



Istituto Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice
Salesiane di Don Bosco

Video-message of Mother Chiara Cazzuola on the occasion of the Ordinary Public Consistory, in view of the Canonization of Sister Maria Troncatti, FMA

A holiness that generates life with a missionary heart

Dearest Sisters,

I reach out to you with joy and together with you I thank the Lord for the great things He is doing in the Church and in the history of our Institute, with the direct intervention of Mary Help of Christians.

I am convinced that the imminent canonization of Sister Maria Troncatti is for all the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians an extraordinary grace, a call to renew ourselves in order to continue with courage and joy, the path of holiness that God asks us to follow today.

I would like to dwell once more with you on her person, on her holiness.

The definition that summarizes everything in a few words is surely that of a happy and faithful Daughter of Mary Help of Christians and, therefore, a Mother! In Her clearly emerges the maternal dimension that generates abundance of life around itself and finds its source in a deep intimacy with the Lord.

We can describe Sister Maria as a woman really passionate about Jesus and for Jesus. The secret of her unconditional giving comes from constant prayer, standing before her Lord, letting her heart be filled with His Love. During the day, she walks with the rosary in her hand, entrusted to the protection of Mary, Help and Guide in moments of joy, sacrifice or danger. She is a tireless Mother in her service to the poor, to the little ones, to the sick and discouraged, both to 'her' dear *Shuar* and to the Colonists. She gives herself with tenderness and love to wounded humanity, testifying, especially in the Ecuadorian Jungle, of the Father's love for all His children. That is why she is called affectionately *Madrecita*.

It is beautiful to see that, keeping the traits of a humble woman and aware of her own frailty, she fully realizes herself as a Salesian missionary. She is courageous, daring, a frontier woman, a prophetic Daughter of Mary Help of Christians, able to enculturate herself in a particularly challenging reality as is the jungle of Ecuador, embodying the most significant traits of the Salesian charism.

One of the most characteristic aspects of her spirituality is her relationship of trusting affection with Mary Help of Christians. Looking at Her, she learns to be a 'helper' for the people who are entrusted to her. In Sister Maria, Marian filiality is not only a feeling; it is a profound reality lived consciously as an itinerary of Christian and Salesian formation. For this reason, it becomes a gift of motherhood in the style of the Preventive System. The essence of the Salesian vocation is, in fact, motherliness in welcoming, respecting the rhythms of each person. It is a delicate and affectionate maternal love, but at the same time, firm and decisive.

In the Amazon jungle, as she herself writes, she is "happier every day" with her religious and missionary vocation, and the measure of her missionary passion is always, as she writes to her loved ones, "with her whole heart".

In her 47 years of missionary life, she has the sole objective of helping people to meet Jesus. She heals the wounds of the tormented bodies of the *Shuar*, who kill each other in the name of revenge, but she seeks all the ways to be able to speak to them about forgiveness, reconciliation, the Gospel.

She acts in defense of the rights and perspectives for good of the indigenous peoples when the Colonists lord it over them. She cares for one and the other indiscriminately and helps them to live more fraternally. She educates the women colonists to sow among people words of goodness, justice, fraternity, equality knowing that through the educative power of women, it is possible to reach the heart of men; it is possible to educate to a more respectful mutual coexistence.

All this until the total offering of her life.

After the death of Sister Maria, Colonists and *Shuar* feel her presence even stronger and resume living together in fraternity. The rainbow that remains in the sky until the time of her burial is a clear sign.

Pope Francis in his homily of 15 May 2022, told us that holiness is not made up of a few heroic gestures, but of much love expressed in everyday life. The saints are our companions on the journey; they have lived holiness by embracing their vocation with enthusiasm and, therefore, have become luminous reflections of the Lord in history.

And Pope Leo XIV, in the catechesis of Wednesday 28 May, reflecting on the parable of the Good Samaritan, pointed out that before we are believers, we are called *to be human*, and precisely this human being, who is compassionate in the face of frailties, weaknesses, wounds, and situations of need. It becomes an opportunity to witness to the Gospel with credibility and contagion. Sister Maria Troncatti lived this, *always outgoing, deeply human*, and therefore, *a true missionary according to the Heart of God*.

We welcome the words of Pope Francis and Pope Leo as an invitation to renew ourselves inwardly, and entrust our mission to Mary, Mother of the Church and first Missionary, in the knowledge that, as it was for our Founders and for Sister Maria Troncatti, She is the one who guides us, helps us, keeps our gaze open to new realities with a missionary and prophetic heart, a heart rich in humanity, compassion, and hope.

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Sister Chiara Cazzuola
Superior General of the FMA Institute

