

Mary's Call

On Devotion to the Dying

by Mother Mary Potter

INTRODUCTION

Jesus alone in the Tabernacle! Alone as regards the people of this world, but ever surrounded by adoring, loving spirits endeavouring to make atonement for the coldness and the neglect of people who believe, yes, firmly believe in his sacred presence, and yet so cruelly neglect him.

Jesus alone in the Tabernacle! What is he doing - of what is he thinking? O God, that we might for one day watch the heart and soul, follow the thoughts of our dear Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

He sees all that is going on on earth; he watches the battle raging amongst his people. He tenderly looks upon his chosen ones, he blesses them times unnumbered. He regards anxiously those in danger; He looks

wistfully upon some who have fallen. He sees how very near some are to committing sin, and he looks almost hopefully upon someone of his people who could help those who are in temptation.

He whispers, for his voice is hushed; his hands are, as it were tied, and his feet, as it were fastened, so that he cannot himself go to the assistance of those in need but he looks anxiously, longingly upon the souls whom he has enriched with graces that they may help him, that they may go in his place in search of the lost sheep. And yet, so many are deaf to his whisper, so many are rejoicing in the graces, the gifts he has given them, and forget the hungry, the naked, the sick souls they could help, if they stretched out their hands to them.

Many are too happy, too warm and comfortable in their devotion to think of one devotion dear, most dear to the Sacred Heart, and yet, if they could see into the depths of that loving heart, (the very slight glance of which they have received

has so entranced them that they remain rapt in contemplation of the wondrous love they have found there) - if, I say, they would enter into the very interior of that Heart, it would lead them to a work of charity of which none could be greater nor more salutary for the salvation of souls and the peopling of heaven, or more dear to their Mother's heart, or more desired by the suffering Heart of Jesus, the burning Heart of love in the Tabernacle, or more glorious to the Holy Spirit, the Eternal Word, the Father Almighty, and ever adorable and blessed Trinity.

No! There is no greater work than this, which Mary is calling her faithful children to perform. Join then, the ranks of those who have given to Mary their whole lives. Learn from her the work she would have you do. Follow her as she leads to you to the altar rails. Kneel there and listen, and in the quiet stillness there will come to your soul a whisper from your Love, telling you to go forth for Him, to go and seek those whom He most anxiously wishes to assist, to help them - spiritually to help them - when you can, by personal assistance, but to help them whichever way your position in life allows you; to help souls, poor souls who are in their agony, who are dying, and dying in enmity with the dear Lord, whose eyes had so often wept tears of bitter anguish at the thought of the loss of the souls He loved so well.

Oh, if you would do an act that would endear you to your Lord, pray for the dying, suffer for the dying,

work for the dying. Today they need your prayers, tomorrow will be too late. Come near the Tabernacle. Ask Jesus what you can do for him. Surely your heart has often burned to do something for your his Love, as his Heart came close to your own. Surely, surely, you wish to do something for him, when you see him so helpless, so dependent on you, so unable to work as he did when in his mortal life, he walked the earth doing good to all.

Now that Jesus leads another life, now that in his sacramental life, he is dependent on others, on those who love him, to do for him what he formerly did even to the sacrifice of his Sacred Body and Blood (which he leaves to his priests to offer, thus renewing the sacrifice of Calvary), surely, I repeat, we will do what Jesus so desires we should do. Do what he leaves us to do that we may show our love for him. Do in his place what he, whose love has imprisoned and hindered him, cannot himself do... cannot, I say, for so has his loving providence ordained, that the work of saving souls should be carried on through our instrumentality.

Oh yes, we will be about our Father's business. We will work our Love's work. We will listen to Mary's call, we will answer, ADSUMUS! Here we are! Anxious to work for Jesus, anxious to fulfil his will, longing to correspond with his wish,

longing to show our good great God, that we do love him that we do want to serve him, that we do want to live for him alone. We will do what Jesus wishes. We will give him all he asks of us. We will do what he has left us to do. We will be in his place on earth. We will go about as other Christs, we will continue as Jesus, to go about everywhere doing good.

There is work for all to do in our Lord's vineyard, work for all who love our dear Lord and wish to please him.

Oh then, you who read this little book, read it in a gentle and kindly spirit - do not be censorious. Do not find fault because it may be somewhat disconnected, but look only to the earnest wish of the writer, that the prayer that accompanied the writing may be fruitful, and may sow seed in the hearts of those who read... the seed of a holy resolution to engage in the work that the loving Lord in the Tabernacle so desires, the work of saving souls, even at the last period of their earthly existence, and saving dying sinners.....of saving those who are in their last agony. Do a grand work each day of your lives.

Look how people labour to achieve some work that shall be for the temporal good of others - look how they devote a lifetime to it - and we, each day, may do a greater work than they have done who have spent their whole lives upon the object that seemed to them 'good' - upon the accomplishment of that which was indeed good for the mortal life of their neighbour.

Do we believe we shall be heard if we pray? Do we believe there are souls in terrible need of our prayer? Do we believe that not far from us, at this very instant, a soul is departing from its body, lingering yet as though its guardian angel detained it by ardent prayers, hoping relief may yet come before it is too late?

Do we believe this - can we believe it - and go through the day careless, forgetful, selfish in our own griefs or joys, not thinking of those who will so soon appear before a God of justice, to be sentenced to eternal misery or everlasting joy, while we may obtain this joy for them if we will - may avert God's fearful eternal punishment - if we will! This constant thought of death will not make us unhappy or melancholy. It will make us happy with that bright joyous happiness those have who are engaged in doing good for others.

As the habit grows upon us, of constantly remembering and assisting the most destitute, the most in need of on earth, so will our interior happiness increase. As we daily more and more endeavour to assist them, by short prayers, by the offer of our daily duties, by the offering of the Eucharist, even when not personally

present at it, by asking our guardian angel to offer it in our place, by offering our Rosary or by any other practices love teaches us, so shall we live in a sunshine of happiness which will carry us through life so peacefully, so happily that those who live with us would long to learn the secret of our constant joy.

The thought of death will be the best preparation for our own. The assistance of the dying the best means of securing help for ourselves in the hour of our death, the best assurance of our own happy death.

Oh then, commence at once. Commence while reading these lines, offering the action as a prayer, a suffrage for that intention. Offering your every breath in union with the last breath of Jesus for those who are in their last agony. Regulate your thoughts so that they may be ever in union with his thoughts, whose every thought was one of love for those who were dearer to him than his own life.

If we would but strive to attain this love, so that unconsciously our every thought and act is a prayer, how beautiful would our lives be in the sight of God. Our acts are few in comparison with our thoughts. How important then that our thoughts should be in harmony with those of God! Would that our thoughts were so pure, so full of love, that they were constantly ascending from our hearts as sweet incense to God!

Would that our lives were ever full of delight to God, because of our whole time being well employed, our hearts praying, even when we seem to be doing nothing - for the earnest wish of our hearts is a prayer before God, and those who are always wishing - not selfish wishes, but wishes for their neighbour's good, wishes that God's kingdom may extend, wishes that God's kingdom may indeed come.

Though we must indeed pray earnestly, if we would receive great favours, nevertheless, if we are in union with our dear Lord, he will grant our very wishes. "Delight in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart"; and we must delight in him - he is our joy, our delight, our good above all goods, our unspeakably precious treasure. "Jesus, the good, the beautiful, is everlasting God!"

This is what the lovers of Jesus sing unconsciously in their hearts, even when they do not know the lovely hymn. They feel sweet surprise who, though unknown to themselves are growing nearer and nearer to Jesus. They are surprised, I say, as their wishes, their little wishes, are granted, and they become more and more childlike in their intercourse with Jesus and He loves them the more for their trusting familiar love.

They are his favourites who treat him thus. For Jesus has his favourites, and these are they who lovingly trust him, who treat with him confidently, boldly, but from their very love and close intercourse with him, so reverently.

Love is always reverent. True love cannot exist without reverence, and the more deep the love, the more intense the reverence. Love is likewise bold, and the more we love God, the bolder we should become with him, and the greater favours may we ask from him. Speak to Almighty God earnestly, boldly telling him you have paid him more than you own him for yourself, that there is that which is infinitely over and above the debt you owed - will he give it to those who are in such dreadful need?

Yes, we may speak confidently to God, since in offering the Precious Blood, we have more than paid the debt of our own sins. In one sense, we indeed owe God nothing, Jesus has more than paid for us - we offer Jesus in satisfaction for our sins. We offer the Eternal Father infinite satisfaction for finite sin. Oh then, let us plead with the good God who so loves the bold prayer, who so loves the charity that prompts it. Oh what will charity not do! What can it not do? Let us fill our hearts full of that dear, dear virtue.

(But) do we understand what true charity is? If we were to answer truly, we should say indeed we know little about it, or at least we should all be obliged to acknowledge that we have but little of it! How shall we know how little we have of it? Let us examine ourselves seriously!

If we have charity, we shall love others as we love ourselves. That means more than we at present think. From mere natural sympathy, we often weep with those that weep, but do we truly rejoice with those that rejoice? Ah, if we truly loved, if we loved sincerely, we should rejoice in others' joys as if they were our own. We should delight in the honour others received. We should be grateful to those who give honour to them, who do good to them. We should almost feel as though a personal service were done to ourselves.

Those who possess this charity are indeed happy. They have every joy with them, since others' joys are theirs, and even others' sorrows, knowing as they do that they have power to alleviate them by the wondrous power of prayer, are a source of joy to them, the joy of the soul that unselfishly seeks to do good to all, that knows the good it is able to do - of the soul that faith teaches to imitate God, that does so, day by day, striving to live a life of love for God and man, that imitates God's conduct towards others, that sees God in others, that therefore, possesses God within itself.

