

## **Come Follow Me!**

Reprinted from  
**the Human Life of Jesus**

by  
The servant of God Mother Mary Potter  
Foundress of  
The Little Company of Mary

*Tipografica Poliglotta Vaticana*  
*Reprinted 1947.*

---

### **COME! FOLLOW ME!**

*And he said to them , "Come follow Me," and leaving their nets,  
they followed him"*

#### **The Call to the Apostles.**

Oh, that grand Vocation! Those thrilling words of Jesus, "Come, follow Me!" Look upon the face of Our Lord, that finely chiselled beautiful face, and look upon the rough fisher-men, those happy ones favoured with such a call. What could there have been in the tones of Jesus that had such a great effect as to induce those men to leave all, their father, their prospects in life, all that they had expected and looked for in this world to follow One Who hail hitherto been a stranger to them. "Come.," said the human voice of Jesus. They heard it audibly with their ears and it had power with them. "Come," speaks Jesus still to many a soul. They do not hear it outwardly, but deep down in the depths of their soul, it is heard and it is strong enough to induce that soul to leave all and to go and follow Him. It is powerful enough to induce that soul to break all human ties and affections, all that it loved in this world, to leave father and mother, brother and sister, to quit kith and kin and travel away into far lands that it might obey that call that it heard so clearly and yet so indistinctly, - to follow, to take up its Cross and to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Ah! Vocation, what a grand thought it is, but we too often apply it only to the religious state.

#### **The Call to Everyone.**

We all of us have a Vocation; each one of us has a call from God to do

some work for Him. It may be a religious vocation, to become a priest, monk or nun; it may be the call to the married state, or to do some special work of charity, but whatever it may be, something has been allotted to us, some mission in the world given us. Ages ago, in the mind of God, we were destined and called to this particular work. It is true we may not always know it clearly, we may find ourselves performing it almost without intention, as we hear of so many great works of charity being founded through the apparently simply accident of some kind man or woman taking in a little orphan.

On the other hand, there are others who have had their work manifested to them in a very special manner. Look at the grand mind of a St. Ignatius, divinely illuminated regarding the noble work he was to form and the followers he was to train, who were to bear the sweetest of all names, the Name of Jesus. Now though we must not look for a very special manifestation of God's will regarding our vocation in life and the part we are to play in this world, still if we are wise, if we wish to be happy in this world, we should pray and take advice before deciding upon what state to enter. Parents also should teach their children from their early years to pray and consider God's will more than their own in their future choice of life. Half the evils in the world are caused through people entering wrongs states of life hastily, without prayer or consideration, without advice and without being fitted by God for that particular state.

**“You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you.”**

Think if you could have heard the sweet voice of Jesus as He, stood by the blue waters of Galilee Consider, it He stood in your path now, on some bright day, filling your soul with the joy by the, sweet sounds of His voice., sweeter than the sweetest music, would you resist Him? Or would you not kneeling submissively at His Feet pray humbly, “Lord, what wouldst Thou have me to do? Make known to me the paths wherein I should walk, for to Thee have I lifted up my soul.” And if Jesus, drawing you to His side were to tell you what part you were to take in this world, how you were to perform it and how you were to walk in it, how lovingly you would listen, how firmly you would promise Him to perform what He had asked of you, and how zealously you would set about God's word in life.

There would be a firmness, and intentness and happiness that few in this world have now, and yet they could have it. Before engaging themselves in any state, they could for a while retire from this world and go into retreat with Jesus, and they should always take advice from one of those to whom Jesus has said, "He that heareth you heareth me. In such a retreat you might

be able to decide far better than amid the distractions of the world, where Jesus' voice is not so easily heard because of the noise and bustle which often penetrates into the soul itself. You would probably come out of this retreat with a clear knowledge of your work in this world and of the mission God has given you.

### **The Call unanswered.**

What a strange attitude some persons, even good Catholics, take with regard to this all-important question of what God wishes us to do with the life, He Himself has given us. How much more serious this becomes when dealing with the life and vocations of others. How very wrong those parents are who, ~without any consideration of God's Will on the matter, with scarcely a prayer about it, consign their children to this or that work, without considering what God may require of them, what He seems to have fitted them for, or what their spiritual guides and advisers (who have greater light as regards their souls than even their parents have) may have counselled them to do. This is a matter that should be seriously considered by all who have the real interest, welfare and happiness of children at heart.

If a wrong step in life is taken, how difficult it is to repair it. Certainly, it is not irretrievable. Nothing, thanks be to God's great mercy, is irretrievable, in this world, but what a risk is run! Therefore, look upon your children as God's children rather than your own, whom you are to bring up for God, for his honour rather than for yourself. Do not thwart them then, if God seems calling them to dedicate themselves wholly to Him., or in any other reasonable desire, unless you really have reason to believe that their wishes are opposed to the will of God. Watch your children's dispositions when young, see in what direction their inclinations turn, foster them, when good and endeavour to make them grow, rather than repress them, as is sometimes done by foolish parents when they find their children's inclinations taking a turn contrary to their own desire concerning them. What serious harm those parents do, who strive to hinder their children's vocation to the religious life.

