My journal entry for August 6, 2026.

I read Maria's vision of the martyrdom of St. Phenicula. She was an early Martyr in Rome. Jesus comments after the conclusion of the vision in his very touching way, mentioning her connection to Peter. Can we doubt the testimony of the Gospel as lived like this? Jesus' gift of vision to Maria, for our benefit, makes history come alive. Let's read this together and ponder...

I am *Anonymous*

The Notebooks 1944
March 4
9 a.m.
Jesus says to me:
"There is a lot of work today to gain back time, which was not wasted, but used in another way according to My Will.

"From the first hour of this day (1 a.m.), you have known what I will keep your mind fixed upon, for the first and only point which was illuminated for you already told you what you would be resting the eyes of your spirit upon. And that unknown female name, clanging inside you like a bell calling and not calming down except when responded to, told you that you would know this, too. But between my virgin and the Master you must choose the Master and have my point precede that.

"I shall make you familiar with many heavenly creatures. All of them provide instruction which is useful for you, who have become aware of everything, readers of everything, but not of that which is knowledge to conquer Heaven.

"Write."

I write, or, rather, I describe.

Tonight, amidst exasperating afflictions, I wondered how Jesus managed to endure that immense head pain -- and I asked Him about it because it was a torment for me to the point of making me clench my teeth so as not to scream at the slightest noise or jostling in bed, and I seemed to have as many hearts beating swiftly and painfully as I had teeth, on my tongue, lips, nose, ears,

and eyes, and in the middle of my forehead I seemed to have a tangle of nails penetrating into my skull, and from the nape of my neck there rose up and radiated out a belt of fire and pain clenching like a bite, and in the right parietal bone it seemed that from time to time the blow of a heavy object smacked against me to drive that belt deeper and deeper into my head and boom all through me -- and in my agony I was contemplating Him from the Garden to Calvary, when, right after the third fall, I had a pause of physical and spiritual relief, for He appeared to me handsome, healthy, and smiling over the stormy waters of the Sea of Galilee.

Then the torment resumed until about two, when, after the contemplation of the Lord's Passion had ended and my tremendous head pain had subsided a bit (just a bit, you know), a name sounded within me: St. Phenicula.

Who is she? Unknown. Was it really her? Heaven knows! Who ever heard of her? And I tried to sleep. Nothing to be done! St. Phenicula. St. Phenicula. St. Phenicula.

There's no one going to sleep, I told myself, until I find out who she is. And, thanks to the reduction in pain, which now enabled me to move -- whereas from 3 p.m. to midnight and beyond it had bowled me over and left me motionless, a body spasmodically suffering, but unable even to open its eyes (Paola can tell you about it) -- I took an index of the saints and found that, along with St. Petronilla, virgin, it listed St. Phelicula, virgin and martyr. I heard "Phenicula," but maybe I was mistaken.

Just when I made this discovery, I saw a young woman, naked and tied to a column in atrocious fashion. Then nothing else.

And now, out of obedience, I shall write what the Master shows me, without putting it off, though my head is spinning like a top.

The Martyrdom of St. Phenicula

I see two young women praying. A very fervent prayer which must really pierce the heavens. One is older. She seems to be nearly thirty. The other must have reached age twenty recently. Both of them seem to be in perfect health. They then get up and prepare a little altar, on which they arrange fine linen and flowers.

A man comes in who is dressed like the Romans at that time and whom the two young women greet with the utmost veneration. He takes out a bag he is carrying over his chest and extracts everything needed to celebrate a Mass. He then dons the priestly vestments and begins the Sacrifice.

I do not understand the Gospel very well, but it seems to be Mark's: "And they brought some children to him... Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it." The two young women, kneeling beside the altar, pray more and more fervently.

The Priest consecrates the Species and then turns to give Communion to the two faithful women, beginning with the older one, whose face is seraphic with ardor. He then gives Communion to the other one. The two, after receiving the Species, prostrate themselves on the ground in deep prayer and seem to remain that way out of sheer devotion.

But when the Priest turns to bless and comes down from the altar, placed on a wooden platform (after the celebration of the rite, which is just like Paul's in the Tullianum, except for the fact that here the celebrant speaks more softly, since there are only two of the faithful, and that is why I understand the Gospel less clearly), just one of the young women moves. The other remains prostrated as before. Her companion calls her and shakes her. The Priest also bends over. They lift her up. The pallor of death is already on that face. Her faint eyes are sinking under her eyelids. Her mouth finds it hard to breathe. But what blessedness on that face!

They lay her out on a sort of long seat which is next to an open window overlooking a courtyard where there is a singing fountain. And they try to help her. But, pulling together her strength, she raises a hand and points to heaven and says only two words: "Grace... Jesus," and, without agony, she expires.