Oh that we did possess within us that God, whose presence makes Heaven within....not only within, but around us too. Oh that the great God of heaven, who ever reposes so peacefully, so tranquilly upon the choirs of Thrones, might rest where He so loves to be - within our heart!

It is something so wonderful, this thought of God's presence within us. It is so marvellous a condescension, that his glory seems to shine more. He seems to become more lovely as he hides in the tabernacle of his creatures' very bodies - more lovely than when we contemplate him resting on the glorious thrones in our future heavenly home.

Yes, he will abide with us if we really will it ourselves. And if he abide with us, we may ask whatever we will, and it will be given to us.

We will then, O God, We desire, as you who live within us wish that we should, that our brothers and sisters may be saved.

We who live in this time of mercy may hope, should hope. there should be no such thing in this world of mercy as no hope. Therefore should we plead with the God who lives with us in this world, therefore should we ask confidently, telling him that in other parts of his universe, he shows his various adorable attributes, that in this part, this world we live in, he show his attributes of mercy, as he seems to do in no other, - that therefore, we will ask him to be merciful, and we will strive to imitate him as best we can.

Our hearts shall be attuned to his heart, which opened on the cross and poured forth mercy for all, when it poured forth his precious blood. We will let a continual, merciful prayer issue from our hearts, that the all merciful God may show mercy. It shall be ever flowing, it shall be humble, constant, hopeful.

We will strengthen ourselves to continue it, we will refresh our souls by bathing them in the precious blood. We shall not wary, for the happy consciousness will come to us, how great a good we are doing, and from the first dawning of the peaceful thought that we are indeed saving souls for all eternity, will come a still stronger assurance, that our own souls will indeed be saved - that forever and ever, we shall possess the God who is now our All in all.

Yes, the closer the union of our soul with God, the greater the increase of love in our hearts for our good Creator, and for everything around us, and the peace which his Holy Spirit will breathe into us, will be the commencement on earth of that heavenly peace those will possess, who have obeyed our dear Lord's command, and loved others, as he has loved them

Chapter 1

A MEDITATION ON THE LAST DAY

"Arise, you dead, and come to judgement!" and the multitudes who have lived upon this earth arise to appear before God, to appear before the Lamb of God in his glory the glory of that suffering human nature triumphant with the rays of the Divinity surrounding, flowing from that Sacred Body. Rays of beauty, of sweetness, are springing from the high throne of God, and flowing towards him, the desired of all the nations, and springing from the sacred heart of the Incarnate one.

The same glorious rays flow to the heights of heaven, the throne of the Holy of Holies, and what are they? - rays of love, of mercy - of all God's attributes! Yes, - they are now to be shown to be glorified, and one more especially, one we think least of, one equally infinite with the others, his Justice.

Arise you dead, and come to judgment! Oh, most miserable multitude now assembling, unhappy beings, of all created things most wretched, the victims of God's justice they are now crouching, they are now in fear and wretchedness, awaiting the proclamation of their sentence.

It is but the proclamation, for they know it already, they know their eternal, unhappy doom, but they still dread to hear it proclaimed. But they must hear and quake in anguish and still confess their sentence to be just. Yes indeed, just! They, poor beings, must glorify God.

Despite themselves, they must glorify his justice, they must magnify his purity by showing the hatred of the all pure God for sin - his horror and detestation, his loathing of it, since it can draw down this terrible justice from the God of mercy, from the God whose mercy is above all his works.

God, we adore your justice, but we love your mercy. The ray of your justice is grand. You are not God without it. But our eyes are dazzled. We cannot look upon such glory! We turn to your ray of mercy, and longingly, lovingly, contemplate Mary, the Queen of your mercy, and we are Mary's own, and love to look upon the fruit of your mercy.

And behold! Who are these happy ones? Oh! the glorious face of our Mother, as, hurrying towards her throne, flock young and old, rich and poor, of all tribes and nations of the earth! Oh! the beautiful smile of Mary as her own flock to her, that she may place them at the right hand of Jesus! Oh! the loving look of Jesus to his mother and her children, as she presents them to him! Oh the happiness of the guardian angels, of glorious saints! Oh the happiness of our own hearts, as we claim our own! Yes Jesus, let us say it! as our mother is queen of mercy, so her children tried to imitate her; They suffered and prayed with her (each in their own degree) to save souls, and now these flock around them for whom they suffered, and cry aloud to them: You saved us: We should have been sent to that miserable crowd, if you had not brought to us the Precious blood, the saving Blood of Jesus.

Reader, stop from the contemplation of that last day of retribution and consider. You have got time, you live in God's time of mercy. You may save souls every hour, might we not say, every minute of your lives, and you are wasting precious time, time so precious because every moment may be used in bringing the Precious Blood to our own souls and the souls of others.

Let us realise what we can do. Let us make acts of faith, hope and charity. Let us visit the Precious Blood, let us take that Precious Blood into our own hearts, and let our hearts be as vials in which we carry the Precious blood to apply to the souls of others.

Think of what you might do, think of how you may spiritually carry the Precious Blood to souls and heal their wounds. If you have love in your hearts, you have Jesus - you have his life. You may be as Mary, your Mother, dispensatrix of the Precious Blood. What a great work, what a happy life, what a happy end!

Holy Spirit, inspire your children, make us earnest, zealous - make us live as Mary would have us - loving souls, healing them, saving them, and for all eternity, have the happiness of claiming as our own, the souls we saved by aiding Mary to bring the Precious Blood to them.

It is from want of thought we are so callous, so cold, about this great work. There is so much to be done, so little in comparison to the needs, being done.

We might convert our friends if we would. We might instruct little children, and teach them of the good God. We might bring those to their duties who are neglecting them - a few words would often bring people back to the sacraments - but above all, prayer, and especially prayer for that great need we have endeavoured to point out to you in this little work - the need dying sinners have

of earnest, ardent prayer, that they may not present themselves before Jesus with their souls stained with the fearful guilt of mortal sin.

This is work for all. None can excuse themselves from it, none can say they cannot do it. They might say that for many reasons they could not speak of religious to their protestant friends - either they were afraid of offending them, or they were afraid of losing their tempers in arguing. Our duties likewise prevent our instructing and so on - this may all be true, but with the work here pointed out, the work of saving souls at the last by fervent prayer, by offering patiently our trials, by placing ourselves as it were at the portals of the church to allow no soul to go forth for whom we have not prayed, by pleading by all that is most holy, most efficacious, by realising their terrible need and inflaming our hearts with love for those souls, and pity for their terrible danger - this we can all do, and if we really challenge our souls to realise their sad state, we shall find innumerable means of succouring them - of endeavouring to prevent their leaving this life at enmity with God.

We shall touch their souls with the Precious Blood. We shall work miracles - yes indeed, the miracle of grace. God so loves to work the conversion of the sinful soul, the prey of the devil, into a beautiful soul - the temple of the Holy Spirit, the precious fruit of the Passion of Jesus.

I ask you then, to read these pages in a prayerful spirit, that you may derive profit from them, and may desire to do so. You must see that if you do not love souls, you are not like Jesus, and you desire to be like him. You do wish to be beloved by him.

Then you do as people who have no appetite, try to create one. Pray that your heart may be touched by what you read, and that you may earnestly set about the work here advised - that it may inflame you with a desire of commencing at once what will render you so beloved by Jesus - what will fill you with constant, holy joy, - what will make you especially dear to Mary - what will make you a saviour, a mother of innumerable souls.

Whatever occupation you are engaged in, this can be part of it, and the charity that will grow more and more in your heart, will fill you with peace, and a hitherto unknown happiness will so possess you that you will wonder where it comes from. But the prayers of those who were ready to perish - souls safe in peace in Purgatory, are raised to beg God to bless their benefactor, and God is only too glad to shower graces upon one who is imitating his beloved Son so closely, who is contributing to his glory, who is doing his will on earth, as the blessed do in heaven.

Chapter 2

Oh how the tender Mother of pity and compassion sorrowed on earth over sinners! How she now in heaven longs for us to co-operate with her in saving them!

See from her appearance - see how she longs to save sinners. I copy from the authentic account given of the vision at that favoured place where she appeared, and where many miracles have been worked: "The look of the holy virgin appeared in an to travel over the whole earth, and when directed all filled with sorrow, toward Bernadette, who was on her knees. 'What is the matter, what must I do?' said the child to herself. 'Pray for sinners', replied the Mother of the human race.

On beholding sorrow thus veiling like a cloud the everlasting serenity of the Blessed Virgin, the heart of the poor shepherdess all at once experienced a cruel suffering. An unutterable sadness spread itself over her features. From her eyes - continually quite open and fixed on the apparition, two tears rolled down her cheeks, and stopped there, without falling."

Oh, that beloved child of Mary was happy in the union with her Mother which made her suffer when she saw that Mother suffering.

We too, if we loved Mary more, should suffer as we see the human race of which she is Mother, so steeped in sin, so easily led from Jesus, so deceived by Satan. Mary is looking upon the world, longing to save sinners. She watches the onward course in sin of each single soul. She hears the gentle voice of Jesus pleading with it, and the clamorous sounds made by the tempter to drown that voice.

She sees the enemy drawing nearer; she sees that souls permit itself to be blindfolded and thus become an easy prey, and Jesus is left. But does Jesus cast that soul off there and then? Does he not seek to enter again into the heart that was once His own? He does!

To what can we compare the efforts made by our Lord to enter the hearts of his creatures? He has himself consecrated the practice used by the saints of making homely comparisons a means of arriving at some idea of truth. "I am a worm and no man, the despised and most abject of men", he says; and again, " We have esteemed him as a leper, and as one struck by God. There was no comeliness in him, that we should be desirous of him. "These are the words of scripture in

reference to our Lord.

