

WE CONNECT



Companions of Pauline and Sisters of Christian Charity

#14 Spring 2014

Cover: Luise Hensel's grave in Paderborn, Germany – photo by
S. Anastasia Sanford, SCC

A year has passed since the last issue of We Connect in which we concluded the account of Blessed Pauline's life from the book A Happy Heart written by Brother Ernest, CSC.

In response to several requests that we continue to share more information about blessed Pauline's inspiring life, we will begin to read from her brief biographical sketch written by herself: Pauline Von Mallinckrodt Tells Her Story: Brief Biographical Sketch of Our Beloved Reverend Mother and Foundress Pauline von Mallinckrodt up to Her First Profession – Written by Herself. Mendham, NJ: Sisters of Christian Charity, 1973. [*Translated by Sister Floriana, SCCJ*]



Pauline von Mallinckrodt Tells Her Story

Ad majorem Dei gloriam

"For the greater glory of God"

To accede to the wish of some Sisters, who desired to know what Circumstances had occasioned the founding of the Congregation and how their first Mother had formerly lived, I have here briefly recorded both.

I, Pauline, daughter of Detmar Mallinckrodt of Dortmund, a Protestant, and his wife, Bernardine von Hartmann of Paderborn, a Catholic, was born, June 3, 1817, at Minden in Westphalia; and, by virtue of Catholic baptism, am a member of Holy Church. After my early childhood, spent happily and pleasantly in the circle of my parents and my younger brothers, George and Hermann, my father was transferred to Aix-la-Chapelle in the capacity of President in the government of the Rhine Province. I might then have been about seven years old. This change of residence was a signal blessing from God, because in this Catholic locality, pervaded by a genuine ecclesial spirit, existed every means for a sterling Catholic education. Very discreetly our wise mother availed herself of these favorable circumstances to give her four

children (in Aix-la-Chapelle God had given her another daughter, Bertha) a solid, genuinely Catholic upbringing. My father, a very intelligent and energetic man, noble-minded like my mother, expended considerable sums of money on his children's education. Together our parents selected exceptionally good schools, as well as efficient private tutors in the elementary subjects, in foreign languages, in the sciences, in music. Father also readily complied with mother's request that the future auxiliary bishop of Cologne, Father Claessen, at the time a Counselor of the government and the Consistory of Cologne, give us private religious instruction for several years before our reception of the sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist. Through this provision the excellent instruction in religion and Bible history which we received in school took ever firmer root.

I attended St. Leonard's Academy for girls. Among the many variously gifted teachers there was one who was to exert a most decided, very wholesome influence on my intellectual and religious tendencies - Miss Luise Hensel, a very amiable, intelligent, wise and interesting woman, who, in an eminent degree, possessed the gift of fascinating the hearts of children and leading them to God. All my schoolmates were lovable girls, but I especially loved Anna von Lommessen, later a member of the distinguished Madames of the Sacred Heart and at present superior of the convent at Warendorf; and Clara Fey, future foundress and superior of the Sisters of the Poor Child Jesus.



In many history books Luise Hensel (March 30, 1798 to December 18, 1876) is known as a German religious author and poet.

Franziska Schervier, the future foundress and superior of the Sisters of the Poor of St. Francis of Aix-la-Chapelle, was likewise educated at St. Leonard's. On the whole, many nuns and very pious housewives have emerged from this educational institution, which was secular at the time but had a high-principled and very pious directress and teachers of the like caliber. Later on, however, it

was entrusted by the directress and the city to the Ursulines and is very flourishing.

During my schooldays I attended several courses with my brothers. After I had left the girls' academy, one of the assistant masters from the *Gymnasium* [a high-class secondary school, providing humanistic education] tutored me privately for a year; then I went to a French academy in Liege. Upon my return home mother trained me in house-keeping, and I had the pleasure of accompanying my parents on a tour to Switzerland in 1833.

Now that I was home again in Aix-la-Chapelle, my parents introduced me to the social circles with whom father's position brought him into contact, and whom, in accord with my parents' wishes, I visited. I would rather not have done so; but, because my confessor had told me that in this matter I should, in childlike reverence, comply with my parents' wishes, I did so affably and cheerfully, endeavoring, while I was with others, to be mindful of God and to converse with Him in my heart.