All of this does not clarify for me where the young woman tied to the column I saw tonight comes in; though much paler and thinner, with more disheveled hair, and having borne more torture, she seems to resemble greatly the survivor who is now weeping alongside the dead woman. And I continue like this, in my

uncertainty, for a few hours.

Only now, in the evening, do I re-encounter the young woman who was weeping before, now standing upright beside the fountain in the austere courtyard, where only some small flower-beds with lilies are cultivated and on the walls rosebushes entirely in bloom rise up.

The woman is speaking to a young Roman: "It is useless for you to insist, O Flaccus. I am grateful for your respect and your remembrance of my dead friend. But I cannot console your heart. If Petronilla died, it was a sign that she was not to be your wife. But neither am I. There are many girls in Rome who would be happy to become the mistress of your home. I would not. Not because of you. But because I have decided not to contract marriage."

"Have you, too, been caught up by the foolish delirium of so many followers of a handful of Jews?"

"I have decided -- and I don't think I'm crazy -- not to contract marriage. "

"And if I wanted you to?"

"I don't think that you, if it is true that you love and respect me, will want to force my freedom as a Roman citizen. But you will let me follow my desire, feeling the good friendship for me which I feel for you.

"Ah, no! One has already escaped me. You shall not."

"She is dead, Flaccus. Death is a force superior to us; it is not someone's flight from destiny. She did not kill herself. She is dead...

"Because of your acts of sorcery. I know you are Christians and should have denounced you to the Roman Tribunal. But I preferred to think of you as my wives. Now, for the last time, I ask you, Do you want to be the wife of the noble Flaccus? I swear to you that it is better for you to enter my house as its mistress and leave aside the demoniac worship of your poor god than to experience the severity of Rome, which does not allow its gods to be insulted. Be my wife, and you will be happy. Otherwise..."

"I cannot be your wife. I am consecrated to God. To my God. I cannot worship idols -- I, who worship the true God. Do

what you like with me. You can do anything with my body. But my soul belongs to God, and I will not sell it for the joys of your house."

"Is that your final word?"

"The final one."

"Do you know that my love can turn into hatred?"

“May God forgive you. As for me, I will always love you as a brother and pray for your welfare."

"And I will work your misfortune. I will denounce you. You will be tortured. You will call upon me then. You will understand then that Flaccus' house is better than the foolish doctrines you nourish yourself on."

"I will understand that the world, so as to have no more Flaccuses, needs these doctrines. And I will work your welfare by praying for you from the Kingdom of my God."

"Accursed Christian! To the jails! To hunger! Let your Christ fill you if he can. "

I get the impression that the jails are rather close to the virgin's house, for the road is short, and that the noble Flaccus is precisely a sleuth of the Quaestor of Rome, for when the vision, changing appearance, takes me back to the room I saw before, with the young woman tied to the column, I see that it is a tribunal like the one in which Agnes was judged. The differences are very slight, and here, too, there is an ugly fellow who judges and condemns and whom Flaccus assists and incites.

Phenicula, taken out of the mew where she was, is brought into the middle of the room. She appears drained of her strength, but is still very dignified. Though the light dazzles her, weak as she is and now accustomed to the dark jail, she holds herself upright and smiles.

The usual questions and the usual offers followed by the usual replies: "I am a Christian. I do not sacrifice to any God but my Lord Jesus Christ." She is condemned to the column.

They tear away her clothing and, with her naked, in the presence of the people, bind her hands and feet behind one of the Tribunal's columns. To do so they dislocate her hips and arms. The torture must be atrocious. And that is not all -- they tighten

the ropes at her wrists and ankles, strike her chest and naked belly with bars and scourges, twist her flesh with pincers, and other similarly atrocious torments which I am not about to narrate.

From time to time they ask her if she wants to sacrifice to the gods. Phenicula, in a weaker and weaker voice, replies, "No. To Christ. To Him alone. Now that I am beginning to see Him, and every torture brings Him closer to me, do you want me to lose Him? Carry out your work. May my love be fulfilled. A sweet marriage where Christ is the bridegroom and I am his bride! The dream of my whole life!"

When they untie her from the column, she falls to the ground, as if dead. Her dislocated -- perhaps even broken -- limbs no longer hold her up and do not respond to any mental command. Her poor hands, cut at her wrists by the cord, which has formed two bracelets of living blood, hang down, as if dead. Her feet, also lacerated at the malleoli, to the point of displaying nerves and tendons, appear to be clearly broken from the way they are unnaturally folded back. But her face is filled with angelic happiness. Tears flow down her lifeless cheeks, but her eyes beam, absorbed in a vision which ravishes her in ecstasy.

The jailers -- or, rather, executioners -- go at her with kicks and shove her this way towards the Quaestor's dais, as if she were such an unclean sack that she could not be touched.

"Are you still alive?"

"Yes, by the will of my Lord."

"Do you still insist? Do you really want death?"