Have you seen an outcast, homeless animal, stricken with some complaint, driven piteously from door to door, receiving a kick from one, a stone from another? Have you noticed the piteous look in the poor creature's face, as it wanders about, seeking for shelter and finding none? If you have, then that poor stricken thing may remind you of him who was as one struck by God, who was wounded for our iniquities, bruised for our sins. Jesus it was who was driven hither and thither in his Passion, who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and who as a sheep before his shearers, opened not his mouth.

What was done to Jesus in his passion is a figure of the treatment he receives in all ages. People will not give him entrance to their hearts, or they take him in for a time and then send him forth, and the thought of those who would do that, the thought of the sin of Judas, was a far greater suffering to him than when his sorrowful heart cried on the hilltop near Jerusalem: 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children to my breast, as a hen doth her brood under her wing, and thou would not.'

But we will, sweet Lord, we will come and nestle in the resting place you have provided for us - your own most sacred loving Heart. We have heard your cry: 'I looked for one to grieve with me, and there was no one' and for one that would comfort me, and there was none.'! We will remain and be warmed in this furnace of divine love, and we will take from there sparks of divine love, with which to kindle the flame you desire should be enkindled - the love of souls.....your love, the love of your heart, for 'the one that loves not his brother whom he sees, how can he love God whom he does not see'.

If your brother were dying, would you leave him alone, untended, uncared for? All of humanity are your brothers and sisters. The souls that are this moment in their agony, the souls that before this day is ended must appear before the dread tribunal of divine justice are your brothers and sisters. Jesus died for them. He died for all, be they who they may. No matter to what country or tribe of people they belong, our Lord shed his blood for them, and has put into your hands his body, blood, passion and death - all the actions of his holy life. He has given you infinite treasures, that you may use them for the good of souls, and you leave those treasures untouched that should be used for the intention of the Sacred Heart, to beg a last grace, to satisfy divine justice, and to bring down the mercy that God so desires to bestow on the dying sinner.

It is the wish of our dear Lord's heart. You who love that heart, you who have banded together and daily watch in turn to show your love and your desire to

make reparation for the outrages it receives - do not forget the souls who are dying, who, if a grace is not given to them. may be torn forever from the heart that beat and bled for them.

Our Lord's desire that we should pray for one another is shown most plainly in the revelations made to the saints. To St. Mechtilde it was said: " If anyone, out of pure love to God, prays for another person as though he were praying for himself, his prayer shall enlighten the heavenly Jerusalem like the morning sun." To St. Gertrude it was revealed that however small the good work might be, that was done for the glory of God - if but one 'our Father' is said for the welfare of the Church - the Son of God receives that work with ineffable delight as the fruit of his Passion, gives thanks to God for it, blesses it, and in blessing multiplies it.

Who would not wish to increase the fruit of our dear Lord's Passion? Who would not wish to add to that glorious multitude who have washed their robes in the Blood of the Lamb? Who would not wish to give our Lady more children or not wish to save an immortal soul from the eternal misery of the loss of God?

To what can we compare that fearful loss? To many has occurred the comparison of the needle and the magnet - and it is a true comparison, for the disembodied soul must tend to its centre - it must seek to rest in God. The lost souls, however, are condemned never to rest. Kept back from the eternal repose for which they were created - the peaceful rest in the bosom of the Eternal Father. They are kept back from the blissful vision of the most high, most holy God.

Instead of the wonderful harmony of angelic song, they hear horrible sounds. Instead of the Beatific vision, they have the perpetual vision of hell, with all its fearful sights and horrors. Horrible, most horrible is the thought of the poor lost soul kept by the iron hand of God's justice from ever possessing what it must ever want - God himself.

We cannot enter into that misery, we cannot understand it, unless - which God forbid - we experience it.

A homely comparison may give us some faint idea of it: Imagine some animal, a lion or a dog, chained up with food placed just beyond its reach - imagine, if you can, the raging efforts of this starving creature to reach this food, for which its whole being craves. It is but a poor comparison. I might give you another, and though they fall so far short of any approach to the reality of the misery of a condemned soul, they will be of service if they induce you to acquire a habit of making visible things serve as a means of raising your thoughts to the invisible. It is a most useful practice.

For my further comparison however: You may have heard how a certain lay brother in a monastery, whose duty it was to cook for the community, was observed, in the middle of all the distractions of his task, to preserve a wonderful recollection and spirit of prayer - being constantly discovered in tears.

Being asked how he maintained his recollection, he replied that the fire - at which he constantly to be - reminded him of the fire of hell.

We may imagine the various forms this holy man's meditations took from the sight of the fire which was so constantly before him - gratitude to God who had died to save him from these eternal flames; humility, in the thought of the sins he had committed, or might commit, or the sins of others and the purity and justice of God, which demanded satisfaction, which demanded the everlasting fire as reparation to his outraged majesty; and then he would have to turn again to Jesus, upon whom had been laid the iniquities of all of us, and to remind him lovingly of his Passions, of all he had endured to save souls from the eternal misery of hell fire. With great earnestness, with a heart full of pity, he would beg Jesus to show mercy to them. He would beseech Mary to pray they might not die in their sin, and be cast, body and soul, into fire so fearful that the fire of earth may, in comparison, be called but a figure of it.

The example of this holy monk shows, likewise, how every state in which God's providence places us, tends to sanctify our souls and has peculiar graces attached to it. This simple monk, in his humble employment, arrived at a higher state of holiness than he would have done if to please himself, he had remained hours before the Blessed Sacrament.

All the day long, there are occurrences - simple accidents of daily life - by which, if we wish, we may raise our thoughts to the unseen world.

Have you ever seen a dog separated from its whelps? Chained to its kennel, the poor animal is in very agony - one almost continuous moan, almost a sob. Sometimes, fearfully howling, it will leap to the end of its chain, almost dragging its kennel with it. Wearied, it goes back into its kennel, and lies down, but out again....it cannot rest, and the melancholy howl ends again in the low, almost human sob. It is distressing to hear, but we can draw a good thought as we think of the frantic efforts of the lost soul to reach God.

So strong is the tendency of the soul to seek God, that the power of God alone could keep it back.

Do you know what it would be to be ever being pulled to what you know you

could never reach.....to be ever falling and yet never reaching the ground - to be ever drawn by an attraction stronger than the attraction which draws the apple from the tree to the ground, and yet never to be able to reach the centre to which you are attracted?

If hope deferred makes the heart sick, what must that place be like where, though desire in the soul is intensified, there is no such thing as hope? Not one straggling ray of hope enlightens those accursed of God. Can you realise this? No! you would die if you did. But our Lord did. Jesus saw it, realised it.

O Mary, whom your favoured servant Grignon de Montfort has called the "echo of God" (see True Devotion) , make to arise up in our hearts some reverberation of the echo that arose in your own when the cry of dereliction arose from the heart of Jesus on the Cross, 'my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' The Son of Man, he who made himself our brother, took the punishment of sin to its extremity. He who died for all sinners, who died for each in particular, who saw each individually before him, as he hung on the Cross, he had taken all our iniquities upon himself. He had placed himself in our place before the Father and when the Father rejected us, he felt that rejection, in a certain sense, which we shall see by Mary's spirit in humble meditation as applied to himself.

Jesus, in taking human nature, made himself one with us. Oh that God may give us the grace to understand how Jesus is our own, our very own, and then we may come nearer, though it be only a little nearer, to understanding the dereliction of our Lord on the Cross. We might understand a little better, how he, the Vine felt the branches that would die and be taken from him.

He presented himself before the Father for all creatures, for each individual soul. Each soul sorrows for its own misery, but Jesus sorrows for all. His grief was greater than any earthly grief, for he was capable of greater suffering. His grief was indeed great, for he alone could understand what those ever wretched souls had lost.

Think of these things by the side of Mary, and they will be profitable to you. We must not shut our eyes to the truths of faith because our own desires lead us to look at what is most consoling to us. We would prefer to keep away from us the thought of the eternal fire of hell, with its living victims, as something too terrible to contemplate. Unless otherwise directed, the soul should not ignore this terrible witness to God's awful purity and his most strict justice. It is a subtle device of the evil spirit to try to hinder souls from meditating on this part of God's creation, either by raising scruples, by suggesting doubts, or by various other temptations well known to directors of souls, who therefore wisely advise that what causes

trouble and distress of mind can do no good in such cases, and is not to be dwelt upon. Where God is, there is peace, but did our Lady lose her peace at the sight - the sight of her children in hose flames? No, most certainly not. Sorrow she did, and mourn with our Lord, but her mind would not have withheld itself, even if it could have done so from seeing anything that revealed more of God to her.

As the beautiful paintings of the old masters derive a great deal of their beauty from the marvelous mixture of light and shade, and would lose their harm without such a contrast, so a weak soul that looks upon the world of sin, and shuts out the thought of the eternal punishment that was made to punish sin, does not see God as the stronger soul does, who - led by Mary - is taught by the darkness of hell, the wonderful light and purity of God.

Mary, who though she is the Mother of fair love and of holy hope, is likewise the mother of fear...." I am the mother of fair love, of fear, and of holy hope", as is read in her office. The Immaculate Flesh trembled, the spotless soul of Mary feared as she contemplated what she knew was even above her comprehension.... the unspeakable sanctity and holiness of God.

Mary saw the whole of the universe, with its lights and shadows, its exterior darkness and its unapproachable light, and derived profit from all. All God's works are instructive to us, though like his gifts, we may abuse them instead of using them. A saint has said, unless we go down to hell in spirit now, we are likely to go down, body and soul, hereafter!

