

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

## **ON CONFESSION – May 18, 1866**

Dear Sisters, today I wish to say a few more words on Confession. Certain people pass much time in examining themselves and neglect to stir themselves sufficiently to contrition and to a firm purpose of amendment. Follow, in this regard, the wise rules that our Father has given us and in which he recommends that we consecrate more time to contrition than to examen. For a Servant of the Blessed Sacrament, whose life is only a succession of pious exercises, four or five minutes should suffice her failings. This is also greatly facilitated by our three daily examens.

Always begin by imploring the light of the Holy Spirit, in order that He may give you the grace to see within yourself as He sees you, to understand the evil of your faults, their causes and the means of avoiding them in the future. This reflection should be done calmly, without anxiety or worry. As you know, the accusation of venial sins is not obligatory, so you can limit yourselves to the accusations of a few faults in which you recognize more negligence and will than weakness and surprise. After this reflection, arouse in yourself sentiments of sorrow for having offended God. We often cry over such little things – a contradiction, a disappointment, but we are hardly moved at the sight of faults that we committed and which, although venial, wound the heart of our Divine Master. How different our sentiments would be if we had true love of our Lord! The thought of His Passion and His sufferings, the memory of His love and the sight of our ingratitude, should stir us to profound sorrow.

These considerations should take eight to ten minutes, and with the five minutes given to the examen, you have the quarter of an hour of preparation prescribed by the Rule.

During the confession, avoid all useless explanations: a confession that is too long can embody numerous faults of self-love and self-seeking. Accuse your faults in a way that will enable the confessor to know you better by indicating the cause of these sins. In this way the confessor will learn your tendencies, your temptations, your habits, and the better he understands you, the more good he can do you.

After the accusation of your sins, especially avoid hunting for others that you may have forgotten; this would prevent your paying attention to the words of the confessor and perhaps to the absolution. If only we thought that at the moment the priest pronounces the words of absolution, the blood of our Lord flows on our soul to purify it, with what sentiments of sorrow, of gratitude and of love our hearts would be filled.

You know that religious have, besides the ordinary confessor, an extraordinary confessor who must come to hear their confessions during the Ember weeks and when they ask for him.

This freedom is given in order that the religious who cannot open their hearts to the ordinary confessor may not, however, be deprived of the advice which they need.

Do not torment yourselves, then, by this obligation of presenting yourselves every three months to the extraordinary confessor; if you have nothing particular to say to him, you will simply make your weekly confession as usual.

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