



**REFLECTION  
FOR THE PROFESSION CEREMONY**

January 28, 2018

Villa Lante, Rome - January 28, 2018

### Reflection - 2018 Profession

We are gathered here today to celebrate the joy that our sisters carry in their hearts. During their profession, they wish to reveal this joy through songs and dances, as expressed in the Psalm. Their “YES” arises as a response to the intense Love of Jesus that they experienced during this time of probation.



The text of the Gospel speaks about love. It shows us the image of the vine and its branches, and it speaks about the relationship of Jesus with his Father and with his disciples, and their relationship with Jesus. The vine is a whole that unifies different relationships; they are not independent parts, but rather relationships that flow towards one another. It is an invitation to live in intimacy with Jesus, building a warm relationship based on Love, an extreme love that encourages life.

Our sisters who are celebrating their profession today have lived an intense time during which they were renewed by God’s love. This love is back at the center of their lives. The first reading tells us that Yahweh “*gathered them and brought them into their own land*”, that is to say, into their own heart. God has been shaping their heart with tender love: he washed it, he cleansed it, and he purified it... and gave them back a new heart, a human heart in which He could dwell. Now they feel integrated, unified and invited to deepen and to live from this heart which has been given by Him. This intimate relationship with Jesus, their friend, transformed them and now they can recognize

Jesus more easily, they know his voice, his tastes, his feelings and his preferences.

This is the invitation we receive from the Gospel. Jesus invites us to remain united to the vine, which is Himself, to dwell in the experience of His love. He repeats constantly *“If you remain in me, you will bear much fruit”*. This is the key to bearing much fruit: dwelling, and living united to Him in a vital way. How do we achieve that? Jesus says: *“If you keep my commandments you remain in my love”, “This is my commandment: that you love one another as I have loved you”*. More than a commandment, we can say it is a consequence, an imperative that arises from inside, because whoever has experienced the love of Jesus and dwells in this Love, feels an immense joy and cannot do anything but express what they carry inside: Love. Our sisters strongly felt this imperative. I will take the liberty of sharing some of their experiences:

- *They wish to be carried by the current of His love as the leaves in autumn, which are never tired because they let themselves be guided by the wind.*
- *They have not only received Living Water from Jesus’ side, but rather He transformed them in living water for others.*
- *Their hearts expanded when they felt embraced by Jesus, called to embrace the world, to incarnate God’s love, to go beyond, to be available to whatever He wants, whenever He wants and wherever He wants.*
- *In front of Love, they experienced an attitude of reverence and an invitation to live in this way with everyone, to care lovingly for others’ lives, especially for those whose life is threatened.*

Their experience is not ingenuous; they know this requires hard and constant work. After their Long Retreat, they experienced the tensions of daily life, but now they have a new manual of life which invites them to care for their inner space. They understand how to live from the heart in a spirit of discernment, to make silence and to listen to the Friend, to recognize his voice among so many voices dwelling in us and ask themselves “Who am I looking for?” To allow God do the work, to recognize and let go those idols who have occupied his place and to put the Lord back at the center to retrieve happiness and deep joy, sometimes even in the midst of pain and suffering.

From the deep sense of being integrated with the vine, our sisters know they have been chosen by Jesus, invited to participate in His mission through the Society of the Sacred Heart. They will profess their Yes, confident that they are not alone, that they *“all participate... in the Society journey with mutual trust”*, and at the same time they take on the fundamental responsibility of *“living in sincerity of heart and life the charism of Saint Madeleine Sophie”* to become *“one body and one soul in the heart of Jesus”*.

May the depth with which Mary Li, Milly, Sarah, Yukiko, Vanesa, Deodita, Mary Grace, Isa, Beth, Resty, Jessie and Kariman lived these months of probation be an invitation for all of us to let ourselves be transformed by the Lord so that his Love could grow, dwell in our hearts and bear fruit. We are all invited *to become experts in matters of the heart of Jesus*.

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