a lovely soft fabric rolled out she said she would have liked to go and get a piece of it as a remembrance of that country.

Instead of benefiting us, going ashore caused more harm to all of us. For more than a day we felt as though we had just set out at sea. And so I must tell you that we have already reached the Strait of Gibraltar. We greeted Cape Moro and Morocco, then turned to gaze at the strategic point, Gibraltar, with its enchanting peak. We got an excellent view because the captain, in his kindness, had the vessel brought near the shore and slowed it almost to a stop to allow those who wished to photograph the sights. The vessel did not stop but went as close to land as possible. All day long we enjoyed new, breathtaking sights as we passed all the seaboard cities of Spain, the resplendent gulfs, gorges, and chains of picturesque mountains. It was all the more interesting because some of our good friends among the passengers knew the places and explained it all to us. They lent us their binoculars so we could better see all the important spots. The passengers enjoyed seeing my great interest in all of it. But my mind, like a giant, coursed through that city and entered all of Spain, where I soon wish to establish one of our houses, not only to do good but to attract many good Spanish-speaking vocations, so that we can increase our works in Latin America. It grieves my soul constantly having seen, while traveling through South America, so many needs without being able to meet them. Oh, the desire for those missions seems to devour me day and night! Nor will I be satisfied until I have given spiritual help to each

one of those poor countries within the sphere, it is understood, of what is permissible to us poor Missionaries.

Once in a while, a very strong urge causes me to look over my shoulder again in the direction we have just left, Morocco, on the western coast of Africa, to which I aspire for some time. I would like to fly there to save those souls. But no, we will not go there while I live, for we have found too much work in the Americas. God grant that we may so widen our work to reach a good part of those dear people, our brothers. In the meantime we shall help them with our prayers. Oh, prayer is always a great comfort, but especially when there is so much good to be done and we see ourselves absolutely impeded by our limited resources.

Prayer is powerful, majestic; it fills all the earth with mercy. By prayer, clemency passes from generation to generation. All centuries tell the account of the marvelous works wrought through the ministry of prayer. We are dust and our days are like grass. [Ps. 90:5] The spirit of man is here temporarily; soon he will be no more. But the mercy and grace obtained through the power of prayer will always cause the people for whom the prayer is made to experience its abundant riches and healing effect. Oh yes, mercy, obtained through prayer will be like a river originating from the immense ocean of the inexhaustible goodness of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It will water those people and gently dispose them to approach God and enter the ark of salvation. Mercy, like a mass of blazing sparks from the vast fire of divine love, will fall like luminous rays to comfort His children. Let prayer, therefore, be our comfort in the limited circumstances in which we find ourselves, to help all those souls whom we already embrace with our hearts and our affection.

But here we are, already in Barcelona. Also this time our good captain has arranged everything for an early morning arrival so that I could disembark with my companion and receive Holy Communion. How much God must richly reward the piety of this rare, singularly kind captain! I have always been fortunate in my voyages, but Captain Boccelli's concern has touched me deeply, as I see how his wise observations give him insight to penetrate and discern, among all the expressed desires and aspirations, the very one that is the most crucial, that gives values to the others. This time he had us taken ashore in his own launch and by seven, we were at the cathedral, where we made our confession and received Holy Communion. Our fervor increased even more upon seeing a good number of women in recollection in that church.

When we finished our devotions, a Genoese gentleman from Ovada who had traveled with us came, saying, "I am sure you would like to know Barcelona. I, as one familiar with it, shall be happy to accompany you so that you can see everything in a brief period." I had already developed much esteem for that gentleman, so I accepted. First he took us to breakfast and then, hiring a comfortable coach, he showed us the public gardens, *Il Climatico*, various churches and the main points of interest of this new city, which are not too far behind those of Paris. Barcelona, a highly industrialized city, has more than doubled in size in a few years and continues to expand.

This Catalonian city can be described as more cosmopolitan than Spanish, populated by foreigners of every race. However, along with progress, the various ethnic groups brought with them the greatest of evils: immorality and irreligion. Therefore, in time it will be necessary to start a house here, a fine mission that will do much good.

Yes, oh daughters, multiply yourselves and grow in virtue because the harvest is great. For as many you are, you are still too few. Indeed, may the fragrance of your good works attract others to follow your example so that I may renew my spirit by satisfying my desire to do some good to so many souls who will be lost if we do not go soon to their aid. Meanwhile, work incessantly through the great means of prayer; have great trust in your beloved Jesus. Abandon yourselves fully in His adorable Heart. Hope much so that, mistrusting yourself and trusting in Him, no matter how miserable and weak, you will be able certainly to do great things. *Omnia possum in eo qui me confortat* [Phil. 4:13]

Now I leave you and end this letter, hoping to see you all soon and rejoice personally in your progress in the spiritual path. May the good Jesus bless you and enclose you always in His Heart where always, at every moment, I wish to encounter you.

Affectionately in the Sacred Heart of Jesus
M. Francesca Saverio Cabrini

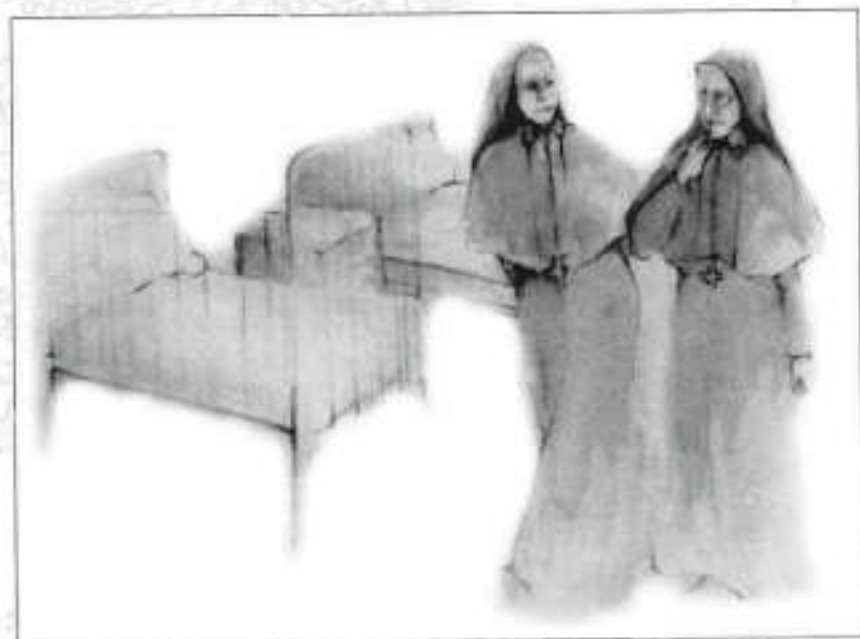
August 27, 1896



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FROM LIVERPOOL
TO NEW YORK,
November 1898

Destinations Cited:
Throughout Spain
Throughout France
Rome, Italy
Codogno, Italy
Milan, Italy
Turin, Italy
Paris, France
London, England
Manchester, England
Liverpool, England
Queenstown, Ireland
New York, NY



"Jesus loves us, loves us
very much. With pure
love He embraces us to
Himself. Put on wings
that He may raise you high
above all created things."
— Mother Cabrini

FROM LIVERPOOL TO NEW YORK, November 1898

Mother Cabrini's purpose in going to Barcelona was to study the possibility of opening houses in Spain and France to draw vocations and to open a place where sisters from other countries could go to learn Spanish and French. She also had to stay in Italy to take care of a weighty judicial matter affecting the Institute regarding a judgment that the Ursulines had filed against the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus before the Pontifical Congregation of Religious.

At the time of the founding of the Institute, the Bishop of Lodi had made a donation of six thousand lire on condition that the interest produced by the capital be given periodically to three Ursuline nuns who lived in the same diocese. This assistance was to cease upon the death of these three nuns. In time, the three nuns and the bishop died. The community to which the three Ursulines belonged claimed for itself the capital of six thousand lire. They resorted to the Congregation of Religious, which rendered a decision favoring the Missionaries which the Ursulines appealed. At the same time, the Ursulines began a campaign discrediting the Missionaries. Mother Cabrini had to direct the defense of the case by presenting witnesses and responding to the accusations. The money did not interest her: she wanted to reestablish justice and the good name of the late bishop as well as that of the Institute. The matter reached the Cardinal Prefects, who decided in favor of the Missionaries.

This caused greater public recognition of the Institute and enhanced its reputation. The Missionaries made new friends, and other loyal protectors arose in Rome and the Italian Church. Mother Cabrini met with Pope Leo XIII on two occasions. Having successfully concluded this trial, she went to Paris to found a house there and then proceeded to England. Because of the lack of time, she was not able to fulfill her desire of opening a house there. For the first time, she left from an English port.

M

y dearest daughters,

May the Heart of Jesus, our hope and only love, our life and our all, shed upon our souls that light of truth and that fire of love that He came to enkindle in the hearts of men.

Jesus loves us, loves us very much, with pure love he embraces us to Himself. Put on wings that He may raise you high above all created things!

November 5. For the seventh time I leave Europe to go to the missions. This time, following a secret impulse that I had nourished for a long time, I visited that land that was once the cradle of great saints and has, unfortunately, become a land of unbelief because of the passion and pride of its head.

I was encouraged by the blessing of the Holy Father, who, at the end of July, deigned to receive me at his feet, urging me, with unparalleled goodness, to run throughout all the world, if possible, to carry the holy name of Jesus everywhere and to draw all souls to the bosom of the Catholic Church in which alone they will find salvation for eternal life. Always with fatherly concern, he wanted to know the itinerary of my forthcoming trip. Seeing me so sickly-looking, he asked, "How can you withstand such exertion? I, who am strong, could not. It's true I'm old, but I'm stronger than you."

The affability with which he addressed me inspired me to respond that since I was his spiritual daughter, I could claim to have in me a portion of the strength possessed by my father and therefore was so courageous that I could run through all the world. I felt sure that, rather than losing strength, I had always gained more to serve that dear Jesus who wished to elect me a Missionary of His Divine Heart. Then the Pope took my head between his hands and, covering me with many blessings, asked me to pray and have everyone pray for him because he was overwhelmed with bitterness by the many revolutions ravaging humanity in many countries.

The Supreme Shepherd, that dear father of souls, as if not convinced he had consoled his little Missionary enough, gave me a generous gift for my trip and some religious articles to give to people who were generous to our missions. He said many other inspiring things, which the Mother Superior of the house in Rome, who was with me during that unforgettable audience, can recount to you. I can only repeat that with that blessing, I can go anywhere with great confidence. No matter how rugged the path or how many obstacles are placed in my way by spiritual or worldly enemies, fear will never overtake me. The Pope has spoken; God has spoken through him. I go everywhere secure. Oh, how powerful is the Pope's blessing! He is the visible Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, God's representative, the oracle of the Holy Trinity, and the

instrument of the Holy Spirit, the resounding trumpet of the Divine Redeemer. He is the mouth-piece of the Lord; his word is the word of the Lord. The Pope is the luminous beacon of divine wisdom. For me, his word and blessing is the true pillar of fire guiding me through all dangers and difficulties.

Oh, yes, let us pray, dearest daughters, let us pray hard for the Holy Father! Let us pray for the supreme ruler of the Church's destiny and pray the more during these most difficult times. We have a sacred obligation to do so, especially since we owe filial gratitude to Leo XIII for all the favors and help that he gives our Institute, treating it as though it were his own beloved family. Speak, oh daughters, talk to everyone about the Pope and see that all stay closely united to him. Whoever is intimately united with the Pope, regardless how far he strays from the right path, will rise again and soon walk in the ways of God. Remind everyone that the Pope is a fruitful vine and whoever remains faithfully united to him will always produce abundant fruit in the mystical vineyard. Moreover, the Holy Father desires our Institute to produce holy souls, as he told the sisters whom I presented to him after my audience. We, therefore, have a solemn obligation to correspond to such sublime wishes of this venerable holy man.

"How can we become holy?" I seem to hear some of you whisper. Let us not fear difficulties, my beloved daughters. All we need is to be faithful to our vocation. That same loving Jesus who deigned to call us, gathering us in His Divine Heart, continues to help us every day, always walking beside us. It is He who called us to follow closely in His footsteps, by the observance of the evangelical counsels, in order that we may be holy and perfect in His likeness. That dear, loving Redeemer has favored us with His loving gaze, removed us from the dense darkness of the world and introduced us into the house of His Divine Heart, surrounding us with His admirable light. As long as we are faithful to our vocation, Jesus is always in our midst, our breasts burn, and He inflames our hearts with great, divine love. Sometimes He will put our love and faith to the test, but, if we are faithful to our vow and pray to Him with trust, never forgetting that the source and cause of our joy is among us, He will very soon inundate us with light and heavenly joy.

He will always be with us in our trials, walking with us and sustaining us. He Himself promised us, calling us to follow Him closely, and His word will never fail. Sometimes, we may have to suffer along the way that leads to the holy mountain of perfection, but we will not be discouraged, because whoever ignores the purpose of Christian suffering does not recognize and know what is great and wonderful in her days. The science of suffering is the science of the saints. Let us then be glad when an unexpected cross presents itself, and we are afflicted with pain. These are the choice fruits of the mystic vine, destined to bear inestimable merits for our souls. My daughters, when you have to suffer, do not go about sighing like those who don't know its value! Lift up your eyes and smile sweetly on what you suffer, which is like a field turning

golden for the harvest. She who knows how to reap in this field will receive the reward. With gentle sweetness always unite your suffering with that of Jesus. Then your travail, suffered for Jesus and His Divine Heart, will become as many droplets immersed in the immense ocean of His Passion. In this manner, our tribulations and pains united to those of our beloved Jesus, will become not only holy but divinized and worthy of eternal glory. In suffering for Jesus, we share in His riches so that graces for ourselves or for our mission to sanctify souls will never be lacking along our pilgrimage. Be wise then, oh dearest daughters, and never waste sufferings by enduring them with complaints, or in a worldly fashion without a supernatural end. Reflect that in every trial there is an admirable secret work of grace and the sweet chain of our predestination.

November 6. Today I begin again my correspondence to you after having passed a tranquil night, so tranquil that we did not believe we were at sea. Dearest Sr. Francesca, who accompanies me, is surprised, because she was prepared to suffer seasickness and all the inconveniences that go with a sea voyage during this season. We are now docked at Queenstown, after sailing for sixteen hours. It is Sunday, and we would like to go ashore to fulfill our Mass obligation and experience the inestimable joy of receiving Jesus. But the ship will be anchored for only a half hour, just long enough to unload, collect the mail and load more provisions. For this reason, we must resign ourselves to directing our sights toward the tabernacles in the devout churches of this lovely Irish city where Jesus truly is revered and loved by these people, still imbued with that living, grand faith instilled in them by the great Missionary, the fervent Apostle of Ireland, Saint Patrick.

But it is necessary to return to the narrative of my voyage because you want to know everything happening to me. I departed after having concluded grave affairs in Rome, one of which, because of its seriousness, interested me so much and gave me so much work with so much stress that more than once I was tempted to yield to unjust demands. I would have surely done so if the affair concerned me personally. But I had to defend the rights of our Institute and would have been gravely at fault if I had surrendered under the moral and physical exhaustion that overtook me. I pressed on, with the help of our good Jesus who, through His loving Heart, does everything for me. At the end, I gained the victory so necessary for the Institute, which had been weighed down by so much outrage, bullying and impertinence.

Yet, this was all permitted by the Divine Goodness, who allows affliction to render us more worthy for the many excellent, singular graces with which He favors our small, beloved Institute, certainly unworthy of such benefits. After rendering thanks to God for them, we must be grateful for all those persons whom God willed to use as instruments to try us, and we must sincerely pray for them. Since true friends are recognized in such occasions, I was able to ascertain how much the eminent cardinals truly love our Institute with generous, fatherly hearts, what sacrifices and labors they will undergo to defend truth and justice, and how much they are enlightened by

the Holy Spirit! Among them are the eminent cardinals Parocchi, Vannutelli, Rampolla, Agliardi and Steinhübel, as well as many other cardinals and prelates too numerous to mention.

This successful outcome was crowned by the audience with the Holy Father that I have already related. I then went to the novitiate in Codogno, where I made my annual ten-day retreat in the company of about forty sisters, and found the spiritual rest that I had desired for so long. At the same time, it was necessary for me to regain my physical strength, which was truly depleted, in order to be able to resume a new, long voyage. It will cover at least sixteen thousand miles before it ends, not to mention the encounters at the various stops, which are not always pleasant but yet welcome because they are permitted by Him who gives wool according to the cold. Even with the snow and frost, He knows how to maintain the temperature of the soil and make it fertile. *Qui dat nivem sicut lanam* [Ps. 147:16; He spreads snow like wool.]

The spirit of our Institute and the acts of piety that accompany and enrich it are enough to keep us always united with God. Yet, the occasional spiritual retreat is necessary for our souls, whose destiny is to scale the heights of the Mount of Perfection as true spouses of Christ, and, moreover, as Missionaries of His Divine Heart. And it is Jesus Himself who said, "I will lead my beloved into solitude and there I will speak to her." He Himself frequently retired to the solitude of the mountain to the quiet of the Garden of Olives and in the silence of night to spend time with His Eternal Father.

In the silence of the retreat and in solitude, we are more open to God, so that we can speak in familiar terms with Him and ask Him to fill us with His graces. It is during retreat that we learn the multifarious, precious mode of prayer, where we learn to pray with words, works and suffering. There we also learn the internal prayer of the heart, which is so sublime and rich in merits because it raises us to the heights every moment in whatever we do. It is in retreat that the soul learns to gaze inwardly at every instant on the infinite beauty and goodness of God. Such inward glances are always a melodious prayer, most pleasing to the Divine Heart of our beloved Jesus.

God is a most pure and simple being; He has a preferential love for pure, immaculate hearts and takes pleasure in their loving, simple looks. Where can the spirit be better purified and simplified than on retreat? The soul learns to love as it should a God so worthy of all our love. Inward aspirations of love, no matter how brief, have an incredible power and richness for us, not to mention that they give ineffable glory to God. The soul learns that it does not need to go out of herself to seek her beloved Jesus. The soul learns that it does not need to go out of herself to seek her beloved Jesus while He lives within her as if enthroned in a tabernacle. In the mysterious silence, the soul may sip deeply from the wound of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. In retreat, the Missionary learns what is needed to accumulate riches for eternity by growing in continuous and loving purity of intention.

Oh, how precious is this purity of intention! Those who are most vigilant in this exercise are the richest in grace in this life and in glory in the next. Yes, my dearest daughters, may God be the beginning, the middle and the end of all our daily actions. Then, like true Missionaries of the Divine Heart, we shall give unending glory to God, and each moment acquire treasures of grace. Whether we work, teach, eat, sleep or travel, let us always do everything in the name of Jesus and for His Divine Heart. Always remember this and teach it to everyone: purity of intention gives life and value to all our actions and is the key to opening an inexhaustible mine of incalculable benefits we shall one day find recorded in the book of life.

In retreat, we learn to look deeply into ourselves and to earn the precious jewel of humility. Our spiritual vision sometimes becomes clouded, and we imagine ourselves to be better than we actually are. But in the solitude we remember the words of the Beloved Disciple, "If we say that we have no sin in us, we are deceiving ourselves and in us there is no truth." (1 Jn. 1:8) How great is our misery! Ignorance, intellectual blindness, arrogance and pride, inclination to evil, difficulty with and repugnance for every virtue, always ready to do evil, tardy and slow in doing good! All these are sufficient motives to humble ourselves before the pure face of God and confess that we are truly nothing but dust and ashes.

Let us always reflect, oh daughters, that it is a great misfortune to be lacking in humility because the absence of this precious, inestimable pearl places a wall of bronze between us and God. If we are not humble enough, we shall never advance in the ways of virtue because any defect or lack of humility no matter how insignificant it seems is of much harm to us, and is severely punished by God. Indeed, oh daughters, be very watchful in guarding holy and precious humility! If our hearts are not humble, all the pious exercises prescribed by our Institute will avail us nothing. It will be vain to recite so many well-ordered prayers with the tongue if our hearts are not humble. We must pray, and pray much, to obtain the inestimable gift of humility, but we need to be humble to be heard. Mary herself, our tender Mother, states that although her virginity pleased God, without humility she would never have become the Mother of God. Some often complain that, although they pray a great deal, their prayers are not heard. But if by grace they strive to become as humble as Jesus wants them to be, esteeming and practicing humility, they will be heard very soon because the key to opening heavenly treasure is powerful humility.

Let us, oh dear sisters, please and give glory to God and console His Divine Heart by being truly humble. Let us always in every occasion with great simplicity practice humility, which is the glorious chain uniting us to God. It is the quality which attracts souls to Him so they run to His loving arms. No, you cannot live without Jesus. He is for you a blessed need. Your soul longs for her Creator, her center, beginning, and only Beloved. Then do away with the impediment produced by too little humility and nothing will hinder you. Your wings will no longer be clipped, and you can soar upward with all the ardor of your soul to your Treasure, who will give you that foretaste of heav-

en which is a secure novitiate to eternal life. The peace and joy which God instills in humble souls surpasses all understanding. Since it is the source of so many benefits, how much, oh daughters, should you esteem the time of your holy annual retreat, the monthly one and that period, however brief, when you withdraw every week to review your insights and resolutions.

But I must tell you that at the end of the spiritual exercises, in addition to the advantages I have enumerated, I had the consolation of seeing the sisters much improved and enriched by precious graces from their beloved Spouse. Delighted by the gentle, fragrant odor of their holy resolutions, Jesus seemed to lift them up as within a pure cloud in the shadow of his Holy humanity. I felt myself more among creatures of heaven than among poor pilgrims, and, assured that heavenly blessings would accompany them to the different houses to which they were destined, I left Italy in peace and tranquility.

On the 25th of August I left Codogno; on the 26th, I departed from Milan for Turin, where I expected to find reduced fare tickets to Paris sent to me by the Mediterranean Network Company at the request of His Eminence, Cardinal Ferrata, who with so much concern wanted to favor our mission. Our good and always dear Msgr. Vigo, pastor of Saint Julia, came to meet us at the station and jubilantly announced that the tickets had not arrived and we would have to make a stop at his house, where we found a pleasant surprise. Msgr. Radini Tedeschi was there working on the finishing touches of his renowned pilgrimage to Lourdes. We thus had the good fortune of having a small part of helping in the tender homage of devotion to the Immaculate Virgin by preparing the leaflets listing the names of the participants according to groups for use by the pilgrimage leaders, among whom were Msgr. Mauder and Msgr. Buti, who generously gave their talent and energy to help the noted devotee of Mary Immaculate, Msgr. Radini Tedeschi. He does incalculable good for the Holy Church, with that zeal, pure faith, integrity, and the singular attachment to the Holy See that distinguishes him.

Our tickets finally arrived on the day that the pilgrimage was to start, and we immediately were on our way to Paris, accompanied by the blessing of the Archbishop of Turin, who wanted to bless our trip after blessing the pilgrimage. As though he had not done enough for us by hosting us for three days, Msgr. Vigo, like a good father, gave us a basket full of good things and went with us to the station. Miss Jaggi, Sr. Maurizia's sister, not satisfied with having kept us company during those days, accompanied us to the border, together with the Directress of the House of Codogno and Sr. Maurizia, to help us pass customs with all our baggage, to relieve us of even this petty annoyance. Carolina Jaggi is a beautiful soul. I don't know what she would not do to relieve others of every burden, in addition to what she does generously for the Institute, which she considers her own and intends soon to join.

On the morning of August thirtieth, we reached Paris at seven. There, too, his Excellency, Archbishop [Placide Louis] Chapelle of New Orleans, known for his great-heartedness and char-

try, met us. With that great kindness which makes him forget the dignity of his office, he came to meet us at the station, to take us first for breakfast to the house where he was staying, and then to the Sisters of Zion, with whom he had arranged our lodging during our time in Paris. That same day we visited Madame DeMier, who kindly offered us her house, thinking this would please her younger sister, who is presently finishing her studies with us. We could not refuse, because she was very ill. So we accepted her offer to avoid aggravating her condition. For an entire month, the home of Madame DeMier became a convent. Everything was at our disposal, the parlor, drawing room, dining room, the servants, in short, everything. A great silence was observed since the poor lady was ill and unable to receive guests. She left her room only at meal times, not to eat, but to keep us company and, like a good little mother, to see that we are well. Every day she tried to find ways to improve our stay.

While I am recounting our Paris experience, the *Umbra*, the ship of the Cunard Line we are on, seems to be flying; it is already the evening of November seventh. The weather is mild, the sea calm, and the wind favorable. We might have hoped to have a voyage like this in August or September but, certainly, never in this season. Everyone marvels at the favorable conditions of this crossing. Occasionally, the waves swell a little. Soon, as if by magic, clouds appear in the sky, momentarily obstructing the rays of the sun, and dissolve in a thick downpour, or in huge raindrops. The fresh water joining the salt water becomes calm and composed again so that we seem to be barely moving. I write now here in my cabin and other times on deck, and am able without much effort to write to you every day as you desire. Sr. Francesca is well and goes everywhere with me. Since we have to order our food à la carte, she orders for me at table because I don't know the English names of the dishes. I don't even know the names of the food prepared in our country, accustomed as I am to being served by the good sisters in our houses, who think of providing everything.

Sr. Francesca is a dear traveling companion, always good-natured, simple know, she does not yet speak Italian well, but she strives to twist and turn words until she makes me understand what she wants to say. The other day, for example, she wanted me to eat fiori cavallo, when she meant cavol fiore ["horse flowers" instead of "cauliflower."] In this way, she doubles her charity by keeping me cheerful with her ludicrous confusion of words expressed so sincerely.

How admirable is God in all His works and how well the work of His Divine Heart speaks! He finds followers everywhere, even in the midst of a land where unbelief and Protestantism reign. In the goodness of His Divine Heart, He wants to form good and generous souls who will serve Him with the greatest fidelity. Once, Jesus walked the region of Galilee and attracted souls to follow Him with one of His divine glances. Now His spirit which wafts gently over every country, and, with His loving Heart, He inflames many and draws them to follow Him. Oh my Jesus, how good You are! I shall never cease speaking of you and your Divine Heart, never tire of pro-

claiming Your praises. You rise every day like a vivid light and, like a lightning flash, run like a giant in every country, illumine souls, inflame hearts and gently urge them to enter into the bosom of Your Church, and to follow You more closely.

Pray, dearest daughters, for the conversion of England, because the heart truly grieves that this country is not in the true faith, having within it so many excellent qualities to make it Christ's portion. Her one fault is that she has a drastically diminished faith, not united to the one who perfects the unity of the church with Christ. Jesus said: "I am the gate, whoever enters through me will be safe." [Jn. 10:9] The door of the sheepfold is the Catholic Church, faith in Christ, and union with the leader who represents him. It is faith in Christ, simple and pure, not halved but entire, embracing all in its universality. The revealed word is that which allows us to enter the true Church, making us living members of the Mystical Body of the Redeemer. In fact, daughters, what advantage is it for Protestants to boast of a blameless life, of a wholly natural and human honesty, of a virtue lacking the interior light of the Holy Spirit? They may boast, "We do harm to no one; we lead a good life," but if they do not enter through the door that is Christ, their reasonings are in vain. The good life is one that is directed to a blessed eternal life and without this admirable order, the good life is lost. These poor people do not enter through the door of the true sheepfold because they do not know Christ, or at least do not entirely acknowledge the revealed word of Christ. They are not members of the Church and have no hope of forming part of the company of the blessed in heaven one day.

November 8. Today is even more beautiful than yesterday. The sun shines, the air is warm, the sea is tranquil and smooth, a magnificent blue, and the ship speeds swiftly and steadily. My two companions rose as bright as birds this morning. They came up on deck after prayers and we spent our time reading, praying, writing and talking, when it was feasible, with those who came near us. With some Protestants, we tried gently to hint at some idea to serve as a seed helping them to know the truth that is the true fruit of salvation.

However, I must not forget to go back in thought to Paris and tell you what our good Jesus has wanted me to do for you in passing. For seven years I nourished a secret desire to start a house in France, but the early work of our missions always impeded me. This time, as I was passing, an irresistible force kept me in the capital. First, naturally, I visited Montmartre, where I felt inspired, received Holy Communion and spent time in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament, which is always exposed there for the well-being of France. I looked at that lovely statue of the Sacred Heart with open arms that dominates the main altar, which seemed to tell me in mute but eloquent language, "Here is where I want you; I shall protect you and you will succeed in spite of every obstacle."

When I finished my visit to this great shrine, built with the donations of all the French people, I felt moved by a greater impulse to talk to the Cardinal Archbishop. I did not find him

because he had left for the countryside earlier. I was told to talk with one of the vicars-general, and the only one I found was Msgr. Thomas. He is an exemplary prelate who, inspired by God, thought it best to create some difficulties for me, so that what seemed to me so easy now appeared arduous. Instead of being dismayed, I felt more encouraged and felt within me a growing respect for that outstanding vicar, who gave me the opportunity to begin a beloved foundation with a cross by making my path somewhat difficult. It was truly a cross for me, because the obstacles, if they did not cut off the hope of opening the house I so long desired, nonetheless delayed its execution. That was a deep sorrow for me, who would have liked to finish everything in Paris in fifteen days and have time to go to England and accomplish something there before going to America. This delay prevented me from going to England, because on the other side of the ocean there was a matter that could not be delayed beyond the middle of November.

