

Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament, the First Adorer ¹

St. Peter Julian Eymard to the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament,
Paris, Friday, July 23, 1858

My Sisters, take note that no one² has yet honored Mary with the title of Our Lady of the Blessed Sacrament. She is honored with the name of Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows, of Nazareth, of the Presentation, etc. But, in spite of the fact that the Blessed Virgin spent much of her life³ in the Cenacle, no one has yet thought of honoring her as adorer.

To each person God gives a certain amount of graces at birth and baptism. We increase this amount depending on the way we live and can double it for our eternal crown. Now, it is sure that all the graces of the angels and of the entire human race are not equal to those given to the Blessed Virgin. Based on this, our entire life is not worth a single sigh of Mary. God graciously hides her perfection from us so that we cannot even understand it; otherwise we would never dare to call her mother and to pray to her. This is why God shows us only her mercy, so that we can approach her with bonds of love and affection.

My Sisters, God gives her to you as a tutor and dispensatrix of his graces. Go to our Lord through her, and she will teach you how to serve him. Let her holiness, then, be a major concern for you. You will not learn to know her from books, but from prayer and meditation. Our Lord said: *Whoever loves me will be loved by my Father. I too will love him* (Jn 14:21). You should love the Blessed Virgin, not only with a spiritual love, but as a daughter, showing it to her wholeheartedly. Study especially her life as adorer, both internally and externally. For her internal life, study her spirit of faith, obedience, sacrifice, and love. For her external life, see how she adored with all her senses, and ask her to show herself to you. Imagine her next to you, and let go of yourself, in order to proceed somehow through her divine person to our Lord.

By vocation you take in the Eucharistic reign in its entirety. While other orders have it only in fragments, you have Jesus Christ in his entirety, past, present and future. God the Father told the apostles: *This is my beloved Son. Listen to him* (Mt 17:5); which means, imitate him. As the apostles went to the Father through Jesus, go through his holy mother. That's why you must clothe yourselves with her, so that Jesus might receive your adorations as daughters of Mary. Imitate Jacob who fooled his father Isaac. In order to receive his father's blessing, Jacob put on the clothes of his brother Esau, the elder, who was supposed to receive that blessing (cf. Gn 27:1-29). My good Sisters, imitate Jacob and deceive our Lord by taking on the clothes of his most holy mother. You might ask how can we clothe ourselves with Mary? The holy gospels are silent about her life in the Cenacle, merely saying that she persevered in prayer (cf. Acts 1:14).

My Sisters, everyone receives a fundamental grace. In the biography of a saint, for example, the author speaks of one particular virtue practiced by that saint. However Mary never had one single life or grace. She possessed all the graces, since she did not have her own holiness but shared in the holiness of Jesus Christ in all his states of life. When one stage [state] passed, she moved on. As Jesus advanced in age, Mary advanced in grace and perfection. This earned her on Calvary the title of Co-redemptrix. In the

¹ Number 52. *Notre-Dame du Saint Sacrement, première adoratrice.*

² Ravanat, variant: *My sisters, take note of number 3. No one...* Father was referring to number 3 of the provisional rule, a rule whose scattered fragments are all that remain as found in the instructions of this period. Once this provisional rule was replaced, the copy of Raulin, which is later than that of Ravanat, has preserved the instruction but without the reference that was no longer valid.

³ Ravanat, variant: *passed a third of her life.*

Cenacle, she was the living tabernacle of our Lord and adored him in all the different states of his mortal life, in the order in which she witnessed them. Since she had a spiritual memory, she recalled them in the Eucharist, since our Lord continues there all the virtues of his most holy life in what was most worthy and most perfect. You will never attain that kind of adoration, but as the Eucharist becomes your life, put aside the past and relive everything as something new. Since our Lord chose you to give his mother a family, she will form you in his divine service. Do you realize, my Sisters, what a special grace it is to have the Blessed Virgin as your directress and teacher?

There is a beautiful thought in the Mass as the priest prays, Through Jesus Christ, with Jesus Christ, and in Jesus Christ. **This is how you should go to our Lord: through Mary, with Mary and in Mary.** Through Mary, through her virtues, her merits and her protection; with Mary, like a daughter with her mother, holding her hand; in Mary, since you form her family. Make a contract with her. Be the human nature and she the personality. In a sense, lose yourself in her, like St. John who adored Jesus in the womb of his mother (cf. Lk 1:41,44). Steal from Mary everything you can, the stealing that children do from their mother. Steal her love, her sufferings, her prayers; in short, hide yourself in her, so that she will be the only one to be seen. How will this be done? As the Church does in our Lord. Mary must live in you for Jesus, and you must become other Mary's.

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After the conference, Reverend Father gave us some instructions about our present situation.

My Sisters, our Lord first attracted you to himself by gentleness; that was the first road. Then comes darkness and trials. Life grows. A lightening bolt can surprise you for a moment, but the darkness that follows can be even more intense. This is the road of faith, and faith cannot see. Go along then, with self-denial and suffering. Above all, cooperate fully, since you cannot possibly understand the abundance of graces that God has in store for you. In order to do this, my Sisters, live in recollection and in silence. Let your house be a house of silence, the soul of prayer. Avoid conversations during your work unless necessary. Speak in a low voice, so that only the voice of God will be heard. In this way you will preserve union with our Lord.

Besides, I cannot recommend too highly the spirit of poverty. Your poverty must be real. Allow for an occasional privation of something that you thought was necessary, even just a needle. Never mind about future usefulness of something; each day has its needs. I don't recommend these things out of a spirit of thriftiness, but with the idea of a wise administration of the goods of Jesus Christ; since, my Sisters, your present surplus should be used to feed the sisters yet to come or for the cult of our Lord. Imitate him in this, since after the multiplication of the loaves he instructed his apostles: *Gather up the crusts that are left over so that nothing will go to waste* (Jn 6:12). Although he could easily renew this miracle, he wanted, by saying this, to teach them the spirit of order and poverty.



Point of reflection:

Notice how Peter Julian describes the relationship that we should have with Mary. He also describes how this relationship can give a particular character to our Eucharistic life. What new insight does this conference bring to your Marian devotion?