

# Unpublished Conferences

## Mary Potter to her Sisters throughout the Congregation

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## SPLITS 1.

(from Australian Archives Box 1, Item 2, MMP).

The apostle speaking of sects, [and] divisions in God's Church indignantly asks, "is Christ divided" (1Cor 1:13)? Now we who compose the Little Company of Mary must have the some horror at any kind of division in that Little Company. It may be unnecessary to refer to this, "one in the Heart of Mary" we all love and many it ever reign the favourite motto of all the houses that compose that body, but still we must recollect we are not immaculate. We live in a fallen world where it is the nature of everything to grow corrupt. There are dangers all round us. The enemy is on the lookout to soil the beauty of the new fresh flowers that has appeared in God's Church. He may see at present no breach where he may insert his ground weapon of disunion, but he will watch eagerly for the time and the moment when he may descend in power and commence his work. Ah, my children well also to

withstand him! Can I give you any signs of danger? It is difficult, very difficult. Of course, the attacks of the enemy are so many and so varied, but as before now he has made his way into houses through party spirit, through ambition, through dislike of interference, through love of authority. It is well to think and review these different bad fruits of the evil spirit. It is possible to exist in a community. Certainly a noviciate is a place where people come in from the world bringing their worldly ways and thoughts with them. They cannot get rid of them at once. We have our pet ideas of virtue. They cling to us and we do not wish to part with them, and perhaps we should be startled if we were told that we might be the cause of the ruin of vocations of many. The breaking up of that particular work we are engaged in, or houses if we cause a party spirit in it, or if we do not put it down if we are in office, or make it known if we are not in office. We are partaking in the sin, but we are as thick as thieves and our idea of honour would not allow us to make [it] known. If ... we had God's honour at heart we would not hesitate one moment in making [it] known to our head superiors. If we were loyal to them we should know that it is our bounden duty to make known what is going on in the body, which they govern in God's Name, and of which they are by His Authority the head. But no, the worldly, or I might say school girl thought, is talk or tell-tailing, is impressed upon their minds and they ignore what they are told, and what any reasonable thinking mind must see the wisdom of, that the head must know what the hands are doing. For as in our corporal body the head must know and direct all the members, to be a reasonable being at all, so in another sense must the heads of a company such as ours. Look at the Company of Jesus. Again we must instance them. They have never been reformed, because never deformed. What is their spirit? What do those who join them have to promise before they are admitted into the noviciate? That they allow others to mention what they see them do or hear them say. In fact speak what they like of them to their superiors, and they agree to this, and also agree not to seek to find out who has spoken of them or resent it in any way. Why my children, think what an imbecile, mad people, why they are people who talk or act, walk, sing without reason, without the head directing them? We say they have lost their reason, and we mean they have lost their head. They are not directed by their head, and the head is, as it were, not aware what the members or the body are doing, so they act without thought or reason. We, not so my children, know or if any should ever come to join the Little Company or not know, may they be sent back (who have not this spirit) to the world whose spirit they possess. We know we are or hoe to be part of that little body, that 'Company of Mary' and we know it must be "one". It cannot be divided any more than our own dear Mother's Heart can be divided. We know the Company of Mary is to be one, as is the Company of Jesus to this present day, despite continued assaults. And if we do not know one thing we might know it to our disadvantage and that is, God's curse will fall heavy on anyone, who, urged by the spirit of darkness, which is opposed to the sweetness, the beauty of the spirit of light, God's Spirit, by which we alone can continue [to be] "one". Yes, whether urged by that pure

