



21 February 1875

The Only Way of Pleasing God Is To Imitate Our Lord Jesus Christ

Saint Marie Eugenie of Jesus

My dear Daughters,

We have seen in the Gospel of today (Second Sunday of Lent), a word which I think I spoke about some time ago with regard to the feast of the Epiphany, a word which came twice from heaven to Our Lord: "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear Him." If Holy Church recalls this word to us, it is because everything consists in listening to Our Lord Jesus Christ and in listening to Him according to two meanings given to this word by Holy Scripture.

To listen is also to obey. It is not only to give the attention of one's mind, but it is to give the attention of one's heart as well. The mind must be filled with truth, it must be filled with the words of the Gospel, with all that Our Lord has said, taught and done. Then, every day of one's life, through meditation, we must propose to ourselves some words of this divine life, to imitate it. This is the way the mind is filled with Jesus Christ.

Then comes the attention of the heart, the attention of the will that urges us to do what Our Lord tells us, what He teaches us, what He shows us. Let us not forget that if He is the beloved Son, we can be, after Him, the beloved daughters of our heavenly Father. If we wish to please God, let us enter into this divine sonship that will render us very pleasing in His sight, but let us remember that we do not enter it except through our resemblance of Our Jesus Christ: this is the only and unique manner to please God.

Often, if instead of complicated examens during which we lose our time in coming back with anxiety to each action of the day, in which we do not apply ourselves to anything but vague things, we can ask ourselves: "How do I fare in the resemblance with Our Lord Jesus Christ? I see on one hand the perfect, divine Model - so holy, so humble, so poor, so gentle - and at the same time so strong, so given to others, doing the will of God at all hours of the day, always doing 'that which pleases His Father' (Jn. 8: 29). And, behold me on the other side, how am I an image of Jesus Christ? Is there anything that resembles Our Lord in my behaviour, in my thoughts, in my sentiments, in my words, in my manner of making my spiritual exercises and in each of my actions of the day? Like Jesus, is it faith that rules all my relations with my Superiors, with my peers and my inferiors?" How everything would go better if we did this!

This, Sisters, is not a detailed examen, not the kind that will give distractions but which, I believe is an examen of perfection and which will help us to make greater effort to resemble Jesus Christ, to accomplish this word come down from heaven: "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear Him."

We all know by faith that Our Lord is the beloved Son of the Father, that God puts in Him all His delight. All that remains now is to accomplish the last part of the word: “hear Him”. Hear Him, that is to say, fill your heart with His teachings, do what He tells you. Hear Him with the ear of the heart that brings about the holiness which is in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

There is nothing that can give us scruples in this examen. It would be absurd to torment ourselves because we do not entirely resemble Our Lord Jesus Christ. Everyone knows well that we cannot be like Him, but it is an examen that brings the soul more keenly to shake off all the grains of dust of its imperfections, to acquire the divine resemblance.

Tell yourself: “Poor soul that you are, it is necessary that you, who are also a daughter of God do what you can, so that He may be able to put in you His delight. Remember this: you have left all. You have had the good fortune of being taken and drawn from the midst of others, and chosen by God. He has done a real miracle in placing you in religious life in order that people may find the holy Gospel in you. If it disappears, people ought to be able to read it in the life of Christians, and, with greater reason, of a religious. And so, my poor soul, where are you in this work? Do you truly work to form in you the resemblance with Jesus Christ? Do all your efforts aim at it? Is it what fills the dreams of your nights and the thoughts of your days? Is it the end of all your desires, of all your ambitions, of your preoccupations, of your reflections? Is that the object of your wishes and of your fears? What troubles you, is it the worry of not yet being similar to your divine Model or the fear of not arriving at that? – the only important desire in this world and the only fear that is allowed.

There is something particular in this our time: the time of jubilee has come. Why do we not all wish to gain it as perfectly as possible? Why should we not all wish to profit of this time of grace in order to be purified of our past sins?

What the jubilee demands above all, is great purity of heart, habitual contrition, hatred for the imperfections into which we ordinarily fall, profound regret of all the venial sins from which we wish to purify our souls and obtain forgiveness. It is a look of love, a sincere love, a renewal of love towards God, a purity of heart and of conscience which are obtained above all in looking at Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Since we will begin the stations very soon, why should we not try to bring to it this spirit of love, this true evangelical zeal; which, on one hand, hates all that in ourselves is not Jesus Christ; and which, on the other, seeks to develop in us everything that has been deposited by grace in order to make us resemble Jesus Christ? This is a disposition in which the soul would purify itself marvellously and would marvellously earn the grace of jubilee.