



1939-1947

Sister and Mother

**9 MARCH 1941** Death of M. Thecla's father, Ettore Merlo.

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**AUGUST 1941** Spends a period of time in reflection and prayer in Alba (LMT 60).

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**8 SEPTEMBER 1941** On the Founder's advice, convokes the Congregation's superiors for a special course of spiritual exercises. Scope of the course: spiritual renewal.

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**28 JANUARY 1942** Asks the Sacred Congregation for Religious to grant the Institute of the Daughters of St. Paul pontifical approval and the *Decretum Laudis*.

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**8 SEPTEMBER 1943** Heavy bombing over Grottaferrata (Rome), location of an FSP community. M. Thecla, who happened to be staying there at the moment, is miraculously saved, together with the sisters of the community.

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**21 OCTOBER 1943** Welcomes into the FSP Generalate in Rome the Benedictine nuns who, because of the war, were forced to abandon their monastery of Santa Scholastica in Cassino. The nuns remained with the Daughters of St. Paul until 18 August 1944.

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**9 JULY 1945** M. Thecla signs a petition asking the Holy See to recognize the Pious Disciples as an autonomous Institute.

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**17 JULY 1945** Writes to the Daughters of St. Paul: "The Lord's care for us and our belongings [during the war] was linked to [the Founder's] promise to build a church in honor of the Queen of Apostles in Rome." Urges everyone to collaborate with the building's construction.

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**NOVEMBER 1945** Is forced to decrease her workload due to bad health.

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**28 DECEMBER 1945** Leaves from Naples with the Founder on the ship "Andrea Gritti" for a visit to the communities of the USA. From there goes on to Argentina and Brazil. On the return trip, again by ship, stops over once again in the United States. Returns to Rome on 23 May 1946.

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**NOVEMBER 1946** In a circular letter, recommends that the Daughters of St. Paul, and in particular the propagandists, open and close the apostolic day with a moment of prayer centered on assimilation of the Word of God. Refers to this prayer as “The Itinerary of the Daughter of St. Paul.”

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**18 JANUARY 1947** Death of M. Thecla’s mother, Vincenza Rolando Merlo. On the same day, the Daughters of St. Paul begin the cinema apostolate in collaboration with the Society of St. Paul.

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**3 APRIL 1947** Bishop Luigi Grassi approves the Pious Disciples of the Divine Master as a Congregation of Diocesan Right.

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