

## **Preaching for Distribution of Dominican Praise at Evening Prayer**

*2 Thessalonians 2:13 and 14* (proclaim using the translation in Dominican Praise)  
Preacher: *Sister Rose Marie Hennessy, OP*

As I opened the Jerusalem Bible at home to prepare for today, the heading above this section from 2 Thessalonians read: ENCOURAGEMENT TO PERSEVERE!

Doesn't that sound like Mother Pia, Mother Seraphina and our founding Sisters? I have no evidence that this Scripture passage was especially dear to Mother Pia in her prayer; but, there is much evidence in the witness of her life that she lived this passage.

Through the decades she manifested her love of the Divine Office. This love of the prayer of the Church was the occasion to build friendship and also through which she experienced hurts. There is a wonderful exchange of letters between herself and Mother Gonzaga regarding praying the Divine Office and adapting it for the communities in Los Angeles. There is also the February 1920 letter of Mother Seraphina to Mother Pia in which Seraphina tells Pia that the Pope, Benedict the XV, has granted permission to pray the Office even though the Dominican Master General at the time was not in agreement! Mother Seraphina eventually won him over.

Passed on to us from Mother Pia is a PASSION for the Liturgy of the Hours. This passion was so intense that she saw need for adaptation and flexibility. When we have passion for a cause we can adapt while clinging to the value!

Through the legacy of her leadership we have held true to the value for which she toiled, prayed, and sacrificed.

Through the legacy of her leadership we have adapted our communal prayer in the spirit of Vatican II and the lifestyle of contemporary Dominican women preachers in the Church of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

With every change something is lost, something dies, something is born, and something is gained. We look at the "new" and see the glass "half empty" or "half filled". We make the choice to let the "new" drain us or "enliven" us.

This Congregational embrace of Dominican Praise

- \*challenges us to let go of some favorite translations and habitual ways and words.
- \*it challenges us as we recognize limitations and live with them, and
- \*it challenges us to wait for and contribute to the decision of a Congregational supplement.

But, what we gain! What is born! We are now ONE in praying with the majority of Dominican US women! What Mother Pia had to struggle for is now in the hands of bringing this

about—it flows to all from Mother Pia’s VISION; this edition of the Prayer of the Church is now the prayer of most Dominican women in the USA and some other English speaking groups.

This is another moment for embracing a book that brings us the ever ancient but newly translated and formulated Word of God.

This is a moment to embrace the call to renew our communal prayer through the Prayer of the Church.

This is another moment of many in our long history to embrace, individually and communally, Mother Pia’s Vision of this her Congregation as fully a part of the PRAYING CHURCH!

I conclude with repeating the Scripture of Evening Prayer and adding the verse 15—  
Mother Pia would want it—

Stand firm, then, sisters, and keep the traditions that we taught you, whether by word of mouth or my letter!