



Courage,
the Madonna
is near you!



Istituto Figlie di Maria Ausiliatrice
Salesiane di Don Bosco

The canonization of Sr. Maria Troncatti on October 19th is an occasion through which the Lord blessed us with a new Saint to the Institute and the Salesian Family.

As we prepare to celebrate the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary in 2025 as an Institute, let us praise the Lord for the life and witness of holiness of our dear Sr. Maria Troncatti, who found in Mary a helper, a teacher, and an example.

The proposal of the novena for this year is inspired by passages from the biography of St. Maria Troncatti, which highlight the direct presence and protection of Mary in her personal and community life, and in her mission. Her entire life was lived in deep communion with Mary, expressed in unwavering trust. She recited the 'Hail Marys' like the breath of her soul and drew strength, serenity, patience, creativity, and missionary boldness from it. Every day during the Novena, an episode from the life of St. Maria Troncatti will be presented that encourages us to reflect on the trust that she had in Mary. It will be followed by a daily commitment with the assurance of her presence in our lives.

As a concrete practice, it is suggested to the Communities to pray the Rosary together and conclude it with the proposal of the prayer to the Immaculate Virgin, renewing the feelings of gratitude, supplication, and trust, as She herself said to her sister Catherine: "I'm asking everyone for a big favor: that they pray the holy rosary every evening before going to bed. I'm asking everyone for this favor. It is the Blessed Virgin who wants it, and she begs that the holy rosary be recited for the conversion of so many sinners. I always pray for all of you, and you pray for me." (Letters from Sister Maria Troncatti, no. 56)

Together with St. Maria Troncatti, let us begin this Novena with fervor and love for Mary Immaculate, Mother, Teacher, and companion on our journey, always!

Sister Leslie Sandigo Ortega

Presentation



29 November



On 25 June 1915, a violent storm struck the city. St. Maria had just returned to the convent to study nursing along with Sr Chiara, who was also a nurse. They were having their late breakfast at midday. The refectory was on the ground floor and faced the courtyard. Suddenly, the road's retaining wall collapsed under the force of the overflowing Teiro stream, and the water from the sky, the land, and the nearby sea furiously flooded the refectory. The two religious climbed onto a chair, then onto the table, but they saw with alarm that the water level was rising frighteningly. St. Maria then made a promise:

"Mary Help of Christians, I promise that if you save me from this flood and Giacomino [my brother] from the war, I will become a missionary." The table moved, carried by the whirlpools into the courtyard, but was pushed by various currents, it overturned. The two of them were in water up to their neck. At that moment, St. Maria felt as if she was being pushed towards a shutter, onto which she grabbed. Then she climbed up the slats, grabbed the first-floor railing and vaulted over it. She helped Sr. Chiara, who followed her along the same path. Finally, they were safe.

(Translated from A. Magna Bosco, *Selvaggio spavento mia gloria*, p. 11).

*We commit to
entrust to
Immaculate Mary
those who are
suffering the
consequences of
natural disasters.*





30 November

2

When the missionaries arrived in Mendez after several days of walking through the jungle, they found the mission surrounded by about eighty armed Kivari with arrows, spears, and machetes. Father Corbellini explained: In a battle between two groups of kivari, the chief's daughter of this group had been injured, and since the doctor, a foreigner, couldn't heal her, they had brought her to the mission. It would have taken a surgeon to extract the bullet that had grazed the girl's right arm and lodged in her chest. The words of the chief had been threatening: "If the daughter hadn't been treated and cured, not only would they not have let the missionaries go to Macas, but they would have killed everyone..." Now everyone was looking at St. Maria with pleading eyes. And the bishop, after a moment of reflection, ordered her:

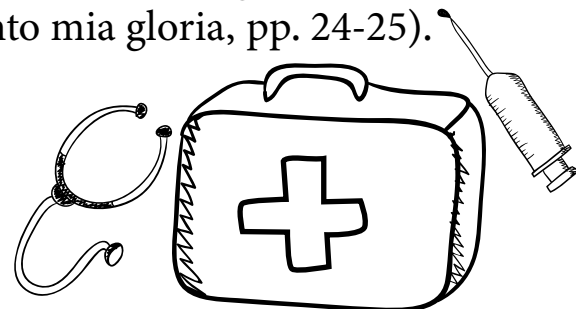
We are committed to pray to Immaculate Mary for young people who are in situations of war, violence.