The words of our eminent Father, the Cardinal Vicar, rang in my mind. As he gave me his last blessing, he said, "Go to England and there establish a house of the Institute, which will benefit you greatly." For me those words were an obligation so that the pain of the delay in France preventing its execution was so great as to form a cross for me. It seemed that I would willingly embrace any other cross to free myself from that one. But all was planned by Jesus to make me a little more worthy of His blessing, without which nothing can succeed. In the meantime, His Eminence, Cardinal Richard, informed me through his secretary that to open a house would fully please him. This happened because the apostolic nuncio had delivered a message to Msgr. Montragnini, the only secretary available at the nunciature to take care of business during vacation time. At the same time, a letter in the name of the Holy Father arrived from His Eminence, Cardinal Rampolla, the Secretary of State with a recommendation to His Eminence, Cardinal Richard, to help the foundation to the best of his ability. The issue should have been closed, but the consent of the vicar-general, Msgr. Thomas, was also needed, and even this came shortly. I received unexpectedly his gentle letter, composed with those holy sentiments that distinguish him, in which he gave me as much consolation as the pain I had suffered. Shortly afterward in visiting our houses in Milan and Rome, he told our sisters that from the beginning, even while he placed barriers in my way, he felt a secret urge to say, "Go start your mission, because the Sacred Heart of Jesus will bless it."

The last difficulty was to select a location, because, not knowing the city, I could have erred. Instead of the modest and less costly site I was about to choose, His Eminence, the Cardinal Archbishop, counseled me through his good vicar-general to locate in the parish of Saint Pierre du Chailot, between the Etoile Plaza and the Trocadero. It is the most aristocratic neighborhood in Paris, which I certainly would not have selected without orders from the authorities. We found a house on 20 Dumont d'Urville Street. Although it was one of the more modest ones in those prime quarters, it was also quite expensive and I would not have been induced to take it except

in obedience to the Cardinal Archbishop. I said to myself that obedience brings victory and always works wonders; therefore, once the mission is started, the means will come. We did not know where they would come from, but our good Jesus knew well. With His provident and loving Heart He always cares for us. Since the house was so elegant, for the community we chose the servants' quarters for sleeping rooms, the porter's room for the community room, and the stable for the dining room. We left the fashionable apartment with its elegant rooms for the ladies who would come there to board. Since it was God's will and the blessing from the Vatican had arrived and is always effective, a boarder did not delay her arrival.

The house was opened on the feast day of the mighty Archangel Michael, the special angel of our Institute, who defends it with a band of angels and saints that I call our great Crusade Army. On the first of October, the illustrious Countess Spottiswood Mackin, an American lady of excellent character and generous heart, came to us. Immediately after her arrival, she felt strongly urged to help the new foundation of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in a special way. She tried to put us in contact with persons who could be of assistance, and she herself was most generous to us. Not entirely satisfied, she organized a concert and chose as honorary patron Princess Eulalia, who accepted the honor very willingly, happy to be able to help the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart. The energetic and talented Countess Spottiswood, strongly motivated, can move a whole country when it means benefiting an organization favored by the Holy Father. Yet, in her ardor, she retains an admirable simplicity that highlights her beautiful qualities. Since simplicity is the sister of humility, you should see her hang onto every word issuing from my lips and obey like a child, happy to make whatever sacrifice, to conform herself to the exigencies of a religious house and render herself worthy, as she says, to be of benefit to us.

See, oh dearest daughters, how admirable is the providence of that adorable Heart, who knows how to find means to help His little Missionaries when they abandon themselves completely to Him? But this is not all. His Eminence, Cardinal Richard, returned to the city on October first, and sent word through his vicar general that he wished to see me. I went on the fourth of that same month. His welcome gave me the impression that he was a holy soul, inspiring in me the greatest reverence for him. He treated me as a true father and gave me a letter he had written, formally confirming the foundation, in which he emphasized that we had been especially recommended to him by his Holiness, Pope Leo XIII. But this generous prelate was not satisfied with this gesture alone. He bestowed on us a generous gift, recording it in a book of subscriptions with a warm recommendation. This had the effect of being immediately matched by other generous persons, to whom the recommendation of their beloved archbishop seemed like an absolute command.

What do you say to this, oh beloved daughters! Are you not astounded by the boundless love of the adorable Heart of Jesus? Let us acknowledge that He is our powerful Advocate and Ruler

who always stands in the presence of the eternal Father to plead our cause. Our cause is in the wounded hands and side of our merciful Jesus. He will never abandon those who with a right intention lean on Him, abandon themselves to Him and hope in His Divine Heart. Oh, He is our secure refuge in all our trials. At the opportune time, He will lend us His effective and loving assistance. He disperses the cruel designs of our adversaries with his breath. Remember, oh daughters, that trust in Jesus is our life; even against all human hope we must always hope in Him and in the goodness of His Sacred Heart.

Many times it will seem that He is sleeping while we endure some evil. But no, daughters, He is wide awake watching over us and our affairs. It is He who clothes the valleys with lilies, and the field with flowers. Then how much more will he be concerned for us, who are the elect portion of His Divine Heart, consecrated by Him as His spouses, desiring always to please Him because we are dedicated to Him in a distinctive way as Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart. Yes, daughters, as long as you have the good fortune of faithfully serving under the banner of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, you will always walk protected by a special providence. But a special fidelity is necessary to merit much protection. You certainly have a good will. Beseech our good Jesus to place Himself as a seal on your arm, so that you may never need to lean on a human arm; as a seal on your heart so that He will always be your only love, that you may work for Him alone. Ask Him to seal with His holy name all your thoughts, words, and deeds, all your sufferings, joys, and hopes. Tell Him to live in you and you in Him, that you may always be one with Him, and that you may always glorify Him, in order not to bear in vain your sublime, enviable title of Missionary of His Divine Heart.

November 9. Our voyage continues as it began, quiet and tranquil, as though we were on a placid lake. Last evening my dear companion and I remained on the rear deck to contemplate the breathtaking spectacle of phosphorescence. The ship seemed illuminated all around: the moon seemed to be reflected in the waves. My companion, in fact, turned about to see the brilliance of the moon, but could not see it because its actual phase was not visible at that hour. Her wonder increased since she could not fathom any reason why so much light was coming from the dark water. The air was humid, filled with iodine and other healthful elements. Open-mouthed, we inhaled all that God provided us to strengthen our lungs. I was particularly happy for my companion because I yearn for her to become always more robust. We sang the *Ave Maris Stella* and the peaceful waves seemed to respond to our voices, giving an unexplained *chiaroscuro* to our modulations. It was as though the heavens opened, the angels joined us, and the Queen of all saints spread her mantle even more to increase her protection over us.

I feel the need to go back again to Paris a bit because a profound sentiment of gratitude urges me to tell you more about all those who were exceptionally good to us. His Excellency,

Archbishop Chapelle of New Orleans, a man of great faith, had been in Lourdes to compose the pastoral letter for his diocese at the feet of the Immaculate Virgin, in whom he placed all his trust. Since he had done everything in his power to facilitate our foundation before leaving Paris for the wonder-working shrine in the Pyrenees, on his return, he came to celebrate its successful outcome, and to give a solemn benediction of thanksgiving. When he saw what the eminent Cardinal Archbishop had written in the subscription book, he added his own recommendation. It is a true decoration to that subscription book because it was written with that heart and soul full of fervor and the spirit of God which distinguishes him, truly rendering him worthy of the episcopate. Among other things, he wrote that it is a welcome pleasure for him to help our Institute, which is most dear to him, and that it is his duty to help me every way he can because the Holy Father especially recommended this to him in his audience of last August.

If we have a thorn driven in the heart because the times are speeding toward calamity and it seems that terrible trials are in store for us, since it seems that this is the hour in which all the powers of the abyss are unchained, we can also take comfort in seeing people such as the venerable prelate Archbishop Chapelle, who works with such energy to repair the harm done to the Church and its beloved children. The wise Leo said *Defende nos in proelio contra nequitiam et insidias diabole* [Defend us in the battle against the malice and snares of the devil.] [The prayer to Saint Michael the Archangel] Not without good reason did he ask the whole Catholic world to repeat this prayer! Yes, the furious enemy of the redeemed of Christ, who with such arrogance insults the noble host of peaceful Israel, will be vanquished and won over. The cruel enemy advances, breathing devastation, heavily armed against us, but we will defeat him. Yes, we will defeat him if we repeat with faith, *Defende nos in proelio* [Defend us in the battle.]. The enemy approaches us with sword, spear, javelin and shield. Like the shepherd David, who was a man according to God's own heart, we proceed against him without fear in the name of the Lord, in peace and full trust, well enclosed within the adorable Heart of Jesus. Have trust, daughters, heroic trust, sublime and without limit, like brave champions. We shall weaken the enemy's forces, conquer him, and always succeed in being victorious for the glory of God and the consolation of His Divine Heart.

Time seemed to fly for me in Paris. Having arranged our little chapel, which seemed like a corner of heaven, Very Rev. Fr. Ledoin, pastor of St. Pierre du Chailloz, came on the vigil of Saint Teresa's feast to celebrate the Mass and to enthrone the Blessed Sacrament. For us, it was a great festive day, and we seemed to see everything renewed, made more beautiful and resplendent by the coming to our house of our Beloved Lord. Since Jesus deigned to come, all other good things would follow. Nothing would be lacking, and I could get ready to leave Paris with the assurance that the mission would progress well.

But the days flew by. Between taking care of one thing and another in my desire to do all that was necessary to leave everything with peace of mind, the end of the month came, without my

being aware of it. During those days, the second assistant pastor came to celebrate and, upon his return from vacation, the first assistant, Father Chesnelong, first came to visit us and then to celebrate the Mass. He was delighted that we had opened a house in his parish. In his goodness and with that nobility of soul that distinguishes him, he greatly encouraged us, wished us success and offered his cooperation. Very Rev. Msgr. Granito di Belmonte, auditor of the nunciature, who had been most helpful, also came to celebrate.

Accompanied by everyone's blessing, I left Paris for America by way of England on October 27, at nine in the evening. By now I had no time left to accomplish something in England, but I at least desired to visit that land where for so long I had directed my most ardent sighs. On the vigil, His Excellency, Bishop Patron, the Superior of the Franciscans of the Holy Land in Paris, had obtained tickets for us at a reduced rate. His fatherly goodness truly distinguishes him. Three sisters preceded us to the station to make all the arrangements. When I arrived, they wanted to come into the compartment to keep me company until departure time. Since in Paris, as in England, arrivals and departures are not called out, the moment of departure came without our realizing it. The doors closed rapidly as the train began to move. There was no way to alight since the train continued its course speedily for more than an hour. There was a moment of displeasure because it was night and no one at home knew anything. But soon we rejoiced that we could be together a little longer since we were to be so far apart for a long time. At the first stop we were met by the stationmaster who had been notified by Paris. Very gentle and full of concern, he told us not to fear because a direct train for Paris would leave in a few minutes. In fact, I was informed in England that by midnight the sisters were already home.

At one, tired from the whole day's work of preparing the trunks for the missions, I fell asleep, but soon was abruptly awakened, since we had reached Calais and had to alight from the train hurriedly to board the steamer. The lighthouse beacon illuminated the scene as if it were day; it shone very clearly, like the sun. Continually revolving around, it emitted rays from its small arc, which stretched out majestically over the small steamer and over the waters of the Channel, producing a marvelous effect. The Channel was calm. With the speed of lightning, we were transported to Dover in an hour. We boarded the waiting train. Before six ante meridian, we were in London. I wanted to admire the land to which my heart had led me, but was too exhausted. Alone with Sister, I made myself a bit comfortable and in no time fell asleep, or into a drowsy state. I was not concerned, because in Paris we had been told that we would not arrive in London until nine. Instead, after five thirty, I was suddenly awakened to hand in my ticket and was told we already were in London and in ten minutes would be at our destination, Victoria Station. I could not stand up because I was all numb, but there was no alternative; we had to prepare to leave.

We checked our baggage at the station and went to the Church of the Fathers of the Society of Jesus, where we received Communion. Then we went to see the superior, for whom Father

Frigeri had given us a letter. He welcomed us with the same fatherly care that distinguishes the Jesuit Fathers and asked us about our work. Then he gave us a recommendation for the Sisters of Mary Reparatrix, where we could lodge during the three days we were to stay in London. They were not far, so we arrived there shortly, and I thanked the Lord because I just could not take another step. We met the superior, who received us most graciously and immediately served us a good breakfast, which Sister Francesca ate with such pleasure. But more than food, I wanted a bed; yet I hid my feelings and tried to sit up straight.

In fact, my time for rest had not yet arrived. The superior told us that all the rooms were occupied and she regretted that she could not accommodate us. She gave us the addresses of two other convents and sent a young lady to accompany us the shortest and safest way. I thought of Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem and started to walk, but my legs could not go another step. I seemed to have lost their use. There was no other alternative but to take a carriage and go to His Excellency, the Bishop of Southwark, from whom I knew I would get the help I needed. He had been a good friend of the Institute for over two years. It was quite far; in addition, the coachman was not too familiar with the streets and did not know where the Catholic bishops resided. We reached the residence of the bishop, Bishop Bourne, at one in the afternoon. He was not home but was at the seminary about thirty miles away, preparing the seminarians for ordination the next day. Zealous shepherd that he was, he himself wanted to prepare the Levites of Christ, because he desired them to be worthy of the great mission that awaited them. However, we found his worthy secretary who treated us as though we were members of his own family. He immediately ordered dinner for us and, in the meantime, arranged for our stay with the Sisters of Christian Retreat. The secretary had a carriage drive us there at four.

I hoped to go to bed as soon as we arrived because of my great fatigue. But those good religious surrounded me, since it was the first time they were hosting other sisters, especially Italian ones. It pleased them so much to hear about Rome, about the Holy Father, etc., etc. Seven o'clock came and they invited me to supper. Finally at eight-thirty, they showed me to a room. I thrust myself on the bed, more dead than alive. My bones felt as though they were all dislocated and did not permit me to sleep. The next day was Sunday and I wanted to get up for the community mass at seven. I tried to get up but it was altogether impossible. Sr. Maria Francesca went down to chapel and, when the good sisters did not see me, they were filled with dismay. They came to see if I had succumbed to a grave illness. Perhaps one of them feared it more than the others. Not in the habit of receiving sisters as guests, she was afraid of an unexpected catastrophe. For reassurance, she came to my room and opening wide the window, came to examine me. Seeing me peacefully nestled under the covers, she exclaimed, "She looks like a sleeping baby!" I accepted the compliment with pleasure and replied, "Sister, be patient, I need to rest awhile. Later I will come down and long to receive Communion and then go to Mass at the nearest church."

At ten-thirty, I finally went to chapel, where the good chaplain, also a Religious of Christian Retreat, gave me Communion. Then I took some coffee and the sisters went with me to Mass at a nearby chapel, which serves as a school during the week and a church on Sundays. We do the same during a special solemnity at our school in Brooklyn, where we have over six hundred pupils. That chapel was once a Protestant church, and was transformed to its present condition through the work of the zealous Bishop of Brooklyn, Monsignor McDonnell [Rt. Rev. Charles E. McDonnell, D.D., second bishop of Brooklyn], at whose expense the school is maintained. I went to church, but my legs bore me grudgingly, and frequently I had to ask my guide to go more slowly. As I went along, I felt my ability to walk gradually restored, and I was happy because it was not the opportune time to get sick. After dinner I rested until vespers. That night I slept well, and the next day I was limber and vigorous again.

After breakfast, my companion and I went to visit London, first to buy a trunk and then to go to Victoria Station to exchange the new trunk with one given to us in Paris. The old trunk had split during the trip and it would be impossible for us to continue our voyage with it without losing everything. We were introduced to London prices, which for us were fabulous. Just as everything in that city is grandiose, so are its prices, because it is the one passing through who pays for all the pomp and splendor seen everywhere.

Leaving the sisters' house to go into the center of the city and the commercial establishments, we took an electric tram. We entered the station, purchased our tickets and found ourselves in a room with many others waiting for the moment of departure. Suddenly, we felt the floor giving way under our feet, and ourselves going down with it until we were buried underground. We found ourselves in a large tunnel, illuminated by electricity, and saw the crowd running desperately, not saying a word. In London perfect silence is observed everywhere, so we followed their example and took our places in the tram, or rather in the convoy, because there was a long line of cars that could not be counted in the dim light.

We set foot in our compartment, which took off like lightning and, in a flash, we were in the center of the city, always underground. Arriving at our station, we passed into a room which, by its size, would certainly not be called an elevator, and were transported to the light of day. We walked around a little, admiring those edifices of proud London, which are something truly beautiful. When we did not know the way, we asked somebody. They not only answered us with singular courtesy, but also offered to accompany us to the right street, offering to carry bag and umbrella. Once when we asked a gentleman for directions, he showed us the way and then apologized profusely for not carrying our package because he had to attend to important business.

We entered a huge store, at least six times as large as one of the Boccioni, to buy something we needed. We were immediately welcomed most cordially and with admirable respect. The salesclerks wanted us to see everything in the store, offering us seats and places to put our bags

in the various departments where there were things of interest to us. In other countries they talk about politeness and kindness, but in London it is truly practiced. We looked for a trunk in one shop, and not having one there, the manager called an employee and said, "Go with the sisters to another store and help them find what they need." I could recount hundreds of such similar incidents. This is how they treat the sisters in England, and God, who regards as done to Himself every act of respect done to His servants, will certainly bless the people of that nation, granting it the grace to enter into the true Church, and to earn the prize that will be given to true believers, not only in this life, but even more, in eternal life.

November 10. The weather is more splendid from one day to the other; only today it is so cold we cannot stay on deck. Fortunately, our cabins are so well located that we are comfortable inside, since we do not smell the unpleasant odor of pitch. Thus, we avoid occupying the common stateroom. We pass the hours together happily, praying a while, reading a while and exercising our language skills a bit. St. Maria Francesca, who thinks she has already mastered Italian, reaches it to others, entertaining us with her malapropisms, spoken with so much pleasure and grace. The other day she was asked her nationality, and she replied that she was Italian, but her accent betrayed her. She still insisted that she was Italian because she belonged to an Italian Institute. One of the officers was sorry to see us so closed in. To relieve the monotony of such a calm trip, which he believed could be boring, he would either come or send for us whenever there was something interesting to see, especially if another ocean liner was passing.

But we were certainly not bored because, united with our dear Jesus and doing His holy will, we felt a heaven in our hearts. The immensity of the ocean, with its vast clear horizon, transports us to paradise. It seems as though the sky, with its few scattered clouds of singular beauty, meets to kiss the waters, to unite the Church Militant with the Church Triumphant. All this inspires us to contemplation. You seem to approach the gates of heaven, and to hear echoing that holy, gentle word that the Church respectfully repeats, "Alleluia, Alleluia," that it never seems to tire repeating, almost as if trying to experience a taste of celestial harmony on earth. How wonderful it is to consider heaven with its gates of emerald and sapphire, its surrounding walls of precious stones, its floor of clean, white shining stone, and its streets resounding with joy and praise!

The most magnificent vision for our contemplation that raised our exuberant spirits is the sight of the Immaculate Lamb on Zion's holy mountain and, nearer to Him than any of the other elect, thousands and thousands of souls who have the names of the Lamb and the Father written on their foreheads. They are the virgins who sing a new song, newer than all the others, because in them all is newness of purest, angelic, heavenly life. Their voices are like that of the harpists who play on their harps the melody that none of the other elect can sing, because it is reserved only for the virginal choir. The others in this group can listen, enjoy, delight in it, but they can-

not sing it. Who can express, oh dearest daughters, what the holy virgins, the spouses of Christ experience in heaven? The Holy Spirit works powerfully in the pure of heart, and if the pure of heart begin to see and experience God in this life, what will it be like in heaven? Let us be ever more enthusiastic about the happiness of the state of life to which Jesus has called us out of the kindness of His Divine Heart. Let us, with generous fidelity endeavor to remain faithful whatever the sacrifice. Let us protect our treasure by the practice of a profound humility, without which all very soon would dry up like a delicate little plant, lacking the life-giving sap that keeps it alive and helps it to grow beautifully.

Now, let us return a while to London, where courtesy and kindness reign. It was noon and my companion was hungry, so we looked around. Seeing a restaurant with an Italian name, we entered in to have something. We were received with joy and warmth as though we were relatives, were seated in a quiet area and served a Milanese meal. Sr. Francesca was overjoyed and kept repeating that she was happy because she was eating *Milano pane*, her favorite food in London. It was a great pleasure to find these good Italians, who have gained respect in that great capital. The Lord will always bless them because they are good Catholics who love their religion and also observe it. Since it was Friday, they had good meatless food available, which they were happy to offer.

That day passed in an instant. Seeing that the sun was setting, we looked for a tram station to take us back to where we were staying. We found the station quickly because they are located at close intervals. The subterranean network of trams is like a labyrinth going to all parts of the city. As we had done in the morning, we obtained tickets and descended, or rather, were transported underground, and quickly boarded the tram, which sped away. We passed one, two, three, ten stations, and never saw ours. I began to tell my companion that the route did not seem right, even though I had lost my sense of direction and it was not easy to get oriented in that subterranean tunnel. Sr. Francesca cheered me by saying that, since we had gone around the city so much, it was much farther but we would soon reach our destination. I kept still for a moment and said another decade of my rosary. But, after passing two more stops, I wanted her to ask how much farther it was. Imagine our surprise when they looked at our tickets and told us that we had gone very far from our destination. They made us get off, go up some stairs, then descend others to reach the other side of the tracks and board the train going the opposite direction. After a long ride, we saw the stop that we were told was close to the convent. We began asking in what direction we could find the convent, but no one knew. Meanwhile night was advancing and it was getting darker. The moon, looking like a huge *frittata*, was low and wrapped in thick fog. It was about to go out, giving scant light, so scant that, instead of illuminating, it cast shadows that further confused us. I finally had to decide to take a carriage, but the coachman also did not know. By dint of continual asking, he finally found out destination.

On the second, we finally left London to go to Manchester, where some friends were expecting us and where St. Maria Francesca could bid farewell to her relatives before leaving for the missions. We departed after taking leave of His Excellency, Bishop Bourne, and the dear Sisters of Christian Retreat, who had become fond of us and wanted us to stay longer. At nine, we were at Victoria Station and made arrangements for our baggage. The porters loaded it in a large cart and were going to weigh it to charge us, but they were directed to take it straight to the baggage car, saying that for the Missionaries it could go free, and I was given the claim tickets. I was truly surprised by so much kindness, and secretly implored blessings on that country, which I wish can soon again be called the Land of the Angels.

(This account was left incomplete. The same occurred in chapters 11-14.)



XI

FROM NEW YORK
TO LE HAVRE,
September 1899

Destinations Cited:

New York, NY
Newark, NJ
Chicago, IL
Lower Manhattan, NY
Bronx, NY
Manhattan, NY
Scranton, PA
New Orleans, Louisiana
Long Beach, Mississippi



"How sweet and good it is to go to sea, tired
and drained from the work of the missions!"

— Mother Cabrini

FROM NEW YORK TO LE HAVRE, September 1899

Mother Cabrini felt that the time had come to expand services to immigrants by creating bilingual schools for the new generations who already spoke English. These schools would continue to offer an integrated Christian formation and were an important step in raising the prestige and social conditions of the numerous Italians. These schools included Our Lady of Mount Carmel (Newark), Assumption School (Chicago), Transfiguration School (Lower Manhattan), and Saint Rita's (Bronx). A center for teaching Christian doctrine and needlework arts was established at Our Lady of Pompei in Greenwich Village (Manhattan). She purchased Sacred Heart Villa at 190th Street in Manhattan, and visited the area around Scranton, Pennsylvania, to plan a school in what became Saint Lucy's Parish. She visited the sisters in the existing houses of New York and New Orleans and arranged for the opening of a summer home at Long Beach, Mississippi, for New Orleans orphans. After this intense activity, she set out once again for Europe.

M

y dearest daughters,

Peace be with you and may it accompany you on your way. Only Jesus can make beautiful and fortunate souls blessed. Without Him, even heaven and its inhabitants would be dreadful.

September 1. How sweet and good it is to go to sea, tired and drained from the work of the missions! The date had been fixed, the cabins reserved, but the second of September came upon us all too soon. During the last days I had to run from morning until night to settle certain affairs of the mission that required my attention. Night served for packing the trunks, so I boarded the ship really tired. As soon as we finished waving our handkerchiefs to bid goodbye to the sisters, rather than sitting, I fell into a lounge chair and remained there for a long time unable to move and drowsing off until I fell asleep. When I awoke, I could not believe that I was alone with M. Virginia and then felt the whole burden of distance from you. It seemed that I still had a word to say to one sister, advice for another, and a suggestion for a third. By now, the immensity of the waters had isolated me from everyone, and the rainy weather seemed to make the thought of leaving you sadder. However, reflecting that I was a Missionary and could not permit sadness to come near me, I withdrew into the beautiful Heart of Jesus and I saw all my sisters there. Even though I could not speak to them, I could ask Jesus to tell each one what I had forgotten or had not had time to say. This was a welcome relief, and I regained my serenity, thinking that while Jesus inspires you to understand what I desire of you, He will also add the necessary grace and help you in exercising those virtues which must render you worthy to be true Missionaries of the Divine Heart, full of enthusiasm and truly zealous for the salvation of souls.

The harvest that God spreads before you is vast and fertile and you can roam through it zealously daily, gathering abundant sheaves. You are the fortunate spouses of Jesus, queens entitled to all the treasures of the Spouse. Be queens, then, in safeguarding the rights of the realm of your King and Lord by sharing joyfully and willingly its concerns and crosses in order to guide those entrusted to your care. Remember that those souls cost all the Blood of Jesus, so do all in your power to lead them to His Divine Heart. Labor with zeal; the power of your love will endow your actions with strength and courage. In your words, actions and sufferings, always seek the greater glory of God. The perfection to which you must incessantly aspire must be motivated by that most noble end, the glory of God. Gather together the forces of your spirit; work, pray, offer your sorrows; sweat, sigh and be vigilant in the constant discipline of yourself. Always hold high the banner, *Omnia possum in eo qua me confortat*. [Phil. 4:13]

Have great confidence in Jesus, and may your trust in Him grow daily. You are poor creatures, but you must lean on the Creator. You are poor little ones, weak and miserable, so you must rely

on Divine Omnipotence. Yes, oh daughters, lean on your Beloved, because the soul who abandons herself in the hands of Jesus in all she does, is carried in His arms. And it is in just this manner that the religious, sustained and carried by her Beloved, every hour performs many great deeds promptly and with admirable ease. The true spouse has wings on her feet and hands to work with speed and accuracy to console her beloved Jesus and to bring much glory to Him with the salvation of souls.

September 4. It was already my second night at sea, but I was still very tired, and did not sleep well. I awoke several times and each time it took me awhile to become oriented. I kept thinking that I was still in New York, and the hour was late for me to rise to run to my work, to attend to the missions that I had started and that you must continue with untiring zeal. By the grace of God, I did not let anxiety take possession of me, and consoled myself with the thought that I have left everything in good hands. I refer in particular to the last mission for which I worked so hard, in accord with the archbishop, to establish a school near Five Points. The Protestants are already working there, with satanic, tireless concern, especially among the poor Italians. The devil has employed all his cunning, frustrating all my efforts for several months, even placing ridiculous barriers in my way, but I still hope that we shall succeed. My hope is sustained by the undefeatable zeal of Archbishop [Michael Augustine] Corrigan, who desires it and gives me the support to accomplish it. Regardless of how difficult a project is, I place it in the adorable Heart of Jesus. Then I can securely rest in peace, even when far away, knowing well that He knows what to do and brings to completion every work that I desire for His glory. In the field, I shall work with all my might, but when obedience takes me away from one assignment to go to another where the harvest is ripe, I shall leave the first. Loving my beloved Jesus, I shall trust Him to give sufficient help and enthusiasm to our dear sisters to succeed in accomplishing everything.

Oh, the law of divine love is so excellent and amiable, and God Himself has given it to His creatures. Without Jesus, the world is mud and affliction of spirit; Jesus without the world is a precious treasure. Blessed is the soul who trusts in Jesus because He is lavish in His promises and generous in giving His graces and treasures. Oh, yes, my daughters, the precept to love Jesus is an inestimable privilege. However, we cannot love Him if we are not loved first by Him. In giving us this law, He also gives us the grace to love Him. What shall we not do for the love of such a loving God, so generous that He has called us to follow Him so closely and to continue the mission of Jesus on earth? Let us correspond to so great a love. Let us be generous, and remember that the salvation of the world is entrusted to our charity. We can do nothing because we are poor and weak, but let us have a lively faith and trust in Him who strengthens us. Let us expand our hearts to help so many souls lying under the yoke of the king of darkness. With the fire of our love, let us break the heavy chains keeping them bound in the terrible service of the devil.

When we see our efforts are unsuccessful, let us throw ourselves at the feet of Jesus. Groaning over the world's iniquity, let us beg His Divine Heart to lay bare His infinite treasures of mercy. Then let us return again to our work, without giving in to exhaustion. Hardships must never discourage the spouse of Christ; rather, they should make her stronger and more determined. Do not be dismayed by rejection and mockery. Go forward always, with the serenity and fortitude of angels, because you are the angels of the earth and so must continue on your way in the midst of so many contrary influences. Everyone can be serene when things run smoothly; it is in difficult situations that fidelity and constancy are proven.

