

(From Mo. Marguerite Guillot Conferences to the Novices)

REFLECTION ON DEATH— January 1867

It has been a long time since we last saw one another; many sad things have happened since then, but God permitted them for the good of each one of us for He has given us great graces. For my part, I was able to reflect seriously; When one finds oneself, as I did for three weeks, at the bedside of a dying person, when death is seen advancing at a rapid pace, and one says to oneself that this person will soon find herself in the presence of God who will require an account of her entire life, one is seized by the truth that the only thing that matters is to live well.

Life is the time for labor; we must employ that time well. It is also the time for mercy of which we must take advantage, our death is the hour of justice, and then, what remains to the soul at that redoubtable moment when it sees itself alone, face to face with God Who is going to judge it? Parents and friends on earth can no longer come to their aid; the devil seeks to throw the soul into turmoil and despair; there only remains the help of the Blessed Virgin and the Angels. Ah, if this soul has not lived well, has not been faithful to the graces that is received, what remorse will it not experience!

How good it is to think of death often during life and to ask ourselves, in accomplishing all our actions how, at that final moment, we would wish to have done them.

But I am straying from what I wanted to tell you; I would have liked to write to each one of you and reply to all your particular needs, but I was unable all my time being employed according to God's good pleasure. I prayed very much for you at *Fourviere*; it was a joy to be in the place where our Father conceived the thought of our Society. I say the thought, but there was more than a thought. Our Father does not tell his secrets; that is evident, but what we can know is, that there, the Society was manifested to him, and the sorrows and difficulties that he would encounter were revealed to him. It is there that he was shown the Calvary that awaited him, a Calvary that he so generously accepted. It is there, my daughters that I prayed to the Blessed Virgin for each one of you.

This short separation which may have been a source of graces for you as for me might also have been an occasion of suffering, and even perhaps a great trial for you. That was another grace, a priceless grace, for this suffering helped to detach you from creatures and turn you toward God alone.

Try more and more to detach yourselves from creatures, to separate yourselves from them in order that your heart may be occupied only with God, and that God alone may fill it. I do not say that creatures may not be helpful to you sometimes, but when God withdraws them from you, know how to give them up and to content yourselves with God. His goodness will never abandon you if you throw yourselves into His arms and if you surrender yourselves to His good pleasure. And do not forget that the good which creatures can do for you come solely from Him.

Also, I asked Him through Mary at *Fourviere*, to inspire me with all that I should tell you, while at the same time, begging Mary herself to form you and to render you such as Jesus desires and as the service of His Divine Sacrament requires. Be faithful to the inspirations of your heavenly Queen. She will help you to become true religious, and to facilitate the efforts that you will have to make, say to yourselves in moments of difficulty: *"If I should die in an instant, how would I wish to have done this or that?"* Act as it will be shown to you under this impression. Ah! At the hour of death, what will be the joy of the Servant of the Blessed Sacrament who will have corresponded well to the grace of her vocation!
