



*Sculpture Found at Notre Dame of Maryland University Chapel  
Baltimore, MD*



School Sisters of Notre Dame  
Atlantic-Midwest Province

Foundation Day Prayer  
October 24, 2022

## Our SSND Story: The Grand Circulation of Love!

### INTRODUCTION:

**Today we gather** to celebrate the gift of our foundress, Bl. Theresa Gerhardinger, to the Church and world. We reflect on the fidelity of those who shared and implemented her vision for the past 189 years. **Our SSND Story: The Grand Circulation of Love** began with Karolina Gerhardinger being called and drawn into the divine embrace and given the charism, which she then embodied.

As her letters reveal, such dynamic energy as trusting to work with many higher civil and Church authorities to found the congregation and ministry, is nothing else but a circulation of love. Again and again she, as we, "find ourselves impelled to extend the gift...outward into ever widening circles<sup>1</sup>". Bl. Theresa's daring to meet a need of the time - education and traveling to America - continued the circulation of love flowing through the centuries and circulating today in 30 countries of our world. And importantly, each one of us circulates this love in this evolving SSND story.

We pause to join with the energies of all the Sisters, Associates, colleagues and friends throughout our fractured world, celebrating as one mind and one heart on this Foundation Day.

Let us pray -

### OPENING PRAYER:

Loving Triune God, **You** call us into the heart of our fragile world to recommit ourselves to partnering with **You** in carrying out Christ's mission of love and unity. As we reflect on the circles of love encountered in the SSND history, in our lives and ministries over the years, grace us with gratitude and new energy to address today's urgent concerns and thus expand those circles with **Your** outpouring love. We pray in Jesus' name through the power of **Your** Spirit. Amen.

**SONG:** (Click the link below to listen)

[Turning of the World](#) by Sara Thomsen [3.58 min]

### READINGS:

Blessed Theresa's unceasing prayer increased the circulation of love.

1. We need not be anxious any more than the birds in the air and the flowers in the field, because the Good Lord, Himself will look after us. ...You can see with your own eyes how God's mighty arm has founded, guided, and protected His work with divine strength to this day...I could not have done it." [714]  
O Holy Spirit, enlighten me, so that I may understand and know my divine call, who I am, what I should be, and what I must do, as well as the means by which these ends may be accomplished. [29]
2. Our charism continues to develop in the living community, which enriched by the past, enables the congregation, together with Associates and colleagues to unfold in the present and be challenged by the future. (YAS Prologue p. 19)

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<sup>1</sup> S. Roxanne Shares' Jubilee Letter 2020

3. Like Bl. Theresa "We are convinced that our union with God, our love and prayer for those to whom we are sent, and the witness of our lives are fundamental to our ministry." [YAS-GD #40]

In what way have you circulated love?  
How did this contribute to the SSND story?

How do you continue to write SSND's story by circulating love?

### CONTEMPLATIVE PAUSE:

Music (optional): [Far Away - by Miika Mettinen](#) playing during this time [1:31 min]

### REFLECTION:

Reflect on the readings and questions; become aware of a word, image or feeling that allowed you to touch the hem of Bl. Theresa's presence.

### SHARING (optional)

### PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY:

**Prayer Leader:** We pray on this Foundation Day for our entire congregation, mindful of the urgent concerns and needs of each province.

**Response:** May we trust with Bl. Theresa that "God has helped wondrously until now; neither will He abandon us in the future." [5032]

**Prayer Leader:** We pray for blessings on the preparations of our 25th General Chapter.

**Response:** May we listen to Mary's challenge, "DO WHATEVER HE TELLS YOU". [Jn. 2:5]

**Prayer Leader:** Deepen the sense of mission in ourselves, our Associates, colleagues and benefactors.

**Response:** Show us creative and inspiring ways to share our charism in ever widening circles of love.

**Prayer Leader:** Deepen our commitment to our JPIC focus areas and the practices flowing from being a Laudato Si' congregation.

**Response:** Creator God, animate us to live more simply, responsibly, and sustainably and to educate, advocate and act in collaboration with others for the dignity of life and the care of all creation.

**Prayer Leader:** Increase our desire for universal communion.

**Response:** May our faith, hope and love encircle everyone and all of creation.

### CLOSING PRAYER:

Faithful God, we ask "that our lives and Bl. Theresa's legacy enable each of us to move forward to be risk takers, to respond to the needs of our times and work towards that oneness for which Jesus Christ was sent<sup>2</sup>". We ask this through the intercession of Mary, Mother of our congregation. Amen.



Ceramic Carving by  
S. Clara Beall, SSND

<sup>2</sup> Council e-letter October 2, 2022



*The Department of Ministry Services thanks Sister Harriet Schnurr, SSND,  
for her collaboration in designing the 2022 Foundation Day Prayer.*