

(From Mo. Marguerite Guillot Conferences to the Novices)

THE POSTULANCY AND THE NOVITIATE – 1866

My dear Sisters, we have need of seeing one another again and of resuming our meetings. This is not to say you deserve reproaches, but we are so weak; if left to ourselves, laxity introduces itself quickly into our conduct. We need then, to be spurred on to advance, while at the same time, being sustained and enlightened to preserve the spirit of our vocation, and maintain the recollection which must be the soul of the life of an adorer. The first duty is to profit well from the postulancy and the novitiate.

The postulancy is a time of formation and study; a time during which the new-comers must work at freeing themselves from the spirit of the world, its manners and customs which, without being evil, are altogether contrary to religious perfection. There is a whole training that needs to be done to acquire the gait, the bearing, the language, and ways of eating, acting and working adopted in the religious life. The postulancy is also a time of study, when the postulants must learn to know the Rule, the obligations that it imposes, and all the duties of the common life.

During this time, the Superiors on their part study the postulants in order to see if they are docile and submissive, humble, and capable of becoming good Servants of the Blessed Sacrament. The important thing for you, my dear children, is not to resist. Have a good will, let yourselves be corrected and formed, and you will then prepare yourselves to make a good novitiate.

The novitiate which follows the postulancy is a time of trial and of more serious examination. The novice must try to find out for herself if she has the necessary courage to always observe the Rule, down to its smallest prescriptions, and to remain faithful to the commitments she is preparing herself to make; whether she is determined to correct her character and the habits and inclinations that have been pointed out to her as being opposed to religious perfection or as creating an obstacle to her progress and to the edification of others.

While the Novice examines herself, she is also being scrutinized by the Superiors to see if she has a spirit of submission and obedience, for we cannot admit a subject whose spirit is not submissive, who would be attached to her own judgment, to her will, and who is negligent in fulfilling the Rule, or in carrying out advice received.

The Novices, my dear Sisters, should be like children whose obedience is blind and whose submission is boundless. Let yourselves then be turned this way and that without ever

complaining; have this childlike simplicity that believes, that desires, that does without arguing all that is told to do and you will be good Novices.

The Novitiate is the hope of the communities, not that Novices are more valuable than Professed Sisters but because they are destined to replace them in the future. The Professed Sisters are the present; they form the Society; - and you, my dear children, are just arriving. You are nothing, but if you delve deeply into the spirit of the Society, the spirit of our father, one day you will be what the Professed Sisters are today.

The Novitiate is a time of grace; profit by it. Do not say as some do; "When I shall be professed, I will be more recollected, more silent, etc." *My poor children, you will be then what you are now, for I believe in the maxim: "Like Novice, like Profess!"*

Be very docile in letting yourselves be formed, while we on our part work diligently at your formation, to show you the path to perfection, to enlighten you about the struggles that you to wage against yourselves, against the world, the devil, and lastly, to teach you how to bear the trials that come from God or from the devil.

You will thus become good Servants, filled with the spirit of our Venerated Father. I ask our Lord that this spirit may increase more and more among you.
