



# THE WORD LIVES

September 2018

JEANNE CHÉZARD DE MATEL  
NOVEMBER 6, 1596—SEPTEMBER 11, 1670

## Reflection from Sister Annette

Often in today's spirituality, the focus turns to an aspect of IWBS spirituality that has always been our legacy: appreciation for and life in the Trinity.

In the language of her day, Mother de Matel spoke the truths that are now expressed in the Catechism of the Catholic Church: the distinction of each Person, clarified by their relationship; the unity of the Persons, affirmed by their intimate relationship of love.

This unity of diversity seems to be exactly what our world is hungering for today. The beauty of so many different cultures; the enriching variety of personalities; the multiple experiences of racial, ethnic and socio-economic groups throughout history producing a legacy of memories—these and other such considerations can either pull us together or drive us apart.

However, a closer look at the truth of the Trinity shows us what Mother de Matel understood about the Trinity and—by extension—us.

Although we could focus on the differences that clarify the gifts offered us by each Person of the Trinity, these differences only underscore the shared essence of God's divine nature of Love.

Can we do the same for one another? Can we recognize that the differences we see (but perhaps do not always appreciate) are expressions of the one humanity—fragile and vulnerable, yet resilient and enduring?

The answer is a resounding YES. For the Incarnation has drawn our human nature into the Trinitarian life of Love. With such a God, such a unity within diversity is certainly possible.

*This month we celebrate the 348th anniversary of the death of Venerable Jeanne Chézard de Matel. Following are some quotes about her from Positio II. (A positio—Positio super Virtutibus—is a collection of documents used in the process by which a person is declared venerable.)*



So intense was her zeal for the salvation of souls that she never spoke to anyone, as her directors attest, without inspiring the love of God in them. How sweet, pleasant and spiritual were her familiar conversations, but also how efficacious in obtaining the power and love of the Incarnate Word.

—Positio II, Ch. XIX, p. 724, Rev. Antoine Boissieu, SJ

After all we have stated about Mother de Matel, nothing should be astonishing about the fact that during her life there was such an extraordinary esteem for her everywhere she went and that she merited the approval of innumerable people of every state of life.

—Positio II, Ch. XIX, p. 732

By the time she died while saying the Name of Jesus in Paris on September 11, 1670, her Order was established in Avignon, Lyons and Grenoble. Just prior to 1793, there were foundations in five provinces, none of which had grown lukewarm nor had turned away gradually, as all human things do, from their original perfection. Undoubtedly, it was due to this fact that hers was one of the first Orders to be restored in 1806.

—Positio II, Ch. XXI, p. 762, Augustin Galitzin

The life of Jeanne de Matel was like her thoughts. A single word sums it up: the love of the Incarnate Word. [...lix].

—Positio II, Ch. XXI, p. 763, Ernest Hello

We must then conclude that Mother de Matel was, in the truest meaning of mystic theology, the spouse of the Incarnate Word, and therefore takes her place among the Gertrudes, the Theresas, the Catherines of Sienna, and all the great contemplatives honored by the Church.

—Positio II, Ch. XXI, p. 767, Abbé Gustave Penaud

I cannot forget that Mother de Matel is one of the glories of the Diocese of Lyons, not only by the holiness of her life, but also by the founding of the Religious Order, which, during so many long years, has made known to legions of children the mysteries of the Incarnate Word and all the riches of Christian education and intelligent piety. We are indebted to this dear Institute for the generations of valiant women, who, in all situations, have been the honor of the Catholic Church and of our fair Diocese.

Positio II, Ch. XXI, p. 772, Cardinal Peter Coullie

The virtues of this holy Mother should be the richest treasure for her daughters, as well as a most priceless model for them to imitate.

Positio II, Ch. XXII, p. 803, Mother Maria de Loreto Sanchez, V.I.

In our Mother de Matel, we have a hidden treasure which it is imperative to discover more and more.