CHAPTER 3

Humility grows wonderfully in our souls as we look upon the punishment God created for sin, and in the thought that we have within us, no matter how high our grace may be, a capability of conceiving and giving birth to that monster, that abortion, mortal sin.

We are capable of committing such sin, as the examples of the old law show us. See Solomon, the wisest of men. See David, the man after God's heart.....Not only are we capable of committing mortal sin, but we, most of us, have committed it, and by that sin, deserved eternal punishment.

There is nothing so terrible as mortal sin. Its punishment, eternal separation from

God, is not so horrible. The soul that commits a mortal sin turns from God, its true spouse, and becomes an adulteress. Instead of the soul giving itself to the Holy Spirit, that by the operation of the divine Spirit, Jesus may be formed within it (those who have entered the Path of Mary will understand my meaning), the soul gives itself to the devil and by yielding to the operation of that evil spirit, conceives and begets the enemy Jesus Christ, sin.

If your soul is not strong enough for the contemplation of a hell and its unfortunate inmates, you are right to treat it as an invalid must do, but you nonetheless lose a grace, which you should strive to make up for by humbling yourself. But do not, I beseech you, make what is perhaps needful for yourself, as a rule to be applied to others with whom you may have any influence, by leading them to think that the thought of hell, the devil and his satellites is a thought not calculated to do good.

The evil that is caused by the forgetfulness of these truths is not known. We are surrounded on all sides by temptation. A saint saw the whole earth so spread over with various temptations, with traps set by the evil spirit to ensnare the human race, that he broke out with the exclamation: "Who then can be saved?" It was but a moments wonder, for he, of course, knew well that God's grace is sufficient to overcome all temptations. We all know this, it would be a great sin to doubt it. But not knowing our danger, we do not seek God's grace, and we fall.

We do not think that numbers of our actions are done at the instigation of the devil. Many would be offended with you if you told them that. They would not like to think that he came to them.... That might be said to you, as it has been said to myself. O foolish, foolish people. God grant they may not remain blind to this important truth, until they visibly see in the next world that which they should have seen by the eye of faith in this - that is, the power, the art, the cunning of the spirit of darkness - the ingenuity with which he has woven a web over the whole earth, and the dexterity with which he ensnares, entraps, and draws within his clutches, those who, like flies, flutter unthinkingly about the earth, forgetful of the enemy who day and night lies in wait for them.

They walk in the midst of dangers, heedless as moths near the flame which attracts them, and they fall like those moths through ignorance of their danger.

You who do know that "man's life is a warfare on earth" and that "we wrestle not with flesh and blood but with the principalities and powers, the spirits of darkness in the high places," rise up, strong in Jesus Christ, and fight for your weaker brothers and sisters.

Nowhere is there more need for this great help in the battle than at the deathbed. At no time is there greater need to show our love for our neighbour, than at the hour of death.

You know yourself that of two sick people, one in danger of dying if not relieved, and another whose case is not so dangerous - you would know to which of the two you would first hasten with assistance.

Could you see any human being, even were he a stranger in the jaws of a wild beast, and not try to help him? To the credit of the human race, be it said, neither you nor anyone could look on without making some effort to save him, even children have been known to expose their lives to save others in great danger, and yet what is the human life of the body in comparison with the immortal life of the soul?

We are taught that the devil as a roaring lion goes about seeking whom he may devour. We know that he has his clutches already upon many souls who have but few hours to live. Yes, there are some already within his jaws, they have but a few minutes respite before they are devoured, and buried in hell, and yet in those few minutes they may be saved.

Oh, if we could but see, as the angels see that wonderful effect of God's grace upon the soul, the instantaneous transformation that takes place when God's spirit breathes into it but one sigh of sorrow for its sins. If we had but one glimpse of that marvellous work of God in the soul of a sinful child of Adam, we should not wonder that those magnificent creatures of God, those beautiful spirits, whose intelligences are fed with wondrous joy and love form the vision of Divinity itself, we should not wonder as we do now, that an exterior work of God could cause a new joy to those who behold God in himself. We should kneel in earnest prayer that the will of God may be done on earth as it is in heaven, and that we may cooperate with that will of God.

God's will is not that the sinner should die in his sin, but rather that he should be converted and live forever. We would pray that by thus using the treasures that God has put into our hands, the merits of Jesus, we may daily increase the wonderful harmony, the joyful melody that is heard in heaven upon a sinner doing penance.

God gives us a picture of the joy with which he welcomes the returning sinner, in the loving account of the return of the prodigal son. We may notice in this parable that the motive for the return of the son to his father was not a very pure or perfect one. It was not sorrow for having left his father, and by his bad conduct

disgraced his name. It was not a desire to see his father, and relieve his anxiety about his long absence from home. Famished with hunger, he remembered the plenty, the abundant supply, that even the servants of his father's house enjoyed, and he said: "I will arise and go to my Father".

That good Father, however, did not look at the motive for his sons return. He saw him far off and went to meet him and fell on his neck weeping , and called to the servants to bring the first robe, to put shoes on his feet, a ring on his finger, and to kill the fatted calf and make merry saying "Because my son was dead and is now come back to life - was lost and is found."

Thus it is that the sinner more often than not returns to God. it is not with a perfect act of contrition that a soul in most cases returns to God. It is not with a deep sorrow for having offended God who is so infinitely good in himself, so infinitely good to us, that the soul in general seeks to be reconciled with him. It returns from many motives. The fear of hell, the desire of heaven, the wish to find peace, the feelings of the emptiness of all earthly things, and a hunger and a thirst for its proper food, the knowledge that the things of this earth cannot supply the void it feels, and that God alone can give to it the food for which it craves, finding from experience that earthly and perishable things cannot sustain an immortal soul.

Various and imperfect as the reasons are that cause the sinner to return to God, God in his love overlooks that imperfection, in the free pardon he grants when the sinner fulfils the necessary conditions of pardon as taught by his church, and like the good father mentioned in the Gospel, he goes to meet his prodigal child. By his ministers, he clothes the soul in the robe of charity, and feeds it, and rejoices over it, and calls on his servants to rejoice, for his son was dead and is alive again, was lost and is now found.

He shows greater love to the forgiven sinner than to those who are ever employed in his service. He tells us himself that there is greater joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than on ninety nine just, who do not need penance.

Oh the joy with which God welcomes back to his loving embrace the child that has strayed from him. O God, good God.....and we may do this work for you, and yet we don't do it.

We know that there are souls in danger of eternal separation from you, and we do not breathe a prayer for them, and yet you have measured our love for you by the love we show to others!

We say that we love you, whilst souls, immortal souls, are being lost for ever. They are in the agonies of death, they are as drowning people, surrounded on all sides by waters which threaten to engulf them. They rise for a few minutes before they finally sink, and are seen no more.

Those who have watched the dying who have witnessed the death struggle which is so hard with some, have seen how they seem to sink and then to come to life again; and many who for years have lost the faculties of their mind, regain at the last the use of reason, purposely, as Divine Providence has designed in numberless cases, to give the soul an opportunity of making good use of the last of the time allotted to it. Oh that the prayer of some charitable soul may bring a grace at that moment! There may be no time to send for a priest, but a perfect act of contrition will save that soul, and restore to it God's grace, if unhappily it has lost it.

God treats the sinner who repents with an exceeding goodness, as I have already shown to you, and lavishes grace upon grace. We know that all who use one grace well, another is given, and another upon that, and so on. Thus a chain of graces, as it were, is formed, one linked to the other, reaching to eternity, and that one grace lost is a chain of graces lost. But the graces that God gives to the returning sinner, make our hearts burn within us as we think of it. May we make use of another homely comparison to bring this a little more clearly before us, that so we may love God better, and be more anxious to obtain from him that first grace, the grace of contrition for dying sinners, which is the foundation upon which he will afterwards erect as wonderful a building, processes of sanctification - commenced even at the hour of death, and rapidly developing and ripening, as we see in the case of the penitent thief?

Let me make a comparison that most people will recognise as true. If a good hearted person has been injured by a friend, either by angry words or in some other of the various ways by which charity is broken, and the friend afterwards feeling grieved for the wrong he has done in damaging the friendship that had existed, comes openly and asks forgiveness, and asks that what has passed may be forgotten, and that they may be to one another what they were before. What would a person of good disposition do in such a case? Surely not only readily forgive, but would demonstrate by actions, how entirely the offence was forgiven, whatever it might have been. By actions of kindness, by a delicacy of silence in never referring to what had passed, by carefully avoiding any topic of conversation likely to bring it to the other's mind.

There would be a new kind of friendship resulting from this. There would be a link not easily broken. And it is thus God acts, and though the comparison is weak, it still shows us a little of how He acts towards those who are sorry for

having offended him.

What marvellous condescension of God, who hates intensely, infinitely, the least sin - in whose sight the heavens are not pure - in receiving the sinner back, without a word of reproach, but with the promise that he will remember no more his iniquities, that he will cast his sins into the bottom of the sea, and that though they were as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow.

The wonderful graces God pours upon the penitent soul make us exclaim in loving admiration; "Who is like to God"? And the souls upon whom these graces are bestowed, humbled, like St. Peter, could exclaim. "Depart from me O Lord, for I am a sinful man", but, grateful beyond measure for the love with which it feels itself encompassed and surrounded, murmurs with broken voice to him who it knows is listening, and "I have found him whom my soul loves, I hold him fast, nor will I ever let him go." Happy soul, if it dies in that act of love.

God grant such a happiness to you and to me, to the soul now stricken down with but a few hours to live. Let us hasten to that soul in danger, Let us be bold with God. Let us prostrate ourselves in spirit upon that soul unprepared to appear before its God, and cry out to him: "If thy hand of justice is about to strike this soul, it must first strike me! You have commanded that I should love my neighbour as myself: I do but fulfil your command."

