

Mary¹

St. Peter Julian Eymard to the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament,
Paris, July 31, 1859

First of all, through the whole day you must have thanked our Lord for the grace you received, especially for the gift offered and accepted. Your whole life should be a perpetual thanksgiving. What happened between God and you? I don't need to know what you experienced in such precious and beautiful moments. Protect yourself from human fickleness. If ever you become lukewarm, look at your ring, and ask yourself why you are wearing it; then look at our Lord.

As you need a tutor, let it be the Blessed Virgin. Take this good mother as your model for service. Who served Jesus Christ better than the Blessed Virgin? She was a servant and a perfect adorer. Mary adored perfectly, even surpassing the angels with a purity so great that our Lord found his delight in her. At Bethlehem and during her entire life, Mary was with him, following him. Mary was the first adorer of the Blessed Sacrament, watching over him constantly. Now she is your teacher. Jesus gave her to you as a mother. Loving Daughters, let her give you life. You were already servants of our Lord, now you have become so even more completely. Mary seems to say, as did John the Baptist of our Lord: *He must grow greater, I must grow smaller* [Jn 3:30]. Remain with her, as you are her daughters. Stay together. See how Mary adores, honors, and loves, in order for you to learn, because she is your model. A child imitates its mother. Imitate Mary and you will do very well. Her divine Son will be pleased.

The Blessed Virgin is not only your model, she is your companion. Beyond being a teacher, she must adore, love and serve with you, and you with her. It is not enough and wrong for you to merely look at her, since your fickleness may distract you. Act as an apprentice does with her teacher. She does not work alone. Stay with your mother, work with her and you will work well. May she be your companion and your partner, holding your heart while working herself, and your service will be well accomplished. Our Lord loves his mother above everyone else. The smallest thing she does is for him a praiseworthy matter. If we love him, let us work with Mary and our actions will appear perfect. He would like to receive the homage of his children only through Mary. They would then be well received. For this reason, let us perform all our actions trusting in Mary. That's what we should do. In order to go to our Lord and to satisfy his heart, we need to go with Mary. If you stay in her company, Mary will do her part to help you and you will learn and act very well. Keep only your personality², otherwise you will not succeed.

Do not merely accompany Mary, **do more; remain in Mary.** As Saint Paul says: *the Christian is another Jesus Christ, the members are the members of Jesus Christ* (1 Cor 12:27). Likewise, become another Mary, one single person with Mary. Give yourself, lose yourself in Mary so that your thoughts, prayers and adorations are all done in Mary, not only with, but in Mary, placing yourself at her disposition. Make a kind of vow of obedience to Mary. Let her be your superior. Let her offer your work to her divine Son, as her own proper good. You will then understand that you should take care to leave in her hands your best work. Your adoration will become perfect through the heart of Mary. Do

¹ End of the retreat. [Number 157. *Marie.*] Mary. Papal Blessing. Notice that this instruction was given on the night of the first vows of the first Sisters.

² This passage is a little obscure because on July 23, 1858, in instruction #52, *Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, first adorer*, Father was saying to the sisters: "During the Mass there is a great thought prayed by the priest: Through Jesus Christ, with Jesus Christ, and in Jesus Christ. That is how you should go to Our Lord, through Mary, with Mary, and in Mary. Through Mary, by her virtues, merits and her protection; with Mary, as a daughter holding her mother's hand; in Mary, because you are part of her family. Make a contract with her, be the human nature and she the personality." We can see here how Mary guided Fr Eymard to her son Jesus. During the great retreat that Father made in Rome, this gift of personality is centered on Christ.

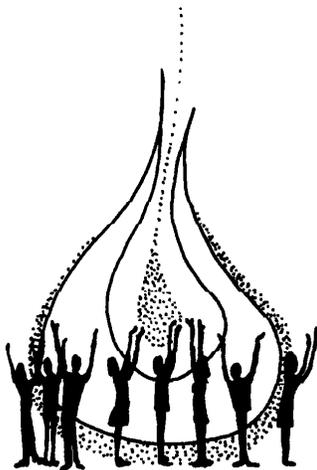
not be afraid that she will become an obstacle on your way to Jesus. Mary will introduce you and be your guide. As a mother who enters with her child, she will present you to the king. Form only one heart with Mary, and from her immaculate heart, go to Jesus and be absorbed into him.

You will experience a twofold happiness if you serve Jesus through Mary, two joys. You will experience something very sweet, delightful and very lovable by going to Jesus through Mary. In unity there is not only strength, but also sweetness. Mary will help you to give thanks to Jesus, as she is powerful over our Lord's heart. If he wants to accept you with her everything will be done, the covenant will be complete. Jesus stays with Mary. To adore and serve him you need not go elsewhere. He lives with her, in his mother's house. There, he is a king, the God of the heart. Love Mary, and adoration will be well done, and Jesus well served.

I kept the papal blessing until now. It is marvelous to think that the Pope touched this and wrote this blessing. [Our reverend Father read the Latin text: *Benedicat vos Deus, et custodiat corda vestra et intelligentias vestras* (cf. Ph 4:7).] This means: May God bless you, keep your heart and your understanding; may he bless you, you and your order as described in the petition. And may he protect you. That is why the Pope used these words of Saint Paul, so that this blessing stems from the holy scriptures.

See how the holy Pontiff was inspired. Your hearts belong to Jesus Christ; may God keep them to love him, if I dare to say, to be a victim. Love is your characteristic; great love is your profession. Naturally you should be burning with divine love. Intelligence, the mind, is knowledge of God or, if you prefer, the gift of prayer. God gives his gifts in prayer.

The supreme Pontiff requests two of the greatest gifts for you: the fire of love and light. Fire is the heart; light is the intelligence. Your heart should be constantly ablaze with that fire, in order to burn before the Holy Eucharist. Your intelligence should bear fruit that can ripen, that you may be like St. John the Baptist, preparing the way for God, as he did. (cf. Lk 1:76)³



Point for reflection:

Adore Jesus as Mary did: with Mary, in Mary, and through Mary. That is the basic idea of this instruction. What dimension can this bring to your Eucharistic vocation? Is this new for you?

³ Father wrote an evaluation of the retreat: "I gave a retreat like ours to those Ladies, a fundamental retreat that ended yesterday with the vows of the elders, to my great edification and their great joy." To Fr. de Cuers, August 1, 1859.