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 24/11/74
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 Dada Eliza

10/12/53

St. Joseph's Convent
 Cuntur
 British India

9/12/74

My dear Mamma, Dada, Eliza and all,

Many thanks for all your kind letters and good wishes, for your cable and especially for your prayers for my profession day. Mamma wants me to tell her all about it. To tell all would fill a book. Fortunately you get the 'Catholic Leader' which gives a full account of the ceremony itself including the beautiful prayers used on the occasion. So my account will begin with the close of the ceremony. But I must relate one thing which shows with what kindness I am surrounded. Unfortunately Father Freyter, who conducted the retreat had to take to his bed on the closing day. For want of a third priest it would not have been possible to have High Mass for the profession. So that evening Father Dubbelman, our Superior sent a note to his Superior V. Rev. G. Bazelmans. Father Bazelmans had already written expressing his regret that pressure of work prevented him coming; he very kindly gave assurance that he would remember me at M. Mass that morning, and pray that I might be "a good nun too", as the "little niece" had expressed it.

Father Dubbelman's note arrived at 11 pm. Father Bazelmans at once rose from bed, & set out to catch a train at 12.30 am. The train turned up at 2.30 am. On reaching Cuntur Father Bazelmans came here - all in darkness, for he was not expected. Then he walked to priests' Bungalows and immediately returned to say his M. Mass; upon which followed the High Mass. So he had a night entirely without sleep. His Reverence spent the

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morning here; then came mid-day train as he had to return their confessions for a community of nuns boarding school. So I do not know how to thank either Father Dubbelman or Father Bagelmann. Please help me with your prayers.

From the church we went in procession to the refectory; and there, as the Little Flower says when speaking of her entrance to Carmel, I was received with inexpressible kindness by "a new family of whose devotion and tenderness people in the world have not even a suspicion." The Sisters sang a song of welcome; then followed breakfast enlivened by song and verse. At each meal there was a suitable programme, and the day was closed with a song of thanks. It will be impossible to give the whole programme. It was so full, but I shall try to give on separate pages some of the hymns and songs; at least the English ones. It will be difficult to do justice to the beauty of the Dutch ones by translation. Reverend Mother presented me with

a pile of letters. I have not even yet digested all the mail. Each time I look through that pile I still find some surprise. Letters from you which were in such good time. Letters from various priests, all with the promise of remembrance at H. Mass; letters & greetings from Kumol & Killore; a letter from the Archbishop; this I shall enclose; and letters not only from Mother Superior, but also from her four Assistants, and from a number of Reverend Sisters and Sisters in Holland. Letters from Italian & Country-born Sisters from a neighbouring diocese and so on.

During the morning came a young man whose wife and child had been under the care of the Sisters in the hospital and also under treatment at the dispensary. He is a Catholic. He and his wife and child came from their village to attend the profession, and desiring, as he said, that all should share in the joy of the occasion he brought a fat sheep, and a bandy load consisting of a big sac of rice, a heavy bunch of bananas, a big basket of oranges, a pot of butter, a sac of chilis, of tamarinds and of every type of vegetable and flavouring that goes to make up a delicious curry; also

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basket of "poppe" or grain which the children eat as sweet
for he desired that all the children should have a happy life.
In addition he presented me with a beautiful umbrella.
A day or two later came two heathen "princesses" of
whom I saw writing to the children. On a silver tray covered
with a beautiful piece of lace they brought fruits, the usual
gift of courtesy for Reverend brother and me, also a donation
and a present which will please you - an enlargement of a
photo of themselves taken with Reverend brother and me.
They expressed their regret that by reason of a marriage in
family they had been unable to come on the day itself.
Later came a relation of theirs with her new baby - (long
years awaited). She presented the usual fruits with a present
from the baby to whom we were requested to give a name.
Unknown to her the child had already been given a name,
for the little note will not live, but there was a problem.
How could we name a heathen baby for most of the
names are names of gods, and the simpler names
would not please such a family. Chinamma (little one)
"s. Pauline, Rajamma ("stone"), Petra; Mariamma etc. are
all distinctively Christian names. Best Prathasiamma (light).
Lucy suggested a way out. That too is a distinctively
Christian name, but Suryaprathasiamma "the light of heaven"
is heathen. So I suggested Suryaprathasiamma and they
might call her Prathasiamma for short. They smiled, but
could see they were not satisfied. The name was not
uncommon enough. So I thought of something better. A.S. I
who has done much for this patient has the name of Pelag.
This name is practically unknown even amongst the Catholics.
So I said Pelagie Suryaprathasiamma. They were delighted. In
the whole village there is not a name like that.