spirit, or led on by our own will, love of self, or distinct opinions, and our own ideas opposed to the religious diffidence. The restraint of will and thought a true religious possesses, and by which the one so replenished with liberty, [possesses] the liberty of the children of God. May those who are slaves to their own opinions, ideas and wills never attempt to form part of the Company of Mary, and if they do so attempt, may their efforts be frustrated, and may they never turn backwards blushing for shame. Dear children, this is a severe conference. We like not to write it, but it is the serious things we see and hear of, and love for our Mother's honour fear lest it should be retarded in any way by not having been sufficiently warned. Love for your own souls, my children, for strange it is, the innocent and most simple are often more easily drawn away by evil than the worldly. And knowledge of this world shows us that evil penetrates everywhere, and one evil disposed mind, one sister, who has lost the spirit of her vocation, would be sufficient to affect many. And how can we be sure that such a one may not enter, or rather that a sister may lose grace and become such a one, and strive to make a clan or clique, strive even to deceive the faithful, or at any rate the unwary. If there was one in the small company of the apostles, one in twelve, how can we expect to be without unfaithful members? Why should there not arrive a traitor amongst us? Nevertheless we will hope that our dear lord by a stretch of His unbounded mercy and by an exertion of His omnipotent power, may prevent such an evil. That from His love of His Mother's Heart, from His desire for its honour He may put forth His hand in power and stay such an evil from desecrating the Little Company of Mary. "That He will send His holy angels, headed by Michael, to keep pure the sanctuary of Mary's Heart. And that we her children will be one with another in honouring our Mother by showing the virtues of Her Sacred Heart before God and man. Yes, before heaven may our hearts be sending forth sweet incense, the perfume of love and humility, like Mary. Before the world may we so act, move and speak that Mary may indeed [be] shown forth in all that we do and say. May she live again in us, and may our lives be beautiful before God's Church in heaven, on earth by their being lived, and our hearts being animated more by Mary's spirit, than our own. We feel we cannot speak of all the evils that cause disunions in communities. [We] will not mention ambition and all the evils in its train. This is not so great an evil since we must know it is sinful. But the other evil party spirit, keeping hidden, from false ideas of honour, what [it] is our duty to make known, siding with certain parties from a wrong idea of loyalty, since there is but one side in religion, God's. All these evils are more dangerous since they have all appearance of good in them, and therefore, are more likely to deceive the many. So let us avoid them. So let us live simple lives, humble ones like Mary our Mother, as we have promised God to do, avoiding all that savours of the world; all that is of the earth, earthly. So shall we indeed walk with God in this world during our life here, and hearing His sweet voice calling us by name to come to Him hereafter. Now kneel and solemnly promise God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, one only true and

living God that **one** hand in hand you will walk this earth, **one** always one in the Heart of Mary. Thus may we cluster around our Mother at the throne of God.

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## SPLITS 2.

God is one, yes, dear children. We know our good God and we rejoice with those of old, who chanted so joyfully that there was no other like to Him. Yes, we want no other but our one Holy God. We love those who are like to Him in some very faint degree by imitation of Him, by virtue they have received from Him. Yes, we love the angels and saints, the just on earth who have [received] from God of His goodness. These in heaven look upon His face; they enjoy His Beatific Vision and rejoice that there is but one God, the Holy one, the first. There is our dear Mother Mary again. She is but one. We do not indeed wish another. There is the one Holy Catholic Church, for which Jesus shed His Blood. The Mystic Spouse of Christ, of which when [there is] some division, some threat against its unity its oneness, the apostle indignantly cries out, "is Christ divided" (1Cor 1:13)? And so my children, my object in what I am now writing to you, is to impress upon you the beauty of this unity, this oneness, which we see in God and His works, so that in any future time [if] some evil thoughts should arise suggested by the suggester of all evil, no matter whether he should disguise himself as an angel of light, as he would most probably, I wish to prepare you all. That if that day should ever dawn upon you, may one and all discard the suggestion, indignantly, and as the apostle cried out in His wrath, "is Christ divided?" So may you cry out, "is our blessed Lady divided?" Is her Heart divided? We are formed together to make one united body pleading from our sweet Mother's Heart, as she once pleaded when she lived in the world, living by its instincts as it were, breathing its wishes. Ah, then dear children, how thus could we divide this Heart? You will never think of it, I hear you each one say, but it is well to be warned. And it is my duty to forewarn you of every possible evil. I might not have thought of it, but [I] have heard so much here in Rome about quarrels, splits, and disunions, for the upsets of the whole world are brought to Rome to be settled. I know one community established about 30 years, split into three parts. It is a great cross for them, and I know so many, many more instances that I have not time to tell you, but which naturally make one learn very much, and able to warn all of you. And indeed I should feel answerable to God if I did not warn you, and take warning myself, by all I have now, [which is] an opportunity of hearing and seeing.