- Open up, Sr. Maria. We will pray.
"I'm not a doctor, Monsignor," she replied. And then, what could I operate with?
"I have some iodine tincture," Father Corbellini said.

- We're going to church to pray to Mary Help of Christians - Mother Mioletti assumed. And she set off, followed by the others.

It was evident that the operation was linked more to prayer than to human means. The missionaries had to gather as much faith and courage as possible... St. Troncatti boiled some water, sterilised the penknife she had taken out of her pocket; She washed the abscess, applied iodine tincture over it, felt the swelling to find its central point, and, saying "Mary, Help of Christians," made a decisive cut. The bullet bounced out as if it had been pushed from below and fell onto the wooden floorboards, immediately picked up by the cheering kivari. On the third day after the operation, the kivara could set off with all its people for the distant place, and the forest knew it immediately from the sound of the drums.

(Translated from A. Magna Bosco, *Selva mio spavento mia gloria*, pp. 24-25).





1 December

3

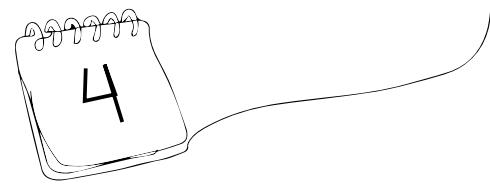
It happened that, having just returned from Sucúa, St. Maria Troncatti was called for a seriously ill kivara. She took her suitcase and cane and set off, accompanied by a young kivaro, Juan Nankitai. They walked for hours. They had to cross a river that, for the moment, looked relatively easy. After visiting and caring for the sick woman, they started back, but the river had risen so much due to the usual sudden rains in the mountains towards its source that Juan could barely find a place where the ford seemed possible. After making the sign of the cross, they went into the water.

The Saint was holding the hand of the young man who was feeling the bottom with his cane and moving very slowly. Suddenly, she slipped on a smooth stone, her cane flew out of her hand, and she fell. The current was powerful. Juan cried out to her: "Hold onto my belt, hug me." So she did, repeating her 'Hail Marys'. Fighting like a bull, with both hands on the stick and the water up to his chest, Juan managed to reach the opposite bank.

(Translated from A. Magna Bosco, *Selva mio spavento mia gloria*, p.47).

*We commit to pray
to Immaculate
Mary for the people
who offer us their
help.*





2 December



Late one afternoon, a Kivaro had arrived and said to St. Maria: Come immediately. My wife is very ill. She was strangely hesitant:

- But, son, night will come soon.

- Please - the man insisted - my kivaria is nearby.

The Saint took her usual suitcase and followed him. After an hour of walking, she asked:

- But where's your hut?

- Right here.

They continued walking. Night fell.

- You say: nearby. But where?

- Come, come.

They walked on and on. Suddenly, shots were heard, screams, and dogs barking. The kivaro stopped and said to St. Maria:

"Wait for me here," and he ran away. She waited for a while. She pulled out her rosary from her pocket and began to pray. The man wasn't coming back. What was she supposed to do, not knowing the way back? Suddenly, a little white dog appeared and ran towards her, barking happily. She looked at him and bent down to caress him. But the little dog held the hem of her habit and pulled her. St. Maria ended up following him step by step until she found the mission. She told the Sisters, who had been waiting for her worried: "Feed this do..." when she realised that the dog had disappeared.

(Translated from A. Magna Bosco, *Selva mio spavento mia gloria*, p.60-61).

*We commit to pray
to the Immaculate
Mary for all those
who have lost their
way or are
disoriented, that they
may find
angels/people along
their path.*





3 December

5

One day, St. Maria was going with a girl from the boarding school to a distant kivarua. At one point, deep in the forest, she felt her legs freeze. A snake had wrapped itself around her leg. Holding her breath, she managed to whisper: "The Snake." The frightened but experienced girl said to her: "Mother Mary, don't move!" And she remained motionless, repeating her Hail Marys!

