

The Month of Mary, Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament¹

St. Peter Julian Eymard to the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament,
Paris, Tuesday, April 30, 1861

My good Sisters, here comes the month of Mary; we will begin it tonight, as we end the final day of April. Our men will do the same. We have prepared our chapel that is even more beautiful than yours. Although we are Religious of the Most Blessed Sacrament, we must not for that reason have a lesser devotion to the Blessed Virgin. It would be offensive to say, Jesus is enough for me. Where do we find Jesus on earth, if not in Mary's arms? We cannot separate Jesus from Mary, for isn't she the Gate of Heaven? We cannot go to our Lord, without passing through her, since she is the one who gave us Jesus. It's a mother's task to dress her child, to care for his education. The more we love Jesus as Religious of the Most Blessed Sacrament, the more should we love Mary, not of course with a love that equals what we give to our Lord, since our love for Jesus is a love of adoration while our love for Mary is a love of veneration, the love of a child.

I can say that no one should love Mary more than a Servant of the Most Blessed Sacrament. You must understand that our Lord would be angry if we did not honor her, since she is his mother, the most perfect of all mothers. He owes everything to her on the level of his incarnation and human nature [...]. **We must honor her as the mother of Jesus and as our own mother.**

That's not all. We must honor her as an adorer. By your grace you are adorers; the Sovereign Pontiff has consecrated you for adoration. He has given you the most beautiful of titles. He gave it, signed it, and blessed it.

Why are you called Servants of the Most Blessed Sacrament? This means that you belong to the adorable person of our Lord. If you belong to the Son, you also belong to the mother. If you adore the Son, you should also honor the mother. Therefore, you are obliged to give special honor to the most Blessed Virgin, as Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament. This devotion is not widespread, and this honor is not yet given to her in the Church because the honor given to the most Blessed Virgin follows the honor of her divine Son. They grow together. When our Lord is honored on his cross, we honor Our Lady of Sorrows; when his hidden life is honored, the most Blessed Virgin shares his states. The two are not to be separated. However, until now, Mary has not been honored under the name of Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

Worship of the Blessed Sacrament has never been so widespread as in our day; it is spreading everywhere. This is the grace of the Immaculate Conception. This devotion is not new, but the grace is new, a spring of living water. I might add that devotion to the Blessed Sacrament will become a spring of salvation for this century. It will be its glory. We would see this if we lived to the end of this century, which has begun well. The Immaculate Conception came as the prelude to the birth of our Lord; now the Immaculate Conception will precede the Blessed Sacrament. Several dioceses are inviting us; four or five want to have an association, a shrine, a place for adoration.

Devotion to Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament will surely grow with the worship of the most Blessed Sacrament. I did not find this devotion in any book, and I never heard anyone talk about Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament. There was brief mention in *La Cité mystique (The Mystical City)* of

¹ Number 317. *Le mois de Marie, Notre-Dame du Très Saint Sacrement.*

Marie d'Agreda; and in *Acts* Luke leaves the most Blessed Virgin in the Cenacle. **All the Blessed Virgin did in the Cenacle was to adore.** She was the queen and mother of adorers; in a word, Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament. During this month honor her under this beautiful title. Meditate on what she was doing and how our Lord received her adorations. May you see these two hearts perfectly united. You yourselves must lift the veil; I cannot do that.

Why is there no word of this in the Acts of the Apostles? The gospel mentions the Annunciation, for it had to speak about the mother when announcing the coming of the Son. It also speaks of the Blessed Virgin at the birth of our Lord and when he was on the cross. Why does it not speak of her elsewhere and then leave her in the Cenacle? **The reason is that in the Cenacle there is the language of love.** Mary spent this time of her life in love, in adoration. There are no adequate words for this. It is not possible to talk about the reign of God in a soul and the soul in God. No one talks about what is going on in heaven, for this is beyond human language. Even St. Luke cannot describe Mary's activity. He simply leaves her in the Cenacle.

Imagine the power of her love and the holiness of all her virtues, as Mary followed the sacramental life of her Son for twenty years or more. All her virtues took on a Eucharistic trait and developed in perfection. There is no need of an evangelist to describe all this; you have the cenacle, you have our Lord who will reveal to you something of what was happening. If all were told, it would be beyond our ability to comprehend. I would enjoy following a *Month of Mary as adorer*. It is important to pray, to meditate, and to thank the Lord for this love. I would be pleased with such a *Month of Mary as adorer*, but greater preparation is needed.