Remember always, oh daughters, that you are the guardian angels of earth, and must be always ready to fly wherever obedience directs you in the vast fields of charity. May your life be a perennial sacrifice of yourselves for the benefit of the human family. May your delight be in hard work, in praying, always renewing the offering of yourselves as victims of expiation and reconciliation between heaven and earth. In contradictions and difficulties, remember that our Lord allowed the apostles to struggle all night in the midst of the storms. This was so that they would be used to suffer opposition and not give up in the midst of the tempests they would meet but resist and go forward in spite of any adversity. You, oh dearest daughters, who are destined to continue the life of the apostles, enter often within yourselves. In the retreat and silence which you must allow yourself, according to your rules, see how you fare not only in times of trial, but in times of felicity, both of which are storms in our life. Yes, daughters, many times the storm of prosperity is more dangerous than that of adversity. There may be shipwreck in either one. Examine yourselves seriously during the two daily exams required by your regular observance. See if you allow yourselves to be dominated by disordered affections, or if you control yourselves as you should against the winds contrary to your salvation, no matter how much they seem to favor your inclinations and greed. Oh, yes! Let us serve the omnipotent God, who is so good to us, daily making us participants in His goodness and wonders.

I wish you all could be at sea with me today. What a spectacle! A horizon so vast it truly gives an idea of its immensity. As far as the eyes can see, all is calm. We do not notice the ship sailing rapidly, so still are the surrounding elements. It cuts through the waves with great ease. It seems as if we were traveling through the sky, because the light blue waters appear as another sky.

This ocean liner, *La Touraine*, is elegant, spacious and comfortable. I have never seen another with such comforts. It is like a small city, with its own streets, avenues, boulevards and plazas, magnificent salons, parlors, small studios and apartments with all the desirable comforts. All of the personnel are most kind and courteous. The captain is a king and father; he has the majesty of a king with the charity of a father. When he noticed that our cabins were on London Avenue, a bit far from the dining room and the stairway leading to the deck, he had them changed. To our great surprise, he gave us a deluxe two-room apartment on the top floor, which is the most

exclusive and comfortable. Near us is a parlor, magnificent for its balcony, located under the lamp that illumines the entertainment hall and the dining room. This room is at our disposal and others cannot enter without our consent. This is just where I am now writing to you. M. Virginia keeps me company a bit, lying on a comfortable big chair and, at other times, goes on her bed. In this way, she stays quite well without being seasick, which is unusual because she has always suffered from it.

The passengers are good company. A few are French; there are many Spanish passengers, some Americans and Italians. Traveling with us are an Augustinian, a French priest, one Italian, and one American, and various sisters, among whom are one Ursuline, one Marianite, and four Sisters of Saint Joseph of Cluny. The priests and the first two sisters are at table with us. They are a help to me because I do not know the names of the dishes and they see that what is best and most healthful is served for me. Like the fish, I feel better at sea than on land and so have a better appetite. The food is prepared so well and is so attractively served that it is appetizing even to those who do not feel like eating.

September 5. Yesterday evening, just before supper, the captain came to visit us. We asked him what kind of weather to expect during the night, since the sun paled very suddenly as though it were late autumn, then came an unbearably cold breeze. He replied that he could not tell us, and from his response we concluded that something new awaited us. In fact, the sailors were intent on preparing the oars and loosening the ropes of the lifeboats. We also asked both the sailors and the waiters. Although they were very courteous, no one revealed the truth, faithful to their obligation never to give any hint of danger to the passengers. We all went to supper, but after the first course, one passenger after the other began to leave the table because the ship began to toss and upset many stomachs. M. Virginia also fled to her bed, the only place where she is comfortable when there is movement. The only ones who endured bravely to the end of the meal at our table were the Marianite sister and I. We even went on deck for a walk, praising God, who had allowed us to master the sea. But the rocking of the steamer increased, as did the cold, so I also decided to go to bed.

At about nine-thirty the silence was broken by the ship's great whistle, a signal of dense fog that is used to alert other ships that may be going in the same direction since it is impossible to see them in a darkness so thick that it can almost be touched. The motion became excessive, but, fortunately, it was rolling and not pitching. Yet the movement, and the activity of the sailors, caused some panic in all the passengers. Luckily, that evening's preparation for meditation was on the storm that the apostles experienced at sea and we were put at ease by the consoling words of Christ to his beloved disciples. *Habete fiduciam* [Jn. 14:1; have faith] and the others, *Ego sum, nolite timere* [Mt. 14:27; it is I. Do not be afraid.] Since He, our beloved Spouse is always with

us, what could we fear? He is master of all, whom all creatures obey and the source of every consolation; therefore, what was there to fear? I had a small statue of the Redeemer with me. With deep faith, I showed him the ocean so that he would bless it and said to Him, *Ne discesseris a me, intende in adiutorium mihi* [do not depart from me, come to my aid.] After that, I rested peacefully and securely.

An hour later the huge whistle was silenced, a welcome sign that the fog had lifted, even though the strong pitching continued. We had no more fear because we were passing the banks of Newfoundland, where good weather is rare. The immense bulk of this huge ocean liner, *La Touraine*, agitates an enormous amount of water in passing, which splashes on the banks, raises the sand and causes the sea to rage. However, we feared nothing because the Lord is always with us, disposing of everything according to His Divine Providence. We shall always stay near Jesus; in spirit we shall build a lasting memorial with the mystic stone of our heart wholly consecrated to Him. Over it we shall pour the oil of grace, always flowing abundantly for religious, and sing an unending hymn of thanksgiving to our beloved Lord.

The life of the saints in heaven is a life of love and thanksgiving and ours should be the same, since as religious we have been singularly favored by the Heavenly Father. Our whole life should be one of thanksgiving because at every instant we receive infinite benefits from the most High. Saint Paul continually urged the faithful to give thanks and wrote to the Corinthians: *Indeed everything is ordered for your benefit so that the grace bestowed on you in abundance may bring greater glory to God because those who give thanks are many.* [2 Cor. 4:15]

The majority of people give thanks to God after having obtained a grace. But the spirit of Jesus Christ, which is what should move us, reaches us first to be grateful for the continual benefits we receive every instant. This is the best disposition to move the Heart of God in our favor. It is a source of supreme joy for me to hear our sisters in some of our houses. When praying a novena or tridium to obtain a grace from Heaven, they add a prayer of thanksgiving. It seems to me that their petition will surely be granted. Yes, oh my daughters, an act of thanksgiving is an act of perfect love of God because it has no other interest than the pure glory of God, the satisfaction and pleasure of God. When we pray we are in fact moved by our own interests, but when we give thanks we are moved by the highest and most perfect sentiments. Let us repeat, then, oh daughters, the hymn of thanksgiving which issues from our heart like a blessed, burning arrow and flies to wound the Heart of our beloved Spouse and Benefactor.

September 6. What a terrible night we have undergone! At times, it seemed as though the ship would leap and fly out of the water and then seemed about to capsize. Objects moved about like moving corpses. We thought we would also be thrown out of our beds, and did not get a moment's rest. At dawn this morning, there was a slight respite, so we rested our tired limbs, which felt

bruised from the continual, not-so-gentle rocking. Since I have always been accustomed to travel peacefully, I did not know if this was a dangerous storm. Around midnight, I heard some movement and uproar among the crew. I touched the button to summon a servant and one immediately came. I asked if we were in enough peril to prepare to seek safety. He answered, "No, no, be at peace. There is nothing to fear, the sea is good." Even though we could not believe him because the effects were anything but good, his kind, composed demeanor put us at ease. If there had been at least the glimmer of the moon, it wouldn't have been so bad, but the night was pitch black. The rolling began again at about nine o'clock. I was still in bed and, when the woman came to see if we wanted breakfast, I did not feel like getting up. I asked her to try to bring some coffee. It was the first time I had been served in bed but the coffee was ill-fated. As soon as it was poured into the cup there was an ill-turned, sudden pitching of the steamer upsetting both cup and pot, wetting the whole bed and everything on it. Whether I wanted to or not, I had to get up. M. Virginia also wanted to get up, but this last involuntary bounce robbed the poor thing of her strength. She did not even try to move her head, because as soon as she moved, she had to pay the tribute to the sea.

September 7. The wind does not want to abandon us. Following us, it toys with the boat as though it were a little shell. The sea is calm though, which contributes to our feeling better and gives us the will to do a bit of good. On deck, we contemplate the vast horizon and the immensity of the ocean, in which shine so vividly the attributes of God, especially His power, wisdom and goodness. How great and admirable is our beloved God in all His works! All He has created, He has created for us so that our gratitude should be unceasing. The memory of so many benefits by which every hour of our life is blessed should be a great comfort. We must often in spirit see the sovereign hand of the giver in all the benefits He has showered upon us, because every grace is a distinct act of love from our God. The immense multitude of graces should not render us indifferent or negligent in gratitude, because the multiplicity of graces does not diminish their value, but increases it and renders it more precious. Let us often consider the graces that by the infinite goodness of God continually surround us and let this serve to warm our hearts with holy gratitude. This will gradually intoxicate us with divine love and make us ready to do and suffer all for the glory of our sweet Lord.

Be certain, oh daughters, that if you are faithful in giving gratitude and in rendering loving service, your Jesus will work new wonders of grace and blessings in you. The flame of love in your hearts must never be extinguished; it is like a fire which needs more fuel the more it extends and widens. Love is the fountain of grace, and grace has a sublime power to attract. Love is industrious and by its superhuman quality converts all tribulations, persecutions and difficulties of every sort into the purest gold of perfection. Our good Jesus loves us, oh daughters; what a prodigious

gious blessing! He accompanies us always with His grace. You often complain because you seem to be far from Jesus. No, no, He follows you always and everywhere. Be faithful to Him. Abandon the ordinary way and run faithfully in His footsteps. In becoming holy you will be able to save many souls who will follow your example, and your word will be effective for them. Loving Jesus with great fidelity will lead to your every action, suffering, your every emotional response, being imprinted with the divine seal. Your fidelity and operative love, which seemed in the beginning like a small stream, growing in its marvelous course of fidelity, will become like a fully vast river, with a holy, driving force. This is the perfect Missionary, who will go, run and perform many great things with perfection for the glory of her Jesus, whom she has learned to love with the fidelity of a loving spouse.

September 8. This day dawned bright, tranquil and splendid. It is the great day of the birth of her who, with Jesus, constitutes the glory of heaven and the joy of His children on earth. It seems like the heavens are sending down saving showers of graces. Oh, happy is the one who loves Mary! What care and tenderness this good Mother has for us! All her thoughts are of us, her children, and we are uniquely hers because she is the Foundress of our Institute. It is through the pure kindness of this divine mother that we are the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. Our Mother of Grace keeps us inscribed within her virginal breast. Often looking at us, it seems that she is pleased with us because she sees in us the image of her beloved Son. She is even more pleased when she sees that we are faithful to our holy vocation and that we strive to imitate more closely her heavenly virtues. She rejoices when we love Jesus very much and work hard for Him, because when the love of Jesus, which is an ocean of interminable light, is alive in us, it renders us unspeakably beautiful, like angels. To be faithful and constant in divine love let us always try to stay under the mantle of Mary, our tender Mother. She is the dove of heaven who in her conception crushed the head of the infernal serpent, our arrogant enemy. Look to Mary and imitate her. Having responded faithfully to grace, she arrived at a sublime degree of perfection to become the most stupendous and joyous prodigy of heavenly virtue, surpassing in sanctity all the angels and saints together. May our Mother, resplendent in her beauty, purity and holiness, on this her festive day, turn toward us with those loving glances that bring joy to heaven and consolation on the earth. May she deign to shower upon us her blessings and the flowers of her precious virtues. Under her patronage, may they be preserved and grow even more beautiful and fragrant so that one day they will be worthily transplanted in heaven where, with Mary, they will be a pleasing incense to the Heart of Jesus.

I take up my pen again now that it is three post meridian. If you could only see how blue the sky is and how it is reflected in the water as to give the illusion of its being another sky! The horizon is vast and makes us think of the vast sovereignty of our heavenly Queen and loving Mother.

What am I saying? The splendors of the sky are eclipsed, the vastness of the sea disappears and the abundance and riches of the earth fade to nothing before the splendor of our heavenly Queen. *Fecit mihi magna qui potens est.* (He who is mighty has done great things for me.). [Lk. 1:49] Oh yes, the Lord did great things for our Mother because she had always been faithful to the graces she received.

What happiness is ours to have her as Mother and Foundress of our Institute. Yes, she really founded it, because while I was discerning whether or not the Lord wanted this work, many were praying to Our Lady of Grace and so was I. After many prayers, Bishop [Domenico] Gelmini gave me the mandate. Bishop Bersani, with his characteristic gentleness, persuaded me to obey without delay. Msgr. [Antonio] Serrati helped me with great fervor and enthusiasm so that I found myself committed without being able to withdraw. The Institute of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart came forth from the hands of Our Lady of Grace. Therefore, she is our Mother. What can we fear?

September 9. Our heavenly Mother has calmed the waves and the power of her command causes the reverent sea to become more beautiful each day. It looks like a truly blue sky, and its tranquility brings to mind a soul who, living united to Jesus, is always at peace, and everything is easy and possible. The ship is sailing rapidly but we do not feel the movement. Yesterday it covered 427 miles and today it will cover even more. In the distance we can see large fishing boats. So much does the ocean seem like the sky that the boats seem to be suspended in air. The faces of all the passengers, instead of the sadness of the previous day, reflect the peace and happiness brought by good weather and also the thought that this is the last day of our voyage.

Tomorrow they will join their relatives and the merchant will claim the merchandise he has counted on to increase his income. Leaning on our beloved Jesus, we were at peace even during the worst days of the terrible storm. Some priests who were on board often said to us, "You are always happy, like those who have a good conscience." I do not know if we truly have a good conscience. This alone I know: that we have great faith in the Heart of Jesus, and supported by Him, we fear nothing, knowing well that He takes singular care of us and not even a hair will be torn from us without His permission.



XII

FROM GENOA
TO BUENOS AIRES,
December 1900

Destinations Cited:

LeHavre, France
Paris, France
Lourdes, France
Madrid, Spain
Codogno, Italy
Genoa, Italy
Barcelona, Spain
Malaga
Cadiz
Canary Islands
Tenerife
Santa Cruz
Santa Cruz de Tenerife



"During this long period [of war in Panama], our sisters escaped unharmed... In addition to the school and catechism, their work was to make Sacred Heart badges, those that say 'Stop!', to give to the sick and soldiers. The badges have worked miracles... Oht What marvels faith can work among peoples!"
— Mother Cabrini

Statue of the Sacred Heart,
Mother Cabrini Shrine, Golden, Colorado

FROM GENOA TO BUENOS AIRES, December 1900

From LeHavre, Mother Cabrini stopped briefly in Paris and made a pilgrimage to Lourdes, where she was favored with a deep spiritual experience. She traveled to Madrid, where the Infanta Eulalia of Bourbon had spoken to Queen Maria Christine about the Institute founded by Cabrini and its activity.

Favorably impressed, the Queen entrusted to Mother Cabrini the direction of a school for the orphans of the soldiers who were killed during the Cuban war. The Leo XIII School was begun in Madrid in 1899 and in a short time became one of the best and most frequented schools in the Spanish capital. From Spain Mother Cabrini traveled to Italy. During her stay in Codogno, the new chapel to the Sacred Heart was dedicated and fifty-three sisters made their religious profession. Before she departed for Argentina, she experienced the joy of being received on two occasions by Pope Leo XIII.

M

y dearest daughters,
May the balm of the sweetness of the Sacred Heart of Jesus descend in your souls and render you worthy of the title you bear: Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Today it is exactly a year since I left Spain after that foundation so richly blessed by the Sacred Heart of Jesus and arrived at our house in Milan around midnight. It was the vigil of our dear patron and mine especially, Saint Francis Xavier. The next day, as you can imagine, there was a great feast, a real family celebration. And tomorrow? Tomorrow, it is again the feast of the great Apostle of the Indies, but none of you, oh beloved daughters, can celebrate with me. Only the crash of the waves of the ocean will bring me the muddled echo of your fervent prayers. You have prayed with so much filial affection that your prayers will certainly reach the throne of the Most High by way of the mystical ladder. God, moved by your supplications, will send a band of angels to guide the *Alfonso XIII*, this fine ocean liner, on which I am traveling for the first time. I firmly hope that, after a safe voyage, we shall happily reach the port of Buenos Aires where your dear sisters, whom I left five years ago in that fertile mission, are anxiously awaiting me.

In the company of Sr. Anna and Sr. Michelina, I embarked at Genoa the other day, the thirtieth of November of this memorable Holy Year. In the morning, everything was done in haste because we had been notified by the Spanish Transatlantic Company that the ship would sail at eleven from Genoa. The kindness of Bishop Romero, Titular Bishop of Jasso, made this trip possible for us. His Excellency, the Archbishop of Genoa, favored us by coming to celebrate Mass and give us his fatherly farewell. He hurried to leave us after heartily blessing us so that we could have time for last-minute preparations. At a quarter of eleven, we were already at the port, accompanied by all the students and a good number of sisters. We hired some boats and boarded the *Alfonso XIII*, which was anchored somewhat far from shore and, we thought, about to leave. Grasping the rope, one after the other we boarded the ship and entered a magnificent salon where we found His Excellency, Bishop Romero. He had recently returned from Rome, where he had led a pilgrimage, and hurried on board to oversee the preparation of our three places. With his great heart, he greeted us like a father. The students took over a piano and improvised a little celebration for the venerable bishop and the excellent captain. This was a pleasant surprise for both, and created a good feeling among the crew members who were able to attend.

But eleven o'clock soon came and then midday was about to strike, announced by a cannon's roar in Genoa. Always keeping in mind that departure would be prompt, I dismissed the girls and sisters, who descended the ladder to board the boats with heavy hearts. The farewells and waving of handkerchiefs were brief because in the midst of the numerous ships ever present in the

cluttered port of Genoa the well-wishers disappeared quickly from our sight. We were called quickly to the table and we went there, thinking that, rising from our meal, we would feel the effect of movement, but nothing of the sort happened. The steamer was motionless, perfectly still, securely held by large cables. We took advantage of the quiet to put our cabins in order.

Later, about four, I asked why the ship had not yet moved, and was surprised to learn that we were not leaving until dawn of the next day. Because of the turbulent weather, the men did not want to work during the night and the cargo was not complete. I decided to send a telegram to our house in Genoa to advise them of the delay. I was picking up my pen when Sr. Agostina and Sr. Lucia appeared. They had gone to the travel agency to discuss the coming departure of our sisters for the United States and learned that we were still anchored in the harbor. When they heard this, it is a miracle that they did not run on the water to come to see us again. After we had rejoiced in each other's presence, I asked the two sisters to go call the superiors of Codogno and Rome. They gladly ran to share their joy with the whole community. In a short time, Sr. Agostina returned with the two superiors. The captain, moved by the affection shown by the sisters showed for their mother, offered to let them stay on board overnight. He did not have to repeat the offer. In this way, even those who will perhaps never be sent outside Italy had the good fortune, as they said, of passing one night at sea. You can imagine better than I can describe it the joy we experienced that evening, the joy of being together unexpectedly with those from whom we would have already been separated.

December 3. St. Francis Xavier - what a beautiful day! It seems to me that we could not celebrate it in a better way than in the midst of the waves of an ocean toward which that ardent soul, that indefatigable apostle, long sighed. In the short span of a few years he knew how to bring countless souls into the Catholic Church. I will not say anything to you about the life of our dear protector because you know it better than I. I want only to ask you, oh daughters, how did Xavier become that great saint, able to accomplish so much? It was only because he always remembered those words Jesus Christ used to invite those fortunate souls who were His apostles to follow Him.

Those words you know, *Sequere me* [Mt. 9:9; follow Me] and copy my example. He addressed these wonderful, very important words also to us, who have been fortunate to have heeded them, giving ourselves with fullness of heart to our God, consecrating ourselves to Him in the religious life. But it has not ended, oh daughters, it is now up to us to become perfect disciples of the school of Jesus Christ, imitating all the excellent, precious virtues of His Divine Heart. Like Saint Francis Xavier, let us always imagine Christ before us, His sweet dignity, serene patience, tranquil, loving demeanor, the inalterable calmness of that divine model. Let us see how He works, walks, talks and teaches. Let us consider the perfection with which He accomplishes each act, and strive to imitate Him as faithfully as possible.

We passed the major part of the day mostly on the Gulf of Barcelona. We thought that we would have several Masses as on the second. Instead we ran the risk of not having even one, because nearly all the priests went ashore. But the admirable Providence of God that watches over us wished to console us and turned an unusual occurrence to our advantage. The only priest who was to celebrate on board had risen in plenty of time to celebrate his Mass and then also visit the city. But the poor man, in spite of all his efforts, did not succeed in finding the person who had the key to the closet where the vestments were kept. Having rested as much as we could at sea, we arose and found that the priest, despairing of finding the key, had given up and was about to eat breakfast. "No, no, Father," I said to him, "Look again and you will find it, because we want the Mass at sea to celebrate our patron." He went again to look for it and much to his surprise, quickly found it where he least expected. He celebrated soon and we were able to receive Holy Communion and satisfy our desire of the previous evening. We took this as a welcome surprise from our saint. From the beginning of our mission until now, he has not ceased to show his admirable generosity toward us.

If you could see how beautiful the sea is. It looks like a cup of milk. My two little companions, who suffered so much the first day, now feel as well as if they were on land. They eat, walk, work and complete all their acts of piety as though they were in a convent. They also engage in exercises of the Spanish language so they will not arrive on their mission totally ignorant of the language spoken there. We are at table with Bishop Isaza, Auxiliary Bishop of Montevideo, his secretary, and other priests, all of whom know a little Italian and are happy to hear it spoken. They always speak Spanish to us so we can learn to speak it. But the bishop delights in speaking Italian to us since he wants us to enjoy the account of his recent visits to the various shrines in Italy. He also provides us with useful information about many countries. Bishop Romero also always speaks to us in Italian and takes good fatherly care of us. From the beginning of our trip, he did everything he could to get me a private cabin, which I desired. When we arrived in Barcelona, a family who had reserved my cabin came on board. I thought that I should have to do without and move in with the others. Without my knowledge, he interceded, and before evening he came with the captain to tell me that they had provided other accommodations for me in cabin number four. This was truly admirable because the number of passengers who boarded at Barcelona was truly great.

December 4. Yesterday at five post meridian, the ship started again on its course. It really seemed like a holiday, with all the people who had come on board, some as passengers, others to bid the travelers farewell. We could not think of anyone who would come to greet us. Our sisters in Bilbao, as much as they desired to come and had originally planned to do so, could not leave the house since they had so many preparations to make for their first Mass in that house, which

will be celebrated on the beautiful solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. Yet, you see, we were surprised. At about three, we were seated at table for some refreshments as is customary on board when we saw two priests pass by in the middle of many people. Their venerable appearance attracted everyone's attention and all watched, asking each other, "Who are they? Are they Jesuits?" They directed this same question to me, but, as you well know, I answered that I did not know anyone in Barcelona.

Meanwhile, the priests came near our table to talk to a gentleman. One of them looked at me with surprise, and then I also recognized him as an old acquaintance and exclaimed, "Oh, Father!" He also exclaimed, "Oh, Mother, what are you doing here?" He was the provincial of the Scolopi Fathers, whom I had met in Buenos Aires about six years ago when I was there for that foundation, a priest with a very good spirit, who helped me so much during the trials of those early days. The other was Rev. Fr. Miracle, who was in very poor health at that time in Buenos Aires. Now he looked so robust that I really had to look at him closely in order to recognize him. He ran to find Rev. Fr. Terradas, his brother in the congregation, whom I was delighted to see because he had just recently returned from Panama, where we had met more than six years ago.

I was able to get firsthand news from him about our sisters there, who are suffering very much from revolutions and civil wars that have plagued poor Colombia for a long time, to say nothing of the many maladies that are devastating that country, such as yellow fever, typhoid, smallpox, and, occasionally, even bubonic plague. They suffered all these diseases, one after the other, for three consecutive years, and now it seems that the wrath of God has abated, even though the war continues. During this long period our sisters escaped unharmed through the admirable Providence of God. In addition to the school and catechism, their work was to make Sacred Heart badges, those that say "Stop!," to give to the sick and the soldiers. The badges have worked miracles. In every letter we receive from them, we read about one or more wonders that were worked. Oh! What marvels faith can work among peoples!

Many say that those people are superstitious and their faith is not sound. Instead, I say that their faith is very sound and there, more than in any other place, we see it proven by extraordinary events. They believe with simplicity, and this is one of the wisest qualities of a true believer. They are uneducated, but possess within themselves good reason for their beliefs. God has infused it in them. They also are willing to be instructed. No, the faith of the people is not to be despised. They may not be able to express the reason for their faith, nor can they always defend it, but these reasons which they possess are deeply felt in their hearts, as though they had studied much. The reason for this is that faith is the heart's highest good; the heart is judge of what is for its benefit, not the intellect. Everyone has a heart, the learned and the ignorant.

How many uneducated souls with pure hearts have raised themselves to God in blessed contemplation. Thus, even the mysteries that are beyond science and the mind were not superior to

the vastness of their hearts. No, the mind does not comprehend the mysteries of faith, but, because they are mysteries of love, the heart of one who has the gift of faith feels, rather than understands them. Yes, the Trinity, the Incarnation and the Eucharist are mysteries of a God of love, a God who makes Himself for us father, brother, victim and food. They are proof of an infinite love; the heart perceives the truth because it needs to be infinitely loved. Oh, faith, oh holy religion, how much you have benefited humanity! Appearing in the night of ignorance, you have crushed error and have assured reason and truth positions they will never lose. You will live forever no matter how embattled, and error will never be a part of you. When error assails us, we will turn to you and find truth under your beautiful mantle.

December 5. As dawn broke this morning, we arrived at Malaga. The steamer docked close to land and everyone went ashore. I decided to do likewise in order to become acquainted with the city. Since they were all going to buy Malaga raisins to bring to Buenos Aires, I, too, bought a small case as a remembrance, but with better luck than the others. While they went into the fancy stores where one pays for outward appearances, I set my sight on a little donkey descending from a nearby mountain loaded with small cases of the famous raisins. The name of the mountain was told to me by several men, who were happy to see me inclined to favor the little donkey. They surrounded me and encouraged me to buy from him because the mountain from where it came was famous and, moreover, I could have it at a good price. In the evening, all returned with their elegant boxes and I with my rustic little case, filled in abundance with better grapes for which I had paid far less. At table, someone offered a bottle of Malaga. Not wanting to lose face by not presenting something in return, I sent to my cabin for one of the bottles M. Augustina had provided. I was asked if it was from Malaga. "Yes, it is from Malaga," I replied. Not understanding the joke, they drank it as if it were from Malaga. They were surprised, especially the bishop of Montevideo, and praised the exquisite wine, which they could not believe was from Piedmont.

December 6. Yesterday while we were at supper, the vessel made its way out of Malaga and slowly coursed toward Cadiz. With the sky serene, the sea most tranquil, and the temperature so pleasant, it seemed the weather was more suited for a pleasure cruise than for going to the missions. Our good Jesus is playing with us, and treating us like children, taking compassion on our weakness. This means that we shall strive to be generous in times when He tries us with bad weather, even though we think He always wants to give us good weather. To abandon ourselves completely in the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, ready to accept whatever His holy will has planned for us, is most consoling and makes us experience a foretaste of heaven.

We reached Cadiz this morning at about five. As the steamer docked, we could rise from our bunks more easily, put our things in order, and go to the chapel to assist at Mass and receive Holy

Communion. We wanted to go ashore but we were docked too far, and I thought it was better not to go, since I still had the cold that I caught at the port of Genoa when I was on deck bidding farewell to our dear sisters. The ladies traveling with us kept telling me to go inside but for me it was impossible until the waving handkerchiefs and the sisters had disappeared from sight. With the care that I am getting, my cold will soon disappear. Even here I can undergo the milk treatment, even though the milk may not be as good and fresh as from our own cows. Nothing but condensed milk is served here. Once I could not stand to look at it, but now, out of necessity, I have forced myself to take it and have found it good enough. I have been assured that it is more wholesome because it is like sterilized milk.

December 7. Yesterday, so many passengers came on board it seemed we could hardly move. The ship is full and all the cabins are occupied, except one that the good captain so generously reserves for me. However I have already changed cabins as many times as we have docked and stopped in port because at every port the number of passengers has increased each time and I must relinquish the cabin not mine by right but by courtesy. Today is the third time I have moved, just like some who have turned up in Rome from the hundred cities, who move every month so as not to pay rent. The only difference is I move every two or three days. When we get to Santa Cruz de Tenerife, I will be assigned a permanent cabin because no more passengers will come aboard.

December 8. This morning before the break of dawn, another vivid, colorful aurora was already unfolding. With vivid splendor, it lifted our souls to such noble, deep feelings that we could not sleep any longer. It was the precious dawn of the day of the Immaculate, and it seemed that this mystical dove, our purest Mother, having found us in a treacherous element, was directing toward us a gaze of special predilection. With that voice that captures the heart, she seemed to invite us to rise and sing her praises and place ourselves more securely under her motherly protection. The thought of our dear, Immaculate Mother dispelled all our weariness, and we quickly ran to the chapel. Some priests, who had tasted most abundantly the sweetness inspired by Mary, the mystic dawn, were already celebrating the Holy Sacrifice. We participated in one Mass, and received communion during the second in the company of our Holy Mother. What we were unworthy to receive through our merits, she who is called Immaculate would obtain for us. She is the one whose comeliness and beauty are a noble cloak, a glorious, rich garment.

How beautiful Mary Immaculate is! God created her for Himself, worthy of Him, all pure, noble and glorious. Oh, how beautiful is our Mother! The three divine Persons love her singular charm. After the humanity of Jesus, Mary is the greatest and most glorious work that has come forth from the hand of the Omnipotent. Among all pure creatures, Mary is the one who most

perfectly resembles God. The arm of God, God's wisdom and goodness shine with visible splendor in this privileged creature. She alone renders God more honor and glory than all the saints and angels together, and the fragrance of her virginal purity surpasses that of all the angels. *Tota pulchra es, Maria, et macula originalis non est in te* [You are all fair, Mary, and the original stain is not in you.]