Could we but see the look of love which Jesus casts upon that soul, when thus unmindful of itself, it prays for the salvation of its neighbour, we would try to earn for ourselves that look of love. We would make a compact with God that whenever we looked upon a crucifix, we would breathe a sigh for a dying sinner that whenever we entered a Church we would go the Tabernacle and knock and pray, the plead that one drop of Blood from that Sacred Heart may fall upon some dying sinner, and that the Sacred Heart to which we have come, may speak comforting words to a souls that died whilst we were praying, died contrite, by the grace our prayers had gained it.

Animate yourself by your love to Jesus, to pray for those whom he desires to love for all eternity. Give yourself to this work of love by applying to it whatever most moves you to zeal in God's service. We have all some special devotion, but devotion to the sufferings of our Lord, and desire to save souls for whom those sufferings were endured, must be above all devotions. Others must lead to that.

As God's spirit guides you, dwell at Bethlehem, at Nazareth, in Jerusalem, or on Calvary. In all places Jesus suffered in body, in all places was his soul athirst with desire to save souls. So must it be with you. Kneel in the cave at Bethlehem, go up

to Mary's knee, and in silent worship, gaze upon the babe whom she holds in her arms, whose eyes she turns towards you.

Well may you be silent. Words cannot speak what your soul thinks. One look into the incomprehensible eternity of the ever-blessed Trinity; one thought of the ineffable repose of the Eternal Word in the bosom of the Father, and your gaze remains still upon the Virgin Mother and the Child Divine.

Scripture thoughts well up in your mind as you recollect the cry that the saints of old sent up to heaven, "Drop down dew you heavens from above, and let the clouds rain the just one." The heavens have dropped down dew, the clouds have rained the just one. "Let the earth be opened, and bud forth a Saviour." The earth has opened, a Saviour has sprung forth. "Mercy and Truth have met together. Justice and Peace have kissed each other." "Truth is sprung out of the earth; and Justice has looked down from heaven." Truly the mercy of God and the truth of his his justice have met together in that infant upon whom we are now looking.

Wonderfully have his awful justice, his unspeakable peace, embraced and kissed each other in that child, that holy one of God lying upon Mary's arm. God is truth, and truth has sprung out of the earth. God is just, and his justice looked down from heaven and exclaimed with utter complacency of him who fulfilled all justice, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear him." "For the Lord shall put forth his goodness, and our land shall yield her fruit." And God put forth his goodness, he sent forth his Holy Spirit upon our land, our own Mother, upon Mary, and she brought forth her fruit, even Jesus.

"He shall judge the world with equity, and the people with his truth." Blessed be our God for his infinite compassion and love. Truly will the world be judged with equity, with perfect justice. But the satisfaction of that justice has been laid upon Jesus, and Jesus the Word, Truth, Incarnate Truth, will judge the world. He will judge the people with his truth.

"Let all the angels of heaven adore him;" thus went forth the decree of the Most High God; "Adore him all your angels". Sion heard and was glad. Bending in lowliest adoration, clustering round Mary in wondering love, these majestic, these most beautiful spirits - who, in heaven, before the throne of the ever blessed Trinity, unceasingly exclaim, Holy Holy, Holy - now offer on earth, worship to their Creator their God, the new-born babe, whom they had ever seen in the bosom of his Father in heaven, whom now they saw and adored, resting on the bosom of Mary, his Mother on earth.

"How shall I extol thee, O Holy Mother of God," you exclaim, "for he whom the

heavens cannot contain rests thy Babe upon thy bosom." Well may you look from the face of the infant Jesus into the face of Mary his Mother and cry with the angels "Who is this? She is not God, she is a creature of God, and yet his Mother. She is of pure human nature; she is our nature, but Immaculate, and yet she is Queen of angels. Look again upon her as she holds her God in her arms, as the angels worship and pay their adoration for the first time to their God in human form. They are filled with ecstatic joy; they cannot feel sorrow.

We love these beautiful spirits, and they too love us. We are ever near them, they are ever watching over and caring for us. They are ministering spirits. They too, are looking upon the face of Mary their Queen, wondering at her super-eminent prerogatives, rejoicing in them, praising God for them. Wonderful is God in his saints. Yes, but how much more wonderful is God in Mary, the Queen of Saints.

These and many other thoughts pass unconsciously through our minds as in spirit we visit Bethlehem. Thoughts of love too for the dear St. Joseph mingling with our love for the holy angels, distract not our mind from the Mother and the Child.

Inexpressible happiness beams on the face of Mary; or rather, the beatitude of the blest seems to radiate from her. The very joy of God is suffused through her whole being. he who is the source of all joy is in her arms. She holds Jesus, the precious pearl of the Most holy Trinity, and possessing him, possesses all.

Mary's thoughts are too far removed. They are raised too far into a region above our comprehension, for us to think to follow them; but one thing that we do know, they were not centred in her own happiness. She did not forget why Jesus had come. She knew that God had been mindful of his Mercy, and that he had done as he spoke to her Fathers, to Abraham and his seed for ever.

he had come, the desired of all the nations. He had come not for her alone, he had come to save mankind. She offered her Jesus, as before she had offered herself, and though she knew that the offering involved suffering, ignominy, death, Mary's love for God, her love for us, were one, and the will of God that Jesus should die to save us from our sins, was met by Mary without a single conflicting thought or wish.

His will was her will. She could not wish anything other than what he willed.

How different we are to Mary. We struggle over our sacrifices, grace upon grace goes forth, before we give ourselves up to its gentle influence, and a greater part of our religion, our prayers, our Communion, are a worship of self. We use

God's gifts and graces, not as he intends we should, to benefit the souls of others as well as our own, but as the man did the talent in the parable, we hide them away, make no use of them as far as other's spiritual good is concerned, and they will not profit us in the way , or to the extent they might.

How shall we learn to be unselfish? We must learn it from Mary. We must study Mary, we must beg her spirit. We must give ourselves entirely to her and from her we shall learn to say: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord!" and as the eyes of the handmaid are on the hands of her mistress, so will our eyes be unto the Lord our God.

Chapter 4

We shall learn from Mary to seek nothing but the will of God, to regard ourselves not as belonging to ourselves, but as belonging to God, ever ready for any employment he may appoint, be it high or low.

We may not know now what our future is to be. We should pray to do God's will in that unknown future, but we should not be over anxious to know what it is.

You are doing God's will now if you are seeking to co-operate with him in the salvation of mankind. It is a grand work we are allowed - no commanded by the law of loving our neighbour as ourselves to do.

I might startle you if I used the word that is, nevertheless, used by theologians, and said that you are to be co-redeemers with Christ. Yes, even you, who know yourself to have been deserving of the fires of hell, are none the less, by the divine will of God, appointed to a certain work in imitation of Jesus - a work for the good of souls.

You, the members must work in union with the head - with Jesus. Do I repeat it to you too often? It is necessary to do so. Get rid of the ownership you now feel in yourself and in your good works, and then God, seeing in you so good a disposition for receiving grace, will pour forth graces upon you which you will take not as meant for yourself alone, but for others.

There are many who would say as Peter said, before he was Saint Peter....."Lord, it is good to be here," when God leads them to Mount Thabor, and forget that it is not there they can be like Jesus, but that it is good - from the glimpses that God gives them of his glory - to wish that others too may see and feel as they feel.

Yes, it is good when we feel God's love, poured out upon us and we have a brighter view, though the brightest view on earth is dim, of him and his incomprehensible beauty dawns clearer upon our minds. Oh, it is good then to come away from Mt. Thabor - to which God in his goodness took us, with a resolution of following Jesus along the way of the Cross.

It is good to grieve over those who do not know the good, the infinitely good God; over those too, who have known, but have forgotten him, over those who are so very near, and yet so very far from him....sinners dying in sin - dying and so near losing him, for all eternity.

Souls are dying and losing God for eternity. You read the words, but cannot comprehend them. Let this book that you hold in your hands, fall. It falls, the leaves close, you cannot see anymore the words that are written. It was done in an instant, and that instant is an image to bring before your mind of how the whole volume of time, from the Creation to the Day of Doom, is like a book that has fallen in the middle of eternity..

Natural feeling we might think, would prompt people to help their fellow creatures who are in such great need of help, who are in such fearful danger of losing eternal life. How often we hear of heroic deeds done by men and women and even children, to save the life of the body - only the body - the mortal life which some time or other must die. A man will jump into the water to save another, even at risk to himself, or venture into a cage where some wild beast is pounding its keeper to death. A woman will throw herself between a couple of combatants and receive the blow or wound that the one intended for the other. A child will venture to enter into a burning hut, not once or twice, but even three times to rescue its little brothers and sisters from the flames.

You know these instances from real life. The Royal Humane Society's records would give instances of many more such acts, or you may have know of such self devotion in your own homes. Natural feelings prompt these heroic acts in many cases. Should not supernatural feeling for immortal souls in danger of eternal death prompt heroic supernatural acts? Yet, take it to heart and ask yourselves - you who read this - how many times in your lives have you heard it said that someone has met with a bad accident and is not expected to live. You know the person to be thoroughly worldly, utterly unprepared to appear before God and you, what did you do? Did you besiege heaven with your prayers that that soul might be saved even at that eleventh hour? Did you lovingly complain to your Lord "Oh Jesus, you died for that soul, will you not save it?" Did you cry to our Lady "Mary never was it known that anyone appealed to you and was not heard?" Did you, speaking metaphorically, bring that person to the foot of the

Cross, and with reverent familiarity, that God so loves, place that dying child in his sight, in the sight of Jesus crucified, speaking to him and asking him "Why should this soul not be saved?"

