



JUNE 18, 2025

3. WITH YOU MAÏN ON THE PATHS OF LIFE

3.10 Life Expands

Mother Mazzarello's Letters



***“I have told you this so that my joy
may be in you and your joy may be complete.”***

Jn 15,11

(Chapel of Collegio)

Angelus

Entrustment *(alternating sides)*

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

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

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

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

MASS

(Prepare a space before the altar where a Bible, candle and the Letters of MM will be placed at the end of the below introduction.)



Introduction *before Mass*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

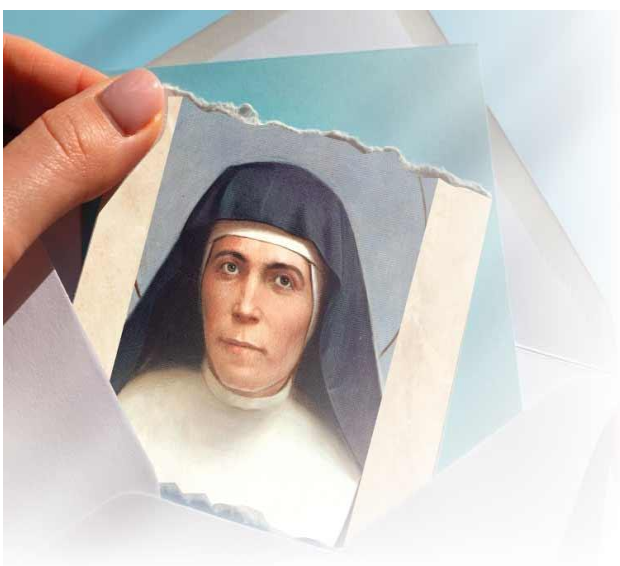
(The Letters of MM are brought to the altar.)



(in room of Mother Mazzarello)

ENCOUNTER WITH MOTHER MAZZARELLO – HER LETTERS

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



Introduction

Guide 1: Mother Mazzarello's letters are a conversation beyond space, a meeting place that activates all the energies to respond to the call; they are a revelation of the living atmosphere of the soul. Mother Mazzarello's letters are a privileged way to delve into the daily fabric of the Institute at the time of its origins.

Guide 2: The desire to contemplate the face of Mother Mazzarello accompanies the Institute's history and ours. It does in the spirit of hope as Pope Francis states in his own autobiography. "The book of my life is the story of a journey of hope, a journey that I can't imagine separated from that of my family, of my people, of all God's people. In every page, in every passage, it is also the book of those who have travelled with me, of those who came before, of those who will follow" (*The Autobiography*, 2025, 11).

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

Guide 2: You want my picture, don't you? I would willingly send it, but it was never printed. (*Letter 29, 4*)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Instrumental Music

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

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

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

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

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

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

Listening to the Word

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

Lk 10,21-22

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

In this Jubilee Year of Hope Pope Francis declares the child-like attitude that, like Mother Mazzarello, we are all called to assume. "Let us be like children, let us be humble, let us be the servants of others. Let us cultivate generosity, kindness, and humility" (*Pope Francis, The Autobiography*, 2025, 44).

(brief pause)

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

Chorus 1: Although such a great distance separates us from one another, we form one heart to love our beloved Jesus and Mary Most Holy (*L 18,2*)

Chorus 2: ... we can always meet and pray for one another (*L 18, 2*)

Chorus 1: Take courage, it is true that we are not able to do anything, but with humility and prayer we will keep the Lord close to us ... (*L 42,3*)

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

Chorus 1: Take courage, my good Sisters; Jesus must be all your strength... (*L 20,21*)

Chorus 2: With Jesus, burdens become light, fatigue becomes easy, thorns are turned into sweetness ... (L 22, 21)

Chorus 1: Always be cheerful, be very good, work wholeheartedly, do everything for Jesus (L 19,2)

Chorus 2: May God bless you and make you totally His. (L 19, 2-3)