Positio II, Ch. XXII, p. 804, Sister Rosa Marta Gamerdinger, CVI

MINISTRIES  
CORNER



**Sr. Marilyn Springs**, a member of the NBSC Board, participated in the National Black Sisters' Conference 50th Anniversary celebration at the Marriot Hotel in New Orleans, Louisiana, July 27-29th. Sr. Teresa Maya, Superior General of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, attended the celebration to show solidarity between the LCWR and the NBSC. The Conference was created out of a need for Black Catholic Sisters in religious orders to form solidarity in response to the 1968 civil rights movement. The theme of the Conference was "We've Come a Mighty Long Way". During the sessions they remembered the past, celebrated the journey and envisioned a future of hope.

**Srs. Annette Wagner, Irma Gonzalez, Colette Brehony and Marilyn Grace Springs** attended the LCWR (Leadership Conference of Women Religious) August 7-10 in St. Louis, Missouri. The theme, "Being the Presence of Love: The Power of Communion" was addressed in three keynote sessions throughout the week. Sr. Teresa Maya, CCVI, opened the days with her reflections on what we are called to for the future of religious life—which is already upon us.

Before the LCWR conference these Sisters also attended a day-long workshop addressing the Ministry of Sponsorship, made available by the CHA (Catholic Health Association of the United States). Presentations included information on the Core Competencies of a Sponsor and Leadership Formation in a Sponsored Ministry.

**Sr. Anna Marie Espinosa**, attended the NRVC (National Religious Vocation Conference) Board Meeting, the J.S. Paluch Vocation Seminar, and the seminar "Vocations: Toward the Future Together" in Chicago, Illinois, August 18-22. The Presenters were the Most Rev. Frank J. Caggiano, Bishop of Bridgeport, Rev. Ralph B. O'Donnell, Executive Director of the USCCB Secretariat for Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations, and Mr. Paul Jarzembowski, Assistant Director for Youth and Young Adult Ministries. He also facilitated a panel discussion of young adults.



September 28—29: Fall Assembly

November 9—11: Vocation Retreat

March 22—23: Spring Assembly

NOTE: Leadership Team meetings are held on the first Saturday of the

A new position has been created at Incarnate Word Academy, Brownsville: Mr. Edward Camarillo, the current Director of Development, is the first to serve in this position. The office is created to enhance and oversee Advancement and Development, Recruitment and Enrollment, Advisory Board, and Alumni Relations. **Sr. Irma Gonzalez** will remain in Brownsville and is assigned to Incarnate Word Academy on a part-time basis. She will be working part-time in a consultative position and will continue giving support to IWA. She will be taking more responsibility in the works of the Congregation: finances and international inter-congregational committees.

Pope Francis has declared the death penalty wrong in all cases because they are "an attack" on human dignity. The church will work "with determination" to abolish capital punishment worldwide.

#### Executions in Texas

**Wednesday, September 12:**

Ruben Gutierrez

**Wednesday, September 26:**

Troy Clark

**Thursday, September 27:**

Daniel Acker

You are invited to join in prayer with the Sisters of the Incarnate Word, 5201 Lipps Blvd., at 6:00 p.m. on days when prisoners are scheduled to be executed by the State of Texas, and for the victims and the family members of the victims.



#### PEACE AND JUSTICE CORNER

We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount.

-General Omar Bradley

The evils of government are directly proportional to the tolerance of the people.

-Frank Kent

The awareness that we are all human beings together has become lost in war and through politics.

-Albert Schweitzer

Truces maintained by walls and displays of power will not lead to peace, but only the concrete desire to listen and to engage in dialogue."

-Pope Francis

If we cannot talk about politics in the language of the heart—if we cannot be heartbroken, for example, that the wealthiest nation on earth is unable to summon the political will to end childhood hunger at home—how can we create a politics worthy of the human spirit, one that has a chance to serve the common good?

-Parker Palmer

The yearning God has for us and we for God seems to grow stronger as we experience ourselves in this time of upheaval and darkness.

-Mary Southard

Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that."

-Martin Luther King Jr.

*In battle,  
life and death struggle  
in a way that is amazing,  
but in Jesus,  
life is victorious.*

-Jeanne Chézarde de Matel, Letter 63