

2912: *To All the Sisters*

Munich
June 9, 1859

J! M!

“Our holy rule has been approved by the Holy See.” Thus reads the telegram we just received from Rome. As a mark of his special favor during this time of war, the Holy Father¹ held an extraordinary meeting of the Sacred Congregation² in his palace on June 5, the feast of St. Boniface, Apostle to the Germans.

Upon receiving this message, all of us here in the motherhouse immediately hurried to the chapel and intoned the *Te Deum*, which all the sisters in all our houses will also do when they receive this letter because praise and gratitude are pleasing to God, and it is our sacred duty to give thanks to God for this grace.

We will manifest our heartfelt gratitude by living in accordance with the Holy Rule, striving for perfection in all that we do and, in accordance with the words of Mary, the Mother of Our Order, doing everything Jesus tells us in the rule.

Finally, on this solemn occasion, I want to express my deep gratitude to all those sisters who persevered with me beneath the cross during this long period of suffering, who were unshaken by scorn and derision from without or by unfaithful betrayal and desertion from within, and who stood by the generalate in loving devotion. May God bless them in double measure so that they can promote the glory of God and the salvation of souls even more in accordance with the directives of our holy rule! As soon as our threatening times allow, we will have the rule printed and distributed to the sisters.

As for myself, I confidently cry out with Simeon, “Now, O Lord, let your servant go in peace!”³

Praise, honor, and thanks to the Triune God and to Mary, the most holy Mother of Our Order!

Mary Theresa of Jesus

Letters of Mary Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger, translation and notes by Mary Ann Kuttner, SSND, vol. 5, *Living Branches, 1859-1867* (Elm Grove, Wisconsin, 2009), 17-18.

-
1. Giovanni Maria Mastai-Ferretti (1792-1878), Pope Pius IX (1846-78)
 2. The Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Religious had been a department of the Roman Curia since 1586 and was often referred to as the Sacred Congregation. In 1908, it was separated into two congregations that are now known as the Congregation for Bishops and the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.
 3. *Luke 2:29*