Chorus 1: Do you get annoyed when the fire won't light? (L 23,5)


Chorus 2: Have patience and try to set yourself afire with Divine Love. Be cheerful and pray for me. (L 23, 5)

Chorus 1: ...never get discouraged because of any adversity. Take everything from the most holy hands of Jesus, ... (L 65,1)

Chorus 2: ... place all your trust in Him and hope for everything from Him. (L 65, 1)

Concluding prayer

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Suor Maria Mazzarello". The script is elegant and cursive, with the first letters of "Suor" and "Mazzarello" being capitalized and prominent.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

(The following suggestions are provided for personal reflection.)

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

1. Complete the "Identity card" of Mother Mazzarello

Unite yourself closely to Jesus,
work only to please Him,
try to become more
holy each day.
In this you will always be
cheerful.
(L. 22,8)

EXPIRATION: ETERNITY

REPUBBLICA ITALIANA
COMUNE DI
MORNESE
CARTA D'IDENTITA'
N. 5.8.1872
DI
MARIA DOMENICA
MAZZARELLO
DAUGHTER OF MARY HELP OF
CHRISTIANS

Surname: Mazzarello
Name: Maria Domenica
Birth date: 9 May 1837 on earth and 14 May 1881 in Heaven
Place of birth: Morneze (Alessandria)
Citizenship:
Profession:
Character:
Particular Signs:
Strong Foundation:
Desires:

Signature: *Maria Domenica Mazzarello*
L. Mazzarello
L. Mazzarello

2. Read the *Acts of General Chapter XXIV: Presentation*

3. Read *With Main on the pathways of Life: From Life to the Letters, From Letter to Life*

4. Read The Letters of MM ppt *(found in Resources)*

5. With the help of the Holy Spirit write a letter from Mother Mazzarello addressed to you. Seeing you in your reality, what advice would she give to you?

6. Presence of Mary in the Letters of MM

- Discover in MM's letters the characteristics of her relationship with Mary Help of Christians. *(can be done in pairs)*
- In a second moment... PRAY and check your relationship with the Madonna and with Mother Mazzarello.

Marian dimension

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



GROUP WORK *afternoon*

*Oh, how many things I would still like to write, but I am running out of paper.
Go into the Heart of Jesus, and there you will hear all I want to say to you. L 29, 3*

Prayerful Reading of Letter 37

(In the meeting room arrange the participants in groups of 5. Each participant will receive a ribbon. Once the instructions are given the groups can decide on a location for their prayerful reading of Letter 37. Within each group one of the participants is chosen as a guide to lead the experience.)

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

2. Brief presentation of Letter 37

Voice 1: The content of letter 37 presents the community of Nizza, an ardent community of women in mission experiencing a personal relationship with Jesus, the source of living water, and the strength of the Spirit that generates life around them.

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

3. Prayer

St. Maria Mazzarello,
let us by reading your letters
enjoy the flavor of a family dialogue,
experience the pleasure of an encounter
with the face of a mother.
A mother who entertains familiarity
with her daughters, a mother who teaches, accompanies, animates,
manifests trust and hopes,
but she doesn't spare corrections.
Maria Mazzarello, teach us with your wisdom
the path of humble adherence to the mystery of God,
the only one who can make us wise.
Show us your face that harmonizes authority and familiarity,
contemplation and constant activity, tolerance and firmness, gentleness
and strength, solitude and communicative solidarity,
submission and freedom.
May your face remind us:
the wisdom of the sages of life,
the discreet and sweet company of friends,
the tenacity of those who work hard,
the concern of a mother who guides life. Amen.

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

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

5. Contemplating: what does the Lord want?

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

6. The meaning for me: commit to what the letter reveals to me?

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

7. Celebrate

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

8. Concluding prayer

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



(room of Mother Mazzarello)

PRAYER

Resonances of the experience of the prayerful reading of the letters

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

Magnificat

(from song sheet in App)

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

