

must always maintain great prudence and discretion over our words and not say to one what concerns the other.

But just the same, Sisters are in no way charged with judging one another. They must not talk about what they see, what they think, what they notice. No, let us chat gaily about all we want to, about the diverse things of this world; but let us speak only charitably about our neighbour - respectfully, kindly. Let us say only what is good of them. That is needed for our eternal salvation, for Our Lord has said: "Judge not and you shall not be judged. With what measure you measure, it shall be measured to you."

Furthermore, the soul that is dissipated is not capable of receiving the touches of the Holy Spirit. Thus may you let the things of time fall so as to let yourselves welcome the grace of God. May none of you occupy herself with what she is not charged with. May no one ever say anything which is not marked with kindness and charity. May everyone see only what is good.

If you pay attention to these two things, they will help you a lot to preserve the graces that our Lord has granted you in abundance during this retreat. Without this fidelity, you will search vainly, in prayer and in your diverse spiritual exercises, for the recollection that you had taken the resolution to keep.

Keeping the inspirations of the Holy Spirit after the Retreat

14th September 1873

My dear Daughters,

Today I would like to recommend to you to keep faithful to the graces of the Retreat. God has spoken to you during this time; you have received many graces. But if you are distracted, if you dissipate your energies on exterior activities, these impressions disappear. The touches of the Holy Spirit are delicate; they demand that we be united to God so as to be able to keep them. If, on the contrary, you impede the action of God in you by allowing yourself to be dissipated, the retreat graces no longer have the same effect; they do not last, they do not produce the fruits that Our Lord would like to give.

I would like to point out to you several sources of dissipation, so that you may the better avoid them. The greatest - and it will perhaps surprise you, - is impatience. If we allow annoyances, bad moods, any irritation to enter in, even if we hide them and refrain from manifesting the feelings of impatience, whether in words or in acts, we shall be upset. Because we keep our self-control, this may appear to you as an act of virtue; but it is not enough. If you personally want to keep your resolutions, you must keep your peace of soul.

Remember the example of St. Francis of Sales. His whole life's effort was to keep his peace in all circumstances. One day, when someone asked him why he could act with so much gentleness in a difficult situation, he answered: "I have been working for twenty years to amass a little honey in my heart; would you like me to pour it all out in a minute by giving in to harsh words!" That shows you that you cannot acquire peace without hard work and great care. Detachment does that, humility too; and when an emotion rises up, you must quell it as soon as possible.

If you feel pain, an excitement for this or that, look, examine well and you will see that what troubles you are temporal matters. They are not eternal ones; they do not come from God's graces; they are not from the divine life in us. Since they are of time, we must let them go. What are they compared to eternity? When one day we will rise again, will they rise with us? I don't think so. So, leaving them aside, we must take refuge in eternity, for which we are created, where we will live with the Blessed Virgin, the angels, the saints, with the Father, the Son and the sanctifying Spirit.

Even on earth God already lives in the depths of our soul. The Blessed Trinity has a sanctuary within us and this sanctuary is pleasing to them. God sees His creature even in the depth of a sinner - the creature He made to His own image - and He wants to convert it. He desires it so much. That is why He came down from heaven to earth, why He shed all His blood. If God thus loves to the end this imprint

of His divine hand, even in the vilest creature, in the worst person, how much more is this intimate sanctuary in us pleasing to Him? How much more does He love it in all creatures who want to love Him, and in you my Sisters, who are in the grace of God?

Remember what our Lord said to Martha who was anxious about many things and even complained of her sister, believing she had good reasons for it: "Martha, Martha, you are anxious about many things; but there is only one thing necessary. Mary has chosen the better part which shall not be taken away from her." Our Lord says this to us also. He does not want us to lose our peace of soul. Thus when the rush of transitory things disturbs and agitates us, let us make an effort to enter into the sanctuary of our soul, recalling to mind that, according to the word of the Master, only one thing is necessary.

The second cause of dissipation is blunt words. When we talk inconsiderately, when we give our opinion on everything, we drive the Holy Spirit away. Let us maintain charity in all our words and not busy ourselves with judging others when we are not charged with it. For myself, I am obliged to think of what is reprehensible in order to correct it. Mother Therese Emmanuel has the same charge for her novices and as Superior of the House. The Mistress of the school and the Mistress of class are obliged to watch over the children and so one with the rest. But when we think about our responsibility in terms of the order of God, there is nothing there that can make the Holy Spirit sad and still we