

(From Mo. Marguerite Guillot Conferences to the Novices)

COUNSELS FOR ADORATION May 11, 1866

The spirit of prayer is a gift from God. In order to obtain it, let us strive to fulfill with the least possible unworthiness all that relates to prayer which, for us, is identified with adoration.

Thus, when, in adoration, our mind works, reflects, reasons on a truth or on a mystery, or when our heart produces affections, we make discursive prayer ordinarily called meditations or affective prayer.

But all meditation, all discursive prayer must end by producing affections which steer the will toward virtue, for of what use would reflections of the mind be if they did not enkindle in us the fire of charity which then manifests itself by good works? Thus, the masters of the spiritual life all teach that it is necessary to give less time to reflections than to affections because it is not beautiful thoughts that please God, but love and good will.

That is why simple and ignorant souls can make an excellent prayer if they are loving and humble. However, in our prayer we must not of ourselves suppress the work of meditation, because the soul that would place itself in affective prayer to the exclusion of all reflection and all reasoning of the mind without being called by it, would expose itself to wasting its time.

But whatever may be the nature of your prayer, you will never arrive at doing it well if you are not recollected, and let me tell you that you cannot be recollected if you pass the time of your adoration looking at what is in front of you. I know well that the sight of the candles, the flowers, of all that surround the Blessed Sacrament can inspire you with good thoughts when you are in dryness, and our Father himself advises us to help recollect our distracted minds by looking, from time to time, at the Blessed Sacrament and the altar, but when you are not in such a state of trial, try to remain within yourselves so that you may always be disposed to receive the inspirations of the Holy Spirit. Lower your eyes, or close them in order that nothing may trouble you or disturb your mind.

Then, know how to remain before our Lord in the state in which it pleases Him to place you. What do you seek in our adorations? It is the Will of our Lord in order to accomplish it. Well, if He wishes you to remain at His feet without feelings, dry, incapable of thoughts and of feelings, accept it since such is His will.

If you were deeply penetrated with the sentiment of your unworthiness, you would understand that you do not deserve that our Lord should tolerate you at His feet; afar from worrying over your helplessness, you would accept it as being the simple consequence of your

property and abjection. You are also anxious at times on account of your distractions, but do not forget that often the good God permits them to try you, to see just how far your patience, your vigilance, your attention will go to avoid what can displease Him and turn your thoughts from Him. However, we must also say that distractions are often the consequence of our previous dissipations, of our lack of preparation for adoration and of infidelity to grace; in this case they are a punishment.

To avoid willing distractions, you must yourselves be recollected during the day by chasing away all useless and dissipating thoughts and by striving to remember our Lord, not by a fatiguing tension of the mind, but by movement of the heart. This recollection serves as the remote preparation for adoration and keeps the soul at the disposal of our Lord, ever ready to unite itself to Him in prayer.

When thinking of your next Communion, you make acts of desire and love; well, do the same for your adoration, gladly reminding yourselves that only two hours, one hour even separates you from your royal audience with Jesus. Awaken in yourselves lively sentiments of love and joy and if, after these diverse preparations, you are overwhelmed with distractions at the *pre-dieu*, you can conclude that our Lord wishes it so. In this case, accept with submission this divine will and be persuaded that an hour of adoration passed in the humility of fighting the distractions that displeases you, is nevertheless very agreeable to our Lord.