God no doubt has His own wise nature in bringing so much to my knowledge that we may take warning, by knowing the rocks on which others have split. He does not wish His Mother's Little Company ever to be divided, to have any splits. So let us be wise and take warning and learn all we can to do our work for God. Better to be able to void the deceits and snares of the evil one, who would try to draw souls away from the right path, to lead us away from the Sanctuary. Our guardian angel led us to the Sanctuary of our Mother's Heart. The beauty of the Little Company of Mary in God's sight is ever to be its unity. A band, a company of hearts all "one in the Heart of Mary" formed together by God's Spirit in honour that most beautiful of God's purely human works, the Heart of God's Virgin Mother, that Immaculate Heart, that Virginal Heart, that Heart that was still more the Heart of a Mother, the most perfect of all mothers, the Mother above all mothers, the Mother of God, whom God in His love and mercy has made Mother of us.

Well dear children, do not for one moment imagine that I think one of you have ever the slightest thought of such a thing as a disunion in the Little Company of Mary. But we should be unwise to think that we may not be tempted as others. And I feel that I must write this, that I may fulfill a solemn duty before God calls me to Himself, and I can then write no more for you, and suffer no more. But the power of prayer will be greater, and the love will be greater, when I see you all from God's bosom. I shall often be able to speak to you if you will listen to me. And I shall always be able to hear you when you speak to me, and tell me your troubles and wants. But be sure, whenever you do speak, to ever thank the Sacred Heart of Jesus for the mercy shown to me, and the grace that enabled me to suffer a little for His love, who loves us all beyond all human comprehension. Yes, merciful beyond compare is the most Sacred Heart of Jesus, and yet there is justice and punishment sent forth into the world when creatures blaspheme against His Immaculate Mother. Yes, and punishment great would come to any who might at any time (which God forbid) raise disunion, discord, attempt to divide for any seemingly good reason our Lady's Little Company. Have I spoken enough? Have you understood? Will you turn to that dear Mother's Heart and renew your consecration and promise you will be faithful until death? You will be united. You will walk hand in hand through life and will hope to meet all one happy Little Company in heaven. Yes, we will be one please God in our time of trial and temptation, our time of working for God on earth. We will be one, please God in our time of suffering in purgatory. We will be one in our happy rest in our eternal home in heaven.

Our Little Company will have but these three parts, and these three parts all reverently, be it said, but **one** as God is one.

## **COMPENDIUM ON THE RULE**

The spirit, type and model of the Little Company of Mary is Calvary.

The sisters form a united body honouring the Heart of our Lady, especially on Calvary.

The sisters whose vocation is both contemplative and active pray and work ever in union with our Lady for the good of holy Church, especially for its members who have greatest need – the dying. For these they watch and pray before the Blessed Sacrament, as though watching on Calvary the dying and death of Jesus, offering His Precious Blood for the dying of the whole world. In the same spirit they watch the deathbed, doing for the sufferer all they would wish to have done for Jesus in His agony. They are present in spirit at the death of Jesus in his dying members. In union with our Lady they watch by the dead and follow their remains to the grave.

The sisters have special devotion to the Maternal Heart of Mary. Striving to imitate its instincts they devote themselves to [the] saving of souls with the love and zeal of mothers, remembering that it was on Calvary that Mary was given to us as our Mother. And it is on Calvary the sisters stand with Mary, invoking God's mercy upon the world, pleading for the Church and its Head, the Vicar of Christ, appealing for still greater mercy, for renewed gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Thus by prayer, penance and good works do the sisters help to obtain for many, the grace of a good death, who without some special help at that terrible hour are in danger of the eternal loss of God.