How will you spend the month of Mary? Although there are books that deal with this topic, it's up to you to complete them. When these authors speak about Bethlehem, complete the thought as you see Jesus born on the altar. As you reflect on Jesus in Egypt, consider that here in Paris he is yet as in Egypt! How many churches there are, where no one goes, churches that are shut from noon to the following morning! Jesus resides among barbarians and strangers, since no one visits him. Jesus led a hidden life at Nazareth. Is he not even more hidden now in the Blessed Sacrament, where he conceals both his divinity and his humanity? Carry on in this way. Once you lift the veil, you know well the direction to take. **What is essential is that you seek out one of the virtues of the Blessed Virgin.** Begin with one of the easier, lesser virtues. You are sufficiently aware, as these virtues are well known by all people. From this level, you will rise little by little to her interior virtues, to her love.

Then offer a daily sacrifice, foreseeing what is difficult for you. Some sacrifices are known well in advance: a person to visit, something to be done. Our Lady will be pleased with such an anticipated sacrifice, which will become one more crown for the Feast of Corpus Christi. If you don't plan any sacrifice, the Good Lord will send something. Just be ready to catch such a bird in flight. Some heavenly messengers bear a grace and a crown of thorns. A sacrifice that is foreseen needs to be planned, and this planning diminishes its value. Keep in mind, my good Sisters, that spontaneous sacrifices are of greater value. When the Good Lord wants to test a person, he will do so by surprise. Be ready, God says. One must be always prepared and well disposed toward whatever the Good Lord wants.

Love likes surprises. A friend likes to surprise his friend, to see if he is faithful. A mother does this with her child. The Good Lord does this by showing us the cross from a distance, to prepare us for surprises. The devil does not warn us; a storm falls suddenly on our heads. I advise you not to lose (the occasions for) those sacrifices; a generous soul is beautiful! The Good Lord can say what he told Satan: *Have you noticed my servant Job?* (Jb 1:8) He had been surprised each time, not expecting these things to happen. A soul that loves is never caught by surprise. Seemingly by premonition, she can sense that a cross is coming. Thus she is always ready.

Honor the Blessed Virgin with a small sacrifice each day. Go to our Lord through her. Place her first and you behind her, so that you become one. I am offering you only what she has to say, that is all. I am but her shadow. If you speak like that, our Lord will be very happy. Doesn't a mother carry her child? Children are not asked to pay their own fare in public transportation. The Good Lord considers you as one with her. You are tiny, my good Sisters, very small in merits. You are hardly one year old. Place yourselves behind the Blessed Virgin, [...] There's the secret. Learn to be with her. Remember that a soul that loves knows all these little secrets.

[...].

During this month, pray hard for the Sovereign Pontiff², because he has placed a beautiful crown on the head of the Blessed Virgin, the crown of her Immaculate Conception. He must be greatly loved by our Lord and by the Blessed Virgin. We must pray very much for him, so that the Good Lord may continue giving him the strength and perseverance that he has given him so far. We must pray for our Father, the common Father of all the faithful. Hell is involved in everything against him, and this is an omen. When all the devils work on earth, this means that the Good Lord wants to bring peace.

Pray also for bishops, that they may remain faithful and united to the Sovereign Pontiff, solid in faith. All evils have come through bad bishops, like Jansenism, and Anglicanism. When an evil starts with the bishop, it's horrible, a sacrilege. Also, pray for bad priests, so that the good ones remain faithful to their responsibilities and their mission. Pray for the shepherds; a good shepherd takes care of his flock. Pray for the leaders of society; the devil has greater temptations for them. If he can corrupt a king or an emperor, imagine the evil he can do. We must pray much for kings and rulers, for all the devils are loose against them. May the Good Lord bring peace; may there be peace and harmony among Christian princes.

There is no need to tell you to pray for the Society of the Most Blessed Sacrament. This is your mother. Pray for good adorers. Never ask for riches. One who knows how to love is already rich. Let us sincerely love the Good Lord. You should not ask for many adorers, but for good ones. Pray for your leaders, and for your servant. While a man does not make others good, I can prevent some from becoming bad. If foundations are badly laid, what will happen to the rest of the building?



Points for reflection:

- a) How did Fr. Eymard highlight the month of Mary?
- b) How does he want us to honor her?
- c) How does he define devotion to Our Lady of the Most Blessed Sacrament?
- d) What idea does he have of Mary in the Cenacle?
- e) How is this devotion expressed concretely in our spiritual life?
- f) What intentions of prayer does he entrust to the community?

² In this month consecrated to Mary, Father requests the sisters to pray for Pius IX who, on December 8, 1854, had promulgated the constitution *Ineffabilis Deus*, defining the dogma of the Immaculate Conception.