Anton Gottfried Claessen
(11 February 1788 -
† 29 September 1847)

My confessor was the later Auxiliary Bishop Claessen of Cologne, a circumspect man, who took into consideration father's circumstances. In his instructions to me on my line of conduct toward father, he may have been influenced by the desire not to render the Catholic education of all her children, particularly that of her sons, difficult for mother through a harsh and overly serious behavior of her eldest daughter. Up to now mother had effected that education in this mixed marriage with prudence and remarkable amiability.

For quite some time I had suffered much from interior trials. A dreadful anxiety (scrupulosity) came over me - frightful temptations against faith assailed me; but God's grace came to my assistance. During a novena He delivered me, I might say miraculously, from this indescribable torture of scrupulosity which, so to speak, disappeared all of a sudden, without leaving a trace behind. After

these tormenting temptations against faith, God, in his goodness, flooded my soul with such a clear light of faith that I can describe it in only one word - the *Gift of Faith*. A sense and a light of faith that imbued me with such certitude, clarity, and constancy in regard to every point of doctrine that I should sooner have distrusted my own eyes than this clear light. God permitted me to experience these inner conflicts for my special benefit and, likewise too, for my instruction; so that later on in my guidance of others I might be tenderly compassionate with them in their interior trials. To Him be eternal thanks and glory!

The Lord wanted to detach my heart more and more from creatures and draw it to Himself. For quite some time mother did

not have the strength she formerly had. The doctor ordered her to a spa in Schwabach. I accompanied her. There her indisposition worsened and turned out to be typhoid. She had most likely contracted the germ through contagion in Aix-la-Chapelle, while nursing one of our maids, a typhoid patient herself, who would take medicine practically only from



Steel engraving from "Views of the Rhine" by William Tombleson (around 1840): Spa Bad Schwabach. Bad Schwabach was called *Langenschwabach* until 1927.

mother's hands. Mother died, August 17, 1834. I shall be everlastingly grateful to the good God for having given me the grace of being able to nurse mother day and night and of being with her until her death. It was the first time that I had seen anyone die; the impression on my mind was profound. At her own emphatic request she had received the holy Sacraments in good time at the outset of her illness. With the greatest presence of mind she instructed me on how I was to conduct myself after her death: how I ought ever keep God before my eyes, how I should give pleasure to father. I was to tell my brothers and sister that our mother was thinking lovingly of all of us and was dying in peace.

They, too, should live in such a manner that one day they likewise could die in peace. She advised me how to manage the household affairs: what servants to dismiss and, on the other hand, what persons I should beg father to employ for my own relief; for we needed trustworthy and efficient servants, because I was still so young and father entertained much company. She directed me to always see to good order in the house and everywhere. In her instructions she went into such minute detail that she did not even forget the linen closet, which I was always to keep in order; nor did she forget the servants' mourning attire. She told me what I might give them after her death, so that everything might pass off peaceably.

She took her rings from her hand and attached them to her watch; then hung both on the wall alongside her bed and said: "It would be painful for you to remove these rings from



The "Ecce Homo" statue in the parish church of St. Foillan in Aachen. With special fondness Mother Pauline singled this out in the month of May. This church, next to the Aachen Dom, was destroyed during bombardment in 1944. After the war the church was rebuilt.

my hand when I am a corpse, but because they will be a dear keepsake to you, my children, I have hung them there; you may take them later on and share them with your brothers and sister. Oh, take good care of your brothers and sister and of your father. Always afford him pleasure. Recommend your brothers and sister to our confessor, Father Claessen."

When father received word of mother's serious illness, he traveled immediately with Doctor Sartorius, our physician and at the same time my parents' true friend, from Aix-la-Chapelle to Schwalbach. But despite all medical skill, despite all our love and care mother died. I could relate much more about that time; I shall pass it over. The oldest of four children, there I now stood motherless at the age

of seventeen in a world full of dangers. We began our journey home. Father cared for me with a goodness extraordinarily

touching and was always most forbearing with my youthful inexperience. When I told him what instructions mother had given me, he permitted me to arrange everything in the manner she had directed. As already intimated, father possessed a very determined character but with it all was exceptionally considerate and wise. I loved him deeply and considered it my duty to comply with his wishes. I also loved my brothers and sister very much and tried to make home as pleasant as I possibly could for all and begged God to give me the hearts of my dear ones.