How beautiful is Mary! How lovable! This noble creature is the manifestation of God on earth. Through her, God will be known, loved, adored and blessed in the world. Thus with good reason she is, in an altogether special manner, the tender Mother of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, who have as their primary goal the sublime mission of instructing the people, to draw them to the knowledge and love of our divine Redeemer. In the infinite goodness of His Divine Heart, He deigned to call us to such a sublime vocation. What shall we fear, daughters, if Mary Immaculate, God's purest dove, is our Mother, our refuge, our hope, and the cause of our joy?

Oh, dearest daughters, let us place all our trust, hope and joy in God as the principal cause, and in Mary as our mediatrix. In God is the primary source of all good, all grace. Mary is the salutary channel through whom we receive the pure waters of divine goodness and mercy. We place our hope in God and as the final cause, and in Mary by reason of her providential mediation. Mary is our refuge, our sure defense in dangers, the remedy for all our ills, our help, light and guide. Let us always put our complete trust in this powerful and merciful Queen whom we can happily claim as our Mother in a very special way.

This morning we had a number of Masses. I got up at four-thirty and awakened the sisters at five. I went immediately to the chapel because the priests, to gain time, had already begun the Holy Sacrifice. After seven Masses, we had a solemn one, celebrated by Bishop Isaza, auxiliary bishop of Montevideo, who gave a beautiful homily on the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, for which the great Pope Pius IX is so celebrated. He emphasized how the American people were firm in their belief of the Immaculate Conception, even before the proclamation of the dogma, dwelling on the prophetic words of the Archangel Gabriel, who greeted her full of grace [Lk. 1:28.] The good prelate pointed out that Mary could not be called full of grace if she were not immaculate. This was most fitting for the rod of Jesse, from which was to be born the divine Redeemer.

Mary enters into all the mysteries of the Divine Redeemer, with whom she was to share the glories, joys and sufferings. She is the singular virgin, the co-redemptrix of the human race, the true Mother of the living. Everything in Mary is great and providential. Her mission in the world has a unique character. She comes into the world as a resplendent sun. Her light is immense, her splendor heavenly, her beauty, divine. Oh, how full of so many graces does our Mother appear on earth when, in the first instant of her being, she was filled with them in abundance by a loving God! From the first instance, Mary was a giant in grace and perfection. Then, growing in grace and raising herself on high, that prodigious rod of incense left so many examples for us! If we imi-

tated that sublime model, that royal eagle always fixed on God, oh, daughters, what good fortune would be ours! We would be true religious, excellent Missionaries of the Divine Heart of Jesus.

Mary lived more in God than in herself. She was where she loved, more than where she lived, so that her intellect was clearer than that of the seraphim. Her will was perfectly conformed to the divine will. Everything in her pure soul was order, light, beauty and harmony. Her body was most pure, immaculate; her modesty, angelic. She was most faithful to grace, abandoning herself wholly in God. Her intention was always pure and perfect and her love for God was most fervent. It was a strong continual love within her which surpassed not only that of all the saints, but also that of the seraphim. Her humility was most profound. She always sought obscurity, and hid her exceptional gifts from everyone, even herself. Her charity toward her neighbor was like a sweet fragrance. All sorrows seemed to have a place in her heart, for she was loving, meek and merciful. Even today, oh, daughters, Mary's special characteristic and innate inclination is to spread her graces to all, to console and lead all to the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ.

Oh, how lovely and majestic Mary comes forth! She is truly the mystical, holy City of God, [Rev. 21] and her glorious foundations rise on the highest summit of the mountain. But I shall never finish speaking of Mary because I seem to see her beauty, power and majesty everywhere. The sea in its immense vastness speaks to me of her. The azure, crystalline waters, reflecting the colors of all the most precious, rare, and resplendent stones, speak in their mute language like an open book of Mary's virtues. I shall be happy if I could raise your hearts and souls toward Mary, instill in you strong hope, a firm faith and tender love for this sweet and loving Mother. When you see the dark haze of human passions spread around you, have recourse to Mary and gaze at her, the morning star, shining brightly, dissipating the darkness.

If you are in danger or have hearts full of consternation, turn to Mary. She is our comfort and our fortress; turn your eyes to her and you will be safe. Follow her and you will not mistake the path leading to heaven, because she is the gate of heaven. You know this well, because you never tire of singing it every evening, *Felix coeli porta* [gate of heaven rest.] Singing it, you feel your hearts open to the most sublime hopes. Happy are you who faithfully observe this beautiful devotion of singing the *Ave Maris Stella* in honor of Mary every evening. You know that at sea I never omit this pious homage to our beloved Mother. After supper, I go with St. Anna and St. Michelina to the back of the ship and there, astern, we let our voices echo, uniting ourselves to you in spirit, we sing the *Ave Maris Stella* and recite our prayers. Afterward, we stay to watch the trail this powerful engine leaves behind in its rapid, majestic movement. It looks like a great mantle. I wish you could see how beautiful it is, like fiery silver, and here and there appear resplendent stars that disappear from our eyes as we watch them, only to give place to others. This goes on without pause, one following the other, and we could watch it forever.

December 10. Yesterday was Sunday and the feast was repeated like the day before. There were several Masses, ending with a solemn Mass celebrated by Bishop Romero, who explained the Gospel with that eloquence which distinguishes him. He spoke on the answer Christ gave to John's disciples when they came to ask Him if He were the expected Messiah or if they should wait for another. [Mt. 11:4] He dwelled on the words, "and the poor are evangelized," [Lk. 7:22] emphasizing the force with which Jesus pronounced these words, giving them great importance. More than healing the lame, giving sight to the blind, and restoring life to the dead, this was most important and best announced Him as the true Messiah: "And the poor are evangelized." From this, he went on to urge the rich to care for the poor and employers to give time to their employees to practice their religion and to see they are instructed in their religious obligations. We can hope that the vibrant words of the experienced prelate did not fall on dry, rocky soil [Mt. 13:5] because the attention and devotion with which the passengers and crew assisted at the Holy Sacrifice was most impressive. The Mass was celebrated in the large salon on deck before all the passengers. On the lower deck, in the dining hall, from which the altar can be seen, were the captain, his officials and the sailors behind them. It was truly a moving sight, especially for me. In more than twenty sea voyages, I saw for the first time the Holy Mass celebrated on board.

Every night at seven-thirty a bell sounds and everyone gathers for the rosary in the salon where the statue of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel is uncovered. The captain is always the first one there, praying with such devotion that it is a pleasure to see him. How brave and good this captain is! He is like a good father to all, has a good word for everyone and no one has recourse to him in vain. Every day he comes to see how we are and if we need anything. He is a man full of faith, observant of God's law, who experiences a great peace within himself and knows how to communicate it to others. By his example, he gently leads others to observe that law imprinted on our souls by the hand of the Most High. In truth, how sad and lamentable is the plight of those who, through their own fault, have allowed the darkness of unbelief to grow around them.

Once the holy patriarch Abraham was weeping, with his head between his hands. When his son Isaac asked him why he was crying he replied, "And how could I not be sad, seeing men go about like poor idiots, walking in the darkness of ignorance and sin, instead of in the path which the mercy of God had placed them, filling their souls with justice and holiness? They serve the devil and do not praise God; the poor things don't even know Him, and you don't want me to weep over them!"

"But why cry, if they are happy just the same?"

Then Abraham led Isaac to a poor dwelling where a woman with a child in her lap was crying inconsolably. "Why do you cry?" asked Abraham. The woman replied, "This child was abandoned by his own. All his life he will never know his father. This makes me so inconsolable that I will not stop crying until my eyes dry up." Before this example, Abraham asked, "Now do you

understand, my son? If this woman cries inconsolably for this boy because he will never see his father, why should I not weep to see so many sons who do not know their heavenly Father, their creator? Instead of praising and serving Him, they refuse to acknowledge Him. They offend Him and, worst of all, walk in a dense fog hiding the splendor of the light the Father had given them, when He imprinted His law on them."

We, too, like our holy patriarch Abraham, feel profoundly sad to see men who, after having abandoned and rejected the Catholic faith, after denying God and Jesus Christ, have reached the precipice of atheism, pantheism and naturalism. "There is no God," the first have declared. The second affirmed, "There is no difference between good and evil." "There is nothing better than to pile up riches by all means possible and to give one's self over to pleasure," exclaim the third. With such senseless theories, they have overturned the world and many have lost their common sense and reason. The misfortunes that afflict us at present and threaten our future come from such errors. Poor unfortunate creatures! I would like to help them. If they would listen and follow me for a moment, I think I could lead them to happiness.

How? Let them come with me and repeat in the intimacy of their hearts:

- There is a living and true God, creator and Lord of heaven and earth, omnipotent, eternal, immense;
- There is in God's divine mind an eternal law which ordains that the natural order be observed without alteration;
- There is in the mind of man a participation of this eternal law by which he understands what is intrinsically good or essentially evil; which we call the natural law;
- There is a natural law, written and promulgated by God himself on Mt. Sinai and given to men to observe: the Ten Commandments of the Law of God;
- There is the evangelic law: a sublime perfection of the written law; pronounced by the mouth of Jesus Christ Himself and taught by the Catholic Church;
- There are the sanctions of this law, fashioned by this same God, promising reward or punishment, according to its observance or transgression.

To all those who faithfully observe the commandments of the divine law, God grants peace of soul in this life and eternal happiness in heaven. He punishes those who deliberately break the law with fear or at least an anxious uncertainty regarding their own eternal salvation, and with the frightful pains of hell after death, if their transgressions were truly serious and they die unrepentant. They will undergo temporal pains in purgatory if their transgressions were less serious or their reparation insufficient.

Let us thank our beloved Lord, daughters, who with such ineffable mercy has deigned to enrich us with all that is necessary to achieve our temporal and eternal happiness. We are God's children; let us strive not to fail such a high and sublime calling. May our soul, life and heart

always follow such a good and loving Father. Let us pray that God will be glorified by us and by all, in the present time and for all centuries, that His sacrosanct law may always rule, reign and govern over us and over all men, from one end to the other of the universe.

December 12. Now we are well accommodated. I did not tell you before, when I was uncomfortable, but now since it is over, I can tell you. From Cadiz to Tenerife I had to sleep in the cabin with the other sisters, because even at Cadiz the number of passengers increased and there was not one cabin available. The captain was very sorry. Even the purser, who had been very indifferent, came in sadness to tell me to be patient, because as soon as we reached the Canary Islands, a colonel and his family would leave and there would be good accommodations for me. In fact, we arrived at the Canaries at six in the evening, and they hurried to put in order a comfortably located cabin for me where there is little motion. I can open a window facing west any time except from four to seven in the morning, when the sailors clean the deck and throw water about mercilessly. The water runs down the sides of the ship, and it enters through the windows, surprising those who least expect it. To better protect myself, I close my little window before going to bed, since I prefer to suffer the sweltering heat than to expose myself to a possible visit from a fish. I am not acquainted with the inhabitants of this sea crossed by the gulf current. Since I have never lived with them, I cannot trust them so much.

At the Canary Islands, we stopped at Santa Cruz de Tenerife, right in front of the peak by that name. As a child I studied geography, which, along with history, was my favorite subject and read about peaks outstanding in the world for their height, shape, and fame. I developed a great curiosity to see two: the peak of Miranda and that of Tenerife. I believe I saw the Miranda Mountain from all sides as I traveled from San Sebastian to Bilbao, and then from Bilbao to Victoria, and I liked it very much. Yet I was told that to really see it, it must be viewed from the west. If God grants me life, I shall see it when I visit another city in Spain, where I am expected on my return from this trip.

Now I could finally see the peak of Tenerife. As we drew near Santa Cruz, we could see a magnificent, cone-shaped mountain of a respectable height, with smaller ones near it of the same shape. They looked like the pyramids of Egypt, and I almost could imagine I was going to Africa, passing through the Red Sea. The stupendous sight before them caused great rejoicing among all the passengers. We would have wished the ship to stop so we could better contemplate that rare panorama not made by man but by the hands of the Supreme Maker. Instead, the ship continued at an unusual speed. It seemed to have put on wings to become a huge winged fish, all because our good captain had promised to reach that port before evening. Determined to keep his word at any cost, he had the sailors speed up the engine. In fact, we arrived just before the sun set and as the dinner bell rang. As much as we wanted to linger to see the view, it was better to go down to the dining

room immediately so that Bishop Isaza, who presides at our table, would not be kept waiting, and we could participate in the grace he says before the meal. While we dined, darkness fell the way it does in Central America, where twilight is unknown. The moon was not shining so we could not see anything. The purser offered to take me ashore with the captain and his officers, but since it was night I did not accept his kind offer. Instead, we went on deck where, not too far, we could see the electrically illuminated city of Santa Cruz and some ships that had docked in the harbor with us or a little earlier. Among them we could distinguish the *Duke of Galiera* of the Veloce Company, with its hundred lights and unique shape.

I cannot tell you about the accommodations on that ship because I was never on it. The only ship of that company on which I traveled was the *Victoria*. Only its remains now can be seen near Genoa, where it was destroyed by a raging fire in 1898. Luckily, all the passengers and the entire crew were saved and took shelter in Alicante. Five of our sisters were the last to leave the ship. They stood by at the order of the captain, who had tried his best to save the steamer. However, the fire had started in the hold, where there was a huge quantity of sulphur, rendering every effort futile. The tragedy could have happened on high seas, making the rescue very difficult, if not impossible. But the loving Providence of God, always keeping watch over His children, did not permit it. Moreover, our sisters had relics of the head of Saint Vitalione, who showed the power of his intercession by obtaining the safe rescue of everyone and everything on the ship except the sulphur. The accident was caused by some penniless young men who had stowed away in the ship hoping to get a free trip. But the poor unfortunates harmed themselves and others.

I thought of telling you about this now because on the *Alfonso XIII*, on which we are now traveling, seven stowaways between the ages eighteen and twenty-eight hid on board when we stopped at Cadiz, taking advantage of the cover of night. But our good captain and the purser, who have a keen eye and take a great interest in everything, discovered them as soon as we had left port and, as you can imagine, imprisoned them. Upon our arrival in the Canary Islands they were turned over to the police in Santa Cruz de Tenerife so that at the first occasion they could be returned to Spain, where the police would determine their motive for stowing away. It may have been economic necessity which prompted them to hide themselves on the ship without paying the fare or presenting passports. Or perhaps they were induced to flee from justice after committing some crime. As soon as the two bishops, Bishop Romero and Bishop Isaza learned that the unfortunates were imprisoned, they went to the captain to intercede to try to obtain their liberty if possible, and mercy, which was not difficult to secure from a captain as good as the commander of the *Alfonso XIII*, Captain Decampa. The two bishops gave each of the men some money so that in the midst of the pain of their deserved punishment, these poor culprits found some comfort.

After dinner that evening, we went on deck and found a market set up as if by magic. Some Canary Island youths had come on board to sell wicker chairs of all sizes. They were so beautiful

that we were tempted to buy them. They also had shoes, lace, embroidered goods, silk shawls, sweaters, etc., and truly did well since the passengers bought a lot of merchandise. A good lady asked us to help her pick a suitable item and I chose one that I liked, a well-crafted tablecloth. To my surprise, I later found out she had bought it to give to me as a gift, when I go to visit her at home. I won't tell you her name now, but later I'll have to tell you all about her because she is thinking of doing something big. As soon as we satisfied that lady, we withdrew because in the midst of that confusion we did not give a good example.

In the morning we got up early in our desire to enjoy the marvelous sight of the mountains from the deck. But first it was our duty to go to the chapel to assist at Mass and receive Communion. Since the Masses followed one after the other, and we wanted to assist at all of them for the holy souls in Purgatory, it grew late. The ship started to move at great speed, and when we finally went on deck, we were already so far from land that all we could see was the high peak of Tenerife, which seemed to follow us with all that majesty that has made it so renowned and celebrated. It has a sharp tip like that of a volcano not yet erupted, and on the two sides of its slope other mountains extend like a mantle with a train. They seem like the children of the higher mountain as is common with volcanoes, which seem to have other dependent mountains in whose prominence they seem to find relief.

The day after we left the Canary Islands, all the luggage was brought on deck to satisfy the various needs of the passengers so those who wished could take out things they needed. Those loaded in Genoa were the last ones to come to light. Having been loaded first, they were at the bottom. When the dinner bell rang, I asked the head steward to watch for mine and put them aside because I needed to open them. The good man told me to go and he would take care of them. Either he did not understand or I did not make myself clear, because after dinner when I went on deck, he announced, as if he had done me a great favor, "Mother, I saw all your trunks, put them all together, and sent them down . . ." I said, "But I needed to open them." The purser overheard me and came to ask if I would like to go where they were. I went immediately, but in a short time they had piled so many others that it was impossible to see them, much less open them. Several sailors offered to remove the huge pile in order to take mine out. I could have permitted it if I had not seen the arduous labor those poor men would have to remove that heavy luggage and get it up on deck with pulleys. In no way would I let them do it, but satisfied myself with the little trunk I had in my cabin. I took out my personal linen and divided it among the other two sisters, and we all settled for changing less frequently during the trip. Meanwhile, Providence, which watches over us like a loving mother, permitted us to have cool weather until now. Everyone expected suffocating heat, especially near the equator. For some hours it was really hot, but the remainder of the trip was so cool that it seemed more like a pleasure trip than a laborious journey.



XIII

FROM
BUENOS AIRES
TO GENOA,
August 1901

Destinations Cited:
Flores, Argentina
Rosario de Santa Fe, Argentina
Mercedes de San Luis, Argentina
Buenos Aires, Argentina
Santos, Brazil
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
São Paulo, Brazil
Genoa, Italy



"She resembles a schoolgirl, such is her simplicity in everything."
— Mother Cabrini

The foundation of education Mother Cabrini established in Argentina and Brazil in the late 1890s continues today through the ministry of 11 schools in these countries sponsored by the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

FROM BUENOS AIRES TO GENOA, August 1901

Mother Cabrini was in Buenos Aires for the second time, and found the school going well. She found a better location, and transferred the school from Belgrade Street to the location called Caballito. In the suburb Flores, she opened an orphanage among the poorest immigrants. Other foundations were an international school in Rosario de Santa Fe and a boarding school and house of studies together with a preschool and elementary school in Mercedes de San Luis. The Argentine sisters bade her farewell in August 1901.

M

ay the good Jesus be with you all and comfort you, accompany our voyage and lead us to port. Amen.

The departure date is August 22, but I did not begin writing until today, the 28th, having just left the port of Santos. The day we departed I did not feel so well, and your farewells and those of the students moved me so much that I truly felt their effect for quite a while. After bidding good-bye to the last three sisters who were standing at the last point of the bay, I went down to my cabin and had to go to bed. My bones were all numb and I did not have the strength to move even a small object. I wanted to put the cabin in order, but ended leaving it all in disorder since I could not do any more. After two days, I felt much better and, arriving in Santos, I felt strong enough to go ashore the next morning in spite of the very rainy weather. On shore, we began asking for the location of the church. More than once we were asked if we were looking for the *igreja*. Fearing that I would be directed to some schismatic church, I answered in the negative and kept going. But in asking others I always received the same reply. I finally understood that the word meant church and then some wanted to follow us and accompany us to the parish church which they call the Matrix.

We arrived in church, and saw the beginning of a solemn mass, accompanied by the sound of small and large trumpets in place of an organ, which they lacked. They did not have even a harmonium. At our request, a priest came to give us Communion at the altar of the Blessed Sacrament. Strengthened by the Bread of Heaven, we returned to the steamer with an increased certainty. Had it not been for Holy Communion, we would certainly not have left the ship. We had two umbrellas but when we got to church, my companion's would not close. What to do? "Let's leave it open," I said to her. It stayed that way the whole time, without anyone commenting or paying any attention to it. A gentleman, wishing to talk to us, said, "Do you know that the one who celebrated the Mass is our pastor? He is a wonderful priest, whom we love dearly." He, of course, spoke in Portuguese, but I understood enough because the language is close to Italian and Spanish. I could do no less than offer my congratulations. After we finished our devotions, we went to the sacristy to ask the pastor for his blessing. He received us with singular kindness and wanted us to stay a while, but we could not, so he took leave of us with such a hearty blessing that it resembled that of a patriarch. I would have liked to have seen some of the city, but we could not get a carriage, so we returned to the ship earlier.

We resumed our voyage and in two hours arrived in Rio de Janeiro. It was about two past meridian and I would have liked to have disembarked immediately to see the city. But the steamer was docked too far from shore and the sea was quite agitated, as is usual at that port. It would not be worth my while to go twice, since I would not wish to miss the opportunity to receive Holy Communion the next day. The captain had already notified me that we would be docked

until the afternoon of the following day, so in the morning we went ashore as early as possible. I was offered the company launch but it would not be available until eight, so I decided to hire a small boat, trusting in the Providence of God to conduct us unharmed through the swollen waves for a distance of half an hour. In fact, we happily reached the shore and as soon as we set foot on land, turned toward the first steeple we saw. When we lost sight of it due to the narrow streets and the houses, we would ask for the *igreja*, having learned the name at Santos. Everyone pointed out the way with great pleasure. We went into the first church we found, called the *Candelora*; beautiful, rich, elegant and kept extraordinarily clean. The altars at the front and back of the church were made of fine, highly polished marble of various colors. Over the main altar was a magnificent statue of the Madonna and Child, entitled *Candelora* or the Purification. Before leaving the church, it pleased me to count the large candlesticks arranged in the form of a pyramid on the main altar at the foot of the Madonna; there were fifty-two. Perhaps the number had a meaning, but I did not know how to ask.

As soon as we entered the church, we went to the altar of the Blessed Sacrament, which was along the nave, the first one after the main altar. Over it dominated a large, majestic, monumental crucifix, under which was depicted Calvary. Several clerics were there, reciting the canonical hours, with two acolytes in attendance. I called one of them and asked him if someone could give me Communion. He relayed my message to one of the canons, who replied that the Office lasted two hours and during that time they could not distribute Communion. We could not wait that long so I asked the acolyte to show me the way to another church, which he did most graciously. I bade farewell to the Blessed Sacrament and turned to leave.

While I was leaving, I met a priest and said, "I wanted to receive Holy Communion but I was told I had a two-hour wait and since I can't wait, I am going to find another church." He replied, "No, no, stay here because I will soon celebrate Mass and you can receive." In fact, earlier than I thought, he came to celebrate Mass at the penultimate altar of the church dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, also very beautiful. Since the large, rich pews where we were did not reach that far, a man, probably the sacristan, ran toward us with two lovely leather cushions for us to kneel on. I marveled at such exquisite thoughtfulness, yet such royal treatment for visitors was in keeping with the elegant decor of the church. We made our thanksgiving, went around the church to see its beauty, and left.

Since my companion and I were hungry, we went to have some breakfast and then hired a carriage to take us around the city, which is built on several hills. We went to the hill called Saint Anna because we had been told that the *Intermuncio* was there. When we reached there, a deaf priest told us that the *Intermuncio* was at Petropolis. Not to waste time, we left and, halfway down the hill, met the vicar-general, who asked, "Have you seen the bishop?" "No," I replied "because I did not know he lived here, and was sorry I had no time to turn back." I gave him my

calling card to give the bishop. With great courtesy, he replied that not only would he give it to him but would also ask him to give us a special blessing for the safe continuation of our journey. He was sorry that we could not go back, but there was no time.

From that magnificent hill, one can see the whole city and its gulf. I would have liked to see Petropolis, but I was told that it was a three-hour ride by rail so I abandoned the idea. Rio de Janeiro is beautiful. I like its laughing hills, lovely plazas and gardens. I will say nothing about the churches, because I have already given you an idea of their grandeur when I described the one of the *Candelaria*. The canal that leads into the Bay of Rio is enchanting. What beautiful mountains, almost all of them cone-shaped! One, because of its special shape, is called Sugar Loaf. These and the others extend in such a way that they seem to rain abundance over the city.

Santos also gave me the same impression, although it does not possess similar natural attractions. But it is the road to São Paulo which everyone praises for its beauty. Brazil is certainly richer than Argentina. They say it is not healthy but I believe it may be unhealthy only in the southern, marshy areas. In the rest of the country, the danger of contagious diseases is caused by the lack of cleanliness and order. For example, in Rio de Janeiro, there are some paths so narrow and dirty that the water that runs across the pavement to drain into the gutters. Instead of being health-giving like the water which runs also along the best streets of Paris, it certainly serves to infect, because it resembles nothing but guano.

In Buenos Aires, the representative of the *La Veloce* Company assigned us two lovely, comfortable cabins across from each other, one for the two sisters and one for me. We could not have desired a better location because they face west. Because of the direction in which we are going, there is never a contrary wind. We can keep our portholes open at all times and always be assured of keeping cool. When we arrived at Santos, there was a huge crowd of passengers and the ship was already full to capacity and could not hold more. But because this one was recommended by an important representative of the company, another by some other influential person, they were compelled to accept on board more than the number of accommodations available. I was a little apprehensive but was at peace, knowing that our tickets were for reserved cabins. The whole day passed but just when we felt we could relax, I saw the doctor approach me. He came to ask me for a favor in the name of the captain that I had every right to refuse, but it was such a special case that he felt encouraged to ask. It was to permit the wife of a pharmacist of São Paulo, a Venetian, to sleep in the sisters' cabin. She was traveling alone, and her husband would not be pleased if she were placed other than with the sisters. He asked so graciously that it was impossible to refuse, and so I consented. I did not regret it because she is so good and well-mannered, so well-bred, that it is a pleasure to be with her. She resembles a schoolgirl, such is her simplicity in everything. She fits in with us so well that she is like one of the community. Everyone admires her and has great respect for her.

After we left Rio de Janeiro, the sea was very *bravo* as the Spanish say, agitated and foaming as though it were angry. Especially during the night, when everything makes a greater impression, it caused a bit of dismay since this is the first time I am taking such a long voyage on a ship as small as the *Piedmont*. When we left Buenos Aires, we could not praise it enough because no motion could be felt then. But after it took on more than twenty-thousand bags of coffee at Santos, it gave us no more peace. It may have been the wind rather than the cargo but the fact is that, after taking on the load, a strong, swaying motion began so that many times I thought the boat would capsize. Knowing nothing about navigation, my fear seemed most justified. But after speaking with the captain the next day, all my fears were dispelled. Other accidents can happen but not that of the boat capsizing. The captain said that fire was the only danger difficult to avoid, adding that even in that case there were many means of saving one's self, the ship being built in such a way that it can be easily divided into three separate sections in case of a disaster.

Another fear is the great number of third-class passengers, increased by those who boarded at Santos and Rio. There are some who look suspicious, and certain types who boast about socialism and anarchy. Some came on board without a ticket and without a penny to pay for one. These, more than the others, demand to be treated well and complain daily, now about the soup, now the bread, now about something else. Actually, they are treated well and all the good passengers say that they never expected such good service.

The doctor on board takes extraordinary care of everyone, not only those in first class, but also has a great concern for those in third class. He sees and tastes the food to assure himself that it is good. When someone is ill or indisposed, he sees to it that they get special food. And yet, after all this, there are those who always find something to complain about.

The other day, seeing some agitators a bit aroused, we asked an officer what the defense would be if a large number of them rebelled. I was told that there was no danger because the trouble-makers already know that if they caused an uprising there would be the terrible punishment of the hose. I never knew before what this was. When I asked, I was told it is a device on the engine which in times of extreme necessity, can direct boiling water all over the steamer to injure anyone caught in it.

Bay of Buenos Aires, August 22, 1901.



XIV

FROM LIVERPOOL
TO NEW YORK,
August 1902

Destinations Cited:
Paris, France
London, England
Liverpool, England
New York, NY



"During the period from the fifth to the twenty-third [August 1902], all was completed for the foundation in London. Leaving nine sisters for the mission and the school, I was able to leave immediately for the United States."

— Mother Cabrini

FROM LIVERPOOL TO NEW YORK, August 1902

Mother Cabrini's return to Europe did not have as a goal new foundations. The seven months of ceaseless labor were directed at consolidating the already existing works. Actually, in the first months of 1902, she was assailed by such a high fever that a total physical collapse was feared. In the early hours of the feast day of Saint Joseph, the fever suddenly disappeared and Mother was able to resume her usual activity. She went to Spain to consolidate the foundation in Bilbao and returned to Italy, where she inaugurated the construction of the Church of the Redeemer on Via Sicilia. Before leaving for New York, she finally established the long-desired mission in England, a school in Brockley.

To my beloved daughters, some notes on my trip.

How many beautiful sheaves
are scattered in the fields!
With God's help I will gather them
and not fear obstacles.

The trip does not frighten me,
nor does the storm stop me.
Always as a good handmaid,
I shall perform my office.

On board the *Eturia* of the Cunard Line, I let my thoughts fly swiftly to all of you, beloved daughters, who are so much comfort to me. Although tired and exhausted, I start to write the news you desire because it always gives me great pleasure to be able to satisfy your longing.

I arrived in London on the fifth day of August, after having visited the house in Paris. Like a small boat in the hands of a good pilot, it spreads its sails and goes forward successfully in the midst of the terrible tempest now rocking all religious houses, causing grave consternation. It could not be otherwise because the brave Pilot, the Omnipotent Pilot, is the Sacred Heart of Jesus of Montmartre, to whom in a very special way I entrusted our interests in France. From the top of that happy place which honors Him, He looks with love on His band of missionaries and defends them from the foaming billows that rage and threaten to destroy all that is known of religion, all, it may be said, that is moved by God's charity. It is a miracle that the house still exists because the sisters near us and even the Sisters of Charity, who seemed untroubled, were put out of their schools. They were unable to win the battle against the enemies, even though the people rose to their defense and guarded their houses day and night. As strangers, we have few friends in France and I did not ask those few to defend us, but placed all my confidence in the dear and loving Sacred Heart of Montmartre. In the end, He is destined to save all of France and to draw from this furious storm much good. A renewed fervor will rise that will make France worthy of its honorable tradition.

