

(From Mo. Marguerite Guillot Conferences to the Novices)

VARIOUS STATES OF SOUL– November 1884

What shall we deal with today my dear Sisters? I stress again the necessity of acquiring the spirit of your vocation. You must earnestly strive to practice silence, recollection and the interior life, always attentive to the inspirations of grace which do not cease to exhort you to the practice of virtue, and promptness in following them.

In the measure that you progress in this life, our Lord will make you participate in the states through which He passed Himself. Do not be astonished if your dear *prie-dieu* becomes a little Calvary. Unite yourselves to the sentiments of the Divine Master in suffering and abandonment. Know that a soul tried in this way, deprived of consolations, and feeling utterly helpless can be very agreeable to God when she accepts these states or dryness and spiritual aridity in total submission to the will of her God, humbly convinced that she does not deserve anything else. Our Venerated Father repeated this to us very often, and now I, your poor Mother, repeat it also.

May these words enlighten those who always wish to enjoy and to feel, those who believe they do nothing if they have no beautiful thoughts at adoration, if they do not feel full of sensible fervor in the accomplishment of their duties and the sacrifices they entail.

I wish to warn you, my good daughters, against these errors which can be very disastrous for you. It is actually a great danger in the spiritual life to worry about the changes of state through which our Lord makes the soul pass and to be attached to sensible consolations instead of seeing solely the will of our Lord which gives to the soul what is best for it.

Souls who are inexperienced or too natural become worried when, after having been full of enthusiasm and fervor, after having been consoled and sustained, they find themselves weak, powerless, in aridity and dryness. Poor children! Instead of grieving and being astonished, let them recall what the author of the Imitation says: *“As long as you live you will be subject to change, even in spite of yourself, sometimes joyful, at other times sad: now at ease, again troubled; at one time devout, at another dry; sometimes fervent, at other times sluggish; one day heavy, another lighter.”* (Bk 3 ch.33)

An enlightened soul, instead of being astonished and troubled, remains firm because it desires only one thing; to go to our Lord, to follow Him by the path which it will please this Divine Master to trace for her.

Besides, my good daughters, it is not for you to judge your own state and to decide what to do. Tell your problem in all simplicity to those who have the grace and the mission to

guide you and abide by their decision, obeying their advice with docility. If you do not obey thus, if you continue to be troubled and discouraged, you will commit a real fault by listening to the voice of self-love, for discouragement comes from self-love and pride.

The humble soul is content to glorify God in the way He expects her to. By annihilation and self-humiliation the soul recognizes its own wretchedness and is not astonished by the fact that such weakness is powerless; this it stays in littleness at the feet of our Lord.

Do not be frightened, then by the various states in which you will find yourselves, nor by the sacrifices that our Lord will require of you. You can do nothing by yourselves, that is true, but you can do all things in Jesus and through Jesus. Place your confidence in Him; say to yourselves; *“On this altar, our Lord immolates Himself continually. Shall I refuse to immolate myself with Him? Shall I refuse to suffer for Him? He gives me His grace in order that I may respond to His plans for me; and this grace is always in proportion to the trials that He sends me; then, I must not lose confidence.”*

Pray also to Mary, your divine Mother. Ask her to help you and she will do it. I am going to ask that she obtain for you the grace to become strong souls, wishing only what God wishes. Yes, before my death, I would like to see you very holy, very religious, and you are still so poor!
