

At the Heart of Jesus

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Born January 30, 1892, Poreba, Poland

I entered into the Congregation on April 17, 1914. Since this time, I twice had a chance to meet in close proximity and speak with Mother General Klara. The first time I met her in the seminary in Tarnow, where I was sent in May as a postulant. Mother General Klara came in June with Sr. Assistant Inocenta for a visitation. Being in the Congregation, I was wholly moved by thanksgiving to God for my dear religious vocation, and in zeal for the greatest sacrifice, I regarded each thing in the convent and each Sister as a saint. I did not know how to approach and honor a Sister who had made her final profession. I observed each Sister from all sides: how she worked, how she prayed and her behavior, in order to imitate her. The Sisters were hard-workers and were full of sacrifice and renunciation: there was in them something godly that was associated with them. And what to say about my feelings when I saw Mother General Klara? Her regal person, her behavior, her serious but cheerful face and her eyes: far and deep, penetrating and all seeing. In spite of her respectability and authority I felt that she is the true mother. Her motherly and watchful eyes followed each Sister like a shadow. I also felt them on myself. During one day of visitation I returned from the church óI had gone to Holy Mass later because that morning I stayed in the kitchen ó and I sat down for my breakfast. Because I had a good appetite I ate some rolls with butter quickly. I took into consideration that I should keep up my strength, since full of health and enthusiasm, I was eager to work. This work was very hard, for we were prohibited from keeping female servants, and all heavier work waited for the postulant. Mother General Klara was sitting nearby and she observed me eagerly. Her eyes penetrated me like the sunlight penetrates a window. Her face shone with a smile and she asked me tenderly if I had it too hard, if I was content and if I did not long for my family. She ordered me to lock an upper window and continually observed me. At the end of her visitation she kissed and cordially embraced me. Oh, how happy I felt that Mother General put her kiss on my head! After the departure of Mother, my Sister Superior Salomea said: "Try not to disappoint Mother General because she expects that you will be a good member of the Congregation." How happy I felt that I was in the convent of the Sister Servants of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and that I was called a member of this Congregation! The cheerful and attractive goodness of Mother Klara, and her godly and maternal approach were the reason for these my feelings. The experience of these moments in the presence of Mother Klara deepened and strengthened my vocation, like the branch of a tree strengthens itself by sap flowing from its trunk. I felt that I was bound more closely to the trunk of the Congregation, and surrounded by the warmth of God's spirit emanating from the spiritual profile of Mother General Klara.

The second time I saw Mother Klara was in 1915. I had stopped at our motherhouse in Krakow on my way from Tarnow through Krakow to Wadowice, during an epidemic at the army hospital where our Sisters and our whole novitiate was working. I was with two postulants, Sr. Apolonia and Sr. Imelda. We went to greet Mother General in her cell. She kissed us in a maternal way and sat down on a low couch, settling us down on the floor, around herself. With great love and the thoughtfulness that then filled all good and godly superiors who cared about

their young generation in that difficult time, Mother Klara spoke with us as a mother talks with her children when she sends them far away. She gave us instructions and directions on how we should behave during our trip, after we reached the hospital, during our work, and how we should react and respond, in the event of possible offensive behavior. Watching Mother Klara in our simplicity, we absorbed her each word as something of the greatest importance and holiness. The goodness of Mother, from which flowed all her words and encouragement, bound us to her, provided us with courage for each battle and strengthened our vocation. We felt that every word of Mother was filled with God's spirit, because it influenced us in God's way. We bid farewell to her and, tragically (!) we nevermore saw her on this earth.

When I was a novice, a short time after the death of Mother, I often heard Sisters who reminisced about Mother with longing, and at every occasion they exalted her virtues and God's spirit that acted within her. They used to say that Mother, herself absorbed and prayerful, watched that everything in the Convent was kept according to the Rules and the spirit of the Congregation. When she had to correct or admonish a Sister for a transgression, immediately after admonishing, she kissed and embraced this Sister, giving her proof that only care for her progress obliged Mother to do it; the maternal love in her heart toward each Sister was authentic. She could thus sweeten even a reprimand.

When we ironed linen and a novice did her work carelessly, a professed Sister, Rafaela, present with us, used to say: Mother Klara would not accept such carelessly ironed linen. When Mother received linen with wrinkles, she returned it to the iron-room because she wanted to accustom Sisters to conscientious and precise work. Mother used to say that a Sister's work should come as out of a box. She taught Sisters to be conscientious and precise in everything.

Sr. Eufemia Henryka Kasprzycka

Karczowka, June 18th, 1955

Appendix:

When Mother Klara sent us to the army hospital in Wadowice and gave us various directives, she advised that we should not show fear anywhere because of our unpreparedness. We should rather have such an attitude and behavior that we could do anything. Our will and attitude of resourcefulness will then be a cause of confidence to the government, and we will never experience a lack of the help of God, if we but work with a good intention and for the glory of God.