

(From Mo. Marguerite Guillot Conferences to the Novices)

ON OBEDIENCE – THE GIFT OF OUR OWN WILL – Jan. 1885

I would like you to understand, my dear daughters, that religious life is a life of renunciation. When you entered this little Cenacle, you had to leave your own will at the door and dispose yourselves to do all that our Lord would ask of you by the voice of obedience.

Why did you leave the family that you loved and by whom you were loved, if not because you heard the voice of Jesus calling you to come and adore Him night and day in His Eucharistic Cenacle? Faithful to the voice of the Divine Master, you came here to live the life of a Servant of the Blessed Sacrament, and to let yourselves be led by obedience.

If you possessed this virtue of obedience, you would be perfect religious, for to say of a religious that she is obedient is to say that she has the religious spirit, that she is regular, that she has the spirit of self-denial, that she is humble and that she loves and desires only the holy will of God. I add that it also means that this religious will experience inexpressible consolations in the practice of the virtue of obedience.

I hope that it may be so with you, my good daughters, and that according to the word of our Rule, nothing in your lives may be deprived of the grace and merit of obedience. Do nothing without permission and do not find this dependence childish, for everything even the most insignificant to you, is important.

Here, in fact, you cannot do as you please, but you must do what the Rule ordains for you and what your Superiors permit; you can no longer follow your own will as in the past. Give yourselves whole-heartedly to obedience, and if the work which is given you displeases you, if you find the employment that is entrusted to you is repugnant, do not complain; accept all for the love of our Lord.

Never neglect to ask for the permissions you need since nothing is yours to dispose of, and you should never take anything in the employments without special authorization; in a word, always remain in a state of dependence on your Superiors. Never act out of self-will, nor perform acts of ownership.

If the practice of the virtue of obedience seems painful to you, think of the obedience of our Lord at Nazareth as well as that of which He gives us an example in the Blessed Sacrament. It is this obedience especially which must be the model of ours. Our Lord obeys all His priests, whether good or bad; it is to teach us to obey our Superiors without examining if they seem

virtuous to us or not. If you obey those who please you and do not obey those who do not suit you, you establish your obedience on natural and human motives and instead of performing a virtuous and supernatural act, by going beyond the difficulties that our Lord permits, you perform a valueless action in His sight.

Learn to obey through the motive of love for our Lord and the desire to imitate this Good Master in His life in the Blessed Sacrament. Then, do all that are prescribed in the time, the place and the manner indicated. If it should happen that at a moment when you are performing an assigned task, something more urgent arises, explain your difficulty to your Superior, but do not change what she has decided, except in certain cases of necessity where she could not be disturbed. Then submit what you have done as soon as you can.

A Sister who does not obey in this manner, who performs acts of self-will, who follows her own manner of thinking and acting rather than that of her Superior lacks humility; be humble and you will be obedient.

Obedience will be hard at times; it will exact numerous sacrifices from you and it may even cause tears to flow, but these tears will not be useless; they will help in the growth of the flower of obedience which you must cultivate in the garden of your souls.

Well then, dear children, be obedient and you will know how to command. But whom must you command, my poor little novices? Your passions, your self-love, all that is in you which is opposed to the reign of our Lord and in order to learn how to command them, begin by submitting yourselves to all that obedience will ask of you. Learn to renounce your own ideas, your own way of seeing things in order to do what you are told. You all wish to attain perfection. Do you now know that it lies in self-denial, in the renunciation of your own judgment, of your own will? It is obedience that will teach you how to practice renunciation. Embrace it generously for the love of our Lord, so obedient in the Blessed Sacrament.

Well then, my good daughter, enough for now; I hope that you have understood me and that my words will bear fruit.