On the fifth I left Paris for London on the Calais-Dover line. It was a splendid day, but more splendid was the playful scene I saw on arrival at sunset. I had never seen the sky like that before. Some richly gilded clouds formed a glorious throne. From its center shone an extraordinary light surrounded by twelve brilliant stars that sent out sparkling rays. It looked like the throne of the Queen of Angels. Then we saw Mary, with a resplendent diadem and, the infant seated on her lap, extending His arms as though to protect us. Even though this was the product of our imagination as we viewed the glorious English sunset, since it happened just as we arrived, it gave us

great pleasure. We seemed to see in it the special protection from heaven over the new foundation in London. My two companions, Mothers Flora and Rosaria, were very enthused by the beautiful sight.

At the station we were met by two sisters who were sent ahead to get a place for us. The imminent celebration of the coronation of King Edward and Queen Alexandra had drawn a large crowd from all over the world and made it difficult to find accommodations in that great metropolis. In fact, our two good sisters found lodging for us with the Mantellate Sisters of the Seven Sorrows, where we stayed for two weeks. I visited His Excellency, Bishop Bourne of Southwark, who has been a good friend of the Institute since the first time we knew him, and he soon opened the way for us. In a brief time, we were able to find a house in an ideal location on the hills of London, where there is a large parish with no religious house within its boundaries, affording us an open field. I wrote immediately to the Propagation of the Faith to obtain the required decree for opening a religious house in England. We received it within a few days so that on the day on which we set foot in it nothing was lacking for the establishment of the house according to all the rules. During the period from the fifth to the twenty-third, all was completed for the foundation in London. Leaving nine sisters for the mission and the school, I was able to leave immediately for the United States in the company of M. Flora and M. Albertina. As soon as I disembark and greet the many sisters in New York, I shall have to leave immediately for Colorado, where the good bishop of Denver is waiting for me to open a house for the benefit of our poor Italian immigrants.

The morning of the twenty-third was very rainy, but we had to leave in spite of the rain. At about ten, we set out for the station to take the noon train for Liverpool. "What a long time," you will say, "to get to the station!" But when some of you who are destined for London see how huge this metropolis is, you will not be surprised. When you go by carriage to your destination, if it is a one-hour trip, you must leave two hours in advance. Because of the heavy traffic of both the people and vehicles, you never know if you will arrive in time.

At twelve we boarded the train, which seemed to fly through fields and cities as it went non-stop to Liverpool, arriving at four. We went to the dock to board the *Eturia*. A few minutes later it turned and started on its course, slowly at first, then, picking up speed, it headed toward Ireland. The next morning, it reached the city of Cork, where it stopped only a half hour, to pick up passengers and some fruit and vegetables. We then set off immediately and in a few hours we were on the high seas. My two companions were fine, but after breakfast on the twenty-fourth they began to get upset stomachs and had to go to their cabins, where they struggled with seasickness all day. M. Flora began first and she thought that she really would die. Then M. Albertina followed. I sent them to bed and there was no way to get them up again. Only this morning at eleven they arose and now they seem to be conquering the sea.

August 25. Today the two good little sisters, convinced that the ocean is calm, made an effort to get up. They felt much better after they came on deck. In truth, the sea is not bad, only somewhat ruffled, causing some rolling and pitching, which is really annoying, especially for those not used to it, or for those who, unlike the fish, do not enjoy the sea as I do. I feel better when there is some motion; it seems the storm gives me an appetite. May God who provides for all our needs be always blessed. He has made me a Missionary and in the goodness of His Divine Heart entrusted the distant missions to me. See, even though I have poor health, He grants me this wonderful grace of feeling very well at sea.

Meanwhile, I fly to you in spirit, rejoicing greatly to see you recollected in the spiritual exercises. "I will lead my beloved to a desert place, or rather the solitude, and there I will speak to her heart." You are truly blessed, oh dearest daughters, who now hear the voice of your Beloved, who gives you an ever deeper appreciation of the sublimity of the religious state to which He, in pure goodness, has called you. Oh, yes, the Missionary of the Sacred Heart of Jesus bears within her the imprint of God and demonstrates to everyone that her election to such a perfect state of life comes from grace, not from nature. The supernatural character conferred upon her by her beloved Spouse clearly shines in her. Yes, oh daughters, through your election of a state superior to nature, your vocation to a life of perfection, destined to be a life of sacrifice and heroic exercise of the works of charity your character is supernatural. Its end is the glory of God, the sole pleasure of God, His divine will and the extension of God's realm.

Therefore, the glorious motto of the Missionary Sister of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is, "All for the greater honor and glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus," and in times of trial, *Omnia possum in Eo qui me confortat*. [Phil. 4:13] Have an ever-growing appreciation for the precious gift God has given you in calling you to religion. He alone, the Lord, elects, calls and destines His creatures to the noble state, to the high dignity of becoming His spouses. Yes, it is only God Who, through His divine goodness, elects a weak and fragile creature for His glory. No, it is not nature that can presume it has supernatural gifts of grace but the kindness and goodness of the Lord that elevates nature to a heavenly life. It is not nature rendering herself superior to her forces; it is divine grace that bends and stoops down to human weakness. Thus, while God manifests His absolute superiority over us, His infinite mercy and goodness are revealed in His elevating us, poor human creatures, to divine union. Oh, yes, dear daughters, it is only the ineffable goodness of the Father that strengthens our fragile clay, purifying and sanctifying it, making it worthy of becoming a precious instrument in the religious house and in His Church, first the Church Militant and then the Church Triumphant.

At the end of this retreat you will have the joy of renewing your vows. This renewal is a new avowal of the sincere, generous offering we made of ourselves to our dear, heavenly Spouse and an expression of our appreciation for being dedicated and consecrated to Him. Renewing the

vows is like renewing profession, to offer the Lord new fruits from the same tree, and to burn on the same altar of our hearts, new grains of incense in a sweet fragrance to His Divine Heart. With this renewal, we are strengthened in doing good, becoming more fervent in our piety and devotion and more zealous in carrying out our duties.

We bind ourselves more closely to our dear Jesus and love the Institute to which we have been called more tenderly. We feel called to show ourselves her true daughters, as those who honor their Mother. The renewal recalls to mind the immense benefits received, and enriches us each time with new graces, merit and blessings. By the renewal of our vows, all the imperfections, defects, sins of omission and all other imperfections committed against our vows or rules are canceled. Stains are destroyed and the performance of all virtues is strengthened. Oh, what immense benefits we derive from renewing our vows! Let us do so with great fervor because it is like a heavenly rain washing and purifying our hearts, causing all the virtues to grow in us.

Each time you renew your vows, it is like renewing your holy profession, renewing repeatedly the glory of God and your merit. The works done for God never become old, but always have a newness; they are always verdant and fragrant. Our beloved Lord, in His infinite goodness, looks upon them with the same pleasure as if it were the first time they were performed. In our works He considers our will, always firm and constant in its resolve to serve Him faithfully until death, just as on the day of our holy profession. All acts, either internal or external, performed in rectifying or confirming our vows, are looked upon by Jesus, the great lover of our souls, as many new professions. Just as God punishes every evil action, thought, or omission, so He approves and rewards every good act, internal and external. How much this should encourage us, dearest daughters, to renew frequently the act of our total consecration to God, at least every time we receive Holy Communion!

How beneficial it is to remember our first profession, made after two years of novitiate. Do you recall it? What a beautiful day it was, truly the day of the Lord! *Hæc est dies quam fecit Dominus exultemus et lætemur in ea*: [Ps. 118:24; this is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.] Then we experienced how wonderful and glorious it is to be consecrated by the Lord, to give ourselves completely to that dear Jesus, who had waited so long for us. We tasted the ineffable sweetness of religious life; our soul overflowed with charisms and received a new baptism of divine fire. The joy of the Holy Spirit, which had permeated us abundantly on the day of our confirmation, descended copiously upon us and filled our hearts with celestial joy.

On that solemn, unforgettable day we drank deeply from the perennial fountain of the wounds of our divine Redeemer. The heavens bent low, close to earth; the divine Lamb, in the immense love of His Sacred Heart, rejoiced in celebrating with us the mystical nuptials. Keep in mind always, oh dearest daughters, that our espousal to Jesus was the work of the Holy Spirit; He bound us to Jesus as we pronounced our religious vows. It was then that we felt ourselves raised

to a new level of knowing and loving our dear Jesus. The books of Incarnate Wisdom were disclosed to the eyes of our intellect, and by means of the observance of our religious vows, we understood new truths and new doctrines regarding our religious vocation, our mission and our predestination to glory. We set foot in the promised land; divine grace opened its treasures for us.

Our beloved Spouse gave us full freedom to enrich ourselves from His treasures as we pleased. Reborn to a new life on that bliss-filled day, we were purified by a heavenly wave, sanctified and renewed by divine grace, and became like new creatures, living images of our Creator. On that day, we were as if touched by the finger of God, as His portion and property, entirely and forever. Oh, great, ineffable day! *Contemus Domino!* [Let us sing to the Lord!] What merits did we have to enter into the House of God? Or rather, how many demerits militated against us to justifiably exclude us? Yet, Jesus did not look at our unworthiness, but only at His infinite goodness. He truly loved us, benefited and enriched us, introducing us into his holy house and rendering us participants of all His treasures.

Do you remember Jacob's vision? While on pilgrimage, he saw a ladder that reached from earth to heaven, and angels ascending and descending. When he awoke he exclaimed, "Is this not the House of God here and the gate of Heaven and I did not know it?" [Gen. 28:12] With even more reason, we can say with Jacob that here - that is, in our Institute - is the house of God and the gate of heaven. What joy and glory it is to live in the house of God! This is for us the threshold of Paradise. The passage from religious community to heaven is very brief. Oh, yes, a thousand times blessed are all those who dwell in the Father's house, for they will praise and glorify Him eternally. Our religious house is holy ground; holy, because it is consecrated to God as church property; holy, because our sacramental Lord dwells therein; holy by the profession of vows we make; holy because of the evangelical counsels professed therein. These urge us on to perfection. It is also holy, because of the holy rules we observe, and holy, in all the constant tenors of life observed in it.

Remember, my beloved daughters, it is not enough to inhabit holy ground to be called a saint, but it is necessary to live like saints according to the observance of the rules and in the actual exercise of all the virtues. Certainly, daughters, the one who belongs to a family of saints cannot be called a saint, but only the one who walks in the footsteps of the saints. Our divine master and loving Spouse tells us, "It is not those who say to me, 'Lord, Lord,' who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. [Mt. 7:21] What is the heavenly Father's will for us? It is to fulfill His will as expressed in our holy rule, in the vows, and the other obligations proper to our Institute. If you want to become holy, dearest daughters, you must have a high esteem for our holy rules and regard their observance as the price of your eternal predestination. Be prudent virgins; always keep the flame of faith burning, adhere to the rules you professed. Be faithful, observant of the many, as well as the few, while your beloved Jesus has

incalculable treasures prepared for you. The day will come, oh daughters, in which Jesus will publicly glory in you in the measure by which you glorified Him before the community with your exact observance of the rules. He will reward you by making you steward of His graces, to dispose of them as you see fit and you will enter into the joy of His consolations.

Always remember that the holy rules are a precious treasure our beloved Jesus gives to His spouse that she may grow constantly in merit and virtue. They are an inexhaustible mine of graces and heavenly blessings, a fountain that continually gives forth waters of life and health, and mystical chains of solid gold of divine charity, drawing us ever closer to our loving Spouse. In the observance of the holy rules, you will find superhuman strength to combat and conquer all your enemies; you will regain peace, joy and all spiritual wealth. If you become truly observant, you will have every reason to repeat that you have found every good thing. Your perfection is found in none other than your holy rules. In vain, you will look for your sanctification outside this path traced out for you by the Holy Spirit.

Remember that every point of the rule is immensely important for you. For this reason, I always recommend your faithful observance of both the important as well as the less important rules. The Lord's true servant strives with all her might to carry out every detail of her rules. Remember the story of Samson whose strength was in his hair. When Delilah cut it, he became weak and fell miserably into the hands of his enemies. This teaches us clearly that the strength of the religious is in the observance of her rules even the most minute, as exemplified by the hair. When a religious forgets or despises religious observance, she loses her spiritual vigor, her strength and her virtue and then falls into the hands of her enemies, always ready to lead her to ruin.

If the holy rules do not oblige under pain of sin except when they are willfully despised, it is also true that every voluntary transgression, however small, is always a disorder in the house of God, a new wound in the holy rules, a lack of response to divine grace, and bitterness for the heart of Jesus, and a loss off a degree of grace and glory. Saint Teresa was right to exhort and inculcate in her daughters the exact, minute observance of the holy rules and the daily schedule. The religious, diligent and observant in all, not only walks in perfection but flies in the way of good. Within a short time she finds herself rich in merits and virtue. Serve Jesus with great love, oh daughters, without neglecting the smallest observance because as you have already well understood, small observances are all heavenly precious gems. Indeed, I beg you to lose none of them. To the extent that you draw closer to the Lord, God will draw closer to you, filling you with His most elect graces and favors.

August 27. It is already the twenty-seventh. Since last night, the foghorn has been sounding continuously, an indication of dense fog by which we are in danger of colliding with another ves-

sel or suffering some grave misfortune. In spite of this, the sisters and I slept peacefully, resting in the Sacred Heart of Jesus, who, through our superiors, has ordered us to travel. He assured us that He will be our pilot, guide and secure refuge. At seven-thirty, we left our cabin, but due to the humidity and thick fog, we could not stay on deck. We went to the music salon, each one with her assigned project: M. Flora, to paint a pretty card for the captain, who has been so kind to us. M. Albertina, to write some music and to review what she had already done, and I, to finish writing what I was saying yesterday, my beloved daughters, about holy observance which will make you holy and blessed. Occasionally, the sun tried to break through the fog, but could not penetrate its density, just like when we allow our passions to have the upper hand. These, like a thick fog, dull our intellect so that we can no longer see the sun of justice who wants to remove us from peril.

At nine o'clock, we went to breakfast, but the captain, who always comes at the same time, was not there because the poor man had to stay on the command deck to direct the ship's course during this moment of grave peril. He may not even be able to come for dinner, because it is already noon and the fog, rather than dispersing, seems to be getting thicker. Among the four hundred first-class travelers, there is a Mr. Valdobrandi, a travel agent traveling with a group of Americans who have made the rounds of Europe. He is a distinguished gentleman and, seeing that we eat very little, he has volunteered to be our interpreter. Every day he translates the menu for us, encouraging us to take some of everything. There is also a physician from Bologna, Dr. Cucchi. But rather than animating us, he needs to be comforted because he suffers from seasickness and is very frightened. He is to be pitied because he is still young. A group of doctors from Bologna is sending him to the tropics to study its diseases. The poor fellow did not eat for two days but now, encouraged by Mr. Valdobrandi and by us, he has plucked up courage and is already beginning to feel better.

August 28. We still had some fog this morning but it did not last long. The sun quickly conquered it and now we have a beautiful day. The sea is very calm; it seems like a lake. Yesterday, the fog was obstinate but today it gave in quickly, leading us to meditate on how a docile soul allows herself to be won over by God's grace, by the sun of justice, while a stubborn soul resists the most precious graces, becomes dismal, and lives in the midst of grave dangers. Happy are you, oh daughters, who are moved by the spirit of obedience; this precious virtue is what keeps you on the sure path. In obedience there are neither errors nor deceptions, no illusions nor darkness or fog. No, in obedience, all is light, splendor, grace, well-being, peace, and joy. Love, yes, love obedience, oh daughters! Remember that the true religious is obedient always and in everything: she brooks no delay and does not put off until tomorrow what has been ordered. The truly obedient religious carries out entirely what she has been asked to do, does not stop at part of it but

completes the task. She offers the whole victim to her heavenly Spouse, not part or half. In this way, her sacrifice always rises pleasingly to heaven, like a fragrant perfume. We seem to see this beautiful sight occurring whenever the religious joyfully and wholeheartedly completes her obedience. On the contrary, how sad it is to see someone who obeys reluctantly with sighing, complaining and creating difficulties.

The good religious conforms herself perfectly with her superior and with her superior's judgment. She conforms her will, as well as her thinking and judgment solely to that of the superior, since the intellect and judgment of a good religious should be conformed to that of her superior. You, my daughters, all want to become perfect and holy. Here is the short and secure path: decide to give yourself over readily to the exercise of obedience. Never consider the human qualities, gifts or manners of the superior; otherwise you will risk exchanging divine obedience for human obedience. See in the superior only the authority of God. Blessed are you, daughters, if you know how to obtain from God the true spirit of obedience. Do all you can on your part to merit this grace. Always obey exactly and promptly not only those in authority, but also your peers and all others. Whether you work, pray, eat, or recreate, do everything in a spirit of holy obedience, striving to seek the denial of your will, and the conformance to that of your loving Spouse who continually observes all you do for His love, and your manner of doing it. If you will do everything in a spirit of holy obedience, you will always add a new dimension of splendor to the most common tasks in community, because the obedience by which it is performed is more valuable than the task itself. Even more, if a work is imperfect, your obedience will make it perfect, canceling its defects and making it precious.

The great ones of the world, oh daughters, have their coat of arms, which recall the history of their illustrious ancestry or some great work. I would like to see written on the coat of arms of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus those beautiful, glorious words that Jesus spoke of himself, *Ego quae placit sicut ei facio semper* [Jn. 8:29; I always do what pleases Him.] Obedience! . . . It is a revealed word, a ray of living light coming to us from the Father of light, a manifestation to us of the divine will! God can do what He wants with obedient servants. They are the delight of His Heart. He gladly communicates to obedient souls His light, gifts and precious graces. He lets the splendor of the rays from His face shine on them, causing them to be fully joyful and satisfied with their lot.

You, dearest daughters, as Missionaries need to prove yourselves fit to win over many people to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Well, then, try to acquire the true spirit of obedience, because by means of such souls Jesus accomplishes His sublime designs and great works on earth. He enjoys being with them and guides them with His wisdom, enlightens them with His light, comforts them with His grace and designates them distributors of all His treasury. Yes, oh daughters, the one who obeys Jesus, acquiring the spirit of obedience, obtains creatures' obedience to her, and

in this way she can lead them to the realm of Jesus Christ. But I shall never finish speaking to you about the sacred treasure of the spirit of obedience that ought to make you blessed, so I will end by urging you to remember well what the angelic Saint Thomas said: obedience really constitutes the religious person and, of the three vows, this is the first and principal one. With the vow of poverty we offer to the Lord our goods, with the vow of chastity, we offer him our body. But by the vow of obedience we offer God our entire being which is certainly more, much more than the other two since the soul with its powers is more excellent and noble than the wealth of the body. Do you claim victory, oh daughters? You do, but in what manner? By being truly obedient, because obedient souls always sing of victory against all their enemies.

It is now the afternoon of the 28th. The sea becomes always more beautiful, and my two companions are charmed by it. Some dolphins are following the ship, entertaining us. M. Albertina was asked by a few ladies to play some music, and she obliged them. They came to congratulate her, saying we had done a good thing, and proved wrong the thinking of some Protestants who say that Catholics are bigoted and not at all sociable. A Protestant English lady, who, they say, is an eminent writer and a correspondent to the *Chicago Tribune*, who also has a home in Chicago, was moved by hearing sister play to cheer the passengers and came to talk to us. One subject led to another and she revealed a secret desire to become a Catholic, saying that she wants to keep writing until she sees the Anglican religion become Catholic and England return to what it used to be, a holy nation. She is a very intelligent lady and, if she acts with common sense, she will truly do much good. She asked for our address in Rome, saying that she wants to visit us when she returns there and get in touch with an ecclesiastical authority to whom she can show her work and be further instructed in the Catholic religion. If the adorable Heart of Jesus will bless our trip so much as to grant us such a conversion, certainly the suffering of this present sea voyage has been well spent. Nothing is impossible to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He is the Lord of hearts and can change them from one moment to the other, as He did the great apostle of the church, Saint Augustine, whom we venerate today.



ON THE OCCASION
OF THE
INAUGURATION
OF A HOUSE
IN DENVER,
November 18, 1902

Destinations Cited:
Denver, CO
New York, NY
Arlington, NJ
Chicago, IL
Seattle, WA
Spokane, WA
Salt Lake City, UT
Butte, MT
New Orleans, LA
Los Angeles, CA
Burbank, CA



Mother Cabrini Shrine in Denver,
a place of retreat and worship
yesterday and today



Mother Cabrini called "the dear children" she brought to this sacred mountain "the beautiful stones of our mountain."

"Coming to this city, the sisters truly found a vast field of action. . . our work extends to everyone, regardless of national origin."
— Mother Cabrini

ON THE OCCASION OF THE INAUGURATION OF A HOUSE IN DENVER November 18, 1902

Mother Cabrini disembarked in New York in August 1902, and would spend four uninterrupted years in the United States. She had been invited by the bishop of Denver to found a mission for the Italian immigrants. Bishop Nicholas Chrysostom Matz and the Italian colony received her as a blessing when she opened a parish school, which quickly drew a large and ever-increasing number of students. The sisters began their mission among the miners and, like consoling angels, went down into the pits to bring a ray of light in the darkness to those poor men, oppressed by grueling work and living in constant danger of being buried in the depths where they worked.

From Denver, Mother Cabrini went to New York to provide more ample space for Columbus Hospital. She founded Saint Anthony's Orphanage in Arlington, New Jersey, and visited Chicago to plan for an orphanage. However, the archbishop requested a hospital instead and she inaugurated Columbus Hospital and a nurses' training school in Chicago. In Seattle, she established Mount Carmel School and Sacred Heart Orphanage visited Spokane, Salt Lake City and Butte. She inaugurated new orphanages and expanded schools in New Orleans, established a parochial school and kindergarten in Los Angeles and purchased property in Burbank, California, for the site of an orphanage.

In 1905, when the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Missionary Sisters was celebrated, Spain, England and Brazil had been added to the Institute's ever-increasing locations. According to her plan, she traveled to Italy early in 1906.

My dearest daughters,
 Yesterday, in the presence of his Excellency, the Bishop of Denver, many diocesan priests, several fathers of the Society of Jesus, and a select group of people, among whom were the flowers of the Italian colony, our mission in this Colorado capital was solemnly inaugurated as His Excellency blessed the school we recently founded for the Italians of this city.

It is now a few months since Bishop Metz met with some of our sisters. Having learned from them something of the spirit and work of our Institute, he felt very favorable about our starting a foundation in Denver. He immediately sent me his request and accompanied this petition with such urgent pleas. He pointed out all the good the Institute could do here, the great need for our work in this area, and the vast field, as he called it, where the Missionaries would find they could exercise their zeal. He expressed all this in such warm words and petitions that it would have been difficult to refuse.

I was familiar with the conditions of the city, which in a few years has experienced such rapid growth. I agreed with the assertions of His Excellency, and did not have the heart to refuse when the work of the Institute was requested for the greater glory of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. After mature consideration, I believed it well to satisfy the good prelate's request. We came here a few weeks ago for this new foundation, which yesterday had the public sanction and blessing of the good shepherd who desired it.

Coming to this city, the sisters truly found a vast field of action. Even though our work extends to everyone, regardless of national origin, still the very great number of Italians who are here renders our mission and our reaching out to them more necessary and extensive. It is essential to have a school to prevent our Catholic children from attending public schools, where they suffer the deprivation of that Christian education that they can receive only in parochial schools. In addition to the children who are growing up without religious education, there are many adults who live all intent on temporal gains, neglecting their souls. Young people of both sexes nearing their thirties have not made their First Communion. Couples have not had their marriages blessed by a priest or their children baptized. In the mountains, hundreds of workers can be found who have not received the sacraments for many years. They are exhausted from their labors and live far from a church, where Holy Mass is rarely celebrated. But they seem so well disposed, to lead us to believe that they need only to be cultivated. Approached with the charity of Christ, which knows how to be everything to everyone, they will become good sheep, docile to the voice of the one who exhorts them to return to God.

After instructing these poor people to receive, perhaps after half a century, their Lord in the Sacrament, it will not be long before the sisters will prepare for those beautiful and consoling ser-

vices they enjoyed in Louisiana and other states. They will set up a small altar, sometimes in one of their poor houses, sometimes under a tree, with the sky as a canopy and the beauties of nature as walls. There, amidst so much poverty, Jesus will come down into the hearts of those poor people, so dear to Him who loves the simple-hearted. Other times, the bishop himself, in this immense temple formed by nature, with a tree trunk for his episcopal stool and the damp mountain moss for a carpet, or in the green meadow still wet with dew, administers Confirmation to his children on whom God smiles from heaven.

To begin our work, we opened the school immediately and on the first day two hundred children hurried to enroll. Yesterday we had the consolation of seeing it blessed by the good Shepherd of Denver. He is a worthy prelate according to God's Heart, all love and zeal and ready for any sacrifice for the good of the sheep entrusted to him. The Sacred Heart of Jesus has inspired him with great trust in the work of the Missionaries and with so much affection for them that we feel we have found in him a good father who will always help us, support our efforts and always provide us with new ways to do good.

Like the good father that he is, he himself expressed the desire to come to give his blessing to our children. Therefore, we had to plan a reception for His Excellency. It is easy to imagine with what love everyone worked to prepare a worthy tribute of gratitude for the good bishop. All seemed light: the shortness of time we had and the difficulty of polishing, in a manner of speaking, these beautiful stones of our mountain. I mean our dear children in whom certainly precious gems lie hidden, although at the moment they are rough and wild. We must confess that they surprised us by their lively intelligence, docility and natural goodness, together with the most delightful simplicity.

The children worked with all their might for a week anticipating this day with mounting excitement. It was a beautiful sight to see them arrive yesterday morning from all directions in their little white dresses, unmindful of the snow. Like a magnificent white mantle, the snow covered the earth. The rays of the brilliant sun made it shine. They filled the center of the old church, now transformed into a school. The two side aisles were crowded with their relatives and invited guests. A stage artistically decorated with papal colors and including a portrait of our pontiff was prepared in the center. How could we not have at our every meeting and celebration the picture of him whose memory lives in my heart and in those of all my daughters? It is he who protects our Institute and is our good and loving father. His blessing renders our work fruitful and, in his name and at his bidding, I can undertake anything, certain that, supported by the invincible rock of the Vatican, I have nothing to fear. In this protection, I have a pledge of heavenly favor. The name of the Holy Father is, and must always be, on the lips of the Missionaries, so that from them all can learn to know, love and venerate him. This is what we have taught these people here, and now they form a precious part of his flock.

Let us return to our story. It was a new sight for the Italians of this city. We saw genuine joy shine in them all, from the pastor, who went among his parishioners with a smiling face to the Jesuit Fathers Pantanella and Gubitosi, who have greatly helped in this foundation. The modest smiles of the parents concealed their pride in seeing their children enter in good order to take their places as a march was played. Their discipline equaled that of some of our long-established schools. This scene was a beautiful and consoling one and seemed to me the first fruits of a mission that will undoubtedly develop, since it will be made fruitful by the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

A few minutes before ten, our bell pealed and gave the signal that the bishop was approaching the school from our house, where he had kindly come to visit me. In a few minutes the carriage was at the entrance. Our good shepherd made his appearance, accompanied by a number of priests. With quick step and a smiling face marked by the sweetest goodness, he greeted the children in the language of their fathers, our Italian language, which he speaks well. He is also fluent in English, German, Spanish and French. The children had been prepared to bow profoundly to their bishop, as is becoming his high station. Hearing his gentle and friendly greeting, they understood that a father had come among them and spontaneously welcomed him. Later, the good prelate admitted that he did not expect such a large number of students. Seeing them gathered under the protective wings of Holy Mother Church, his heart was touched and filled with joy. He indicated it caused him to understand better the sentiments Jesus felt when, surrounded by little ones, he said "Let the little children come to me. The Kingdom of God belongs to such as these." [Mt. 19:14]

This was the theme of the discourse he delivered, after a short program in which the children performed very well, considering the short length of time they were in school. In this fine discourse, the bishop's heart was revealed in all its beauty and we could appreciate the uncommon gifts of his mind. Speaking especially to the Italians present, he stressed the importance of giving a Catholic education to their children. Furthermore, he helped them appreciate the advantages their children would derive from being educated, not only in the language of this country but also in that of their parents, the melodious Italian language. He spoke of the importance of knowing many languages especially in this country where many nations are gathered and where, according to a Jesuit saying, "a man is many times a man as the number of languages he knows." He highly praised Italy as a country of genius, art and culture. He praised the work of the Italians in foreign countries, their strong, vigorous spirit, their energy, and how much the world expects of them.

Like a good father he spoke encouragingly to the children, praising their behavior, their singing and their speeches and finally exhorted them to continue their good work. He had high praise for the pastor, urging him to build a new school quickly because, if his prophecy is fulfilled, before the end of the school year the number of students would be doubled. For the sisters, he

had the words of a tender father for the daughters whom he knows are devoted and grateful to him. He assured them that, in keeping with what he had told them from the very beginning, they would find an enormous amount of work, as was proven by the two hundred children present. He pledged his good will to them and promised he would never fail them. I firmly believe that the Institute has found in Bishop Metz not only a good father but a zealous co-worker, who will always help and support us and afford us many opportunities to spend ourselves for the good of our neighbors. Now the school has resumed its regular schedule, and the sisters have begun their mission in the neighborhood with enthusiasm.

