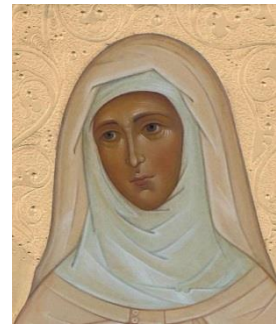


**RELIGIEUSES DE L'ASSOMPTION**  
**Maison généralice**  
**17, rue de l'Assomption**  
**75016 PARIS – France**



10 March 2014  
Feast of St. Marie Eugénie of Jesus

Dear sisters and brothers of the Assumption Family,

---

## **Feast of St. Marie Eugénie**

We have just finished the month long CGP, a time of grace that provided us with an intense experience of communion that binds us as members of one body, one family, one fraternal house called to keep our doors always open; an invitation to stay awake, with hearts alert, ready to hear and welcome calls addressed to us.

After this wonderful experience of the CGP, on my way to visit my sick mother before leaving for the Visit of the Province of India, I am pleased to share with you what lives in my heart. On the eve of the feast of St. Marie Eugénie of Jesus, our Foundress, the mere mention of her name fills my heart with joy, because in it, we have a person who intercedes for us before the Father in Heaven. She was present during the time of the CGP and has accompanied, supported, and inspired us in her own humble and delicate way.

This is an exceptional grace that is given to our congregation, to anticipate Laetare Sunday with the celebration of the birth of St. Marie Eugénie in heaven. The fact that her feast is in Lent reminds us of the purpose of the Congregation, the meaning of religious life and our religious life as Marie Eugénie has understood and lived it: conversion, the relentless seeking of the Lord, His will, participation in the coming of His Kingdom. She was aware of God's goodness towards his creatures, and wanted her whole life to become a manifestation of this.

\*\*\*\*

### **1 - From grace to grace**

God our Father gives us grace upon grace since he became one of us in His Son, the Incarnation of the Word: *"God's becoming man is a great mystery! But the reason for all this is his love, a love which is grace, generosity, a desire to draw near, a love which does not hesitate to offer itself in sacrifice for the beloved."*

It is not always clear to understand and to welcome a mystery! Lent eloquently reminds us of the love with which the Father loves us in His Son, even in the apparent monotony of everyday life that in a favourable time, is transformed into a time of grace. The time together during the CGP in February has confirmed us anew. The moments of silence, of welcoming the Word, the huge place given to listening to God and to our sisters, enabled us to taste the word made flesh, as bread for the journey, light and salt of our lives called to be "living offerings" for the Lord and for the world ( cf. Rom 12: 1). May the time of transmission give you the same joy of the experience as you welcome the path made by the Plenary General Council on behalf of you all!

Most of the moments of transmission are to take place during this time of Lent and Easter where God's grace is given to us in abundance, along with the call to "return" to God. This implies that our whole life is a journey

of conversion, a way for us to progressively come closer to the Lord until the final, definitive moment. Is it not a delicate touch of God to have us remember our Mother Foundress during Lent?

This is an opportunity for us to renew our faith and to seize the meaning of our journey in the following of Christ, to remember the origin of this faith that illuminates time and history. This memory of the faith received from our fathers and mothers is rooted in the life of Christ, the Alpha and the Omega. It situates us well in the memory of our holy Mother Foundress. It is her experience of Christ that builds ours.

## **2 - Life as a heritage**

Since God reveals his love for us by calling us to Himself and giving us the gift of an encounter with Him, we must recognize that it is by faith that we have this encounter with God and can grow with Him in trust. Faith enlightens this unique foundation: that is the life of Jesus. It is also *a light that comes from the future and leads us beyond our isolated selves towards the breath of communion*<sup>ii</sup>. It is in the same light that we are able to welcome the joy of celebrating St. Marie Eugenie.

The Feast of March 10 is indeed a celebration of an encounter between Marie Eugénie and Christ. This is an occasion for us to shed light on the foundational experience that has opened up a way of life, through a special way of following Christ. It is always good to keep sharing this experience, to make it known there where it is not yet sufficiently known. It is for us to ask ourselves how often do we give Christ His rightful place in our lives. Our life may gain new meaning in the light of Christ who calls us to follow Him, but also in the light of the life of those who preceded us, foremost of whom is that of Marie Eugenie of Jesus whose spiritual experience has attracted us to the Assumption.

