



Le Mans the 9th of April 2017, Palm Sunday

To all the members of our spiritual family

Dear Friends,

When you read this Letter, we will be in the middle of Holy Week and through the liturgy we will be plunged into the last days of Christ's life on earth. The way to Easter passes through Good Friday! Have you noticed that the Church does not celebrate Good Friday as a day of mourning, but rather as a day of hope? It is on the Cross that Christ already experienced his victory over death. The Cross, sign of suffering and death, becomes a sign of hope and joy: " Through the Cross, Joy has come into the whole World " (one of the antiphons of the Good Friday liturgy.)

Anselm Grün tells us: "The Cross shows us the mystery of our life. Jesus on the Cross extends his arms and so includes the whole universe. He unites heaven and earth, God and humankind, life and death, light and darkness. In contemplating the Cross of Jesus, we see all that can happen in our lives. But our way of looking at all this is not filled with fear and sadness, but with the certainty that what happens in our life will not destroy us but open our hearts to the mystery of Jesus' love that came to its fulfilment on the cross."

The liturgy of Good Friday is already penetrated by the light of Easter. Death is defeated and the Cross becomes the sign that all our sufferings are taken in this love. During these holy days, our hearts are filled with so many feelings of **love, gratitude, and hope**, for we know: **Christ is alive! He is among us!**

With Him we offer our own daily sufferings and germs of death and those of our brothers and sisters who are suffering all over the world. *The risen Christ, a message of life for all humanity, echoes down the ages and invites us not to forget those men and women seeking a better future, an ever more numerous throng of migrants and refugees – including many children – fleeing from war, hunger, poverty and social injustice.* » Pope Francis says.

Let us pray for all the people in our societies who have lost hope and taste for life, for elderly people, who in their great loneliness feel their strength diminish, for those who think that they have no future. Let us announce to them the words of the Risen One: " *I am making everything new!*"... *To the thirsty I will give water, without cost, from the spring of the water of life.*" (Revelation 21,5-6)

May the reassuring message of Jesus help each of us to continue our journey with much more courage and with the desire to build bridges of reconciliation with God and with our brothers and sisters.

Let us look at the Cross with eyes of faith, then we will not only see the suffering, but Jesus' love that is stronger than death. Death does not exist anymore without the Resurrection! There is no failure that cannot end in a new beginning!

Look at the cross as the place of an immense love for every human being, for my sisters, my family, for me!

During spring, when we go for a walk, we see the explosion of life and beauty and we understand Easter better. In nature, we also see the victory of life over death!

To each of you I wish you a holy Easter full of hope, because life triumphs over death!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sister Martine Meuwissen". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single blue stroke.

Sister Martine Meuwissen
Superior General