The Diocese of Denver comprises a vast territory since it is the only one in Colorado, a state whose area exceeds that of Italy. One third of it is plains, the remaining two thirds are formed by the mountainous regions of the Rocky Mountains. This is a very high chain of mountains; the highest peak reaches 14,500 feet. As their name well indicates, they are enormous masses of rock tinted with the most attractive colors of the rainbow, making them a charming sight, one of the more beautiful natural regions of the United States. Their enormous, painted masses seem to be hanging by a thread. Railroads snake along the slopes to the highest peaks, then descend to the opposite valleys, then course through very narrow gorges called canyons. The canyons' inaccessible walls, radiant colors and artistic forms resemble the walls of an enchanted castle. Anyone seeing their panorama would think it was a creation of the artist's brush. These surprising gradations are formed by the various elements of which they are composed. Every variety of metal can be found, among which gold abounds as well as silver, copper and lead. Mining constitutes almost the sole industry of this part of the state.

In these very deep caves far from the light of the sun, so many thousands of miners spend their lives absorbed in intense labor, sometimes standing in boiling water coming from the mineral springs that are plentiful here. While the companies amass millions, most of the workers labor under severe hardships, furiously chipping away with pickaxes, searching for the vein that will mean their fortune and that of their children. Most often, after years and years of hard labor, their only recompense is a slim gain. Less frequently, having located a vein, they do not have the means to develop it and are back at the beginning. (Veins truly appear in the granite or quartz rock, because of the cracks produced by volcanic eruptions. The cracks are later filled in by volatile metals, transformed and deposited by the work that nature has accomplished in ages incalculably far from us.)

In the meantime, the miners live completely absorbed in their work, intent on procuring worldly goods and forgetting God. The small towns that have a priest who comes once a month to celebrate the Holy Mass are considered fortunate. With such a scarcity of spiritual resources, you can imagine how much help is needed. Our sisters have begun their rounds. They have descended to a depth of 900 feet, lowered into the mine in a bucket barely big enough to hold

them, through an opening no larger than one square meter cut obliquely in the rock. Compressed air introduced in the cave made breathing possible. Other times, they walked at the same depth for several kilometers through narrow tunnels to bring a good word to those poor men and remind them of the eternal truths. It is not difficult to instill a consideration of hell in the miners in these dark pits, where breathing is laborious and the only light is from a few tallow candles, giving a limited idea, yet a very expressive one, of the reality of eternal darkness.

In their work of helping others, the sisters who have come to this mission have themselves benefited by the experience, learning how much the world will do for a tenuous temporal gain. It has served to rekindle their zeal to work for the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the spread of our holy religion. In this work of spreading God's realm on earth, it is not necessary to go in search of the vein of gold. The least action is sanctified by the intention. For us, an obedience done in conformity with the spirit of our Institute is purest gold, deposited where thieves cannot steal. Oh, how fortunate are those called by God to the religious state! Let us love our vocation with our whole hearts and constantly thank our good Jesus who has favored us. Let us show our gratitude by working indefatigably in whatever field is assigned to us by obedience, without measuring the extent of our sacrifices. We should always think that we do very little. On the great day, we shall know the truth of the words of Jesus Christ that the children of darkness are more prudent than those of the light.

Returning to what we were saying, this passion for gold that absorbs so many beings and ruins so many souls in this state has indirectly benefited the inhabitants of the bordering state of Utah. Most of them are Mormons and, as you probably know, are members of a sect who believe they have visions, are inspired from on high, and call themselves the Latter-Day Saints. Under the guise of religion, they have some abominable practices, among which is polygamy. Not tolerated in any other state of the Union, they have confined themselves to Utah. However, Providence, which never ceases to benefit its children and is moved by the prayers of good souls, has caused many of them, attracted by the prospect of finding gold in the nearby mines of Colorado, reputed to be richer than those of California, to leave Utah and their sect. The law of the United States, far from encouraging them, condemns their practices and forbids them to hold high government positions. When through deceit, an attempt was made to fill one of the higher positions in the nation with a Mormon, a general cry of indignation was raised. The loudest and most respected protests came from the women, who rebelled at the very thought of such degradation, seeing their most sacred rights, guaranteed to them by Christianity, insulted.

Whoever is faithful to God is faithful to his country and family. To the extent that the holy fear of God moves the hearts of the citizens of a country, so great and respected will that country be. What is more, it is said that nations are formed at a mother's knee. Therefore, the more the mother is venerated in the family, the more she conforms to the sublime model we have in

her who repaired the damages caused by Eve, elevating humanity's fate, the greater will be future generations. They will be the glory and prosperity of the nation.

Oh daughters, you must teach these principles in your schools because, as educators, you have the obligation to form not only good Christians for God but also good citizens for the nation we all want to be great and highly respected. Here, in addition to addressing you, I feel I should direct these words also to the young women of Rome attending our teachers' college, who will shortly be called upon to educate those who in their turn will teach others. Make them understand how serious their responsibility is and how much the Church and society expects from them.

A world intoxicated by erroneous theories needs those who teach sound doctrine, but how arduous is the work of setting on the right path those who have gone astray! The formation of a new generation is in your hands. You must start them out in the right direction, instill in them sound principles, good seed, seemingly buried for the moment, but which will undoubtedly bear good fruit in time. The impressions of childhood are never erased. It will be to your credit if the young whom you are educating grow to maturity to become the pride of their family, society, country and, especially, the honor and support of the Church. I have already received many consolations from our students of the teachers' college and expect more, certain that those exemplary young women will do well now and in the future.

The great amount of work I have found in western United States will prolong my stay more than I thought. However, this is not wasted time. Accompany me with your prayers and sacrifices so that all our works will prosper and give much glory to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. If everyone is obliged to love and make reparation to the Heart of Jesus, whose Heart beats for love of us, how much more is the Missionary who bears His name! She has been chosen by Him with a particular love to promote His interest. We all recognize the value of our vocation. Let us take care not to be unworthy of it. We shall do this by not placing limits on our love and sacrifices for Jesus, because the Missionary never says that she has done enough. She never draws back in the face of difficulties. Of herself she can do nothing, but she knows that with Jesus she can do everything. She has as her motto, "I can do all things in him who strengthens me." (Phil. 4:13) Grow daily in virtue, always according to the spirit of the Institute. May the blessing of Jesus descend upon you and multiply your numbers. The need is great, the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few. [Lk. 10:2] The days pass; souls fall headlong into hell. Death is nearer than we think, and it will bring an end to the time allotted us to work.

While there is time, work with energy, enthusiasm, and especially with a spirit of sacrifice, because this is what makes the true Missionary. This is what moves the Sacred Heart of Jesus and draws from Him precious graces for the hardened, obstinate souls who resist His love. Work with that apostolic spirit which offers everything — actions, prayers, sacrifices — for the conversion of

souls. Then seek among those you know good souls who will be our collaborators, those who, above all, feel the desire to do something for God's glory and contribute material help for our missions.

In his letter to the Philippians, Saint Paul assures them of his love for them because of the generosity with which they helped him by their offerings. [Phil 4:14-20] He calls them his collaborators in spreading the good news. How many good souls are in the world whose hearts are full of zeal and love for God. At the thought of countless souls being lost, they would do anything to help save them. Unable by their state in life to dedicate themselves completely to apostolic labors, they go about disheartened and repeat, "Oh, if I could!" And perhaps, with this cry of dismay, all ends. Teach them that without leaving their country or neglecting their duties, they can become true Missionaries of the Sacred Heart and be among those who will one day in heaven be followed by a countless throng of God's children they have saved. How? The first means is prayer. This is how Saint Teresa helped Saint Francis Xavier, the great apostle of the Indies, praying and sacrificing herself in the solitude and silence of her cell. The second way is to help the missions entrusted to our Institute by their offerings. You see, God judges actions differently than the world does. The world sees only the appearance and often bestows honors and glory on those who have not merited them. Instead, God, who sees all, even the most hidden thoughts, knows how to trace the source of that small offering that made possible the good deeds. Therefore, he knows the identity of the one who made possible the good work done by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in faraway lands. What is given to Missionaries is given to God because it is given out of love for God and for the benefit of the poorest and most derelict of his children. If it is sweet to deprive oneself to give to others, how much more consoling it must be to give to God, from whom we have received everything and who will certainly not be outdone in generosity. He is so generous and good! Banks fail, thieves rob property, muths and hail destroy and waste possessions, but money given to God is deposited in the divine treasury, where it renders a hundredfold.

Continue, my dearest daughters, to procure the greater glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, in whom I leave you so that He may inflame you all with His holy love.

*Affectionately yours in the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus
Mother Francesca Saverio Xavier Cabini*



XVI

NEW ORLEANS,
May 31, 1904

Destinations Cited:
Seattle, WA
Denver, CO
New Orleans, LA
Chicago, IL
New York, NY
Rome, Italy



"Go forth and bear fruit, fruit that will last."
John 15:1

Mother Cabrini High School
in New York and Cabrini High School in New Orleans have
followed Mother Cabrini's
call to "sow the good seed
of a solid Christian education." She always had a "special
affection" for the students entrusted to her care.

NEW ORLEANS, May 31, 1904

As an educator herself, Mother Cabrini always had at heart the interests of the sisters in her Institute as well as the care and training of the teachers of the future who received their education at the teachers' college in Rome. In this letter and the ones following, she speaks to the student teachers affectionately, and interweaves colorful descriptions of her activities with wise norms for teachers and delicate advice on fostering womanhood.

My dearest young ladies:
I do not want the scholastic year to close, and have you return to your families without letting you know how much I appreciated your Christmas and Easter letters and those you sent me after the retreat you made with so much fervor during carnival. By now you know that you cannot give me greater joy than by writing to keep me informed of the progress of your studies, your plans for the future and your aspirations. Even though from time to time the Mother Directress lets me know how well you are doing, it still is dear to me to read your own lines, and let me say, even to read between the lines, regarding the work of grace in your souls. I dearly enjoy contemplating the growth of those precious seeds of virtue sown in your souls as they continue to develop into graceful little plants, green with hope. One day they will grow to full height, their branches bent with the load of precious fruits. This interest is a natural result of my special affection for you as favorite daughters of the great family the Sacred Heart of Jesus has entrusted to my care. More than soil on a hill on which my daughters are called to sow the good seed of a solid Christian education, I consider you our co-workers, destined to be associated with us in the great undertaking of saving souls.

Oh, how great, how noble and exalted is the mission that you have been called to fulfill in the world! Our divine Savior addresses to you the words that once He spoke to his apostles, "I chose you and I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit, fruit that will last." [John 15:16] Reflect with me a while how much God's favor rests in this call: "I have chosen you, you have not chosen me." In fact, He wished that during your studies you should not be exposed to the poisoning and corrupting atmosphere of the world. He drew you close to Himself, in His house, in a healthy environment for your souls where He is preparing you for the mission you are called to undertake in society. Despite our regret in parting from you, we realize that you are now strengthened against dangers and fortified with a well-grounded education, and we can confidently say to many of you at the end of the school year, "Go and bear fruit."

What fruit? Even though your experience of the world is limited, you can see that society is senselessly forgetting its God. How much the wise educator can do to repair this greatest of evils if, together with her intellectual gifts and all the talents that can enrich her teaching, she possesses a solidly, freely Christian and religious spirit! She knows what the immortal and lamented Pontiff Leo XIII said: by no means must the judgment of Solomon be renewed, cutting the child in half, by an unjust and cruel separation of intellect and will. She knows that while developing the children's intellect and will, it is the duty of the educator to direct them to the acquisition of virtue leading to the ultimate end. She knows that those who in their early years have not received a religious education grow up without a notion of the highest truths. These alone can instill a love for virtue and repress disordered passions.

Gently and sweetly, she makes her good influence felt in school, helped by the grace of the Holy Spirit, who soundlessly penetrates the intimate recesses of youthful hearts which, like soft wax, are ready to receive impressions. From this you can see the grave responsibility of those who neglect this duty, because early impressions are difficult to erase. This is the fruit you are called to bring to the Church of God, with the difference that, while teachers have the duty to educate their classes well, you who are destined to instruct these teachers have the advantage of being able to do a greater good. The seed that you sow will spread more rapidly and bear fruit. In this way, you are associated with the great work of the Christian apostolate and enter the ranks of those generous champions who, by order of our great leader and His vicar on earth, propose to combat bravely to restore the world in Christ. The person who, so to speak, travels from one to the other pole well understands how far the world is from Him who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

A few weeks ago I was in Seattle, the capital of the state of Washington in the far West, where we have opened a mission. This city, recently built on Puget Sound with all the conveniences of its sister cities, is located in such an enchanting spot that you could call it the garden of the United States. It is distinguished by being called the Queen City but it could also be called the city of twenty hills, which is the number of hills on which it is built. A most beautiful panorama surrounds it. While the snow-covered peaks of the Rocky Mountains on one side and those of the Olympics on the other are reminders of the North Pole, the green hills, lapped by the ocean waves, are fragrant with orange and lemon blossoms and rich with lush vegetation. It is enough to tell you that we picked berries in February. Spring is continual, because even though Seattle is at fifty degrees north latitude, it is in the path of the warm Japanese current. In the background, the dark green virgin forests provide an abundance of suitable lumber for construction.

This state, which reminds me of southern Italy, besides being beautiful and fertile also provides a good field of work for the Missionary. We found Italians who had not been to church for forty or fifty years. They do not want to go to that English church, which they say is Protestant, where they don't speak to us like our churches in Italy. (They mean that they use the English language.) Our first concern was to build a modest church, large enough to gather them all. It is built at the top of a hill, adjoining our school and orphanage. On its slopes and down below in the valley are scattered the houses of the Italians. In the beginning, when we did not have a bell, the sisters acted as bells. Two in one direction and two in the other, they went about the hills gathering those good Italians and hurriedly led them to church. As soon as the first signal is given, you can see them hurrying to church. During Lent, I noticed some had to make it to Church by themselves three times for the Stations of the Cross.

Even though they may have not been close to God for many years, I found that their faith, although latent, was rooted deeply in their bones. So, with a bit of charity and gentleness, it is not difficult to lead them back to God.

How moving it is to see mature men cry tenderly at finding themselves again in an Italian church, where the word of God reaches them in their mother tongue, and where all reminds them of the fatherland abandoned so long ago. They recall the dear memories of childhood, the bell tower of their native town, the church square, the feasts of their patron saints and the solemn processions. I expect that this mission will bear much fruit.

During my stay in Seattle, requests for a foundation in Alaska reached me. You may know this region from reading about it. It is most interesting to hear it described by those who have lived there. This peninsula has strong commercial ties with the state of Washington. Our Italians start off from Seattle to go there in search of gold. In spite of the fact that hopes have in many cases been disappointed, gold still continues to lure others.

It is believed that the inhabitants of Alaska emigrated centuries ago from Lapland, and I think it will be interesting for the sisters who go there to visit those small Eskimos in their igloos, so called, of ice. They employ a very simple means to build them, without architects or masons. They use boards of driftwood, which the provident hand of God has caused to be washed up on the coast in generous quantities in this land of perpetual ice and snow. They stabilize the house against the side of a hill, using the boards to raise the roof and walls as best they can. Then they pour water over it, which freezes quickly, and repeat the procedure until the thickness of the walls is sufficient to render it windproof.

They live out their lives in those huts, stretched out on animal skins with which they are also dressed, their bodies covered with whale oil to protect them from the cold. Their dwellings seem not houses but burrows, which they must enter on all fours through a low, narrow hole. The sun still shines in the summer until ten at night, while during the winter, it is already night by 3 p.m. However, the sky provides them with some of those meteorological phenomena common to the Pole. From time to time, mirages, like those that frequently appear in the African desert, are seen in certain parts of Alaska. An entire city can be seen suspended in the air, which some recognize as the distant city of Petersburg.

Their eating habits are strange. If you are invited to dine by a chief or other person of authority, you would not dare to begin to eat a piece of salmon or some roast whale, which abound on those coasts. You would find two plates prepared before the host, one filled with food and the other empty. The host's work, which must be truly fatiguing, now begins. His duty is to chew and place on plates all the food to be given to the guests. When he finishes, all his table-companions serve themselves of the delicious food thus prepared. A good Jesuit Father who had been there many years told me this story. Then, smiling, he added, "And this is not all!"

However, the white people have begun to build houses and villages so that if anyone of you wishes to join the sisters who will go there, you will not sleep in an igloo. For long months, there is no communication with other parts of the world. All during the winter, the mailman makes

his rounds only twice. On foot, in boots with nailed soles, dressed in fur garments, suffering incredible privation, he travels those regions of eternal ice. He carries the letters sewn inside his jacket. The cold does not allow him to carry a bag, which would leave his hand exposed.

Consider the many sacrifices the desire for gold demands and how the hope of gain is often unfulfilled. Is it not the duty of the Missionary to remind herself that also in those far-off places there are souls to save, and to sacrifice herself for love of them? And is this not the duty incumbent on all those who love God and His glory to pray and to offer some sacrifice for the salvation of those souls which have cost the precious blood of Jesus Christ?

The trip from Seattle to Denver is very interesting because the train goes through various towns, all so different from the other. In Utah, I have seen the lakes and mountains of salt, diaphanous and milky in color. The most interesting were the Indian reservations, as they call the territories to which the Indians are confined by federal law. They are not permitted to live in the cities of the white people, but are permitted to go to there occasionally to sell their handicrafts. In times past, when hatred between whites and Indians was worse, only one Indian, a woman, named Angelina, was permitted to enter Seattle. This is the reason: among the many idols the Indians adore, they have some truly ugly ones.

It happened that the whites stole one idol, which still stands in a square in Seattle, representing an enormous, deformed gnome which, together with other little monsters, forms a pillar. The Indians, highly indignant by what they deemed a profanation, decreed the extermination of the city to vindicate the honor of their outraged god. But Angelina, who was a sweet, good-hearted woman, did not want to see blood shed. Amid many dangers during the night, she crossed mountains and valleys and went to the city. Having been warned, the whites prepared their defense. They never forgot this favor, and gave Angelina the privilege of entering the city whenever she pleased, to stay at any hotel and spend as much as she wanted and send the bill to the city. She was called the queen of the Queen City. All this may seem insignificant to you, but the Indians considered it a great privilege, of which they are still proud.

I passed through the Coeur d'Alene Reservation. Although these Indians are in part faithful to ancient customs, they have considerably modified them because of the influence of religion, which is making progress among them, especially through the apostolate of the Jesuit Fathers. Still, there is much left to do. They still have ridiculous and strange superstitions. Is someone dead? All his friends are called and, willing or not, they cry over the corpse in a monotonous singsong that more or less says, "Oh you were so goood! You had a lovely hooome! Now you are no inooore!" You can imagine the rest because they continue in this fashion all night, singing the praises of the lamented one.

The next morning, their chief comes. With much insistence they beg him to tell them whether the dead has gone to heaven or hell. He then orders that a basin of water and a loaf of

bread be brought. As long as the corpse is on earth it does not need anything, but if it is destined for hell, it will come to take its supply of bread and water because there is none in hell. If it is destined for heaven instead, it will not need anything; therefore, it will not return to take it. Naturally, since no one returns, everyone, according to them, goes to heaven. The relatives happily celebrate with a great banquet!

Poor souls! They are the same ones for whom Christ paid such a high price on the cross, those who especially tormented His Heart in the sorrowful agony He willingly sustained as He saw depicted before Him all the horrors of His imminent passion, and saw how useless so many torments would be for innumerable souls. What bitterness such a thought caused the Sacred Heart of Jesus, much more painful than the scourges, thorns, nails and the cross! If we had been permitted to console and comfort Him, how we would have offered ourselves as victims for the salvation of those souls that cost Him so much! We all can offer Jesus this comfort. We can all do our utmost in this endeavor by prayer. Let us be generous, offering our little sacrifices to the Lord for the success of the Catholic missions. Perhaps one day, when we have been received into the eternal tabernacles, we shall see coming to meet us many souls who will declare they owe their happiness to us.

The Indian woman, as is true in all nations that have not felt the beneficial influence of Christianity, is destined to work, while the man quietly smokes opium and becomes inebriated. If the poor woman is the mother of small children too young to stand alone, she carries them strapped to her back in a sort of sack so that she can continue her tiring work. When the baby cries, she quiets him by shrugging her shoulders, making him jump a little. This is how the Indian baby is cradled.

See, my daughters, how grateful we must be to Christianity, which has elevated the lot of woman and reinstated her rights which were unknown to ancient countries. What was woman until Mary Immaculate, the woman par excellence foretold by the prophets, desired by the patriarchs and the people, the daybreak of the Son of Justice appeared on earth? But Mary is born, this new Eve, true mother of the living, chosen by God to be the co-redemptrix of the human race, and a new era arises for woman, no longer slave but equal to man, no longer a servant but the mistress within her domestic walls, no longer the object of scorn and amusement, but raised to the dignity she deserves as mother and educator, on whose knees generations are formed.

We owe all this to Mary. In the tenderness that naturally arises in our hearts for a mother so lovable, kind, merciful, and ready to answer our prayers and come to our help, we must never forget how much Christian society owes her and how much we are obliged to her. Mary derived all her greatness from Jesus. If hers was the boast of giving life to our Redeemer, hers also, as our Holy Father said, was the duty to guard and prepare for the sacrifice the sacred victim of the human race. Mary was the Mother of Jesus, not only in the joys of Bethlehem, but also on

Calvary where she not only contemplated the cruel spectacle of the crucifixion, but also had the joy of offering her only Son for the salvation of the human race and worthily merited to become its co-redemptrix. Then, if we want to rise to the height of our mission, let us do away with heedlessness and vanity, and remember that we shall be true women only when, mindful of the principal duty incumbent upon us, we become true educators of society, angels of the family and faithful imitators of Mary Immaculate.

How can you imitate her? I wish that looking at Mary, your morning star, you would become so many copies of the Immaculate. Fix your interior gaze on your mother. If it seems that your eye cannot endure the bright light radiating from her, listen to what Saint Anselm says to you, "Mary was docile, spoke little, was always composed; she was never seen laughing or upset. She persevered in reading the sacred texts, in mortification, and all good works." Saint Ambrose says, "Her bearing was never undignified, her step never rushed, her voice neither affected nor petulant. The composure of her person was an indication of her interior beauty and harmony. It was a marvel to see with what promptness and diligence and concern she performed all her household tasks, peacefully and gently. Her bearing was always serene and a modesty more heavenly than earthly shone through her every movement. In speech she was always brief, dignified, prudent and truthful. The whole being of Mary Immaculate was well integrated."

So much for her private life. In its early days, the Church seemed to be wholly centered around Mary; all hearts turned to her. All hope, after Jesus, rested on her. She was like the ark animated by God containing the law of the new alliance, the living rule of the precepts and counsels of Jesus Christ, the treasure of the wisdom and knowledge of God. The difficulties of the Church in those first days were the same as those being experienced today, twenty centuries later. This is not surprising because Christ has always been the sign of contradiction. The Church, His spouse, must be the same in this valley of misery and tears. Let us not fear difficulties. Let us lift our gaze on high to our Star and call upon Mary. She is for us what she was to the apostles and the first Christians. Let us honor this immaculate dove and wholly entrust ourselves to her. The eyes of her mind and heart are turned to us. They are sharper and more penetrating than those of the prophets and seers of Judah, more perfect than those of the Ecstatic of Patmos. They are higher than the angelic hierarchies. How admirable is our Immaculate Mother! She is an unfathomable ocean of marvels, grandeur and glory. Let us abandon ourselves, I repeat, in the arms of our august Queen and Mother and in her shadow we shall be secure.

In Denver I found the schools flourishing. I had left a little more than a year ago, when they were established. The optimistic predictions the bishop made on the day they opened are being fulfilled. Now the zealous shepherd wants us to open an orphanage for the Italian orphans, who are very numerous in Colorado because of mining accidents. From the capital of Colorado, in two days of rapid travel across this state and along the border of Texas, I arrived in Louisiana. Here I

also saw many natural beauties, pale image of God, who is eternal beauty, which He willed to lavish on earth as a token of his deep love.

For many hours, the railroad passes through narrow gorges called canyons, which have become famous worldwide. They are two perpendicular walls of inaccessible height that seem to touch the sky, while at the bottom of the gorge the river runs in tortuous turns. Its pure waters, now turbulent, now calm, reflect the varied colors of the most marvelous rocks I have ever seen. It is not possible to describe them to you. The artist's brush faithfully painting them would seem to lie, and yet it is so. They even change colors during the different hours of the day, taking on tints and hues not even the most skillful artist could reproduce. They are the work of the immortal architect, whose existence people dare to deny or consign to oblivion while the powerful and marvelous works of His arm speak so eloquently of Him.

The immense plains of Texas, a state with extensive uninhabited territory, are very fertile, rich in every kind of vegetation and adaptable to any type of agriculture. These fields, still virgin, have a reddish color, full of life and promise. They seem to be waiting for our Italian immigrants who, instead, more willingly direct their steps to the populous northern states. They would find here prosperity and a life more like that which they led in Italy. There are a few settlements already, but there are more in Louisiana, where they cultivate cotton, rice and sugar, not to mention those around New Orleans where they do very well growing vegetables. In this city of New Orleans there are more than thirty thousand Italians, so you can imagine what work there is for us. Our schools enroll seven hundred children. Since there is no more room for them in the two houses we have, the archbishop gave us another one a few weeks ago. But I must think of providing for the orphans whose numbers are also growing so that they need a bigger house. I am working on this at present. When I am finished here, I shall return to Colorado for a brief visit and then, after Chicago, I shall return to New York, and embark for Italy from there.

To my regret, I shall not find all of you when I arrive in Rome. When you receive this letter, you will be taking exams, then vacation will follow for most of you, and for others, the completion of your studies. I know that this is a time of much anxiety. But, away with anxiety; take courage! You have done your duty and have studied diligently. Keep calm and you will do better. Place your trust in God and His Holy Mother; you will see they will help you pass with honors. I wish all of you the best results. You truly deserve the fulfillment of your desires because you are such good daughters, from whom I can expect so much good.

I need not exhort you to pray; I know that you pray with all your being. This comforts me because prayer is that powerful weapon that must defend and help you, not only now, but throughout your lives. It is the key to heavenly treasures, the channel through which graces descend. As long as you pray, you will be safe. As Blessed Canisius says, "The one who prays is on the road to heaven."

Never forget this breastplate that must defend you, this powerful arm that will assure your victory. In time of success, pray and you will not be swollen by the pride which often precedes a fall. In times of discouragement, pray and the trust that makes us strong with the strength of God will return. Pray for yourselves, for the persons entrusted to your care, for those dear to you, for society, for the Church. Make prayer a habit, because if you succeed in experiencing the sweetness found in this intimate conversation of the soul with God, there will never be hours of discouragement and despair, nor will clouds long disturb the calm horizon of your souls. Obey Christ's precept: pray and always pray. On His part, He will accomplish in you what He has promised, "Ask, and it will be given to you; knock and it will be opened to you." [Mt. 7:7]

Now, good-bye, my good daughters. As I said before, I shall not have the pleasure of seeing some of you when I return, but I hope that if you come back to Rome, you will visit your sisters. Then I will have the joy of seeing you and congratulating you for the diplomas you earned and the progress you have made both in knowledge and virtue. To those who will return to the college, I say a hearty *Arrivederci*. To the others, although my heart is heavy at seeing you leave us, with great confidence that you will be worthy of your mission I repeat the words of our divine Savior, which we have found so full of meaning, "Go forth and bear fruit, fruit that will last." [John 15:16]

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus bless you, and be a port of salvation in which you find refuge, help, and comfort in all the vicissitudes of life. May the mantle of our Immaculate Mother extend over all of you, may she clothe you with her virtues and always protect you. Seeing you entrusted to Jesus and Mary, I no longer fear for you.

Imploring every blessing from heaven upon you, I have the pleasure of repeating that I am .

Affectionately yours in the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus,
Mother Francesca Saverio Cabrini

New Orleans, May 31, 1904



XVII

DENVER,
May 9, 1905

Destinations Cited:

Chicago, IL

Denver, CO

"In founding the hospital in Chicago, we had visible proof of the power of heavenly help for those who invoke it with confidence.... Its location is in the center of a park world-renowned for its beauty, with a splendid view of Lake Michigan."

— Mother Cabrini

The campus of Columbus Hospital has changed in size, appearance and name over the years. As the place of Mother Cabrini's death on December 22, 1917, part of the property has been dedicated as the St. Frances Xavier Cabrini National Shrine.



DENVER,
May 9, 1905

As an educator herself, Mother Cabrini always had at heart the interests of the sisters in her Institute as well as the care and training of the teachers of the future who received their education at the teachers' college in Rome.

My dearest young ladies,
I have sat down at table several times to write to you. One of those times was about two months ago when I received your letters telling me about the holy retreat you made during the last days of carnival. At that time I intended to rejoice with you because of the good will with which you applied yourselves to strengthening your souls and faculties in the contemplation of heavenly things, leaving aside futile worldly entertainments so often filled with bitterness. Those days of recollection served to prepare you to begin with enthusiasm and determination the second half of your scholastic year, which ends with the appearance of that ugly scarecrow called exams. Notice that I call it a scarecrow because that is what it is and, as such, taking on colossal and frightful proportions, it may try to intimidate some of you.

In the midst of the many preoccupations that overburdened me these last months, I did not find time to turn my attention to you. Now your letters and Easter greetings, which I reciprocate with all my heart, serve to remind me that my desire to write to you has remained nothing but a good intention. So, not to be like that beautiful statue of Saint Philip, which appeared always in thought without making any decisions, here I am.

