

AN INVITATION TO EVERY SISTER TO SHARE AND COLLABORATE IN THE CAUSE OF BEATIFICATION OF HENRIETTE AYMER DE LA CHEVALERIE

To each Sister of the Congregation:

Dear Sister,

We want to speak to you about the Beatification of Henriette Aymer de la Chevalerie, foundress of our Congregation of the Sacred Hearts. We all know that the cause of beatification is a task of all of the members, sisters, brothers and laity and this is why your personal collaboration is so important. We are heirs of her charism, spirituality and style of life. Also, we may have received favors and graces through her intercession and now is the time for sharing.

To motivate this request we want to look at how the history of our family has been written. In the introduction to his first notes on the life of the Good Mother, in 1835, Father Hilarion Lucas makes the following observation: *“I did everything I could to collect all the facts related to the life of the venerable Good Mother but I am sure there are more things and some of the things that have been collected are not well explained.”*¹ For these reasons, the participation of all the sisters who knew the Good Mother was essential and he proposed “a job” for them:

- 1- That each local superior read and enable all the sisters to read the memoirs he wrote and that these writings be made available so that all the sisters could read them.
- 2- He asked each sister who found something incomplete or incorrect written about the Good Mother or if there were missing facts to please make a note of them so that they could be added to the account. He also asked the sisters who knew about a fact cited in the memoirs and could testify to the truth of the event, to please let him know about it. Father Hilarion also asked that the sister identify herself by name and by the house in which she lived.

This reference to history helps us to value and validate the initiative and participation of the sisters who lived with the Good Mother in the writing of her life and the first years of the foundation of the Congregation. Now the moment has come for us to do all we can so that Henriette, if it is God’s will, can serve as a model of a consecrated Christian woman. Something concrete that we can do is to gather testimonies that attest to the holiness of her life and which are still actual today.

We propose the following:

It is important that you remember your relation with the Good Mother. For this we ask that you take some time for silence, prayer and reflection on the following questions:

1. How am I challenged by her life?
2. How has her life enriched your spirituality?
3. When do you turn to her? For what things do you ask her for a helping hand?

¹ **Hilarion**, Lucas, Observations on the Memoirs for the life of the Very Reverend Mother Henriette Aymer de la Chevalerie, Paris, Picpus, 1887, p. 1.

4. Have you invited people to ask her help? Have they told you anything related to Henriette Aymer?

We are convinced that this time of working towards the beatification is an opportunity to renew our commitment to the values of the gospel and our Sacred Hearts charism. Please tell us about your experiences in writing or in any other way you find convenient. We want to share all of this with each other and especially anecdotes of small or great favors attributed to the intercession of the Good Mother. Your participation is important for the following reasons:

- Because our experiences of the grace, care, and closeness of God enriches all of us and enables us to participate in the Lord's presence in Henriette.
- Another reason is that for the beatification, we need to produce a portfolio with testimonies of graces received and to give this to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. We need a brief description: Who received the grace? What was the grace received? Where did the event occur? When? What are the circumstances in which it happened? The name of the person reporting the grace.

This working group considers the task we propose to you as very important. We need the participation of all the Sisters and of all those for whom the Good Mother is significant in their lives.

Please send in your reflections and testimonies before **March 1, 2003** so that we can make a first publication. The persons who will gather these testimonies are:

- Bernadete Maria Marafon for Latin America (detesscc@yahoo.com.br)
- Christine Inguni for Africa (christine.inguni@bol.com.br)
- Anastasia Puji Hastuti for Asia (ssccbd@attglobal.net)
- Katherine Francis Miller for the United States (srkfmiller@sacredhearts.org)
- Mercedes Bayo for Europe (mercedesbayo@wanadoo.es)

Eagerly awaiting news from you, we thank you with all our heart. May the "Good God" bless you always. United in prayer and in the Sacred Hearts,

Anatasia Puji Hastuti

Mercedes Bayo

Bernadete Marafon

Katherine Francis Miller,

Christine-Inguni