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## **WORKS OF THE LITTLE COMPANY OF MARY**

The sisters active works consist in nursing the sick in their own homes or in hospitals, visiting and instructing the poor and ignorant, co-operating in any way to bring those outside the Church into its one fold. Helping in the foundation of new missions, giving their services in opening schools, where there are no other means for children to be brought up Catholics, but not undertake schools except in places where it is a great charity to do so. Instructing young girls who have left school in their future

duties, inducing them to frequent the convent and to be taught the importance of their work in the world, especially as mothers.

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## **ON THE CONFRATERNITY OF CALVARY**

Dear sisters, we love to extend our Lady's work to carry her name to new lands. We are all now rejoicing in the new home for Jesus being prepared in Malta, and I have been particularly pleased at the interest taken by the different houses, especially the last two foundations' generous offer to the 'baby' house of the Little Company of Mary. The various active works we hope may all do good, and draw souls to our dear Lord. But we do not want overlooked that other extension of our Lady's Little Company, the drawing of souls to her devotion, the obtaining new members for the Confraternity of Calvary, erected by our dear Bishop in Nottingham, in his own Cathedral as you see in the little pamphlet, "Charity", also at St. Thomas of Herefords – Ilkeston. It is to these two points I want to draw your attention. Do you inculcate True Devotion? Do you teach it to your patients? Do you bring your dying into the Little Company ere they die, and thus extend that Company? Exterior works are so attractive. We seem to be doing so much when we are engaged in them for God's glory that we do not realize that inward work is put in practice, our daily prayer "Thy Kingdom come." What is it that we ask for? That God may reign in all hearts. He will do so by means of Mary. If we extend her kingdom we extend Christ's. Make Mary loved, her devotion practised, and Jesus will be adored and worshipped wherever that sweet work, that lovely Conception of His is known.

We must love the Divine Artist who fashioned a being so fair as Mary, Virgin and Mother. But, however, there are some who will not embrace the True Devotion, and we cannot urge it upon them. But there are none, who could not join the Confraternity of Calvary to pray for the dying, to honour the last emanations of the Heart of Jesus, the last word that fell from His dying lips. What a grand work we should do if from every quarter of the world we had engaged souls to lovingly respect these last words of Jesus, daily to offer them to the Father, begging Him to show mercy to the dying. We must gather souls round Calvary, and engage them to promise this little practice of piety in honour of Jesus' passion. They will love more and more to contemplate that supreme hour of Jesus' life, that momentous time of the sacrificing, the shedding of Blood by which we were all saved. The little easy practice will bring untold graces with it. When people become familiar with it, it will appear to the Eternal Father as if it were the very heart of God's Church echoing these last words of Jesus, spoken at that hour, when He showed that love far greater than which no man hath

when He laid down His life to save men [and women] (cf Jn 15:13). There are certain words uttered on this earth that the faithful never weary of repeating, as the angels never weary of their eternal *sanctus*, *sanctus*. The angels “*ave*” we repeat again and again and it is well. It is the remembrance of the announcing of the coming of Jesus. Let us now commence to honour more the departure of Jesus, that hour when His [disciples] left Him and fled. Let us come to make reparation for this hard-heartedness, and let our lips near to the dying lips of Jesus utter His last words, and we shall have comforted Him at that last hour of His suffering life. Yes, you were there. You, who now honour Calvary, you were present with Jesus. You consoled Him. What you do now, you did then. All is present with God. My children delay not if you have been a little supine in the past. Make up for it. Enroll all you can. Give them leaflets with the Seven Last Words. Have more printed if need be. Send the names direct to St. Barnabas Cathedral, Nottingham, but also send them to me. For when the numbers who have joined the Confraternity are sufficient, and we have a proper chapel in Rome we shall have an Archconfraternity in Rome to which all others will be affiliated. The Lewisham House, as they have a proper church and numbers sufficient to watch, could easily have the Confraternity with permission of the Cardinal, and engage people a half hour a month or so watching for [the] dying etc. Australia is not too spiritual. Anything that would attract people to think of death and the other world, and the thought, “what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his soul”(Lk 9:25) brought mildly before them, would make them a little less worldly, and do good thus to their own souls, as well as those others who are in such terrible need – the dying. Now my children pray over these things. First, it is what we must do always before we can do anything. What is written for you to derive good from will be like the parable of the good seed (Mk 4:1-9). Some of you will hear, and be full of zeal, which will quickly die away if not supported by prayer. Others quietly listen and think no more etc., but you will like good children think – here is work my Mother has sent me to do. My God help! I will do my best to do my Mother’s bidding. Behold the handmaid of the Lord! Help me O my God, for of myself I can do nothing. Holy angels whisper to me words that will inflame the hearts of those whom I would influence. Give me power with your clients.