I would like to be able to write to you with the same gentle, lovely expressions you addressed to me. I know they came from your hearts. Likewise, from the depths of my heart, I send you my thanks and all the blessings that the heart of a mother can wish for her beloved daughters. You well know that you form a very dear portion of the large family the Sacred Heart has given me, that I have for you special concerns, prayers and wishes. You ask me to pray for you during your exams and I shall willingly do so, certain that the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and his Mother Mary will grant you the grace to pass them with honors.

I desire two things from you: The first is that you always pray with the fervor you have had until now. God alone has placed in the human mind this divine spark called intelligence. The poet, the artist, the scientist owe to God the talents that made them great. The Church, among the glorious titles it gives to the Holy Spirit, calls the Spirit, Spirit of Knowledge and Intellect. It is to our advantage, then, to draw water from the source. After working on our part unceasingly and diligently, we have recourse to the Lord and expect memory, intelligence and success from Him. This is what the celebrated Cardinal Ximenes did. While important questions of state were being tossed about, he would be often found at the foot of the Crucified. Asked by the ministers why he did so, he replied, "To pray is to govern." Pray, then, not for long periods of time, which is impossible for you, but with fervor.

Today's world seems to be regressing rapidly toward paganism. Notwithstanding the gigantic progress being made in science and commerce, it has forgotten the value of prayer and hardly

recognizes it anymore! This happens because man, in a pagan attitude, has made a god of himself and of creatures. He has lost the notion of the relationship and rapport that should exist between himself and God. Our good God who created heaven and earth, as the small child tells as he stammers reciting the catechism, has almost been expelled from creation; there is no place for Him. Man has made an idol of himself which he adores, and does not think of praying and adoring the one true God. Is it any wonder that after exerting superhuman efforts, his nature weak and limited and powerless to fight any longer to get what he wants, he abandons himself to despair, suicide, and crime? Prayer would have averted all this. Like incense, it would have risen to heaven and would have showered down an exhilarating dew of graces to invigorate the lost soul, restoring hope and calm to it.

Here is the second thing I desire from you: be calm. Wait peacefully for the exams without being alarmed or anxious, with your confidence placed in God, which is not presumption, because you have studied like good students all year. Study quietly, pray, trust in your Mother, Mary Immaculate, and everything will go well. Whoever hopes in her will never be disappointed.

In founding the hospital in Chicago we had visible proof of the power of heavenly help for those who invoke it with confidence. I arrived there on February tenth from New Orleans, where I had purchased the last piece of land needed for our orphanage. On it now is a splendid villa, facing one of the main thoroughfares of the city. It extends between pleasant parklands up to the clear waters of Bayou St. John, which lap its shores. When I arrived in Chicago to complete the final preparations for the opening of the hospital on February twenty-six, I found there was enough work for two more months. The date had been set and could not be changed. The president of the hospital, the world-renowned Dr. Murphy, surgeon and inventor of surgical instruments that bear his name, wanted to be present for the celebration but for health reasons planned to leave for Florida. Had we deferred the date, he would have had to forego that pleasure. I would not permit this to happen.

So much work! Imagine a vast six-story building which, although solidly built of enormous, thick stones, has been completely remodeled on the inside to meet all the requirements of modern medical-surgical science. There were bricklayers, carpenters, plumbers, electricians, interior decorators; in short, an army of workers. But that was the least. More important was the organization of the hospital services, scheduled to open to admit patients the day after the formal opening. Only one who has experienced this can appreciate what a monumental task this was. Our sisters worked day and night, yet the work seemed to increase rather than diminish. There was no lack of persons coming to tell me, "Mother, we won't succeed. There is too much to be done and the difficulties are too numerous." But firm trust in the Heart of Jesus maintained the calm. In this calm spirit, everything was completed quickly, efficiently, and peacefully. When the morning of the twenty-sixth dawned, we could open the doors, confident that the critical public eye would find nothing to ridicule.

That was a great day for the new Columbus Hospital. We called it the day of the Lord because it was all His work. Even the clear sky, with its bright sun causing the blue waters of vast Lake Michigan to glitter, seemed to take part in the celebration. The opening of a new hospital may be an important event for the medical profession, but it generally does not excite much interest in the public, who tend to flee from such houses of pain. Instead, His Excellency, Archbishop [James Edward] Quigley, the worthy Archbishop of Chicago, to his surprise, saw himself surrounded by a crowd of more than four thousand people, who thronged the chapel and parlors to hear his word! More than one thousand people hoping to enter were turned away for lack of space. Everyone agreed that never before in the United States had such enthusiasm been shown for the opening of a hospital. It was the day of the Lord, the work of the Lord.

The morning program was strictly religious, consisting of a procession led by the archbishop, during which he blessed the house, followed by a sung, solemn high Mass, and a sermon by our beloved archbishop. After the eloquent discourse, delivered with warm fatherly love by this great, zealous prelate, a pleasant surprise awaited the guests when he read a telegram from Rome conveying the Holy Father's blessing. You, my dear young ladies, who are privileged to see the pontiff often, receive his blessing and experience the holy sentiment his presence evokes, can understand the enthusiasm with which the blessing was received by the doctors and all our friends who helped in the foundation of the hospital. They received it as a heavenly message, all the more precious because of the distance which separates us from the glorious throne of the Vicar of Christ. They received it with hearts full of veneration and affection for His Holiness, at the thought that the Holy Father remembered his distant children.

Not knowing of a better way to express their gratitude, they asked me to send a telegram of thanksgiving immediately to the Holy Father in their name. I did it gladly, happy to see that the blessing of the Vicar of Christ was so precious to them. From my experience, the blessing of his Holiness is always a pledge of heavenly favor and success for the work on which he places his seal. The Vicar of Christ never in vain raises his hand in blessing. Fortunate are you who have had the enviable good fortune of prostrating yourselves at his feet and receiving his blessing in person! Strengthened with such powerful protection, be of good cheer! It will draw precious graces on your souls which will extend to your studies, your exams, your families and your interests.

In the afternoon, we had the official opening ceremony, consisting of musical selections interspersed with eloquent speeches delivered by prominent people, among whom were Dr. Murphy, Judge Brentano of the Supreme Court, and other very distinguished persons and orators. The medical authorities of Chicago classify our hospital as first class. All agree in saying that the charming location and beauty of the building make it the best in the city. As for the requirements of modern science, the most up-to-date equipment was selected. Each department is directed according to the rules of the health department and of modern surgery. There are several oper-

ating rooms with facilities for sterilization, laboratory departments for bacteriology, X-ray, pathology, etc. Annexed to the hospital is a school for nurses, who graduate after a three-year course dedicated to serious study and the necessary clinical practices. With regard to the hospital's location, it is in the center of a park world-renowned for its beauty, with a splendid view of Lake Michigan. It can be said that nature, with its invigorating fresh air, together with the skill of the celebrated doctors who comprise the staff, cooperates for the good of the patient who comes to this place of rest and quiet to seek health and often life, which may have been slipping away.

I think that my reporting some of the facts that Dr. Murphy furnished us in his talk will please you. They bring glory to the Church and our homeland. Besides being first in the arts and sciences, our country is a leader in charity. Before Christianity, history does not record the existence of the institutions that are the highest expression of fraternal charity, as are the modern hospitals. Even ancient Greece with all its culture and civilization ignored this noble sentiment and made scant provision for the care of stricken soldiers. But Christ came to enkindle the fire of His love on earth, and Italy has the glory of having opened in Rome the first hospital in the world, followed shortly after by one in the Roman Campagna. Several centuries passed before other nations, among them England, followed the Italian example and instituted similar works of charity. The Church, which has inspired the movement, operated and preserved these institutions during the Middle Ages. There was not a convent without an infirmary adjoining it, where the poor and sick were sheltered and their needs and infirmities were given attention.

Now Columbus Hospital of Chicago has begun its service to society. Patients come in great numbers for admission and enjoy their stay. Some have even come from Colorado and California. It was to these two western states that I directed my steps as soon as the work of the hospital was securely under way. Once again I am in the mountains of Colorado. While I am writing to you, the president of this great nation [Theodore Roosevelt] is entering Denver amid acclamations, after having spent three weeks on these mountain peaks. I have not been able to follow him among those almost inaccessible crags where he went to track bears, ten of which fell victims of his gun. They will be sent to Washington as a gift to his daughter, Alice, who desired them. I was unable to admire with him the grace of the marvelous birds, which he knows by name and which build their nests on the highest peaks of the Rocky Mountains. Neither my mission nor my physical strength permits this. In this splendid state, whose name indicates its multicolored mountains, cobalt sky, birds and flowers of unlimited varieties and brilliant colors, there is much to admire and for which to thank God, who has let fall on earth such rays of His infinite beauty and power.

The citizens of Denver wanted to make President Roosevelt an honorary member of the Press Association of Denver. Do you know what kind of certificate they gave him? They mined gold from the nearby mines and processed it in their great smelters or foundries. They then made a

sheet of pure, solid gold and engraved the proclamation in silver, also mined in Colorado. Precious stones, also native to Colorado, provided the accents. Was it not a beautiful gift? California has many marvels of a different kind. That is where I shall go as soon as I have purchased land here for the new orphanage. Here, the mineral kingdom displays its wonders; there, the vegetable kingdom opens another page in the book of the beauties of the universe, pale image of the beauty of Almighty God.

To Him, then, let us direct our souls, created by Him and for Him, those souls in which he has infused a strong attraction for all that is beautiful and great as proof of our noble origin and the end for which we were created. Let us rise above the things of earth and, since we cannot fly, let us transcend them. The right intention in our work is the magic wand that changes into pure gold whatever we touch. The Christian virtues we practice make fragrant flowers spring up wherever we pass. Faithful to the divine commands and the teachings of the Church, we go about completing the mission assigned to us, however modest. The angels keep dangers away from our path, faithfully record our good works and accompany us to the dwelling of our gracious God, where our joy will be complete and our rejoicing eternal.

My dear young ladies, I shall not give you a sermon because you have heard many during your years at the school. You know the road and have been given the arms for the combat whenever it may be necessary. I shall instead express the firm hope I have in my heart that after leaving the Institute that welcomed, instructed and loved you, you will always show yourselves worthy of the mission to which God calls you, imparting to others what you have received. Always remember that life is short and flees like a shadow, that the body dies but you have one soul destined to live eternally in that abode, either of glory or suffering, which it will have prepared for itself in life. The thought of the last end made Teresa a saint. May the holy, tremendous truths of our holy faith strengthen you during life's trials and against false mirages that will try to lure you away. May these truths strongly motivate you to do everything in your power so that the students of the normal schools entrusted to your care are not only well educated, but also well founded in the maxims of that holy faith which is the ark outside of which is no salvation.

May Jesus bless you now in your exams, in your scholastic career, and bless you in your mission, rendering it fruitful for the Church, for our country and for our society.

Mother Francesca Saveria Cabrini

Superior General of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Denver, Colorado, May 9, 1905



XVIII

CHICAGO,
February, 1906

Destinations Cited:
Denver, CO
Colorado Springs, CO
Trinidad, CO
Albuquerque, NM
Grand Canyon, AZ
Los Angeles, CA
Burbank, CA
Venice, CA
Catalina Island, CA
Pasadena, CA
Altadena, CA
Chicago, IL



"How many times I thought
that I was almost at the end
of my present mission in the
United States when instead
some new work turned up!"
— Mother Cabrini

Cabrini Institutions today
still place special emphasis
on serving the needs of
the immigrants of
the 21st century.

CHICAGO, February 1906

Reading this letter gives one an idea of how beloved Mother Cabrini was by the students of the Teachers' College in Rome and how this affection was reciprocated and expressed by Mother Cabrini. No doubt this letter was eagerly welcomed and circulated widely among all the students.

My dearest children:
 Your letters and Christmas greetings pleased me very much, even though I had hoped that, at least this year, I would be in the Eternal City to spend the holidays with you and I could have in person responded to your wishes for happiness. Instead, I must convey them to you a hundredfold only in writing. I admit that the kind, noble sentiments you expressed have consoled me not a little in the deep regret I felt in having to be far from Rome again. Only duty, which the Missionary must always put before pleasure, has kept me far from Italy for such a long time. Believe me, as soon as I have completed the few affairs I have left, I will not delay my departure one single day.

How many times I thought that I was almost at the end of my present mission in the United States when instead some new work turned up! It was work I could not have omitted without disregarding the sacred interests of the glory of God and the salvation of souls. But now I can assure you that in a few weeks I shall be among you to take pleasure in your virtue, your progress and your loving company. I wrote to you from the height of the Rocky Mountains, promising to tell you about my trip to California. I do not believe you would let me get away with forgetting that promise so I steal a few minutes a little at a time, now from my daughters, now from business affairs, to write to you.

I believe I have written to you about my work of enlarging our orphanage in Denver for the daughters of our immigrants. It is enough for you to know that with the help of the Sacred Heart, who is always prompt to favor us, I was able to obtain a fine piece of property at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, on a hill that gently slopes down to the banks of Rocky Mountain Lake. We are adding a wing to the house, because it has already become too small for the thirty orphans we have gathered during this first year. Surrounded by trees laden with fruit, the house is reflected in the limpid waters of the lake. Westward, there is the imposing chain of the Rockies with its snow-covered peaks, east of us is the beautiful city of Denver, and south and north are the great plains that comprise three fourths of the area of Colorado.

While seated in a comfortable car of the Santa Fe Railroad transporting me to Los Angeles, my gaze scanned the immense plains around Denver, populated with the homes of our Italian farmers, and beyond them to desert land and immense tracts of virgin soil. My thoughts turned to the immigrants who disembark annually in large numbers on the shores of the Atlantic, always crowding the populated cities of the East where they encounter many hardships with very little gain, while here in the West and South there is room for millions more. The very fertile soil would afford them more congenial work suited to their past experience, an opportunity to apply their industriousness and agricultural knowledge. Their labors and efforts would be crowned with abundant fruit.

This stream of population must be directed intelligently. I know that the Commissioner of Emigration is studying this problem, which is so important for the well-being of our immigrants in the United States. However, the solution presents many difficulties, not only because of the almost four thousand miles that separate the Atlantic from the Pacific, but especially because of the difficulty in finding sincere, conscientious people who will not exploit the sacred interests of the poor.

Poor immigrants, taken advantage of many times by those who set themselves up as their protectors! These "protectors" deceive them by skillfully masking their actions under the guise of charity and patriotism. From the train I saw these poor dear countrymen laboring on construction of railroads in the most perilous, narrow passes through the mountains, miles away from any habitation, for years separated from their families and their Church. They are deprived of the holy pleasures which in our country the farmer has at least on Sundays, when he could lay down his hoe. Dressed in holiday best and consecrating the morning to the divine service, he could listen to the words of the priest reminding him of his noble origin and destiny, and the value of work consecrated to God. He had the rest of the day to dedicate to his family and to honest recreation. The next day he was able to take up his work with renewed vigor.

Here the most difficult jobs are reserved for the Italian worker. Very few look on him with compassion, care about him or remember that he also possesses a heart and mind. They regard him only as a clever machine assigned to complete a set task. It is also true that here the Italian has commanded respect because he is sober, honest, faithful and hardworking. But of how many pure joys is the person deprived who abandons his country to come to this foreign land without anyone to guide him on the road of true well-being! This does not consist only in scraping together a hoard of money which often he cannot enjoy due to the hardships it exacted. How much better it would have been for him had he stayed on his own little farm in his native village! What a great social and philanthropic work could be done by those in our country who would devise a plan to employ to benefit our own country that same energy now being expended for the benefit of a foreign country!

I do not deny that there are advantages for our farm workers in this vast virgin and very fertile territory, which certainly offers the immigrant work and a comfortable living. But I hope that truly generous people will come forth, to take to heart the interests of the poor and direct them conscientiously when they land on these shores. I can assure you that it has been most consoling for me during my tour of our missions to see that much good is being done for the immigrants by our institutions. What we as women cannot do on a large scale to help solve grave social ills is being done in our small sphere of influence in every state and city where we have opened houses. In them we shelter and care for orphans, the sick and the poor. Not only are thousands of children instructed, but these charitable institutions make it possible for the sisters to do immense good through the relationships they develop.

The relationship between the people and sisters is most cordial. They call them mothers and sisters, and feel that such words are not empty of meaning because these titles are matched by truly maternal hearts beating in union with theirs. Setting aside all thought of themselves, the sisters make the people's interests, sorrows and joys their own. All this is not through any merits of ours. It is the fruit of the charity of Christ, the prodigious fruitfulness of our holy religion, which is a true friend of the people, a torch guiding them in the darkness, house of refuge, tower of strength and harbor of salvation.

While I have been writing to you, we have reached Colorado Springs, the aristocratic city of Colorado that rises in the shadow of Pike's Peak, one of the highest peaks of these mountains. Weak and consumptive persons are drawn there by the mild climate, the healthy environment of the surrounding mountains and the various mineral waters that spring everywhere, fresh, sparkling and foaming. The Indians, marveling at so much richness of mineral water, thought that their god Manitou, an Indian word meaning Great Spirit, lived in these mountains, especially in the so-called Garden of the Gods. When I return, you will be able to admire the scenes of this magnificent natural park, covering several hundred hectares. Scattered about are myriads of brightly colored rocks, sculptured by nature into the most unusual shapes. Some are imposing, some grotesque, others austere. Some others are nonsensical and challenge the imagination. Not far from here, General Palmer, one of our benefactors, has his own garden of the gods on his property. The mansion that he built and the natural beauty of the rocks in the form of multicolored obelisks constitute a veritable gem of art. The nest of an eagle who lived as queen of these mountains for many years can still be seen among the rocks. A short time ago, a baby eagle was killed. On that day the noble bird deserted her nest. You can imagine the great sorrow of the general, who was proud of his guest.

Trinidad can be reached in a few hours from Colorado Springs. This area is important for its varied mines, especially coal, which employ many Italians whom our sisters visit regularly. For those poor men, such visits are like a ray of sunshine in that darkness. The sisters speak to them about the progress of their daughters for whom they care and of their families whom they have visited. They remind them of their religious obligations and comfort them in the sadness of their deplorable conditions. They always leave them happier or, at least, resigned to their poverty. The sisters' efforts in scrambling up these steep mountains are repaid by the smiles that light up those faces at the mere sound of their mother tongue echoing through those dark vaults.

Poor miners! Would you like to hear about their life? Those who work on the day shift enter the mines at six and are buried there until noon. They come out at twelve for a short lunch, re-enter at the half-hour and come out at five! They take about a half hour to wash up and prepare for supper. When this is over, they are so tired that they are unable to do anything more. They fling themselves on a cot to reawaken in the morning to the whistle calling them to work. On Sunday,

they smoke and sleep. The men continue this work without interruption for years and years, far from their families, in isolation, until they reach old age or become powerless. A cave-in, an explosion, or some other accident may end the life of the poor worker, who then does not even need a grave, buried in the tomb in which he lived all his life.

Oh, if only the voice of religion could reach all these poor people, to teach them to sanctify and dignify such weary labor, to render it fruitful for eternity! From this you can see the tremendous responsibility of anyone who attempts to steal the gift of faith from the working class, deprive them of every hope of future life and extinguish in their hearts charity toward God. Once supernatural principles and the precepts of our holy faith are snatched away, what is left if not degradation and the indulgence of every base passion? Pray, my good children, pray for an increase in the number of evangelical workers, zealous and good-spirited, whose efforts will help in putting an end to materialism and unbelief which, like subtle poisonous gases, infiltrate everywhere, causing immense, irreparable damage.

Pray that all the faithful listen obediently to the voice of the Vicar of Christ, Pius X. He is aware of these great evils that are trying to cause the downfall of the foundations of society and has resolved to restore all things in Christ. Strong with the strength of God and assisted as he is by the Holy Spirit, he will not fail to fulfill in the Church the exalted mission to which God has elected him. At the same time, what labors he will have to undergo, what care and sorrows will cause anguish to his heart and preoccupy his mind in this arduous task! At least, may he see himself supported by the love and obedience of his children, and find in everyone that necessary cooperation to carry out his holy plan to arrest the avalanche of evil threatening to cover the world.

Leaving the great manufacturing city of Trinidad, the train enters the heart of the mountain region. Since the locomotive scales the heights with difficulty, we had time to admire the scenic beauty. The scenery changes every moment: austere mountains capped with pure white snow; red-soiled hills covered with evergreens; sharp peaks upon which only the eagle dwells seem to touch the sky; and plateaus where the bold goat returning from her mountain forays comes to feed on the abundant, fragrant grass and where the slow ox and fierce buffalo pasture together, ignoring the roar of the wild bear resounding in nearby gorges. Here and there, silver streams descend among the rocks and soon are converted into threatening torrents rushing by leaps and bounds to their multicolored rock beds. The name Colorado was never better applied than to this enchanting state, and to these magnificent natural parks where the hand of man could not add to the beauty with which nature has enriched them. Truly, here the exclamation of the psalmist comes spontaneously, How admirable is God in all His works!

Meanwhile we have begun to descend the western slope, heading rapidly toward the Pacific, and have crossed the border of New Mexico. This state is very interesting. A large number of

Indians still live here in pueblos, small villages built like fortresses on steep and almost inaccessible mountains. Three sides of the dwelling are formed by rocks and the front is also hermetically closed, without windows or doors. The only means of access is by ladder through an opening in the roof.

It seems that these Indians of New Mexico, unlike other more savage tribes dedicated to hunting, have been peaceful people, frugal, industrious and dedicated to agriculture. To protect their provisions and the fruits of their labors from being stolen by their fierce neighbors, the pueblos were built like fortresses. From the train I saw these poor Indians sitting in front of their little huts in their picturesque attire, either weaving baskets, at which they are quite adept, or idly observing the passing train, which is the great cause of so much development and commerce but which has not succeeded in drawing these people away from their primitive simplicity.

Arriving at Albuquerque, the metropolis of the Rio Grande Valley, I was able to observe them closely, because I found them lined up in double file under the arcade of the station offering to sell travelers the products of their labors. Some sold terra cotta vessels, beaded work and skillfully woven baskets. Others sold garnets, smoky topaz and other small stones found in the Mexican deserts. In the interior of the station where there is a display of a very beautiful collection of Indian arts and crafts, the more skillful Indians wove the famous Navajo blankets.

There are numerous and varied Indian tribes. Some have high foreheads and aquiline noses. A fierce intelligence shines in them while piercing eyes reveal the daring proper to their race, together with a nobility and goodness of soul. Other Indian tribes are more inferior to them. Their faces seem to show a nearly dull inertia. The women especially seem to love to paint their faces in various colors, similar to tattooing. Most unusual is their dress, which I do not describe because the illustrations I bring with me will give you a much better idea. As soon as we got off the train, some Mexicans mingled with the Indians and gathered around us, happy to see the sisters. The Indians, who were more timid, came forward gradually, offering me their little crafts. Attracted by the shiny cross, they asked to kiss it. As I satisfied their innocent desire, I thought: how many souls in the midst of this civilized nation still do not know God and are steeped in the darkest idolatry, superstition and ignorance! Very little good can be done for them because of the lack of evangelical workers!

Oh, how the Missionary's heart suffers! Burning with zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, she feels paralyzed by the inability to be in all the places where God's interests call her. While these poor souls fix a curious gaze on you, they seem to ask in their mute language: "Why not come among us to bring the light of your faith?" Oh, generous Christian souls, why do you not heed the appeal of these your brothers in distant lands? You are not lacking in courage, energy, intelligence and heart. Why do you keep the many fine gifts the Lord has given you inactive and buried? Why not employ them in favor of those who do not know the true God? Why

not reflect that these talents of yours, employed in the service of the Lord, will gain immense merits for you on earth and glory in heaven! This is how the poor Indians of Albuquerque spoke to my heart. To me they represented the numerous, scattered tribes of the western United States among whom, no matter what has been done, little has been achieved. An intimate sense of regret gripped my heart at not being able to stop there for the moment and apply myself to their spiritual and intellectual development because of the lack of personnel.

There are now more than four hundred Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart working day and night in the United States. Yet they are only like a small bunch of sheaves in an unmeasurable field. Oh, may the Sacred Heart grant that many generous souls come to join our ranks under the banner of the Sacred Heart to work for His greater glory and the salvation of the people He redeemed. There is a field for all, for every activity, talent and inclination. The one who consecrates herself to Jesus as His Missionary, willing to go to the very limits of the earth to carry His name, even at the sacrifice of the dearest affections and of life itself, is a true heroine in whose heart the flame of charity is alive. She does not let her heart waste away nor does she place under a bushel the lively spark of intelligence God has given her. Rather, the flame lit in her heart becomes a veritable volcano of charity, embracing all. That spark of intelligence becomes a brilliant torch, dispelling the darkness and lighting the way for errant souls. Blessed is she who is able to present herself at God's tribunal followed by a great number of souls saved by her efforts. The voice of God calls many, but not all heed it. For this reason, there is often the sorrow of seeing great harvests lost for want of reapers.

You, my good children, in your worthy mission as educators, are the closest collaborators of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart. That is why you form such a beloved portion of my heart in the large family Jesus has given me. I expect much from you as does your country, your church and the whole world. Now it is no longer necessary to be a Missionary to travel around the world. Ease of transportation and immigration policies make it easy for people to change countries with the same facility with which they went from the house to the orchard earlier. We see many thousands of our fellow countrymen land on these shores every year and sadly observe them in constant contact with people who are heretics or uncivilized idolaters.

If every child entrusted to us in our schools grows through our efforts in the holy fear of God and if in addition to instructing the mind, we educate the heart, instilling in it the principles of religion and honesty, the child will grow to be an exemplary Christian and citizen. Is it not true that this pupil will in her turn become a teacher, the kind of teacher who is more effective than any professor with sterile and pedantic instructions because she will teach by her exemplary speech and deportment? The teacher who so educates her students sows countless mustard seeds which, according to the word of our Divine Master, will grow to a great height. [Mk. 4:30] She will never know how much salutary fruit these seeds have borne. My good children, let your

instructions be not only of literature, science, mathematics and history, but also of sound Christian morals, and you will render a glorious service not only to religion, but also to your country. You will contribute greatly to the fulfillment of the solemn promise made by so many sons of Italy immigrating overseas, that of acting in such a way that our country is honored and respected by other nations.

By now we have left New Mexico and have entered Arizona, or better said, the desert. To tell the truth, the deserts of Arizona are not monotonous and lifeless as you would imagine by their name. They are immense lands intersected by mountain chains, deep abysses, inactive volcanoes, brightly colored rocks and mountains of imposing, varied shapes. With a little imagination, they will seem to you now castles with bulwarks and towers of defense, at other times colossal monuments adorned by an infinite number of caryatids, columns and marvelous sculptures. The desert sands have already proven fertile for those who have had the courage to dig wells and plant legumes and fruit. There is the added advantage that because of the great heat, crops can be harvested in the winter and bring in a higher price. As we are nearing California, the land of the giants of the vegetable kingdom, we can already see that the yucca, shrubs and grasses assume colossal proportions here. The cactus called *Cereus giganteus* reaches a height of sixty feet.

But the biggest attraction of this desert is formed by the Petrified Forest and the Grand Canyon. The Petrified Forest is an area of about one thousand hectares that was probably on the shores of a large inland body of water, which, in the evolution of time, was buried under water and is now covered by desert sands. Innumerable petrified tree trunks of varied sizes, even as large as ten feet in diameter, are found lying on the ground or rising out of the sand. They seem to be either pines or cedars. The water filled their cells with silica, magnesium and ferrous oxide, mixed with other substances and has given them those magnificent colors which attract the admiration of tourists. Under the action of either heat or cold, these trunks were broken off in such a way as to seem to have been sawed by human hands into enormous disks. In their natural state these stone masses are not very brilliantly colored but after what has happened to them over the years they are rightly called the jeweled forest because every little particle of those plants has become chalcidony, carnelian, agate, chrysoprase, amethyst, topaz, etc. One of these trees, with its trunk still intact, fell across a forty-five-foot gorge, almost forming a bridge. Its roots and top are still buried in the sand, which will give you an idea of its height. I am sure you must be curious to see this remarkable, petrified wood. To satisfy you I will bring a piece home on my return.

From this wonder we pass to one even more spectacular, which no pen has yet been able to describe, the Grand Canyon of Arizona. Neither will I attempt to describe its beauty, since skillful writers have found the task to be beyond their capabilities. The word cation is Spanish and is often applied here to refer to those gigantic gorges of the mountains and ravines that the immense rivers carved over the centuries in these titanic regions. The Grand Canyon is an intricate

cate system of canyons more than six thousand feet deep, one-hundred-twenty-five miles wide and one-hundred-eighty miles long. Whoever faces the edge of the canyon, on seeing the powerful panorama, has the sensation of being on the tip of a very high mountain instead of on the edge of a deep abyss. There is a labyrinth of immense architectural forms of infinitely different designs which compare or even surpass the pyramids of Egypt or the majestic mausoleums of the pharaohs. They are decorated with the most unusual ornaments nature has produced, sometimes resembling festoons of lace or netting hanging from the rocks, painted with the widest variety of colors the palette can produce, diaphanous hues of a marvelous delicacy. The towering mountains dominating this abyss have this quality of changing color according to the different hours of the day so that now you see rubies, which later change to emeralds. Later they become glittering diamonds under the powerful rays of the sun, and sapphires in the more pallid light of evening. Before this imposing spectacle, man feels very small. In the eyes of the faithful, this is an image, however pale, of the greatness of our God.

