

1 October 2017

Saint Therese of Lisieux

For the Greater Glory of God!

The Bishops who have signed this letter, joined together in thanksgiving, wish to express our joy and satisfaction about the arrival of the Charism of the Sisters of Maria Stella Matutina into our Dioceses, now that three years have already passed since their erection as a “Public Association of the Faithful” (in the Diocese of Saint Sebastian).

We cannot but bless God for the quick expansion of this budding community into more than 20 Dioceses in diverse places that represent our catholicity: Africa, Asia, Europe, United States, Mexico, Brazil, etc. We have observed the filial spirit of the Sisters and their desire for communion with us Bishops. They also cooperate simply and promptly with priests, religious and the other ecclesial structures aiding them.

We applaud their determination to receive good formation, fed by the healthy doctrine of the Second Vatican Council and the Magisterial documents coming from the Church’s Tradition, as well as their love for the Holy Scriptures. We believe that their charism has great value for the life of the Church—in it is combined a contemplative life without papal enclosure with an evangelical and testimonial dimension (pilgrimages, missions with young people and families, prayer vigils, liturgical chant concerts, etc). Through these events, a beautiful space of encounter is formed for the evangelization of our globalized culture. The fact that the communities consist of Sisters from diverse backgrounds and places of origin both bears witness to the catholicity of the Church as well as is a great help for welcoming all the people who draw near to them.

We have observed how, in the communities of the Sisters of Maria Stella Matutina, the Sisters integrate a life of obedience with relationships sustained by maturity and freedom. The Sisters are regularly in contact with their families, as well as with priests who accompany them in each of their dioceses. In fact, it is part of their charism to form communities comprised of lay people, priests and families.

Their testimony of a simple and austere life leads them to beg for the charity of the People of God, during the times when they sell their craftwork (sculpture, ceramics, icons, calligraphy, sewing, liturgical vestments, etc.). This way of embracing poverty prepares them to exercise a ministry of compassion and closeness to those who live alone or in other situations of poverty (especially people who are alone, sick or deprived of freedom in prisons).

In conclusion, we would like to give glory to God, uniting ourselves to the prayers of our communities of Sisters of Maria Stella Matutina for our Dioceses and for the whole Church, knowing that the contemplative dimension is the foundation of their life and charism. We are aware that without the contemplative life, as Saint Therese of Lisieux said, the Church, as the Body of Christ, would be lacking its heart.

In the exercise of communion as pastors of the Church, the following Bishops who have the Sisters in our Dioceses are signing this letter-declaration on the occasion of the third anniversary of the Association of the Sisters of Maria Stella Matutina:

+ José Ignacio Munilla Aguirre, Bishop of San Sebastián (Spain)