Too well you know in your heart that the answer would be that he had not come to Jesus that he might be saved. He had not come to receive the Precious Blood upon his soul, that would have cleansed it from the sin which will keep it from God's sight for ever, unless it be washed away. Did you, growing bolder and bolder, and in spite of the apparent rejection of your prayer, urge your Lord, that it did not come, but that you have brought it? Did you, as you watched the great drops trickling from the wounds of Jesus, exclaim more boldly still, "The very inanimate earth receives your Precious Blood, it is trickling upon the ground; shall not this living immortal soul receive one drop?"

God will love you if you exercise such charity. But have you done it? Have you heard of sudden illness? Of people stricken suddenly in the midst of a well-known sinful life? They are unconscious, you are told, and will probably die without recovering the use of reason. And you have heard the news carelessly, and without a thought how, for all eternity, God will be deprived of the glory that soul might give him in heaven, how the passion of our Lord will have been to no avail, except to relieve in some degree the severity of that dreadful pain that the soul will endure eternally, if it dies in that state of sin - if it dies without the return of that reason which it is necessary it should have, in order to acknowledge its God before it dies, and beg forgiveness for those unforgiven sins that now defile it.

You have not only have not prayed as I have said, but a single "Hail Mary" has not even passed your lips, so little concern has it been to you that one of your fellow creatures has such need of your charity, that the last of time has come, that the last chance is about to pass away for that dying man, for whom Christ died.

At all hours, souls are dying and in need of our assistance. We are employed in various ways, and do not think of what is going on around us. I make a short extract from Father Faber's "Mary at the Foot of the Cross":-Who could live if he realised what hell is, and that every moment immortal souls are entering there upon their eternity of most shocking and repulsive punishment? We smell a sweet flower and just then a soul has been condemned. We watch with trembling love the elevation of the host and the chalice, and meanwhile the gates of that fiery dungeon have closed on many souls. We lie down upon the grass and look up at the white clouds dipping through the blue sky, as if ether had waves, and catching the sun on their snowy shapes, and all the while hell is underneath that grass, within the measurable diameter of the earth, living, populous, unutterable, its roaring flames and countless sounds of agony, muffled by the soil that cover the uneasily riveted crust of the earth. What agony would this be if our minds

were equal to it, or co-extensive with its reality; no, if we realised it, we could not survive many hours even if we did not die upon the spot."

To think of this will not cause you to be melancholy and sad, that would be contrary to God's will. Exercising charity towards others brings Jesus nearer to us, and the presence of Jesus makes us happy. charity brings joy and peace along with it. Charity is the first fruit of the Holy Spirit, the others follow in its train.

You must think of these things to enkindle in your heart a burning desire to save the souls that are in such imminent danger. You are not required to alter your special devotion to do so. As I have said, wherever God's spirit leads you is best. The attraction that leads you to one mystery of our Lord's life more than another, you have no doubt found increases your love of him and strengthens your soul. Therefore, as a tree is known by its fruits, you may safely conclude that you are led by his spirit. And though the passion of Jesus is most especially applicable to this work that I advocate, this work so dear to our Lord's heart, this intercession for the dying, still let us, in our prayers and meditations, refer them to this work of mercy.

You may love to be at Bethlehem. You have found the child with Mary his mother, and you remain. But are your thoughts, as you look upon that Divine Infant, wholly occupied with the joy and happiness that radiate from that countenance, in which, mingled with its childlike expression, the divinity shines out as its eyes meet those of Mary, and from her eyes are reflected peace and happiness, as she looks upon her child, who is also her God? Is Calvary forgotten by Jesus? Is it unknown to Mary? It was ever before the eyes of our Lord: "I have a Baptism with which I must be baptised, and how I am straitened until it be accomplished," are the words of Jesus.

And Mary, can we think that she did not know the prophecies that spoke so plainly of the Messiah: "They have pierced my hands and my feet, they have numbered all my bones." Had Mary never read that? Oh surely yes. She knew that the tiny hands that Joseph loves, that she holds out to him as he kisses them with reverence, will one day be pierced with cruel nails and that those feet will be crushed by another nail driving into them, bringing terrible pain and anguish, which she, his Mother, must watch but not alleviate.

She knows that the delicate form, moulded so beautifully - "for he was beautiful among the sons of men", formed of her substance, nourished by the milk from her breast - she knows full well that the Infant flesh will one day be scarred and seamed until there will be "no sightliness in him, that we should desire him."

If Mary, sinless Mary, did not forget this, as she looked upon him, whom the angels longed to gaze upon, should we, sinful creatures that we are, forget it as we too look upon the Babe of Bethlehem?

Oh no! We should bring it to our minds. We should look upon this Divine Child, this son of God, son of Mary, as he is resting peacefully within the arms of Mary, pressed close to her breast, but who would, hereafter, be pressed close to the Cross, fastened to its hard wood by rude nails, and we should think of this, and bring to our minds the Blood that will come from those hands, those feet, that Side.

Even from the eyes will come drops of that life giving stream, forced out by those cruel thorns that surround his brow. Those beautiful eyes, which speak their love for the human race, will be glazed and dim by his agony on the cross. He will be "esteemed as a leper and as one struck by God." We should remember these things as we look at the babe of Bethlehem, and recollect why these things are so. Why will that divine infant be known hereafter as the Man of Sorrows? Ask yourself that question. Your conscience will cry "For my sins." It is true, "he was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our sins."

It seems to us, that Bethlehem is sadder in some senses than Calvary. The fearful expectation of what was to come must have been excruciating agony to Mary's heart. The anticipation of evil is always a most trying pain. Think then of Mary's gentle soul continually kept on the rack, anticipating the future of her Son.

In saying my Rosary, commencing with the Joyful mysteries, and entering into our Lady's spirit, there seems to me a sense of relief when Calvary is reached. There, it is finished, there the worst has arrived, and there the work of Jesus is consummated. He has died that his children might live. He has died that the hour of other's deaths might be the hour of their birth into a glorious eternal life.

He has died in grief and sorrow of soul, that his children might die in peace and joy. He will die no more, he can die by once. Oh but the long anticipation of that death to Mary - and Jesus himself was in pain until that day came.

How earnestly Jesus longed for good deaths! He saw the future of all, and the tears of the infant Jesus, as they rolled down his cheeks were as sorrowful as those he shed in later years in Gethsemane. There were the infants of his own age lying in their mothers' arms all round Bethlehem. He saw the probable unhappy end of many if they lived to manhood. No, he must save them. He longs for good deaths, and the executioners of Herod are the ministers of his tender love and mercy. Such are the ways of God. From a seeming evil, springs a great good.

From the crime of infanticide, practised to such a frightful extent in China, God produces in his wisdom, this great good, that numbers of souls are rescued and baptised, and thus enter heaven, who might never otherwise have been there, and the maternal heart of Mary is rejoiced by many children it might otherwise never have possessed.

We love thee then, dear Mother, at Bethlehem, though we do not think of thee there, as all in joy as do some, but we love thee Mother, with Jesus in your arms - beautiful model and picture of mothers. Open wide your arms, and draw us near to your maternal heart. I turn to you who really love Mary and wish to imitate her, and I ask you. How can you become like that most perfect mother, unless you are imitating her in her mother-love for others?

If you studied the secrets of that sweet mother-heart, what lessons you would learn. Mother-love is the purest form of love there is. "I am the Mother of fair love", speaks Mary in her Office, and those who meditate upon, and strive to discover more and more the beauties of the heart of Mary, are sweetly inebriated and delighted, as are children at their mother's breast. "Truly Mary, you are to us as the breasts of God from which we such unutterable sweetness." (Path of Mary).

From the study of the Mother-heart of mary, we learn practice after practice most pleasing to God. From the daily practice of praying for infants still in their mother's womb, to that which this work is written to draw attention to - prayer for the dying. But we must not forget that though our most earnest prayers are for those who are dying in sin, and who are in danger of damnation, and therefore of losing God forever, there are other souls in danger of dying and losing the sight of God for ever, though not in danger of hell. I mean the souls of infants.

The mother-heart of Mary longs for those souls. Are they not redeemed by the blood of Jesus? Did he not die for them? Do they, therefore, not belong to her? If they have bad mothers, must not she supply in their mother's place? If through their own mothers' neglect or carelessness, they are in danger of dying without Baptism, without the Blood of Jesus being applied to their souls, what must not Mary's children do to hinder that calamity? Let us then daily pray that God may raise many missionaries who will work to bring baptism to children. Let us be missionaries ourselves, in our own land, and go into the houses of the poor and see if their children are baptised.

What a blessing it would be if we interested ourselves in the poor more. If those who lived, for instance, in our own country villages, knew how much might be done amongst people of all religions. How many simple - no, innocent - people we find who know nothing of the Catholic faith, who though they may not

always be ready to be instructed themselves, are quite willing that their children be baptised, and will allow them to be instructed and to attend the Catholic schools. Oh, England would soon be Catholic if people interested themselves in the work of conversion, and surely it is as needful in our own country as in any heathen land. They are as woefully ignorant of the truths of religion here as elsewhere. In one sense, also, the regaining England to the faith would seem a thing more pleasing to God than the conversion of a barbarous nation.

There is desecration in our fair land being robbed of its ancient faith. There is sacrilege in the churches that were once catholic, being used for false worship. The people are ripe for conversion, and the time of those who can give it would be well employed in conversatin, familiar conversation, with the simple, ignorant poor upon the truths of religion; not so much in the way of argument, as in simply putting before them the truths of the Catholic Faith.

Let us give good example. Let us pray, let us give an answer to those around us, of the hope that is in us, and soon, very soon, we shall see the good effects. The fields are white to the harvest. Come then, and labour. Come - the voice of God calls you - "the harvest is plentiful, labourers are few....pray to the Lord of the harvest that he sends workers into the harvest..."

