



Circular No. 6 – May 25, 2015

**BE LIGHT TO THE INTELLECT, FLAME BURNING IN THE HEART;
HEAL OUR WOUNDS WITH THE BALM OF YOUR LOVE.**

1. Holy Spirit, guide my pen!¹

By invoking the Holy Spirit of Adele, I would like to start this dialogue with you, dear Sisters, on this anniversary of the Foundation, an anniversary that, with the approach of the bicentennial, awakens our dreams and our deepest desires.

It is interesting and inspiring for me to retrace the letters of Adele in 1815, a year that brought closer and closer the long-awaited moment, the realization of the "cher projet".

I would like to turn back the time machine and transport myself to Trenquelléon, placing myself invisibly beside Adele tirelessly weaving, along with Chaminade, the story of a project that now emerges ever more clearly.

After the death of her father, whom she loved and served with extreme filial tenderness until his last moments, Adele can now give wings to her dream and write to her faithful friend Agathe: *I am free, and the project that is important to us could be accomplished within a short time.*²

For this, both Adele and Chaminade, invite insistently to pray to the Holy Spirit. *Call upon the insights of the Holy Spirit so that we do only what is in God's plan, and according to his will.*³

Chaminade echoed: *Pray constantly, united with your dear companions, so that the Holy Spirit may enlighten us enough, to not permit deviating even a little from the plan that God has for you.*⁴

The year before the foundation has been such for Adele and her companions, a year of strong and constant invocation of the Holy Spirit, well aware that no project can be undertaken without the assistance of the Spirit.

I feel it as a call for us, as we prepare to celebrate the bicentennial, to live this year with the same ardor, the same joyful expectation of Adele and her friends. A new dawn is rising; the lights are already glimpsed on the horizon.

It is therefore important to invoke the light of the Holy Spirit. Christian tradition offers us a rich range of prayers and supplications to the Holy Spirit. Let me suggest the following: *Be light to the Intellect, flame burning in the heart; heal our wounds with balm of your love.*

¹ L.AT. 347

² Cf. L.AT. 273,3

³ Ibidem

⁴ LC 56

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2. Be light to the Intellect

Holy Spirit, illuminate our minds, our intellect. Without you, without your light, all intelligence is blurred, every mind, even the most acute, limited. Open the eyes of our mind, those eyes, that thanks to you, can cross the borders and the limits of science, giving meaningful answers to the many questions that beset the seeker who is in each of us.

Illuminate the darkest corners of our minds, where our insecurities lurk and are rooted, with our certainties often so human, so limited, always ready to believe that we have the answers, where pride hides tenaciously defending its territory by building incessantly analysis and statistics of reality, that give us somewhat the illusion of knowing where we are going.

Enlighten our minds and open them with refreshing wind of humility, and courage. Enlighten and open our eyes that *we may know to scrutinize history, looking beyond appearances that are often contradictory in life, allowing proximity and new possibilities to transpire, in light of tenderness and peace. That's what distinguishes those who put their lives in God's hands: a look that is open, free, comforting, that does not exclude anyone, embraces and combines.*⁵

3. Flame burning in the heart

Holy Spirit inflames our hearts as you did with Adele's heart, who at seventeen years of age, wrote: *My God, I desire you with all my heart. Yes, that our heart is founded, so to speak, in the desire to possess God.*⁶

To desire God with all your heart! To make the desire of God and his presence the driving force of our days, our actions, our speech, our comings and goings into the streets of the world!

Holy Spirit, make us fervent in love, strong in charity. Feed this flame, which you set alight to burn in our hearts, and not to be consumed.

I praise you and thank you, for all the times that I've felt this ardent flame burning in approaching the sisters, talking with them, listening to the memories of their youth, feeling the heat of this flame that still burns in their hearts full of years, yet still young in love and reaching out toward others.

My God, I desire you with all my heart. Desire is the driving force of research; it is the pressure that sets you on the way, which makes you leave. It is the stepping-stone for every small or big accomplishment. The intensity of desire, even in the spiritual life, is essential.

My God, do I really desire you with all my heart? Is it in you and for you for whom I live and breathe? *For a long time I live and breath only for Her (Mary),* the aged Founder confided, giving a glimpse of the passion that had driven and oriented him, the great love of his life.

