

(From Mo. Marguerite Guillot Conferences to the Novices)

BEARING IN THE CHAPEL – DIVINE OFFICE - 1878

My dear Sisters, I wanted to see you today to make a few recommendations: First I wanted to recommend to you regularity and punctuality for the exercises, all of them without exception. Regularity is one of the essential virtues of the religious life and a community in which this virtue is practiced by all the religious is a foretaste of heaven.

Then, I ask your attention and respect for all that is done in the Chapel; it would not be enough to arrive there on time if you accomplished negligently the great actions that you have to perform there. Why is the Divine Office so often recited in a defective imperfect manner? Because you give in to distractions, to carelessness; you follow your impressions, - either you go too quickly, or too slowly.

I beg you not to be so neglectful. Remember that you are psalmodying the divine praises and that you are speaking to our Lord; you are before Him. If we were fully aware that we are in the presence of our Lord, would we permit ourselves anything that we would not do before someone we respect? The Divine Office is a public adoration; we say it before the Blessed Sacrament exposed. How reverent and attentive we should be.

If you had only heard our Venerated Father say the Divine Office, you would have understood what such an exercise should be. What reverence in his bearing! What unction in his voice! What dignity in his movements!

I also wish to speak to you concerning your posture at the *pre-dieu*, my good daughters. Follow attentively the directives in the Customs Book to avoid singularity. If your devotion needs to be expressed outwardly, you are not made to become Servants of the Blessed Sacrament whose chief characteristics must be simplicity and humility. The greatest fervor ought to be clothed here with the seal of the hidden life and the most heroic virtues placed under the veil of humility and simplicity, which seek to pass unnoticed. What examples of this true virtue we have seen in our first Sisters! They forgot themselves completely to think only of our Lord, and this abnegation out of love certainly raised them very high in heaven.

Every time you see to attract attention you are not practicing virtue, believe me, and far from meriting approbation, any exaggeration is blameworthy.

Be then simple in everything you will be the daughters of our Father. I insist that in the Novitiate, all that tends to affectation, all that is forced, all that is strained, unnatural, all that is departure from the hidden life must be checked.