The feast of our Mother Foundress is indeed one of communion among us in the Assumption. It connects us one to the other in a common history that precedes us and turns us all into a future that necessarily goes beyond us and draws us, inspiring our zeal and our desire to give in truth.

This is why in celebrating St. Marie Eugenie, we celebrate the goodness of God made manifest through the generations of people who have formed a chain of passing on life to us. We choose to be responsible for this life received and not keep it for ourselves.

## **3 – Keepers of the flame of our heritage**

One feature of the life of Marie Eugenie was to be "all for God for others and all for others for God." This life of faith that she so well understood in the sense of a deep call to holiness, she really lived by the total gift of her life in love and goodness, that she received from God. When we revisit the story, we recognize that it is not possible to listen and contemplate her way without wanting to live from the Gospel values that have nurtured, shaped and illuminated her path as a woman of her time; a woman committed to the transformation of unacceptable situations of society. We prayed that her Holiness be recognized by the Church and her spiritual path be offered to all. The Church has given us this grace and it always invites us to deepen our knowledge and our commitment to Marie Eugenie. Maybe we could ask ourselves again, what our personal relationship with her is. How may we rekindle, renew this relationship? How do "we share" St. Marie Eugenie, how do we get to know her better? How do we drink of the source of the many writings that she left us while having the desire to offer these to others?

In writing these lines, I feel rising within me a great appreciation for all the Sisters of the Congregation who were living channels for many of us, to come to Marie Eugenie, to walk with her and to want to be counted

among his daughters. I would, without naming them, commemorate all those who since the beginning of the Congregation until today, gathered, collected, transcribed, rewrote, translated and presented the rich writings of Mother Marie Eugenie, to put at the disposition of many generations of sisters, including ourselves.

The work of translation and transmission continues. I encourage us all to take this to heart and do our part, so that the sharing continues to be effective and reach where it still is feeble. Let us also remember all our ancestors in the Congregation: those with whom we had closer relationships, those who communicated the love of Marie Eugenie and the Congregation. May we all celebrate this Feast as Assumption Together and on this day of celebration, let us dare to tell our story that began with Marie Eugenie, but also our own stories. May her faith and her boldness nourish us and make us grow in the desire for holiness which moved and motivated all her life in the service of the Kingdom.

\*\*\*\*

In this 116th anniversary of the birth of our Mother Foundress in heaven, let us give thanks also for her birth in time and the grace of her baptism, for which we are indebted to her parents. This baptism that she received more in keeping with "tradition rather than conviction" has borne fruit in the life of Marie Eugenie, and has become a gift for the Church and the world; Yes, "for those who love God all things work together for good" (cf. Rm 8, 28-29)!

It is also all the milestones in the life of Saint Marie Eugenie that we celebrate until the recognition of her holiness on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June 2007. For this joyous act of remembering, we contemplate the outpouring of life that helps us to highlight our own path to holiness. The life of Marie Eugenie was not for herself, but for God from whom she received all and for whom she wanted to give all<sup>iii</sup>. Her shining witness of life inspires us and gives us a taste of holiness.

Let us make sure her memory is always a joyful one, a Eucharistic memory that we would like to share with as many as possible.

May we make our moments of celebration of 10 March, moments of awe and wonder, not only for the actions and words of our Foundress, but especially for the work of God in her life. It is God whom we celebrate!

I wish you a good and holy feast of St. Marie Eugenie of Jesus!

With all my affection and communion in thanksgiving!

Sr. Martine Tapsoba  
Supérieure Générale

---

<sup>i</sup> Lenten Message of Our Holy Father Francis 2014

<sup>ii</sup> The Light of Faith, No. 4 – Pope Francis

<sup>iii</sup> *"I am from God, in God, for God. It is of God's love that He has created me and has given me everything; with His gaze fixed upon me, He saves me, teaches me, and keeps watch over all my actions, all my thoughts, all my affections that all may be directed towards Him."*  
---- Marie Eugénie of Jesus, Note No. 243/0