There may be many persons in the world who have neglected this special call to give themselves to God. What have they done? Ah me! They little thin when they neglect that good inspiration, that gentle whisper of Jesus, sounding deep in their hearts, "Come follow me", what sorrow they are laying up for themselves, what a ruined life is before them. They will never know why they are not happy as others, why such difficulties rise around them, hindering their progress in perfection and seeming to endanger their souls and, in some cases, not merely seeming, but actually doing so. They

are restless, uneasy, anxious; they are not in their right place, not in the place where God is ready to enrich them with special favours and tokens of his love. It is true that God often gives souls who have chosen a wrong state, cross upon cross, which in some measure makes up to them for those graces which they have missed. He gives them grace in other ways, but their earthly lives are not as happy as they would otherwise have been.

Let us be most careful in impressing upon the young, the necessity of finding out what is their vocation, that is - the special work for which God has destined them - and of being unbiased by self-will, self-love or selfish inclinations in their choice of a state of life. It is very certain that there are some souls continually on the reach because they are not in the place where God intended them to be. They have not found their special work, their particular mission and therefore they are not contented or they may be beset with some temptation which grace itself seems scarcely able to master. It is because they are where they should not be. They are not in the place where God had reserved such great graces for them. They are indeed struggling, but it is a very hard struggle for want of those special graces that God would have given them were they in the place to which His holy will appointed them.

**“Master, we have followed Thee! ”**

Let us now look again on that sea-shore where Jesus called to Himself the souls intended for so great a work. Were they chosen for any great qualities in themselves? No; if they were chosen for anything special in them, it would seem to be their nothingness. They were illiterate uneducated men, and they do not appear to have had any specially attractive natural qualities. We admire them for this one thing, the readiness with which they obeyed the call of Jesus. Ah! let us turn and invoke those- Apostles, by the glory of their vocation, by the ready hearkening they gave to it, by the joy it must ever be to them that they did not neglect it, - to intercede with the Sacred Heart for all who are called to do a work for God. and may they, blessing their clients now from above, obtain for them that they may hearken readily and having hearkened may persevere courageously and obediently unto death. This is not written exclusively for religious and we nudge on you, who are living in the world, to realize that you have a vocation, that the state of life which you have chosen, after prayer and with advice, is a distinct vocation from God which He has blessed and consecrated. To those who have not yet chosen a state of life, we would point out the importance of seeking to discover it, so that it may be in conformity with that in the Mind of God. You who have embraced Holy

Matrimony, what a beautiful life you have chosen, and with what opportunities of grace. You may truly imitate the Holy family; *you* may people this earth with holy souls, -for as a rule, children brought up by good parents turn out well. What a great need there is, in these days of good Christian marriages.

### **The Mission-field at home**

The whole is going wrong, evil is in power. You may then indeed be glad if you hold important positions and offices in the world, that may enable you to be more for God's Church. When in such positions and offices, you must do your duties, with earnestness and zeal, not supinely, not lackadaisically, or giving way for the sake of peace. 'There is too much of this in the world, too much lukewarmness, there is perhaps as much lukewarmness as badness. Society seems divided into three classes, the good, the lukewarm and the bad. Therefore we can see how it is that evil preponderates over the good. The good are in the minority, the bad wage war against them, the lukewarm take neither one side or the other, but are rather inclined to - side with the bad, if not doing so would be at all likely to disturb their peace and comfort.

There is much more energy wanted from the laity in these days. The poor priests are overworked, the religious do their best, but cannot cope with the quantity that has to be done, unless they have generous secular help, and help that is not tiresome. Persons are needed who do not want to take up too much time or are not easily put out at trifles, persons working for God's glory without self-love and therefore not anxious to take the foremost place, but only anxious to do as much good as possible. Ah! if we could but reform the vast mass of the people, what a change would come over the face of the earth. We are almost stunned at the amount there is to be done, but let each do their duty in their own circle, let each do all they can in their own state of life, and how soon there would be thorough change and how much more glory would be given to God.

### **The Reward exceeding great**

How happy also would they not be, who are ever busy about their Father's business who put it before the business of the world and who do not leave to priests and religious the whole work of labouring in God's Vineyard. This is the great mistake so often made, for no priest or religious can do for you what you should be doing for yourself, *first*

*in your own family*, and then around you in your immediate circle. Did we not read, not long ago of a poor servant girl who converted her master and his family, and who was the means of a church being built and a mission established. Can we doubt that she fulfilled her vocation? She accomplished the world God had given her. She was blessed in this life, she will be still more blessed in the next. Can we doubt but that Jesus will greet her with the same smile with which He welcomes his consecrated spouses or the zealous missionaries who laboured so for His Glory in far off lands? We need these missionaries, yes, but we want home missionaries also. The poor heathen who are converted do not know the state of the countries, from whence come those who convert them. It is well they do, not, their faith might staggered if they did.

Take then, these things to heart, and with great faith and hope and with an intention springing from charity resolve to fulfil perfectly the duties of your state of life, and though you may be neither priest or religious, to regard your state of life as a distinct vocation, distinct Call from God. Respond to that call generously, and He will give you grace to do much for Him.

Is not this an answer to Our Lord's own Appeal:

*"The harvest indeed is great, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore the Lord, of the harvest that He send labourers into his harvest."*

(S. Luke X. 2).