Chapter 5

This was the prayer of the heart of Jesus. Think of it. Meditate upon it. Offer it. Unite your own desires with the desires of the Sacred Heart, and pray the one especial prayer it has asked of you. Pray that there may soon come those servants of Mary whom the Saints have foretold are to do such great work for the Pray for those who are to renew Mary's life on earth, and draw renewed mercy from God's glorious throne. You can make no better prayer, if you wish to save souls, than to ask for saints formed by Mary.

It was Mary who brought us this mercy, the greatest mercy God could show us, first of all, and wooed the son of God from his repose in the bosom of the Father, to commence his life of suffering and labour on earth. It will be always thus.

Surely we need great mercy in the present age. Souls are sunk in sin; souls who were once beautiful, by the grace derived from the sacraments of the Church. The temptations now attacking all those who are striving to serve God are terrible - the harshest attacks directed at those who seek to serve God completely. It is sad to see so many sinking into these temptations. Think of them I pray you, if you

are truly devoted to saving souls.

Pray that those who are now dying out of the Church, may even, at the last hour, be reconciled to her, and die within her heart. That way you will prevent graces given to us by the mercy of God, being lost.

What will obtain from God his Mercy, the gift of his Holy Spirit for those who are dying in sin? Mary will! Let us take refuge in her mother heart, that we may not fall as others have fallen, and likewise unite our own poor prayers and desires with the grand prayer and desire of the Mother of the Church. Let us labour in that harvest field - the Heart of Mary - that produced the Bread of Life. Let us labour in the vineyard that produced the Precious Blood of Christ. O Mother of Christ, Mother of Christ's children, at this time of need, thy children turn to you and cry aloud: We are tempted and sorely tried, do then have pity upon us, help us and assist us. And our Mother's voice will answer us and will direct us. Our Mother will point to her sweet maternal heart, which is burning and beating with love for the human race, and she will say: 'Come to me, for I am your Mother'.

Happy are those who will listen to her voice, and attach themselves to that heart as a secure anchor. The waters of the deluge of sin which drown so many of the world shall do no harm to them. To you, therefore, who have been touched by God's Spirit to desire to save your fellow creatures, I would remind you that your desire is not so great as is Mary's. If you have felt a desire rise within you to assist those in their agony, and thus save souls - remember, it was the voice of God whispering to you, and I beg you, do not neglect that inspiration of the Holy Spirit. If you do not want to lose it - give it to Mary.

Think of the anxiety a good mother has for her child at the hour of its death. What would a mother not do, to procure ease of body and soul for her child in its agony - though she sees only dimly the awful risk it is running at that momentous hour? Oh then, what would Mary not do? You who love Mary, help her. Do the work she would have you do, take her place at her children's deathbed, and she will reward you.

Can you think of any work that would better please her? St. Alphonsus tells us that there is not act of charity that is greater than the assistance of the dying. As I have said before, those who can, should be present in person. A person in the grace of God, has God with them in a way that few but the Saints realise. St. Ignatius the martyr called himself 'Theophorus', that is, 'one who carried God within him', and 'Christoferi', or the bearers of Christ was a name commonly given to Christians. Therefore, a good person has great power in defending, by presence and prayer, the dying from the attacks of the enemy. It is important

though, that those who seek to care for the dying, work at keeping themselves in the grace of God, for then God's Spirit lives and dwells and works in them. Whereas, those who are in mortal sin - they carry an evil spirit about with them, which does mischief to others.

There are some people who strive to keep from mortal sin, and who are anxious about their own soul and the soul of their children, or those under their care, who, if they sin, will remain for weeks in that state, and are not in the slightest hurry to go to confession. It is strange that anyone who has faith can sleep, night after night, at enmity with God, and not rather take the first opportunity of being reconciled to him. We have to be awake to the impulses of grace, which will urge us to good, but only if we yield to them.

You who so constantly neglect the warning voice of God should fear, lest he withdraw, and cease even to reproach you. It is not so light a matter as you think to turn a deaf ear to the gentle whisper of God's holy Spirit. We do not think enough of this eloquent pleading of the third Person of the Trinity - or of his continual entreaty with the souls of men. Those souls who devote themselves to the work of saving souls should strive hard to increase their love for the Spirit, remembering that it is his whisper to the soul of the sinner, that produces the grace, the act of perfect contrition, that cleans the soul from sins - however great - that it may have committed, and that, even before the sacrament of Penance has been received. Such an act of perfect contrition brings the Three persons of the Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Spirit, to take their place in the that beautified soul.

It is that most holy Spirit whom I would have you invoke by your presence and prayers at the bed of death. You may say that you are too unworthy to do much good. That is true! But turn to Mary, and ask her to be with you. Hide your own unworthiness under cover of her beautiful dispositions, and then plead as Mary pleads. By what does Mary plead? She pleads by the Precious Blood shed upon the Cross. Unite yourself to that sweet mother heart, breaking at the foot of the Cross, with the anguish and grief caused by the death agony, and the grief of Jesus. The person whom you are tending is a member of the mystical body of Jesus. Ask Mary to show you what she would do - what she would have you do, and you will feel yourself assisted in this great act of charity. It will make you inexpressibly dear to your Mother, for you will be imitating her on Calvary, imitating her in the work of love she so loved to perform.

As I have said, the one thing that induced Mary to leave the retirement in which she lived after the death of Jesus, was the deaths of his members. She performed her motherly offices for his children, as she had longed to act towards Jesus when he was dying. Happy are those who are drawn by God's Holy Spirit, to imitate

Mary in her work of love at the bed of death. It is a glorious vocation, yet given to so few. O God, breathe your wish into the hearts of those chosen ones of this earth, Mary's own. Inspire them to go forth imbued with her spirit, possessing her heart, to make the chamber of death another Calvary, giving glory unspeakable to you, O most holy Trinity, who live and reign forever, in peace unspeakable, blissful, loving, resplendent. Who made the souls of all that they might rest with you for ever and ever: Amen.

Chapter 6

This devotion, which we put before you, is not new; it is as ancient as the Church itself. It is simply receiving new impetus, probably because such a devotion is never more needed than now. The devotion to the dying is fearfully needed, because it is terrible to see souls unnumbered, souls - members of God's holy Church, dropping out of time into eternity - and what eternity? - to all intents and purposes, an eternity of hopeless woe. Do what we might - convert, instruct, admonish, - there are still so many we cannot reach except by prayer. Let us then pray, and let us pray for those who have the greatest need - the dying of today... those for whom tomorrow will be too late.

Think seriously of the fearful danger souls all over the world, are in at the present moment. Think of the souls for whom Jesus died, who are now on the deathbeds, who might be giving glory to God, by making their deaths bear some resemblance to Jesus' death: Who might, however bad their lives may have been, still be brought to repentance at the last, as was the good thief on Calvary if Mary's children were praying as she did on Calvary for that dying sinner.

Can we think of that horrible 'forever without God', and not make some effort to save souls from that terrible fate? Let us just throw ourselves heart and soul into this work of saving souls. Let us put ourselves to one side, forget our selves, our selfish cares and worries, and let us launch out in the calm of our Mother's heart, and we shall be peaceful and secure, and we shall bring others to this place of refuge.

There is no limit to the number who make seek safety from the dangers of the temptations which are now spreading over all the world, by appealing to Mary; by taking refuge under the mantle of her maternal protection, throwing themselves into her arms, uniting their hearts to that dear mother-heart that beats so truly, so constantly, so lovingly. In that heart, they will receive strength to live so as to save their own souls. And not only their own, but the souls of many others,

and in doing this, their lives will shine brightly before God. They will be beautiful in his sight and the sight of his holy angels.

Let us lead noble lives, live of love to God and men, and we shall endear ourselves to God whilst we do an undying work of love for our neighbours, and show ourselves true children of Mary, to whom she had revealed the dearest wish of her heart, the salvation of the dying.

St. Getrude once complained to our Lord of the small number of the elect - if one can judge from those who were leading lives that might be seen as leading to heaven. Our Lord told her she was mistaken, that the number of the elect was not so small as she imagined.

Might he not mean, that he, in his mercy accords a good death to some whose lives did not deserve his doing so; that he allows himself to be persuaded, if may speak in that way, by the prayers, the penances, the ardent supplications of his servants, and thus is drawn to show his mercy?

Do we not read read, that his favoured servant St. Francis of Assisi, saw the fate of one of his disciples, saw the sentence of damnation that awaited him, and yet, in answer to the loving prayer of Francis, our Lord revoked the sentence. How terrible if we could see the fate of someone we dearly loved, some soul condemned to everlasting torments. Yet, how it would help us to return to the world and pray and suffer for others who we feared might share the same fate. We can do so , when those near and dear to us are in danger, and yet, if we love our dear Lord, all whom he loves would be near and dear to us. And he loves all, he died for all.

Jesus gave the souls for whom he died to his Mother. On the Cross, he made her the mother of Mankind. Never did an earthly mother love her children as did Mary at the foot of the Cross. Yet her already pierced heart felt them taken from her and condemned to eternal death. Her eye followed them to their everlasting doom. She saw in spirit what Jesus saw, the souls of the lost. Her spirit - in its measure - felt as his, and longed to save those souls. No human ever felt as Mary felt, what it is to love god. She the daughter of the eternal Father, Mother of the Incarnate word, Spouse of the Holy Spirit - she above all creation, knew how God was to be desired. Her great mind looked into eternity, and saw in some measure, what that time without end would be like, without God, the good God, the ever-blessed Trinity, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end of all things.