Moments passed - which seemed like hours - of agonising tension. Then the snake loosened its coils and slithered away. The girl was the first to speak, while St. Maria wiped the cold sweat from her brow:

- Oh, Mother Maria, what would you have done if the snake hadn't left you?

- It's very simple: I would have died. But, see how the Madonna watches over us? Let's go then.

(Translated from A. Magna Bosco, *Selva mio spavento mia gloria*, p.62).



*We commit to
pray to
Immaculate Mary
to gain trust in
moments of
temptation and
difficulty.*



*Immaculate
Virgin,
save us*

4 December



During one journey, in the distance, we Kivari girls heard voices and noises that became increasingly alarming as we got closer. We started to get scared. Then I started shouting in the Shuar language: Attention! Be careful! She is not a soldier, she is a nun. God sent her to us.

"Hearing these words in their language, they understood who we were, calmed down, and let us in. But in this confusion, I hear Sr. Maria repeating: "Immaculate Virgin, Mary Help of Christians, save us!" And she urged us: We trust in the Blessed Virgin Mary! She will save us.

(<https://www.cgfmanet.org/infosfera/chiesa/la-devozione-mariana-di-suor-maria-troncatti/>).

*We commit to pray
to Immaculate
Mary for the
missionaries who
are going through
difficult times in
the mission fields.*





5 December



On one occasion, St. Maria, the Animator of the community at that time, heard a clear and distinct voice: "Gather and keep all the money you have in the house together..." She immediately hurried to gather the small sum, truly small, received from the pharmacy Mission. There was also a more significant amount from the colonists, who knew that the safest bank is the Mission place, under the care of the missionaries.

Having checked and noted everything carefully, the Animator placed it in the drawer of her poor desk [...].

What does that mean? ... What will happen? But every possible conjecture ended in the one true and comforting word: Mary Help of Christians will certainly take care of it!...

One night, from Saturday to Sunday, two woodcutters noticed that the kitchen was on fire...

In a hurry, the Missionaries managed to save the kivari children inside, who were screaming in fright, running here and there without knowing where... Only then did St. Maria remembered the money and said to one of the Sisters: "For God's sake, let's save money, it is not ours..." But by then it was impossible: The house was completely engulfed in flames, and everything was collapsing...

Meanwhile, a Kivari person called the Saint to take care of the Director, who had fainted. As she hurried towards the place indicated to her, she was surprised to see her desk, untouched, in the middle of a solitary meadow... She approached, opened the drawer, and found the money she had put there... How did it get there... So far away, when everything was already engulfed in flames? ... She could not believe her eyes. She quickly took the precious envelope and moved off..

(Ricordi missionari tra i Kivari, in Gioventù Missionaria 34 (1956) 15, 20-21).

*We commit to pray
to Immaculate Mary
to hear the voice of
the Spirit in
moments of
discernment.*





Maria
walks with
us

6 December

8

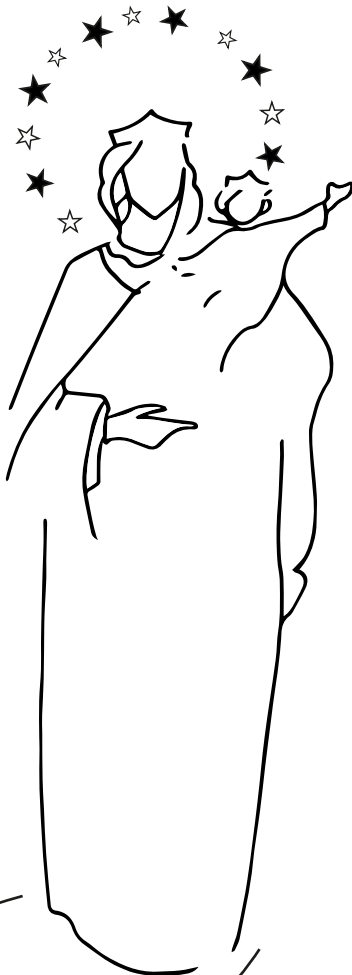
St. Maria had a dream in which she seemed to be in the Chapel, kneeling before the statue of Mary Help of Christians, which became a living person, moved and turned on its pedestal.