From the border of the Grand Canyon, which is about six-thousand feet high, the train descends in a dizzying course along the sides of the mountain and along the edges of precipices until it reaches the city of Needles, just a few feet above sea level. Then it immediately climbs about three thousand feet. The position of this city, almost buried between two high plateaus, together with the nature of its soil, all covered with lava that erupted over the ages from nearby volcanoes, makes Needles one of the hotter cities in the world, or at least in the United States. To tell the truth, the heat was suffocating. Unable to resist the intense heat that came in through the windows and even from the cracks in the train, I tried to shield myself from it with pillows but, in a few minutes, they felt as if they were on fire, too. Needles is on the border of Arizona and is, therefore, the gate to California. If I were to judge California by this city, I would not have had a very favorable impression. Instead, it was good for us that the darkness of night hid this unattractive area from our view. The next day, when the sun rose, the train coursed through orange groves, hedges of eucalyptus and all kinds of beautiful verdure, lush fields and colorful flower beds. We were in California.

With good reason this state is compared to Italy, especially our so-called Riviera. But neither are those wrong who assert that it should rather be compared to the promised land that is said to be flowing with milk and honey. One of the principal attractions of California is its incomparable climate, although the state is rich in gold, silver, and other precious elements, among which are the famous mines of tourmaline, a gem which is much in vogue. Here we have constant spring. The bright blue of the skies puts to shame that of Italy. It hardly ever rains, only during a couple of months of the year. If there are hot days during the summer, the heat is tempered by the ocean breeze, and the nights are very cool. When I left in December, the hills were beginning to be covered with new green grass springing up under the giant evergreens, which also put

forth new shoots. Every evening a beneficent mist, laden with gases from the city, rises. During the night, a fresh breeze from the mountains blows it out toward the ocean. In the morning another mist surrounds the hills on which the city of Los Angeles is built. The sun has a hard time to dissipate it so that often it lazily does not rise until ten. This mist which comes from the ocean has a translucent blue tint and, blown by a marine current in the opposite direction from the one in the evening, purifies the atmosphere and leaves the air clear and calm for the rest of the day.

So much for the climate. You know better than I the products of California. Fruits, vegetables and trees grow to immeasurable proportions. Here are giant trees with chapels built in their trunks and tunnels cut through them wide enough for cars to pass. Here is admired the famous water lily, *Victoria Regia*, which you know from the naturalist's description. The trunk of a centuries-old *Washington Regia*, the giant of the forest, felled by some unknown accident, accommodates a cavalry squadron living up on it as though it were a main street or, better yet, a parade ground. The geraniums grow to such proportions that they form a fence dividing the various properties or sometimes climb as high as thirty feet to adorn the trunk, of the palm trees lining the streets, gracefully bordering the gardens. The fruit has a very special fragrance and taste.

The famous naturalist Burbank lives near Los Angeles. He keeps adding new marvels to natural wonders by ingenious experimentation and grafting. He has produced new species of flowers and fruits such as pitless apricots and plums and seedless grapes. To the glory of the Church, I must tell you that Burbank was shown the way by Albot Gregor Mendel who, half a century ago in his monastery in Austria, began experiments which have made the name of the California naturalist famous. His current accomplishments are due to the work of an intelligent Augustinian monk. You can see from this how much respect is owed the Church as promoter of the arts and sciences.

You can imagine how as soon as I arrived I lost no time but quickly began making the rounds of the city and its surroundings to give me a good idea before selecting a site for our school and orphanage. I can say that there is neither hill nor valley that I have not visited, with an ever-growing admiration for the goodness of the Lord so amply demonstrated in this blessed country. Every valley is a natural sanitarium, where every special illness can be cured simply by staying out in the open air day and night. And truly there are sanitariums for every type of illness. Those with tuberculosis pitch small tents at the foot of the hills and live in them. After a few years, they are stronger and more vigorous than before. In other places, asthmatics recover their health, elsewhere those with nervous disorders. In another location, the anemic find health. In sum, the air is physician and medication for all.

The city of Los Angeles which in 1880 had only 11,000, now counts about 150,000. During the cold season, tourists who come to escape winter are added. While I was there, more than

30,000 came in one week. An unparalleled system of electric cars connects it to the ocean, only sixteen miles away. Its beautiful streets are lined with the most elegant buildings, unlike any found elsewhere in the United States. Its residences and parks extend gently from the tops of hills to the valleys. There is no house, no matter how small, that does not have its little flower garden. The palm trees give the whole city an aspect of elegance. Exactly on one of these hills, I found the right place for our house. I can indeed say that the Sacred Heart prepared it for us, because the large garden filled with palm trees in front of the house hide it from view so that it is a true convent. At the same time we are a short distance from the center of the city. At the foot of our hill are the houses of our Italians, so that in a few minutes the sisters can be about their mission and go to the school which Bishop Conary is building for us.

While we were negotiating the purchase of the property, I had the opportunity to go to the so-called Venice of America. Situated in a charming position on the Pacific Coast, this little city is patterned after Venice. There are small artificial canals with bridges that are replicas in miniature of those of the Queen of the Adriatic, filled with small gondolas. Stone buildings are very few in Los Angeles. Private residences are almost exclusively built of wood, but with good taste. Except for the few main streets that make you think you are in Italy, the city is made up of tents. There are thousands of them forming neat rows and streets. The tents, the size of a regular room, are well furnished and lighted with electricity. In summer, even the wealthiest people leave the comforts of their mansions for at least a month to enjoy their freedom on the shores of the Pacific.

A true pleasure trip was given to me by Mr. Banning, the owner of a celebrated island in the Pacific Ocean, who provided me the fare in his boat. I had heard so much praise of the marvels of Catalina Island that I could not leave California without being able to tell you something about it. I went there on a beautiful day when the sky was cobalt blue and the ocean justified its name. The three hours of the crossing passed swiftly in the contemplation of the immense ocean with nothing but sky and water in sight. As we drew near the bay that makes up the small port, a translucent mist extended like a veil in front of the immense, thirty mile-long mass of rock that forms the island, letting us see only its outline. When we drew closer, this great curtain lifted gently as in a magnificent theater prepared by nature. I assure you I seemed to be dreaming, transported to an earthly paradise.

Impressive mountains rose against the background of a sapphire sky, dotted with rocks and pine and palm trees at the edge. The air is so clear that distances can't be calculated and the ability to see seems increased. The water of the sea is a beautiful blue, so transparent that one can clearly see the myriads of fish at the bottom, among which are flying fish, darting like arrows into the air and diving back into the waves. Quite a few seals, brought here from Newfoundland, where they are very numerous and have great commercial value for the English, move slowly in

the midst of the waters without frightening the fish, which are accustomed to their company. It seems as though the fish are not even afraid of humans, such is the natural harmony that reigns. Still less afraid are the aquatic birds that are the fishermen's companions. Thousands of them populate scenic Avalon Bay. Now they dive in for a morning bath; now they alight in the water, allowing the waves to rock them. You see them perched on the masts of the fishermen's boats, on the prow of the ship, or on the rocks. There is nothing projecting out of the water that they do not adorn with their elegant forms of spotless white.

But the most marvelous spectacle is the one seen in the glass-bottomed boats. I had heard about the aquatic ocean gardens of Santa Catalina and imagined an ingenious device made up of lenses, giving the illusion of a garden in the bottom of the sea. Nor would I have gone to see it if I had not been invited to make a trip on one of these boats. In truth, I was not sorry because what I saw was beyond my expectation or imagination. The bottom of the boat has an opening covered with glass through which can be seen all the ocean life. We were not far from land when the ocean bed, which at first was smooth and sandy, began to be full of rocks. Then there were mountains with plains and valleys, green with marine algae that in some places reached a height of one hundred feet, swaying with the movement of the water. In their midst I saw an almost infinite variety of aquatic plants, some of which had flowers of beautiful violet plumes, and diverse fruits of delicate, fresh colors, like shoots just budding in the spring. All were swaying with the water, as though a cool breeze was moving them. If the sight of a park is lovely, I assure you that the sight of a park under water far surpasses it, even more when it is viewed populated by every kind of fish, among which are goldfish, and rocks adorned with seashells of the most brilliant colors.

After a few hours of this marvelous sight, we landed on Moonstones Beach, where such stones are found in a rough state, but make attractive pendants and other jewelry when polished. The chalcedony from which they are formed has fallen from an unknown distant high mountain and is washed ashore by the waves. Tourists finding them can take them home as interesting souvenirs from Catalina. I stayed there over twenty-four hours. I won't speak to you about the climate of Santa Catalina which during the winter is all flowers. It belongs to a wealthy gentleman who has refused to sell it for offers of five million dollars. He has made it a place for meetings and a true earthly paradise for tourists.

The perfect network of electric railways that connects Los Angeles with its surroundings offers visitors a very pleasant tour, which was obtained for me through the courtesy of friends. In less than four hours from the shores of the Pacific we were on top of Mount Lowe, six thousand feet high. Leaving the beach, one passes among lush vineyards and fields that reveal the prodigious fertility of the soil. It is enough to sow the seed and leave the rest to the sun and rain, and expect in the fall a plentiful harvest. After a little more than a half hour, the city of Los Angeles appears like a majestic queen with its white buildings standing out among the perennial green of

the hills that form its crown. Then, passing always through new hills, one arrives in the aristocratic city of Pasadena, where the millionaires of the United States spend the winter. There, in the midst of green carpets dotted with flowers, among the scent of oranges, one reaches the foot of the Sierra Madre Mountains. For the inhabitants of California, the word *foothill* suggests to the mind the most beautiful, the best and most healthful place imaginable. Here oranges and lemons bloom and ripen without fear of frost. Even in winter the most delicate vegetables are gathered. Here the sick recover their health.

From Altadena, which is at the foot of the mountain, we climb five thousand feet by funicular. The most spectacular part of the view begins here because, arriving at that height, there is a magnificent panorama of the open valley and plain below. An electric railway constructed by the daring typical of Americans extends its rails from peak to peak, suspended over dizzying abysses. It climbs granite rocks that would seem to be inaccessible and reaches the summit at six thousand feet. There, one can enjoy the mountain in all its beauty without being a mountain climber. I spent several hours contemplating the splendid view from that height, turning my gaze even to the ocean, visible on clear days.

It is time to return to Los Angeles. By now our sisters have well settled themselves and have begun their mission, not only for the Italians but also for the poor Mexicans who live here in large numbers and are in dire need of help. Evangelical workers have been few up to now, yet the enemy through the Protestants, has sown many weeds in this beautiful place. I never saw a city with so many strange sects. One evening at about six, I was returning home along one of the principal streets when my attention was attracted by a group of men and women prostrate on the sidewalk at a street corner, crying and beating their breasts while a preacher exhorted them in a loud voice to repent for their sins. It was suggested that I stop a short distance away to see an interesting sight.

Sure enough, all of a sudden they all rose to their feet, clapping their hands, shouting, hopping and dancing joyfully. The preacher had assured them that the sins they had cried over were forgiven, and because of this, full of joy, they jumped. This practice has given their sect the name of the "Holy Jumpers!" What do you think? They even go to the bedside of the dying and sing and dance to encourage them to die joyfully. There are the Nazarenes, who claim to live without eating or drinking, and not finding men so foolish as to accept this, they resort to having women ministers. Christian Science, in the wide definition of the term, dominates. Right in the center of the city, these people perform their rigged-up miracles under a large tent which carries in large, conspicuous letters the scriptural story referring to the miracle of Saint Peter at the door of the temple [Acts 3:1-9] There the lame walk and the blind see in the presence of fools who allow themselves to be deceived. A poor crippled man went there in good faith to be healed and was badly mistreated. When the spirit was invoked, it naturally did not perform the miracle. The

minister kept calling, "Lord, hear us because we are holy and innocent, we come quickly after you!" There was no way to make the poor man walk. So great was the fury of the minister that, if the crippled man had not limped away in a hurry, something worse would have happened to him.

Some of our poor Italians fall into the nets they weave. If a sound knowledge of our faith is necessary everywhere, it is especially needed in these Protestant towns and shows us how necessary it is to study the catechism well. How can the poor immigrant be faithful to a truth, to principles that he barely knows? How can he embrace practices of which he has no notion? The catechism in its short form contains the highest doctrines of our faith. In it both the learned person who, like the eagle, penetrates the divine mysteries, as well as the simple person not anxious to speculate, happily seeks the way to live a Christian life and win eternal reward. Take religion away from man, what is left for him in this life of disillusionment, trials and afflictions beyond number? Where will he find the strength to resign himself in sad occasions, if not in the thoughts suggested by religion? We are greatly mistaken if each one in our sphere wishes to contribute to the greatness of our country without founding our building on the cornerstone which is Christ and his Church.

You are lucky, my dear children, while you are intent on acquiring the necessary education, you do not forget the study of this highest above all sciences. You are even more blessed in drawing forth much fruit from this study so that yours is not a vain science causing swollen pride but one that reforms habits, educates the heart and forms true character. Blessed are you. In this way you will become worthy instruments in the hands of God. The Church and society can expect great things from you. Your very presence, your virtue and your teaching will create a wholesome atmosphere in the classrooms where you will teach, a salutary environment. You will radiate a beneficial influence, education in the true sense of the word. The good you will do will be immense.

Once the mission in Los Angeles was systemized, I returned to Chicago, where I found our Columbus Hospital, opened only last February, had made great progress. In these twelve months about 900 patients were admitted, and more than 350 successful operations were performed. When I arrived, the distinguished Dr. Murphy, president of the hospital, asked me what I thought of my children. By this he meant the many physicians working there day and night. To my satisfaction and his, I could say that I was pleased. Remember, we are not talking about children but about physicians and surgeons of every age, some of whom are world-renowned. Still, it is a marvel to see how they all follow the rule that, after having studied the conditions of the country, I have imposed and that I require they faithfully observe. If discipline is necessary in a school, it is even more so in an institution of this nature, where the dangers of abuse are great. If I can leave Chicago in peace, it is only because I see that my instructions are exactly observed.

Regulation is good, not only for religious but for all. It is common for human nature to be relaxed and tired and to change course according to circumstances. Thus, being firm and consistent in keeping the rules which each one has set for himself, regardless of the obstacles and repugnances that may arise, forms character. It is a safeguard and a means to a happy outcome as much for the person as for the institution.

And now, after having tried your patience, let me fondly bid you farewell, my good children. The thought that we will see each other soon consoles me. Imploring upon you the choicest blessings of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, I am . . .

Yours most affectionately,
Mother Francesca Saverio Cabrini



XIX

FROM
RIO DE JANEIRO
TO NEW YORK,
February to March, 1909

Destinations Cited:
São Paulo, Brazil
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Bahia, Brazil
Barbados



"Remember that time
flies, life is short, and
eternity, where you
will reap what you
have sowed, is eternal.
Be happy at the end of
that day during which
you have won many
victories over
yourself."
— Mother Cabrini

FROM RIO DE JANEIRO TO NEW YORK, February to March 1909

Mother Cabrini arrived in Rio during the period she was visiting the house in São Paulo whose founding she had entrusted to her sisters. Her purpose in going there was to fulfill a duty of homage and gratitude that she owed to the apostolic nuncio. Instead, the cardinal archbishop of the city asked her to come to the help of the people entrusted to him. She established the foundation, which was inaugurated on June 25th of the same year.

The new mission was beset by diverse and painful trials. There was opposition of every kind plus an epidemic of smallpox that took its toll among the sisters. In the event of a future epidemic, she purchased a residence in the country where it would be possible to transfer the students.

Debilited by her concerns and labors and running a fever, Mother Cabrini left Rio to go to New York. She did not write much during this trip even though she was in her preferred environment, "between one wave and another."

M

y dearest daughters:

We are in view of Bahia and I begin to give you some news as you desire. It is obvious that your fervent prayers accompany us and are truly effective because the weather could not be better. The ocean looks like a cup of milk, delicately reflecting the blue sky. The temperature is cool, like spring. The air is a little stronger than a zephyr; it seems to purify us and give us an appetite. All in all, the trip up to

this point is what you desire for me.

The only unpleasant note is that the captain has seated us near him at table to treat us better, while I would have enjoyed greater freedom in a corner. But since he is so good, we have become accustomed even to this. There are only five women on board; all the others are men, businessmen, and all are serious and respectful. At noon we shall be in Bahia. If the ship stops for twenty-four hours, tomorrow morning we shall attempt to go to receive Holy Communion. If not, there will be perfect abstinence, since there is not even a sign of a priest on board.

The retreat made in the beginning of Lent usually very much reorders the love for Jesus in religious souls. I am happy to think that all of you have renewed yourselves in such a way as to please your loving Spouse so much more each day. Sanctifying with special mortifications all the holy days of Lent, you will go into the next retreat, that of Holy Week, to rise with Christ so fully as to live afterward a truly perfect life, a life worthy of the beautiful and glorious title that you bear.

Courage always, my dearest daughters, in conquering yourselves and in rising above your moods and inclinations. Remember that time flies, life is short, and eternity, where you will reap what you have sowed, is eternal. Be happy at the end of that day during which you have won many victories over yourself. I leave you now with so many sentiments of gratitude for the concern you have had to make me happy during my long sojourn with you. I have each one of you and the goodness of your heart always before me, daughters. This is of the greatest comfort to me. May Jesus bless you, accompany you always and give each one of you a great desire to attain the sanctity of your sublime state.

Very affectionately yours in the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus,
M. Francesca Saverio Cabrini

My dearest daughters,

It is obvious that you are constant in your prayers because our voyage could not be more beautiful. The sea is tranquil and the sky is clear except for an occasional downpour that serves only to break the monotony. The clouds, peacefully playing on the horizon, seem to point to the saints to whom you are praying. One day we even saw Saint Joseph blessing the sea to tame the waves, and so we almost thought you were making the Stations of the Cross to Saint Joseph.

I received your telegram in Bahia, where we stopped a few hours. Tomorrow, Saturday the sixth, we shall reach Barbados where we hope to receive Holy Communion after so many days of fasting, which have been very difficult. We were consoled only by the words of that august woman who, after two years of bitter imprisonment always deprived of Communion, rejoiced and exulted saying, "Jesus has rested in this breast and I still feel him pulsating." Oh, how much strength a lively faith gives to generous souls truly animated by it!

At Bahia a very jolly millionaire from New York came on board. He is not Catholic, nor has he any other religion. He says that does not matter but he has a great respect for us. He seeks always to be near us and entertains us with his useful and delightful stories. I wish that he would be converted and do something for us. Help me to pray for this intention.

When we crossed the equator, I gave the captain the box, which he appreciated very much. He is always kind and courteous toward us and often recommends that the others treat us well. We shall arrive in New York one day late, but we shall finally arrive. I remind the directress that if she has not yet attended to the insurance for the Regina Coeli house, to do it immediately and to be attentive to everything that has to be done for both properties.

May Jesus bless each one of you and all of you. May He grant you the grace to be truly holy and to become great saints because you do not lack the means to reach this goal. In the same manner, I bless all the students. I want them all to grow up to be very virtuous and with the true and holy fear of God.

In the peace of Jesus I am, very affectionately yours
in the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus,
M. Francesca Saverio Cabrini

Near Barbados, March 6, 1909



XX

FROM NAPLES
TO NEW YORK,
March 24, 1912

Destinations Cited:

Naples, Italy
Gibraltar, Spain
New York, NY
Chicago, IL



"Accompany me always with your prayers in order that after a good voyage, I may accomplish all the good for which I travel."

"In the peace of Jesus I am very affectionately yours in the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus."
— Mother Francesca Saverio Cabrini

FROM NAPLES TO NEW YORK, March 24, 1912

The intense activity of her last years and the malaria that she had contracted during her many journeys in unhealthy climates were seriously threatening Mother Cabrini's health. In response to an urgent appeal from the United States, she announced her departure to her daughters. Perhaps there was a dark premonition in everyone since this leave-taking was especially painful.

Mother Cabrini would never return to Europe again, especially since World War I broke out in 1914, much to her sorrow. She refused also to travel to South America, and died in Chicago in 1917.

She knew the sisters were heartbroken over her departure. This short letter was perhaps written to console them.

M

y dearest daughter. [This is the only letter in this series addressed to an individual]

You had me arriving yesterday in Gibraltar, which we shall not reach until tomorrow morning, Monday, the twenty-fifth. Yesterday, the first day at sea, we had two Masses. Today, Sunday, we had three, because the so-called secretary of the Pope also celebrated. The celebrations begin at six and so we need to rise early to receive Communion. Then we take in the good morning air, which stimulates the appetite so that I can eat everything and digest it well, as if I had never suffered any disturbance of the stomach.

These are the miracles of the sea, our good God has prepared for me. I am truly well and have completely recovered. I wish the voyage were over so that I could commence my work. But I must have patience for eight more days. Meanwhile my bones and nerves will become more robust and stay that way as long as they are needed, or, better said, as long as God wants. It is so comforting to be abandoned to Divine Providence. One lives in such peace, is it not true? It seems that our Lord takes delight in showering His graces on those who most abandon themselves in Him. He seems to withdraw His hand from those who are diffident and always fearful. Therefore let us abandon ourselves into the arms of Him who can do all things, especially in times of trial and difficulty.

Today, the Italian doctor from the Immigration Service came to make my acquaintance and to introduce me to the Marquis Centurione. Tomorrow he will introduce me to a gentleman going to the United States who has been commissioned by Mr. Sangiuliano to visit the works being done on behalf of the immigrants. Perhaps making his acquaintance will be very beneficial. Let us hope so! I shall speak to him always with your prayers in order that after a good voyage, I may accomplish all the good for which I travel. Present my respects to all. I cordially greet all the sisters and implore on all of them God's blessing to make them holy.

May Jesus bless you and help you in everything.

Very affectionately yours in the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus,
Francesca Saverio Cabrini

On the Mediterranean, evening of March 24, 1912



EPILOGUE



TODAY

Today, one hundred and fifty years after the birth of Mother Cabrini, her spirit continues to energize new generations of the Cabrinian Family to carry on her mission "to be bearers of the love of Christ in the world (MSC Constitutions)." The Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart recognize that the Cabrinian charism is a blessing and a heritage for the whole church. They are responsible to transmit this heritage to new lay and religious vocations for the good of all. New ways of understanding Frances Xavier Cabrini reveal new facets of this heritage, for example, Mother Cabrini as Missionary of the New Evangelization, Mother of Immigrants and Educator of the Heart.

After Mother Cabrini wrote the 1912 account of her voyages found in this volume, she lived for five more years. She continued to travel, to found missions, to write letters, and to compose journal entries and reflections until her death in 1917 in Columbus Hospital, Chicago at the age of 67. A period of institutional expansion and consolidation followed in which buildings rose, new missions were opened and further missionary dreams were realized by going to China (1926) and Australia (1948). Mother Cabrini's canonization, the first to take place after World War II, occurred in 1946, when she was acclaimed the first US citizen-saint. In 1950, she was named "Patroness of Immigrants" by Pope Pius XII in 1950.

Today, the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart are active in a variety of apostolates in 16 countries spread around the globe: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, England, Ethiopia, France, Guatemala, Italy, Nicaragua, Philippines, Portugal, Spain, Swaziland, Switzerland, Russia and the United States. Wherever MSCs are, they seek to live and embody their Mission Statement which makes evangelization the center of all Cabrinian activity. Cabrinian institutions, whether social, educational or medical, strive to be centers of evangelization where apostolic priorities are being actualized in a co-responsible way with lay men and women collaborators. These missions are called to promote the transformation of unjust structures and the creation of an alternative culture of ethical, economic and Christian values based on gospel solidarity.

Mother Cabrini did not become "Mother of Immigrants" by theorizing or writing books. Rather she rolled up her sleeves and alongside her sisters walked through the immigrant ghettos of the cities. A 1889 newspaper interview quotes her:

Our mode of work is to go right down into the Italian quarters and go from house to house, from apartment to apartment. We are recognized by all Italians and many of them are glad to see us. We try to learn about all the children, whether they have proper homes and schooling. Our object is to rescue the Italian orphans of the city from the misery and dangers that threaten them and to make good men and women of them.

Today, the displacement of whole populations around the world has resulted in even more immigrants and refugees than a century ago. The Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus continue to roll up their sleeves to respond to the urgent needs of immigrants and exiles in various parts of the world. In England there are two centers for refugees on the grounds of St. Frances Cabrini School in London. In Italy the sisters maintain a Caritas Center for immigrants and refugees in Sicily and have worked in the NATO refugee center for Kosovarians. This refugee center was relocated to Kosovo itself with the aid of the Cabrinian Family.

In the United States, the immigrants have always been educated, cared for and employed in Cabrinian schools and hospitals. However, in recent years, new centers in New York, "Cabrini Immigrant Services," have been created so that the sisters can act as advocates for their immigrant brothers and sisters, documented and undocumented, helping them with living conditions, employment, learning English, legal issues, etc. MSCs minister in Federal detention centers for immigrants who are awaiting hearing or deportation. In Chicago, Programa CIELO serves the health care and advocacy needs of Mexican-American families, while St. Anthony's Hospital provides inpatient medical, psychiatric, pediatric, social welfare and emergency care to the Latino population.

In 1996, at the 50th anniversary of her canonization, Pope John Paul II called Mother Cabrini "Missionary of the New Evangelization." Evangelization is carried out in the many parishes throughout the world where MSCs minister, in the retreat houses and the shrines of New York City, Chicago and Denver.

The Cabrini family seeks to announce the good news of the gospel of Jesus. Challenged by the call to missionary solidarity, they draw closer to suffering humanity, to the marginalized and excluded. This happens in our newest Cabrinian mission in Ethiopia, one of the poorest countries of Africa, another poor rural mission in Swaziland and a mission to poor women and children in the Philippines. Evangelization occurs in missions in northeast Brazil where there is unending struggle for land, for water, for justice and dignity, in our missions in Central America with their need for education and health care, and in prisons which Mother Cabrini herself visited 100 years ago.

Mother Cabrini left a legacy of "education of the heart" to Cabrinian schools and wherever adult learning and formation takes place. In the United States, Cabrinian high schools in New York City and New Orleans and Cabrini College in Pennsylvania are committed to forming leaders for the next generation who are sensitive to social issues of justice and peace and the social teachings and responsibilities of the church. The same is true of Cabrini schools throughout Europe and Latin America. Education of the heart is what guides our labors with troubled adolescents in West Park, New York (an institution begun by Mother Cabrini herself), street children in the Philippines, Central America and Australia.

The challenge to "bend down over the many wounds of our brothers and sisters whom we meet along the road" is what sustains the Cabrinian Family in its arduous and prophetic efforts for health care in the United States, Australia, Latin America and Europe. Cabrinian health care exists in many forms: from small clinics and dispensaries in Ethiopia, Swaziland, Guatemala, Brazil, Argentina to large hospitals in the United States, Australia, Italy. There are special programs for those afflicted with AIDS (New York City and Swaziland) and hospices for the dying (New York City) and Australia). The elderly are cared for with sensitivity and respect in their homes and in specialized settings in New York, Australia, Italy, France and Switzerland.

Laiety in the Cabrinian Family

Frances Cabrini was a woman endowed with special understanding and insight. From the earliest days of the Institute, she intuitively grasped the idea that faithful and committed lay people were essential to carry forward the mission with which Jesus had entrusted her. She counted on the generosity of priests and sisters, but also on the giving hearts and willing hands of lay colleagues, individuals who collaborated by offering their funds, emotional support, skills and expertise in many areas.

Today the MSCs call on their lay collaborators to extend Frances Cabrini's mission in the world. MSCs and laity together share the joys, worries and hopes of the people. Entering with greater awareness into areas of social deprivation and marginalization, they are called to cooperate with men and women of good will everywhere in the transformation of society. Promoting this greater awareness with lay collaborators is not left to chance but enters into the official program of Mission Standards and Mission Integration which is organized throughout the province and carried out in every mission and institution. This form of "education of the heart" seeks to give to lay collaborators and sisters alike the tools and strategies to carry ahead the mission of Jesus in an ever more competitive and demanding environment.

Three other forms of lay involvement, besides lay collaboration in MSC sponsored institutions, have been developed in the United States: Cabrini Mission Corps, Cabrini Associates, and Cabrini Lay Missionaries. Different versions of these movements exist throughout the Institute. Cabrini Mission Corps was established in 1990 for men and women volunteers in mission who live and serve fulltime in a Cabrini mission for a minimum of one year within the United States or eighteen months or more abroad. Often this experience is a mutual form of "education of the heart" between sisters and volunteers alike. Volunteers from other Cabrini provinces have served in the United States and United States volunteers have lived with volunteers from other countries while overseas.

Cabrini Lay Missionaries are women who are interested in a longer commitment to both the lived spirituality and the Cabrinian mission. They are considered non-vowed members of the Stella Maris province, assigned by the provincial council to live in community and minister in a particular mission.

Cabrini Associates are men and women who desire to serve the people of God by committing themselves to the mission and charism of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart and actively live it within their particular circumstances.

This is a dynamic evolving approach to "Missionaries of the Sacred Heart" as envisioned by Mother Cabrini and stretched by new challenges and new times. The Cabrinian Family is made up of a central core of vowed women religious who collaborate with various groups who share their passion and interest in different ways: Cabrinian collaborators in both institutional and non-institutional ministry, members of Cabrini Mission Corps, Cabrini Lay Missionaries and Cabrini Associates.

Together, the greater Cabrinian Family is privileged to go to places and situations, which Mother Cabrini was not able to reach during her lifetime. They follow in the footsteps of the woman whom John Paul II calls "an intrepid missionary of Christ...a relentless peace-maker." *Inspired by her dauntless courage, the Cabrinian Family continues to "listen to the cries of the poor in order to respond wholeheartedly to their material and spiritual problems. This is Mother Cabrini's legacy at the beginning of a new millennium, so rich in expectation and hope, but also so wounded in its humanity (JP II, 2000)."*

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