

## 38. One heart and one soul

*The young women left France with nothing more than a Rule for the voyage by way of formation. But this Rule already confirmed an essential aspect of the spirit of the Society of Mary. "Since you are members of the one Society, having the same vocation and the same aim, redouble your efforts for unity, harmony and charity so that truly you will have only one heart and one soul". (No. 5)*

*In 1858, after 12 years of solitude on the islands of Wallis and Futuna, Marie Françoise Perroton saw the arrival of three sisters. Two were sent to Wallis and one, Sr Marie de la Pitié, remained with her. The deep union they maintained through their common vocation, despite differences of character, remains something beautiful for us today. Even when they went to different places, they felt a unity and solidarity in the Mission, supporting one another especially through prayer, affection and, when possible, the exchange of letters.*

**Futuna, March 8, 1859**

**What can I tell you about the dear sister who has fallen to my lot? She is an angel of peace and gentleness. I am put to shame, without however being able to correct my outbursts of impatience. Believe me, Very Rev. Father, the two poles could not be more diametrically opposed than our two characters, so this dear sister is acquiring great treasures of merit every day. I don't want to cause her pain or annoyance, but I'm sure I do so from morning till night with my continual chattering and my irascibility. Well, what can you expect - I am old, infirm, and besides that, all my life I have had a difficult character. Therefore, if this good sister complains to you, believe everything she says. My dear sister is admirable in her piety. ... I have to tell you, however, that despite how different our two personalities are, the greatest peace reigns in our home. You would hardly even notice the smallest cloud of discord.**

(Marie Françoise Perroton) Sr Marie du Mont Carmel (Futuna)  
to Fr Favre (Lyons), (OPS I, 121, Letter 9 §8)

This letter realistically recalls the variety of graces afforded by community life. On the one hand, we find support, friendship and joy, and on the other, sufferings and difficulties. (cf. Const. 155) The importance of the life and growth of the community, for which each member is responsible, is also evident.

