

(From Mo. Marguerite Guillot Conferences to the Novices)

ON TEMPTATIONS – January 1874

You have come here to become Servants of the Blessed Sacrament. We have received you and you have entered the Novitiate to learn how to serve our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament.

As the sole manner to serve Him well is to die to everything in order that He may make you live of His life, we must teach you in the novitiate the science of death, the art of dying to self and of immolating yourselves continually.

Our Lord will support you in this study, that is true, but know also that He will help you first of all to die, by permitting that you be attacked by temptations which will purify you, humiliate you and detach you from yourselves.

My good daughters, I must tell you that some of you worry too much when they have temptations; do you think you are the only ones who are tempted? We are all tempted, and I who am speaking to you, have more temptations than any of you. At such times, I refer to the advice that our Venerated Father gave us formerly, and I follow it without worrying. You have to know how to draw from your temptations with profit, for temptation is a grace and an occasion of merit. By temptations the soul becomes rooted in virtue and advances rapidly in humility and confidence. Remain calm then, and persuade yourselves that our Lord will never permit you to be tempted beyond your strength. To younger souls He sends small temptations of vanity, self-love, jealousy etc. They have only to scoff at them instead of listening to the devil who wishes to trouble them. Later on, more painful temptations will appear, those against faith, against trust, against charity etc., but the soul must not be alarmed; it must draw strength from the thought that our Lord loves it and that, not only will He sustain it in these difficult hours, but He wants it to gain great merit by these trials.

Among all the temptations that will come to you, expect to find temptations against your vocation. What must you do? Open your heart to the person who has the authority, ask advice and obey. When a Director, a Superior tells you that you are in your vocation, your duty is to chase away all contrary thoughts, not to let yourselves dwell on it for an instant, or to examine it. If you do not act in this way, you will expose yourselves to danger and run the risk of being unfaithful to a choice grace by listening to the devil who, jealous of your happiness, would wish to make you lose it.

Yes, listen to those who have the grace and mission to guide you, whatever may be the trials and difficulties that you may encounter in your religious life for it can be that many things in it are repugnant to your nature.

Are you not aware that there are two kinds of vocations – vocations of attraction and vocations of reason? In the first all seems easy, pleasant; the soul advances without effort or repugnance. In the second, the soul accepts all through acts of the will; reason is sustained by faith, though everything is a source of difficulty, suffering and trial. Yet in both cases the soul has been called, decided called; it is our Lord who gives the soul one or the other of these vocations. It is of little importance, therefore, whether you have a vocation of attraction or reason once it has been decided that you are truly called by God.

Sometimes suffering presents itself at the beginning of the religious life, sometimes later on; at times these suffering last until death, but our duty is always the same; to accept the will of our Lord and submit to all His plans whatever they may be, regardless of the form of suffering, difficulty or temptation which surrounds these plans.

But there are indeed temptations other than those against our vocation. You have some, my daughters, against charity by experiencing antipathies, aversions, repugnance with regard to your Sisters, and you will have to fight in order to triumph over them and to keep them from appearing exteriorly. You have also temptations to laziness, dislike for your work, the various employments. You will have some against prayer and adoration which will be painful for you and in which you will find, not the joys and expected, but only dryness and aridity. You will have some against faith and the other theological virtues, and many others still more painful and more humiliating.

Do not worry about them; all these trials are necessary to strengthen you in virtue. Do not be depressed by them; sad religious do nothing good and they do not belong here.

Finally, I end with an important recommendation. Do not talk about your temptations to your Sisters; they do not have the grace to listen to you and you could do them great deal harm. Talk about to those who God has placed near you to direct you.
