



1894-1915

Infancy, Youth, Vocation

20 FEBRUARY 1894 Maria Teresa Merlo, the daughter of Ettore Merlo and Vincenza Rolando, is born in Castagnito (Cuneo), Italy. She was the second of four children.

22 FEBRUARY 1894 She is baptized in Castagnito's parish church, St. John the Baptist, by the pastor, Fr. Pietro Palladino. Godparents: Leone Merlo and Margherita Rava Rolando.

1901-1903 Completes grades 1-3 in Castagnito's elementary school. Since the village school does not offer any higher education, her parents arrange for her to continue her studies privately under teacher Maria Chiarla.

23 APRIL 1902 Makes her first communion in Castagnito's parish church.

29 SEPTEMBER 1907 Is confirmed in Castagnito's parish church by Bishop Giuseppe Francesco Re (1848-1933), Bishop of the Alba Diocese. Godmother: Mrs. Carolina Zocca Barbero.

c 1908-1911 Attends sewing and embroidery classes in an institute in Alba known as "Ritiro della Provvidenza," run by the Sisters of St. Anne. Afterward, is sent by her parents to Turin to complete her training as a seamstress.

19 MARCH 1912 Writes to her parents from Susa. There is no information as to whether or not she had ever been there before.

c 1912 Opens a small sewing and embroidery school for girls in her parents' home in Castagnito. Not only teaches her students how to sew but also helps them develop their prayer life.

15 JUNE 1915 Fr. Alberione opens a "Workshop for Young Women" in Piazza Cherasca, no. 2, Alba—a building vacated by the boys of his "Typographical School", who had transferred their headquarters to Moncarretto on 5 May. 15 June marks the birth of the Daughters of St. Paul. The first person to collaborate with the Founder in this initiative is Miss Angela Boffi.

27 JUNE 1915 Teresa meets Fr. James Alberione in the sacristy of Sts. Cosmas and Damian Church, Alba. In 1961, M. Thecla would write: “My mother, who accompanied me [to the meeting with Fr. Alberione], said that I could stay fifteen days. Those fifteen days have not ended yet.”
