

November 15, 1965

Dear Mother Paschal,

Praised be Jesus Christ! After reflectively reading and re-reading your letter of October 3, (regarding SSNDs in Chile) I read it to Sister Mary Rebecca. Her spontaneous reaction was, "How I wish I could go there!"

Like you, I am extremely happy that your Councilors had their first glimpse of real poverty and squalor in Latin America. What they saw is by no means the lowest condition of living to be found there. Sister M. Simplicia is doing exactly what I should want her to do: studying the situation from all possible angles; preparing to submit these findings to Bishop Castro upon his return from Rome. Thereupon she is to learn the Bishop's attitude, and perhaps suggest possible ways of procedure in the assignment...

You mention small cells, lack of hygiene. When I think of our Berlin Sisters infirmary with bedrooms about the size of our bathrooms - if that large - with naturally congested, simple accommodations; of our Sisters in the past exterminating vermin, cleaning walls, scrubbing floors, searching for window panes before the house became habitable; of our Sisters sleeping in mud huts with the poor during missionary tours; of our modern college graduates as members of the Peace Corps and Papal Workers pledging themselves to live with the poor for several years for their social uplift — well, one can only marvel about the source of their strength, stamina and will to go on. . .

May I make it clear: before God, in the assignment we are answering the call of the Church. We are not asked to achieve outward success but to put forth our best efforts to help Christ in His poor and needy - be they poor physically, culturally, mentally, spiritually. . . .

Sister Mary Simplicia impressed me as a mature religious who will never say, "It can't be done," when Christ calls. Don't we hear His call to the Province?

In the event that the Sisters' best efforts in the work prove futile, they need never reproach themselves but can always say "we've tried." And that is what counts with God.

With one of the maxims of our loved Foundress, Mother Mary Teresa, "All works of God proceed with suffering," I am

Devotedly yours in Notre Dame,

Mary Ambrosia