The loss of my mother aroused in me an intense desire for heaven, to which she had gone. I longed for the time when death would lift the veil separating this life from the world beyond. In August 1835 [on the 31st] at the age of eighteen I received the Sacrament of holy Confirmation, which imparts the fullness of the strength and grace of the Holy Spirit. As one of these graces I consider the courage that God gave me several days later of deciding and immediately carrying out my resolve to sever my association with a highly esteemed but Protestant gentleman (I have, however, never been engaged) - a decision which until then I simply could not bring myself to make. Peace of soul and great graces from God followed upon it.

[In the next installment Pauline relates how the desire to consecrate herself to God grows stronger and describes her father's reaction to her new course of action.]



In the encyclical *Perfectae Caritatis* religious were urged to return to the original inspiration for their communities. The SCCs responded with a renewed study of the charism of Mother Pauline.

In 1976 a selection of prayers taken from 25 of the 26 volumes of letters and other writings of Blessed Pauline were compiled into a booklet titled Whom Did She Love? Prayers of Our Reverend Mother and Foundress Pauline von Mallinckrodt written by herself. (The prayers in Volume 22 were not included because they already appear in Mother Pauline Tells Her Story.)

I will love you above all else; O Source of all happiness; I want to love You with all my heart, with all my soul, with all my strength, above all else; and for love of You I will love my neighbor as myself. Only then will my love for my neighbor prove genuine--if it flows from You as its Source. Vol. 23, p. 39 1843

I will love my neighbor for Your sake alone, dearest Lord. In childlike love let me walk before You, Eternal Love! Let this be the fruit of my retreat, that I abide in Your love and You, my God, abide in me. Amen. Vol. 23, p. 62 1844

God, how infinitely good You are – we hardly open our mouths to acknowledge our sins, and You immediately forgive them. My sincerest thanks for the grace You have now given me again; I will always love You with my whole heart, with my whole soul, with all my strength. You alone will I serve. Vol. 23, p. 105 1847

O Love, O summit of perfection – Lord, give me love.' Amen. Yes, Lord, I want to love you with all my soul, with all my mind, with all my strength, above all – We are on this earth to love, praise, and serve God and thus become holy. Amen. Vol. 23, p. 34 1848

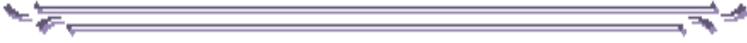
O God, give me interior sorrow and help me to become better. From now on all my labors will be interiorly so perfect, so permeated with love for you, that they may one day be justified before your all-seeing eye. Vol. 23, p. 128 1848



On August 21, 2014 we will celebrate the 165th anniversary of the Founding of the Sisters Christian Charity. Let us together, Sisters and Companions of Pauline thank God for the graces and blessings bestowed on “our” Congregation during these many years.

We also anticipate the celebration of the 200th birthday of Blessed Pauline on June 3, 2017.

Such an event deserves an extended preparation. In our next issue of We Connect we will share with you information about our three-year spiritual preparation for Blessed Pauline’s birthday.



BECOMING A COMPANION OF PAULINE

If you know someone who wants information about becoming a Companion of Pauline, please contact

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SUPPORT THE CANONIZATION PROCESS OF BLESSED PAULINE

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we beseech you in the name of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, and through the intercession of his Immaculate Mother Mary, glorify yourself in Blessed Pauline and grant that she may soon be proclaimed a saint. **Amen.**

Father in heaven, lead us the way of love as you led Blessed Pauline von Mallinckrodt. Open our hearts to others, that loving them as your Son commanded, we may be one with them in your heavenly kingdom. **Amen.**



BLESSED PAULINE VON MALLINCKRODT CANONIZATION FUND

We are grateful to everyone who has given a personal donation to support the Blessed Pauline canonization fund. We are not the only ones working on this project, but we are glad to do our part to support it. Checks should be made to:

Sisters of Christian Charity – Canonization Fund

Please mail the checks in care of:

Sister Janice Boyer, SCC
2041 Elmwood Avenue
Wilmette, IL 60091-1431