A great love! A Love that fills and leaves no room for pettiness, self-pity, sadness. A great Love that gives wings to existence and makes it beautiful, new, full. A great Love *that overlooks everything, is always trusting, is always hoping, and always perseveres.* (1 Cor. 13:7) A great Love, which is the fruit of the Holy Spirit. For this, confidently and persistently we repeat: *Come Holy Spirit, burn strong in the heart!*

⁵ Message of the Episcopal Permanent Council for the 19th World Day of the Consecrated life (February 2nd, 2015)

⁶ L.A.T. 40,5

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4. Heal our wounds with the balm of your love

Heal our wounds. We are wounded, O Lord. We carry in body and spirit the wounds of our personal story, a story that has deeply and indelibly marked our past and present life. Wounds, for the most part healed, others perhaps still open, mark our way of being and of inserting ourselves in society, in the community.

Our wounds are not hidden from you, O Lord. Pour the balm of your love. Only love can heal and also wipe out all traces of what has hurt us, of what today is likely to make us fall back on ourselves.

We are wounded, O Lord, but we also wound others. We receive and give wounds. It is a sad reality that we face continually. We are distributors of suffering; some are never closed for "weekly rest period" or "holidays" or "work in progress". Distributors of suffering all-day, 24 / 7 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week); but, and this is comforting, most often unintentionally, unconsciously. It is our human frailty, our ontological limit that we can hardly avoid. It is necessary to grow in self-knowledge, in awareness, to reduce gradually the wounds, even those unintentionally done to others.

To accept being debtors and creditors of each other is critical. It is the first step towards healing. Debtors and creditors towards our parents, members of our family, our teachers, our classmates, our friends, our sisters and brothers, our superiors ... All are in need of receiving and especially, to pour on others' wounds the balm of love.

Heal our wounds with the balm of your love, O Lord. Only then are we able to pour out on those around us the balm that comforts, sustains, soothes, protects, encourages, gives life.

Heal our wounds! Today becomes a cry that we cannot ignore, that must emerge from our heart, from prayer of our communities, of our assemblies. The brothers and sisters, who are killed, slaughtered, thrown into the sea, humiliated and tortured ... it is our humanity, it is each of us, as members of one body, who suffer violence and abuse.

You alone Holy Spirit, Spirit of Love can heal such deep wounds, wounds so big, for those who have seen beheading their son, drowning their child, raping their mother, torturing their father, so not prevail hatred and desire for revenge.

Let us make ours the cry of our humanity: *Heal our wounds with the balm of your love.*

Help us to become balm for each other.

The balm is linked to smell. If all five senses lead and guide our relations with the outside world, the sense of smell plays a major role in interpersonal relationships. It is the experience of smells that make us sensitive since birth, shapes our growth and our tastes. Infants attach themselves, attach to the mother's breast perceiving only the smell. Odors are related to our experiences that are imprinted, so to speak, "in the skin" of a person.

Even years later, experiencing a certain smell or scent is enough to evoke and awaken a series of experiences and memories, positive or negative.

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Balm, a set of scented oils and resins, which the Bible itself often refers to, is associated with positive and beneficial experience of an interpersonal relationship. *A faithful friend is a balm of life*, we read in the book of Sirach (6:16).

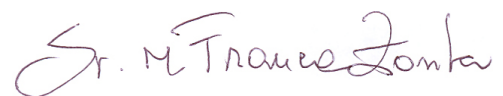
Be balm for each other. Pour with abundance, as the woman of Bethany (Jn. 12.1 to 3), the balm of consolation, encouragement, compassion, tenderness, mercy, and forgiveness. To be balm signifies being a presence that radiates peace, joy, goodness, melting tensions and bad feelings that lurk in the dark corners of our communities, melting them like snow to the sun. It means valuing the time, perhaps there remains a bit of it, adding Adele, highlighting the positive, gratitude, avoiding to waste the opportunity with negative criticism or malevolence that undermine the esteem and the respect we owe to each sister or brother. How often Pope Francis returns with insistence on this last point!

This year we celebrate the anniversary of the foundation after the feast of Pentecost. This is a period in which the prayer to the Holy Spirit is particularly fulfilled, to which Adele attests. *Dear friend, revive your courage; recite frequently the "Veni Creator" ... our Father has told us that the "Veni Creator" prayers of this period, are almost all fulfilled. Let us say it with faith.*⁷

Let us meet frequently in the Upper Room with Mary to invoke an abundant outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all the Congregation.

Dear Sisters, along with this circular I send to you the Communication No. 12 with a summary of the survey on the proposal of the "Foundation in Malawi", for which also I ask you to continue to invoke the Holy Spirit.

Together with the Sisters of the Council, I wish you all a peaceful and fruitful anniversary!



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⁷ L.AT. 326,7