Now to sum up! For the future you will strive to extend the Company of Mary, increase our Lady’s children in heaven, earth and purgatory. You are giving to beautify souls by teaching them this devotion to our Lady. We may call it Jesus’ devotion to her. We are going to bring those we can influence in the world to be affiliated to the Little Company. And [we will] strive for some practical way of teaching the devotion so that people do not simply make the act, but impress their lives deeply, imbue their souls with this sound spirituality, this devotion after Jesus’ Heart. And whilst teaching others we shall progress ourselves. We shall see how much we have to learn. How little we really know and we shall study under the Blessed de Montfort that we may advance from the first to the second and third step, may become those favoured ones, blessed by God, who

make this sweet devotion their habitual state. To the dying we will speak in few words. As we have shown in the *Love that Reign in the Heart of Mary*, the Chapter headed "Our Lady's Love for the Dying," Mary will be pleased to receive at the last hour their lives, Jesus' children and claim them as her own. Then again we are going to make all [whom] we know, whether they are Mary's Own or not, join the Confraternity of Calvary and do something extra for the dying. We will urge them to this, telling them they must, if for no other reason than to be helped themselves at that dread hour, for as they measure to others it will be measured to them (Mt 7:2). Distributing the Last Words of Jesus for one member daily to recite will earn from our dear Lord a loving smile. It will draw upon the world a special blessing from the Eternal Father, as those words so touching, vibrate from Pole to Pole.

Now my children have you work to do, will you be in earnest? Will you make time? Believe me my little ones these spiritual works will last when many of your other works have passed away. They are more real than the works that have such an appearance of real good. The works that so captivate some unwary ones, in that they put their whole thoughts in them and forget the interior life, and that lovely spiritual world where God shows Himself. [It] draws to Himself the faithful Spouse, who does her duty to the works obedience gives her to do, but [she] neglects the one great work she entered religion for – the perfection of her own soul. [She] who leans ever on the arms of her Beloved, is ever listening for His voice, who fears to act without Him. Oh happy one, she does work the world knows not, but God knows. He seeth in secret and the world would envy if they knew the peace and content of that happy one.

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## TO THE NOVICES IN THE LONDON

### HOUSE

God bless my children in the last house of Our Lady, though the first spot of God's Church, where the seeds of the Little Company were sown; the first members gathered together, the first meetings held. Yes, it was in the Westminster Diocese that the cross first came to the Little Company, the cross, always the forerunner of grace, so that you who are now in both houses have a great treasure of graces to rely upon. You have to reap where others have sown. So do not be surprised that God is following you with abundant blessings. The angels are welcoming you back, and giving special help to those who were sent away, probably through the machinations of the Evil One. But he can never succeed, as God's wisdom knows how to draw good from evil, and is giving now, to

make use of you to bring an abundant harvest of souls. Here (Commercial Road) commencing that, the vast family of dear Jesus, these who in the world so sadly need our help, are to be tended with love. The Spouse of Jesus is to bring to her Lord innumerable souls, and there (Isleworth) also are those Spouses of Jesus to be trained. Isleworth is to be a birthplace for fresh members to recruit the bands and send forth fresh missionary bands to found new houses for Jesus and Mary. How our heart delighted in our Noviciate. You know how pleased I am and write to tell you so to give me pleasure, when you have conversions and death-bed repentances, and all the other fruitful works of your missionary career. But there is no work so important in the religious life as the Noviciate.

