

# Spirit of Love and Sacrifice<sup>1</sup>

St. Peter Julian Eymard to the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament  
Paris, Tuesday, November 2, 1858

My Sisters, I explained to you the spirit of love and sacrifice. Make your first meditation on this subject, examining the sacrifices you should make toward God, your neighbor and yourselves. **Sacrifice is love in practice.**

**1° Toward God.** I cannot tell you what these sacrifices are; there are no general rules. Each one should follow her grace; discern the characteristic of God's love within you. Then you will be sure of the sacrifice God is asking from you. The goal of love is a perfect union with God. You have to be like a drop of water poured into wine, losing itself and becoming wine. Like wax that melts and joins something else, love gets lost in the loved one. Allow nothing within you to prevent union with our Lord. Get rid of anything that could be an obstacle. [...]

**2° What are the sacrifices toward our neighbor?** You are responsible to discern your natural and supernatural relationships. Charity is the means of union with God. In community, charity should be the one dominant virtue. Our Lord often told his apostles: *Love one another as I have loved you; the amount you measure out is the amount you will be given.* (cf. Jn 13:34; Mt 7:2) Charity is the measure of merit.

Ordinarily, when living together, we notice the weaknesses and faults of our neighbor, rather than the virtues, because we see only their human nature. When nature rubs against nature, there is conflict; when sacrifice meets sacrifice, it is a Calvary. Looking at it naturally, it is almost impossible to live as a community; it is a martyrdom. But with God's grace, it is a great blessing, because we have the constant occasion to practice charity. We should never run away from the cross, because it is everywhere, but it is never so commendable as in a community.

**3° What sacrifices should you exercise toward yourselves?** Begin with mortification. Try to have an open ear to discern God's inspiration. Exercise custody of the eyes and self-control. Try to follow faithfully the movements of grace. If the spirit of love were not prior to sacrifice, human nature would be afraid. But love makes everything easy for one who is inspired by it. Sacrifice should not make you sad. The one who loves God is happy to make sacrifices. Our Lord said: *We prune a tree when the sap rises* (cf. Jn 15:2). We don't prune a tree without sap; it is dead and produces nothing. Similarly, when our Lord asks someone for some great sacrifice, it is a proof that he wants to honor her.

See how the apostles were happy to suffer all kinds<sup>2</sup> of torments for love of our Lord. (cf. Acts 5:41) I am not saying that we should laugh and sing when we are suffering. Our Lord did not sing and laugh on the cross, but he loved. My Sisters, don't be sad in your sufferings, but accept generously to suffer with love for our Lord.

As you have little time to work for the glory of our Lord, you must work generously, like men hoping to find a gold mine or other metals in the earth. As they advance, they become more ardent at the thought of soon possessing their treasure. **My Sisters, your gold mine is the reign of the Holy Eucharist. Hurry, then; apply yourself to bring it about.** Anyone who would skin us alive would do us a real service, for then we would soon reach our goal and our fortune. A merchant does not complain of the number of buyers, because this increases his income. Likewise, you should be happy when you have to suffer

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<sup>1</sup> Number 89. *Esprit d'amour et de sacrifice.*

<sup>2</sup> De Ravanat : all kinds

something. I think that all of you have something to suffer; our Lord takes care to give you occasions for sacrifices. [...]

**Point for reflection:**

In this instruction, the spirit of love and sacrifice takes shape in the concrete situations of life. To integrate this better in your life, write a page in your personal journal on this meditation.

We Must Go To