

*(From Mo. Marguerite Guillot Conferences to the Novices)*

## **NECESSITY OF RECOLLECTION – June 19, 1866**

You have been very busy these last days and I am sure that you offered your work to our Lord; in this way it will not be lost and I hope that God will reward your efforts and give you new strength. Exterior works are always a danger to recollection because occasions for failing in silence present themselves frequently. If we do not watch ourselves attentively we lose the interior spirit which should be the principle of our life, for the spirit of prayer and adoration must not be exercised only at the *pre-dieu* but it must accompany us everywhere, in our cells, in our employments, in all our works however distracting it may seem to be; whether we are alone or with others. Everywhere always and in all things, we are adorers and consequently we should be recollected and ready to pray.

If you do not keep silence faithfully, you will not arrive at practicing this life of continual prayer which must be ours, not only exterior silence but also interior silence. If every religious house is the house of God, and must be, consequently, a house of recollection and silence, what shall we say about ours in which Jesus dwells day and night perpetually exposed before us?

How can you pretend to be recollected at adoration when beforehand you said all that came to your mind, or when you let your mind wander in a thousand idle thoughts? That is not possible; the soul that gives in to dissipation cannot, in one instant, retire within itself and become all of a sudden disposed to listen to God and receive His grace.

You must then lead an entirely interior and recollected life, and that is why we do not cease to recommend silence. Be very attentive to observe this important point of the Rule. Remember that silence must never be interrupted outside the time of the recreation. Outside of the time of recreation, we are permitted to speak only for what is necessary, and we must wait to say what is merely useful. Do not take as a pretext the fear of forgetting or failing in charity; these reasons are nearly always illusions that the devil uses to abuse us and make us fail against the Rule. If you must be so exact in observing simple silence with greater reason should you be so for the great silence which begins with the General Examen in the evening and lasts until after the thanksgiving Mass. To break the great silence there must be a serious reason of actual and absolute necessity.

I entreat you, then, to keep silence well, and if a Sister forgets herself, do not believe yourself obliged to reply, but by your silence, make her understand her fault, and if that does not suffice inform her about it in a low voice.

Observe also with greatest care the silence of action everywhere and specially in your cells. When you place an object put it down gently; when you open a door do not open it briskly, and when closing it, hold it to keep it from slamming.

Do not walk too quickly, do not rush downstairs; all that, while being contrary to modesty, disturbs the silence of the house. Be, in all things, true religious; calm, silent, and recollected.

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