- Why don't you stay still? "... – asked the Saint to Mary.
- Because - she replied - I'm not happy being here.
- Do you want to come with me?
- In response, the Most Holy Virgin, extending her arms, descended from the altar and, leaning on the Director, began

to visit the Community. When she came to a ditch, she stopped... "I'll go first," the Director told her, "so that I can hold your hand." She jumped and was on the other side; But when she turned back, the Most Holy Virgin was no longer there.

St. Maria didn't tell anyone about the dream that she had: But she remembered it when she saw the beautiful new church rising, right at the spot where Mary Help of Christians had stopped and disappeared. (

Ricordi missionari tra i Kivari, in Gioventù Missionaria 34 (1956) 15, 20-21).



We commit to greet Mary every time we find a her image in our home.



7 December

9

A small kivaria who had become blind, led by her parents to the Mission to be cured. Though she couldn't find the light for her poor, extinguished eyes there, she found the precious light of the soul. He received baptism and first communion with great fervour. She learnt to know and love the Blessed Virgin, and to speak to her with filial confidence.

All of this was a comfort and a smile to her; however, the night that surrounded her perpetually made her feel anxious. Sometimes, when she was most overwhelmed, hearing the Sister's footsteps, she would go to meet her, saying in a pleading voice:

- Mother, buy me two new eyes...

But she would return serene and calm upon hearing the affectionate response that Our Lady in Heaven would restore her healthy and shining eyes.

A great desire, therefore, to go to Heaven, and to hasten the moment, she lay composedly in her little bed, thinking she was dying... Wait, wait, tired of being there, she was shouting:

- Mother, I still feel alive!... How does one die? ... Tell the Madonna to take me to Heaven soon!...

She died very young and almost suddenly, exclaiming:

"Oh, I see her, I see her!... How beautiful she is!..."

(Ricordi missionari tra i Kivari, in Gioventù Missionaria 34 (1956) 15, 20-21).

Let us commit to pray to Mary to illuminate our path in moments of darkness, uncertainty, or danger of death. May she intercede to welcome all our deceased sisters, relatives, friends, and benefactors into heaven.



Rosary prayer to the Immaculate Conception

*Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Sunday, December 8, 2025*

On the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, we are invited to pray the Holy Rosary with a heart full of gratitude to the Mother of God and our Mother for her constant and significant presence in our lives and for the unexpected gift of the canonization of our dear St. Maria Troncatti. We are invited to pray together the prayer to the Immaculate Virgin, who has accompanied us during this novena, entrusting to her all those in need of God's grace and the nations experiencing wars, so that she, the All-Beautiful Mary, may listen to our prayers and grant our requests.



Prayer to the Immaculate

Virgin most holy and immaculate,
to you, the honour of our people,
and the loving protector of our city,
do we turn with loving trust.

You are all-beautiful, O Mary!

In you there is no sin.

Awaken in all of us a renewed desire for holiness:

May the splendour of truth shine forth in our words,
the song of charity resound in our works,
purity and chastity abide in our hearts and bodies,
and the full beauty of the Gospel be evident in our lives.

You are all-beautiful, O Mary!

In you the Word of God became flesh.

Help us always to heed the Lord's voice:

May we never be indifferent to the cry of the poor,
or untouched by the sufferings of the sick and those in need;
may we be sensitive to the loneliness of the elderly and the
vulnerability of children, and always love and cherish the
life of every human being.

You are all-beautiful, O Mary!

In you is the fullness of joy born of life with God.

Help us never to forget the meaning of our earthly journey:

May the kindly light of faith illumine our days,
the comforting power of hope direct our steps,
the contagious warmth of love stir our hearts;
and may our gaze be fixed on God, in whom true joy is
found.

You are all-beautiful, O Mary!

Hear our prayer, graciously hear our plea:

May the beauty of God's merciful love in Jesus abide in our
hearts,

and may this divine beauty save us, our city and the entire
world. Amen.