

(From Mo. Marguerite Guillot Conferences to the Novices)

TO SERVE OUR LORD ACCORDING TO THE SPIRIT OF OUR VOCATION – Jan. 1877

Well, what shall I say to you, my dear children, except that we are here for our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. We have come, in fact, to serve Him on His Throne of love, and to serve only Him. Seek then only Him and nothing except Him.

In hospitals, the religious are continually occupied with the sick; in teaching communities, the Sisters are concerned with the education of children; - here, you are called to a life of prayer, of contemplation and of adoration, and at the same time to a life of annihilation, a life which is at every moment a death to nature. This is what you must engrave in your minds, dear daughters, for you have left the world to respond to the call of Our Lord; you heard His voice and your vocation is the work of His grace.

But now it is necessary to correspond to this grace; it is necessary to correspond to it every day of your lives, and you will do that only by dying to everything and by constantly striving to die more completely to self.

You will always have much work to do, for nature is ever ready to take itself back. It is still living in the Professed Sisters; with greater reason is it alive in the Novices.

Do not be surprised then if you have to struggle constantly. Say to yourself; "I am here to become a true adorer in spirit and in truth, and to learn to serve Our Lord according to the Spirit of my vocation.

It may happen that at certain times, this life with the exercises which compose it: adoration, Office, etc., will tire you, bore you, and even displease you. Our Lord lets many souls pass through this painful trial, the devil also can arouse this temptation and you must remain on your guard against his attack.

In order not to be shaken either by trial or temptation, attach yourselves solely to Our Lord; look only at Him and forget yourself. Do not be among those souls who constantly desire sensible consolations and who believe that they are lost when they do not find them in what they do. If Our Lord sends you consolations, be grateful; if he withdraws them from you, say like Job; God had given them to me, God has taken them away; blessed be His holy Name."

To this detachment from your own personal interests, from your tastes, your pleasure, your self-satisfaction, which I will not cease to exhort you to practice, I ask you to join great sensitivity.

Yes, my dear daughters serve the Divine Master in self-denial and true attentiveness. Never be late for the exercises, especially for adoration; and if you have the misfortune of being late, perform the sanctions faithfully. Never complain because you are thus obliged to do penance and do not say; "We are not school children." Yes, my children, we are all students, apprentices in perfection and you my Novices, more so than the Professed. You are little Mary's presenting yourselves in the temple, following your Divine Mother, and we must teach you the duties of your vocation.

Be then very attentive about punctuality, and if it happens that the Laudes is rung late, hasten a little. The Bell-ringer must take every precaution to ring on time, but it can happen to her, as to you, to be at fault, so if she rings late one day, your duty is to hurry a little more, thus showing your good will and your desire that the service of our Lord may always be well performed. When the bell rings, stop your work immediately and leave; do not run, but do not lose time. In the ante-choir, if you have a few minutes to wait before entering the chapel, raise your soul to God and think of the great action for the royal audience that is granted you and your adoration will be better, more fruitful than if you let your mind become distracted while waiting.

I add a word on the subject of the prayers that you have to say; there are some among you who worry when they have omitted a word or two, or when they have made mistakes. Dear children, do not be so narrow-minded with God; be at ease with Him for God is not a rigorous and severe Master.

I will stop here for I have already spoken a long time. I shall assemble you again as soon as I can.