The future of the order depends on the novices. The history of religious life shows us plainly that it is possible to mar and spoil a work of God. But the Evil One knows this can only be successfully done by introducing a wrong spirit to the novices. Professed sisters may get off the track, may cease to aim at the perfection of their own souls, as they should do, till the hour of their death, but they cannot do the harm of a fresh band of novices entering the order with a deteriorated spirit. Oh Mother, watch over thy children that this may never happen in thine own Little Company. Thou art the model thyself. We place them in thy burning Heart of love. There let them be modeled and come forth many emanations of that Heart, many sparks of love for God and man. [So that they may be] bright and beautiful to God in any part of the world that our Lady, when she has trained and formed them, shall with her maternal guidance lead them.

Now you young ones at Isleworth, I assure you I am with you morning, noon and night. We are all but feeble instruments in God's hands. Those who know their own weakness and incapacity for good are those our Lady will make most use of. She is Spouse of the Holy Ghost. She will form in you the spirit of the infant Jesus if you are truly docile, generous and self-sacrificing. You look at the Holy Child. You long to follow in His footsteps. You know full well what the Holy Child wouldn't do, therefore, though human nature is indeed weak and prone to fall, that is our criterion. No matter how you may excuse yourselves for some fault or mistake, from the lips of the Holy Child came no murmur or complaint. He, the Incarnate Wisdom, was subject, and we have from Him [that] the most perfect thing in itself is not the most perfect thing always for us to do. We are to be subject. We are to be led hither and thither as a lamb that is led to the slaughter (cf Isa 53:7). We are imperfect, so we shall fall. We shall open our mouths when it is not well or wise to do so. This is not to be wondered at. What we must not do is exempt ourselves from the penalty. We must penance ourselves when we fall from our good resolves, when we neglect the observances, are not subject to the rules or customs, or incline to think that we are hardly dealt with rather than seeing God's permission in what ever happens to us. I beg of you to remember the important position which you hold. You are laying the foundation of what

we hope will be a beautiful building, a spiritual edifice, enclosing a garden of delights, where Jesus will pluck flowers most dear to His Sacred Heart. Listen to Him speaking to that chosen soul so brave in her penances, so lovely in her love for Jesus – St. Rose of Lima. “Rose of My Heart,” speaks our dear Lord using our language “Thou shalt be My Spouse forever.” Children, now gathered away from the world, placed as it were in a hot house where virtues, fair flowers of grace will spring up under the fostering care of your Mother, with the light of the Holy Ghost guiding you in the way of perfection by means of your rules. Flowers of unknown beauty will spring up if you bravely pluck, and allow to be plucked all those noxious weeds, which so hinder Christ’s lilies blooming, as they should. We all know how easy it is to spoil a choice work of art, a wrong colour, a daub with the paint brush, an awkward blow of the chisel. In religion we are safe if we are docile. The Holy Spirit breathes on pliant souls. They sprout. They grow quickly, and why should it be so difficult to allow ourselves to be moulded? To see God’s Providence, we know, or should know, some little of our own weakness, that our own care of ourselves profits us little, and that the good God, who is our Father and Mother, has care of us. Now my children, I shall look forward to your letters to watch how the seed is growing, and how far you understand your religious life. The next compendium I would like to have from you would be on the religious life, and second on the nine ways of being accessory to another’s sin, a conference which is read in all novitiates once a month.

I am sure that none of you would like to disappoint God, or through your own faults frustrate God’s good designs in your regard. You will not let self-love, negligence, or cowardice hinder your blooming into a Passion Flower, dear to Jesus’ Heart. This apparently barren world produces beauties, works of art, or rather we should say works of God, works of His Holy Spirit, and the spouse of Jesus Crucified, one who has earned that title by following Jesus from the crib to the cross. Such a one is an object of God’s complacency, a glory to the Sacred Humanity of Jesus on earth and forever in heaven. This is what, my dear children you have come into the Little Company of Mary to be, and please God will be.