"I want Life. Oh, my Jesus, open Heaven to me! Come, eternal Love! "

"Throw her into the Tiber! The water will calm down her enthusiasm."

The executioners lift her up roughly. The torment of her broken limbs must be atrocious. But she smiles. They wrap her in her clothing, not out of modesty, but to keep her from staying afloat in water. A useless concern! With one's limbs in that state, one cannot swim. Only her head emerges from the tangle of clothes. Her poor body, tossed over the shoulders of an assassin, hangs as if already dead. But she is smiling in the torchlight, for it

is now evening.

When they reach the Tiber, they take her as if she were an animal to be suppressed and cast her from the height of a bridge into the dark waters, where she resurfaces twice and then sinks without a cry.

Jesus says:

"I wanted you to get to know my martyr Phenicula to give some teachings to you and everyone.

"You have seen the power of prayer in the death of Petronilla, the companion and teacher of Phenicula and much older than the latter, and the fruit of a holy friendship.

"Petronilla, Peter's spiritual daughter, had absorbed the spirit of Faith from the living words of my Apostle. Peter's joy and Roman pearl. His first Roman conquest. The woman who, through her respectful and loving devotion to the Apostle, consoled him for all the sorrows of his Roman evangelization.

"Peter, out of love for Me, had left home and family. But the One who does not lie had had him find in this girl -- and in a superabundant, brimful, and tightly packed manner, according to my promises -- comfort, care, and feminine sweetness. Like Me in Bethany, at Petronilla's house he found help, hospitality, and, above all, love. Woman is the same, in her good and evil aspects, under all skies and in all periods. Petronilla was Peter's Mary, with her purity as a girl, in addition, which Baptism, received when her innocence was still unstained, had brought to angelic perfection.

"Maria, listen. Petronilla, wanting to love the Master with her whole self, without her beauty and the world being able to disturb this love, had asked her God to make her a crucified one. And God heard her prayer. Paralysis crucified her angelic limbs. In the long illness, in the ground washed by pain the virtues blossomed more beautifully, especially love for my Mother.

"Continue to listen, Maria. When it was necessary, there was a pause in her illness. To show that God is the master of miracle. And then, when the moment was over, it crucified her again.

"Don't you know any other woman, Maria, to whom her Master, when He has need, says, as Peter said to Petronilla, 'Rise.

Write. Be strong,' and who, when the Master's need has ceased, once more becomes a poor infirm person in perpetual agony?

"When the Apostle had died and Petronilla was healed, she found that her life was no longer hers, but Christ's. She was not one of those who, having obtained the miracle, make use of it to offend God. But she used her health in God's interest.

"Your life is always mine. I give it to you. You should remember this. I give it to you as animal life, causing you to be born and keeping you alive. I give it to you as spiritual life with Grace and the Sacraments. You should always remember this and make good use of it. Moreover, when I restore health to you and virtually cause you to be reborn after a near-fatal illness, you should remember even more that this life, thriving again when the flesh already seemed ripe for the grave, is mine. And out of gratitude use it for Good.

"Petronilla was able to do so. She did not absorb my Doctrine to no avail. It is like salt preserving someone from evil and corruption; it is flame bringing warmth and light; it is nourishing and fortifying food; it is faith bringing security. The trial came, the assault of temptation, the threat of the world. Petronilla prayed. She called God. She wanted to belong to God. Did the world want her? God defended her from the world.

"The Christ said, 'If you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you can say to a mountain, "Get up and go over there. "' Peter often told her this. She did not ask the mountain to move. She asked God to take her out of the world before a trial beyond her strength could crush her. And God heard her. He had her die in an ecstasy. In an ecstasy, Maria, before the trial could crush her. Remember this, my little disciple.

"Phenicula was a friend and, more than a friend, a daughter or sister, given the small difference in age, amounting to about ten years. People do not live with someone who is holy without being sanctified. As one does not become depraved by living with someone who is depraved. If the world only remembered this truth! But the world instead neglects the saints or mistreats them and follows the satans, becoming more and more of a satan.

"You have seen the firmness and sweetness of Phenicula.

What is hunger for those having Christ as their food? What is torture for those loving the Martyr on Calvary? What is death for those knowing that death opens the door to Life?

"My martyr Phenicula is unknown among present-day Christians. But she is well known among the angels of God, who see she is happily in Heaven behind the divine Lamb. I wanted to make her known to you so as to be able to speak to you about her spiritual teacher as well and to encourage you in suffering.

"Repeat with her: 'Now, indeed, amidst these pains I am beginning to see my spouse, Jesus, in whom I have placed all my love,' and consider that for you, too, I have raised up a Nicomedes to save your deepest self, which I wanted for Myself, from the waters of the passions and to gather in everything about you which deserves to be preserved, what is mine, what can do good to the souls of your brothers and sisters."