Her loving heart, like the heart of Jesus, saw her children condemned for ever to this fearful loss. Oh, how she longed to save them. In spirit she foresaw that they

would be lost, body and soul, in hell. She saw those who had been made like to Jesus, saved by him, for he was then shedding his Blood to save them - saw those wonderful beings whom the eternal God had created so great, that He, in speaking of their dignity had said: "I have said that you are Gods". Mary, who so delighted in being Mother of the children of God, saw those glorious beings now changed into devils.

Chapter 7

The emissaries of Satan are very busy in carrying out his wicked schemes. They are forever about the work of their master. Let us be more earnest in defeating those schemes. Let us be ever employed about the work of our master. Let us cheat the devil of his prey, of those of whom he has had possession for years and years of sin and wickedness. Let us show forth the wonder of God's mercy, in the conversion of hardened sinners, at the last hour of their lives.

Too great has been the insult offered to God by those who have lived in open rebellion to his law. Shall their death add to that insult? Shall they die in enmity with their God? No, it must not be. Satan has succeeded too well in the temptations he placed before these souls in the days of the health and strength. Now, on their deathbed, his last struggle for the possession of these souls, will take place, but it is not too late for God's grace to work. Do we not have the example of the dying thief? Does it not seem that our Lord wished to give us as striking an example as he could? He might have forgiven many a dying sinner, and we should have loved and blessed him for his goodness, but it would not have been fixed upon our minds as it is now: " And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all things to myself", were the prophetic words of our dear Lord, and we are drawn to you, sweet Jesus, you are our first thought in the morning - our last thought at night: We desire to know nothing but Jesus Christ, as him crucified. This we say with your Apostle, whom

you raised up to show forth the wonders of your redeeming grace. But, together with you, what is it we see? Together with you, Jesus, on Calvary, we see the dying sinner changed by your love and power into a saint. You have willed it thus. You knew well that as all ages would look towards that mount of Calvary, where your love for the human race was shown to its uttermost extent in that Precious Blood poured out for their salvation, so too all ages should see the wonder of the work, the efficacy of your Precious Blood, the great desire of your loving heart, for good deaths.

The conversion of the dying sinner was the last work of mercy of the Sacred Heart, before it broke upon the Cross. As the longing for good death which Jesus felt, as he came into this world as a little child, gained the happy deaths of the Holy Innocents. So, in leaving this world, the same desire, the same intense longing, procured the good death of Dismas, and gives us a revelation of the heart of our Lord. It shows us that, as of all the works of mercy he loves to perform, the work of mercy to the dying, is loved by him the most. Those who love him most, must love to do what he loves to do - what he loves to be entreated to do, and those who are seeking to please him utterly, should never cease, daily and hourly, entreating him to do. As the hours of the day go by, souls are dying, souls have died, and we have not thought of them, and yet dear Lord, how much we might have done for you.

You might say it is a good, a beautiful thought to pray for the dying, and if you had a vocation, it would beto that which you would devote yourself! You might say that you could image nothing more pleasing to do, but that you have too much to do, your work, your duties in the world in which you live, take up your time, and that you have very few moments to devote to prayer.

I answer that what you say is true. you are a great deal too occupied to spend much time upon your knees! You do have various duties to perform punctually, and punctually they should be performed. That is God's will. Whatever duty is imposed upon you by your state of life, that duty is your office, and should be looked at by you in that light. God intended that we should benefit by every act we do, and the benefit we should receive from every act performed according to the will of God would not be a temporary benefit alone, but likewise an eternal one. Theologians teach us that no action of ours is a matter of indifference to God. it is either good or bad. What a pity that we lose so much valuable time! I do not mean by laziness. I mean by that bustle and hurry to get through our various duties, which we see in so many people, and which demonstrates lamentably, the lack of good intention with which the actions are performed.

You who are reading this might have fallen into this mistake and now I ask you to reflect and examine yourself. You may not have examine the way you perform your action: You believe, do you not, that God's

providence watches over the world? Then you should also believe that he has appointed you certain works which will bring you growth, rather than retard you. To complain of what you have to do, about the difficulty in which you find yourself, would indicate that you want a trust in God. It may be that God is trying your virtue. Trust in him, and his grace will never be wanting. In proportion to the difficulty, he will bestow what is needed to support the difficulty.

It often happens, however, that people place themselves in positions which are dangerous to their souls, and in that case they must expect extraordinary help from God, and if they fall, as they probably will, however secure they may have been of their faith or virtue, it will be but a just punishment for their neglect of what they have been told to avoid:- Not only sin, but the occasions of it. People who place themselves - or remain in - positions dangerous to their souls, when it is in their power to change that position, are in a very dangerous state. The more dangerous, if they do not see their own danger. They are quite sure of themselves, quite confident in their seeming good resolutions of avoiding sin, but, there is the mischief. How strange it is, that people who show such a thorough want of confidence in God's care over them should have such an unbounded confidence in their own care of themselves! They will not trust God, who is infinitely good in himself, but they do trust their own weak, sinful nature, and by that means, do harm to themselves and to others as well. If any of you who are reading this, are guilty of this strange recklessness and presumption, I beg you to let no human respect, no worldly prudence, mercenary motive, or anything whatever, prevent you from quitting the danger which menaces your soul.

Think: Do you value grace? Do you believe that gold and silver and precious stones are but dirt in comparison with what may be termed a little grace - though indeed, all grace is great? You know it well enough. You fully believe it. Then, bring that faith into practice. Look at your past life. You have perhaps, had to move from one place to another. Was your first thought to look to the spiritual advantages you might gain by your change of residence - daily Mass and the rest? You may have many a time, taken a holiday in the country. Did you previously find out whether there was a church in the place, or perhaps have you not known there was not one, and yet determined to spend your holiday in one place you fancied more than another, though there was no Blessed Sacrament there, no daily Mass, no opportunity of receiving the sacraments?

Think of it dear reader. Look back over your life, your daily life, as well as long years back, and see if you are the least bit as anxious to obtain spiritual riches as to obtain worldly goods. Do you not allow any little matter to interfere, for instance, with a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, or the evenings prayer? How often is not God put aside for your own comfort. How sad it is.

I have said in another work (Path of Mary : ed) but I must say it again: Souls are being lost daily, hourly, momentarily. with every breath we draw a souls has drawn the last breath in this world of mercy, and has entered another region, a region where the Divine Justice is exercised with a severity we shrink back from contemplating. And if we could ask each miserable soul that has already commenced its eternity of woe, why was it lost? What, if it answered truly, must be its answer? It had neglected grace. I beg all of you who read this, think of what

I say: DO YOU VALUE THE SALVATION OF YOUR SOUL? Then, value grace. Do you care for the souls of others - your children, relations, those around you whom you love, because Jesus loves them, and died to save them? Do you care to assist with him in saving them? You must value grace.

Do you care, with Jesus, to glorify your Father who is in heaven? You must value grace. Do you care, with Jesus, to glorify your Father in heaven? You must value grace. These are three motives. You must look at them separately, and influence yourself by whichever has most weight with you. You may say to yourself:- For my own good, I will get all the grace I can, or for my neighbour's good, I will strive not to lose graces that so many poor souls are in such great need of; or you may say - for God's good, to glorify him, that his wonderful mercy may be shown upon this sinful world, I will treasure, I will esteem his graces, as it is his wish I should.

Take these motives separately if you will, but they are one reality. See if they will not induce you to make a strong resolution for the remainder of your life, to look at grace in a different light, to realise that it is an entity, a real thing, far more real, far more valuable than the greatest treasure this world could give us.

But in strongly advocating the esteem of grace, I would not have my meaning misunderstood. There are some sadly mistaken people who seem to think that the church is the only place where God gives grace. Now, whilst I bitterly deplore the disregard so prevalent amongst Catholics of all classes for the graces they may obtain in God's house, the place where he opens his hands and fills with his blessings every living creature, I also grieve over some - I do not think their number is great - who are so wedded to a wooden rule, that they have made for themselves, that not even to do an act of charity will they miss one of the services of the Church. A case in point is one in which a person, who was nursing a sick person, asked another to come and sit with the invalid, whilst she went to the early mass. She was surprised, and not a little disedified, by the refusal from this religious person, on the grounds that she was always accustomed to hear both the early and the High Mass!

I would counsel those who feel they are wanting in a proper liberty of spirit, to invoke every morning, the Third Person of the Trinity. Let them unite themselves to the heart of Mary, and make an offering of the precious Blood, in union with the dear mother-heart that furnished it, and very soon, will they find wonderful effects of God's holy spirit produced in their souls.

There are many people - worthy people - who have a great longing to do good. They would be very happy to have the opportunities they see enjoyed by others,

of hearing Mass, frequenting the sacraments, visiting our dear Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and making reparation to him for the offences offered to him, but they think, as they are so much occupied with their various duties, they cannot do the good they wish. Yet how much good they may do that they do not think of! The best intention we can have in all our actions, is the intentions of doing the adorable will of God. That thought will give a zest to all that we do.

If we do our actions because they are the will of our Father who is in heaven, we shall do them as we should imagine he would wish us to, and shall therefore, avoid that hasty, excited way of setting about our daily work, that almost certainly produces numerous venial sins, and not infrequently, mortal sins. But of this, I have spoken before. If we are doing our actions because they are the will of God, we shall do them carefully and earnestly.

When all things were in silence, and the night in the midst of her course, when your almighty Word O Lord, came down from your royal throne, and the angels praised you saying: Glory to God in the highest, they spoke also to the the people of earth, bringing your message: Your promise of peace, to a troubled world. But, to whom would that priceless treasure be given my God? Not to men of noted good deeds - no. It was simply to 'men of good will'. "Glory to you O God," the heavenly army sang: "Glory to you in the highest". Peace to the poor human race, peace even on earth, to men of 'good will'. Amen.