

(From Mo. Marguerite Guillot Conferences to the Novices)

ON WORK – 1866

Dear Sisters, we ask your devotedness for the direct service of our Lord; we exhort you to it in all circumstances and by every means because this service is our greatest duty, our primary duty.

To this principal service we must add the material service of the house, which is the secondary service of our Lord, and after having devoted yourselves wholeheartedly to the spiritual service of our Lord, you must devote yourselves gain to His secondary service by working in the employments and everywhere where it is necessary. A Sister who would refuse or who should not give herself devotedly to this work would show little attachment for the Society which could not exist without the labor required for the up-keep of the house and the employments.

You are adorers, not only at the *prie-dieu*, but by your whole life, and you must not cease to make adoration because you no longer are in the chapel. May the spirit of adoration, the interior spirit animate all that you do; work with the thought that you are working in the presence of our Lord, for the good order of His house, for the upkeep of what belongs to Him and it will be easy for you to devote yourselves to your employments – whether creatures know it or not, for it is out of love for our Lord, for this pure and disinterested motive that you must be devoted to the work.

These employments to which I ask you to devote yourselves generously, should be fulfilled with exactitude in a spirit of submission and obedience which consists in observing, without changing anything therein, all the prescriptions relative to the manner of fulfilling them.

It is said in the Rule that the Sisters must consecrate to the greater glory of our Lord their qualities and their virtues, their piety and their works; consequently, it would be false humility to hide the talents that you may have, if they can be useful to the Community. State with the simplicity what you can do and wait for obedience to give you the work that your Superiors will judge necessary.

Devotedness to work must be accompanied by concern for the interests of the Community, and if you perceive that something is deteriorating, your duty is to call attention to it; you would fail in this duty if you said to yourselves; *“That does not concern me; it is not my employment.”* If you are devoted you will do everything with pleasure, however painful it may

be to nature, for you will do it for our Lord without seeking anything for self. Our Father tells us that we must serve our Lord without self-love, that is to say, without thinking of self, without reserving anything for self, and seeking only the glory of God.

Be sure that it will be thus if you do your employments as I have just told you, with devotedness, generosity, and without loss of time. Like idle words, time wasted will have to be expiated. It is a great virtue not to lose time.

Time is a precious thing; it is the price of the blood of our Lord. The saints who were penetrated with this thought often reproached themselves even for the loss of a few minutes. Someone who is always occupied is better disposed to receive the grace of God and the inspirations of His grace, while an idle person is exposed to lose grace, as the dissipation of her mind prevents her from perceiving it.

Love your work, love it as all interior souls do; consider it first of all, as a duty to which all are bound, then as a special obligation of your vocation as Servants. Work is the service of the Master, and a good Servant does it with devotedness.

Work, but may love always be the motive, the purpose of your work. Love is our life; may it be the principle of all we do.