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Many thanks & love for certainly would not have causing the water bags & directions. I am glad for & comes flowing & long.

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to return to the feast day itself. You may like to hear something of the various letters I received.

From Mother Superior: "With heartfelt joy I wish you happiness on this the happiest day of your life. By your holy vows you have now bound yourself to God forever. This bond made here below is sealed in heaven, and the choir of angels and saints chants the Magnificat with you in imitation of our heavenly Mother.

You have every right to rejoice, for the Sponse of your soul has done great things to you. Your happiness cannot be compared with earthly happiness, and only those who have experienced it, can conceive what you have felt this day. With you we thank the good God, and at the same time beseech Him that in your religious life each day may see an increase in the love and glory you offer to God. May you be caught up in Him, thrive but in Him, for Him, and through Him. Then indeed, has beautiful & of what great value will be your life as Bride of Christ." Mother Superior concluded with a petition to Jesus Mary and Joseph, ^{pleas me,} and then in her own kind, motherly way, welcomed me into the congregation on her own behalf and that of all the Sisters.

From the Mother's Assistant came letters of congratulation and assurance that they shared in my joy, and also expressions of congratulation and good wishes for all of you.

One Sister wrote: What I thought so beautiful on my profession day was that each day of my life is as it were a profession day, for the bond lasts forever. Nay, I must be fair. Days more beautiful are yet to come. We give ourselves wholly and unreservedly to our beloved Sponse and say to Him: "Do with me what You will. If then he asks great sacrifices, ~~then~~ you are not invisible of them, for from it it is precisely that that you realize to the full what you have said to Him, and that you have asked; but there is something beautiful in the total abandonment of oneself to Him, for He has always in view His own glory and our greatest happiness. That deep, quiet consciousness that our greatest work here below is to accomplish His will, constitutes our happiness. And so my sole prayer is: "Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done."

Another Sister, in the course of a very nice letter remarks: "You will certainly have experienced how sweetly He repays our poor gifts. He gives Himself in return for our nothingness. We should almost be inclined to say He makes a bad exchange, until He is contented with such poor gifts as we can give."

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My photo - in black habit - was taken for the profession. Since then Santa Claus has visited Custer, so Reverend Mother now wants to make you all happy with photos, and has already sent a large packet containing profession photo mounted; the enlarged photo, gift of the princess about whom I have written to the children, a large group photo taken before Father Jarvis' departure. Father Jarvis is in black cassock. Reverend Mother Arnoldine Kurnod, is beside Rev. Mother Assumptia also a group photo taken after retreat; in the centre Father Dubbelman Ord. Praemonstratensis (Robertine priest) our present parish priest. The Robertines always dress in white when in Holland (i.e. always white cassocks, hreties etc; they do wear black when travelling). Here all guests dress in white. They wear cassocks always, but merely in the church or house. In this photo Rev. Mother Arnoldine, ^(center in picture) is on Rev. Mother Assumptia's right, and Rev. Mother Elizabeth near Father Dubbelman (left). Enclosed also a laughing Jack. Christmas card which St. Nicholas knew how to make good use of, the necklet with medallion was also a surprise from Santa Claus. I send some other photos. Please make Auntie,

Harold's family all happy. You will know who already have or have not photos. As soon as Sister has time to print them Rev. Mother will send more profession photos - so that there will be one for home, one for Auntie, Helen, Edie, Harold, Edward, Walter, Leah, ^{has a home} please send enclosed letters to Sister Cavendish, Selia, Windsor. Consent: Sister Selia very kindly sent money order \$2.2.0 to me as gift for profession. She is very good indeed; Sister promises to send next time for Christmas. As a little token of grateful Christmas she sends herself (in accompanying parcel) to Sister Selia. You may expect; please send it on to Windsor with love from Christmas.

Now I have some requests to make. About the first I shall later write more fully to the children. It is about Santa Claus, who does not live in this heathen land, doesn't know how to find his

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