

23 June 1878

XIII. PATIENCE AND THE INTERIOR LIFE, FRUITS OF DEVOTION
TO THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

I will not return today to a subject I treated recently, I would just like to say that for religious consecrated specially to adoration and love of the Blessed Sacrament, this beautiful octave is an ideal moment to cultivate our spirit of adoration, love and rejoicing. For the Church desires to honor joyfully this sacrament in which Jesus Christ dwells among us and gives himself to us.

Certainly, we all experience difficulties and desolation which result from the limits of our nature but beyond these human limitations there is an exaltation such as the angels surrounding the Blessed Sacrament experience, or such as the delight Our Lord feels to give Himself each time He finds a soul desirous of receiving Him with a pure heart.

By forgetting ourselves we can become caught up in His praise and thanksgiving for through the Blessed Sacrament we receive the power to glorify God as He deserves. Left to ourselves we have only our ingratitude and misery which can offend and dishonor God. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ we can give God honor in a manner worthy of Him.

Nothing greater, holier or more worthy can be offered to God than the Blessed Sacrament. No sacrifice can assure us of attaining its ends, adoration, reparation, petition and thanksgiving, except this Sacrament. When you come before the Blessed Sacrament in the name of Jesus and where He is present for you, then you can pray to God with confidence, glorify Him with assurance and praise and bless Him as He deserves. It is good to go beyond the petty limitations of our self-preoccupation in order to be filled with thoughts of the Church and from our faith, to draw love for greater things.

Moreover, Scripture tells us that Christ has chosen us that we may bear fruit.¹ It is the Blessed Sacrament above all else that will effect this fruitfulness in us. During this week, let us try to discover what fruit Our Lord

¹ Jn. 15, 16.

wants to produce in us. Surely, it should first of all be a more perfect interior life and more attention in listening to Him.

It seems extraordinary that a truly interior life should be so rare. However, it is true that to recollect oneself, to cease to listen to all the noise and to all that is going on outside, is something rare even among persons consecrated to God. Why are there so few interior souls? Because we do not know how to be quiet or to listen. We do not know how to be recollected, to limit exterior curiosity, to mortify the activities of our mind and heart so as to receive light from God. If we could rid ourselves of these, God would already give us the lights of eternity. If we do not hear Him speak, possibly we are listening to something else.

Another fruit we should seek is patience. As a matter of fact, Our Lord seems to expect patience of us in all our undertakings in life. I imagine it is not the virtue that holds first place in our thoughts. In general, we are pre-occupied with cultivating a lively faith, a firm hope and an ardent love, even a sincere humility. Rarely do we think of patience. I would like to see statistics which show how many times the word patience is repeated in Scripture. Our Lord preached it unceasingly. St. James and St. Paul mention it in their epistles, "Patience obtains all things."² "Through patience you will possess your souls."³

We must acquire patience so as to receive the fruits of these promises. We must be patient as regards the other virtues. We should practice it with ourselves and with others. I would even say we should be patient with God. I have just said that if we are silent and recollected we will hear God's voice. Take the example of a sister who goes to the chapel, shuts her eyes and listens because she wants to hear God's voice, but He does not speak. It sometimes happens that we do not wait patiently for the moment God has chosen to speak. To hear God we must pass through periods of dryness, or of purification. We must withdraw from the things of earth while we have not yet received those of heaven. Hence patience is necessary if we are not to return to earthly things and miss the hour of God.

I do not refer to earthly things that are incompatible with religious life, but to this or that matter or aspect of work, this or that book. It is easy to fall back and let them occupy the whole of our attention. It is difficult to live without them and to wait for God when He seems to hide Himself. You are blessed, Sisters, if this is not your experience, if even at prayer, during

² Jc. 1,4

³ Lk. 23, 19

Office, throughout the day you do not dwell on such things but can easily recall God's presence and give Our Lord all the time consecrated to Him.

I ask you this week to seek these fruits in a spirit of adoration. I believe many graces are attached to the feasts we are now celebrating. We give God praise by using flowers, hymns and processions and this could appear childish. Yet He accepts them all, He is delighted to be in the midst of His children during these celebrations in His honor. He is ready to open His hands and shower us with graces. In exchange for our praise, little as this may be, He gives us graces as great as Himself.

Let us open our hearts wide to receive these graces. Let us be wholly recollected so that He may touch the secret point of the soul where He has chosen to be heard. It was this secret point that God touched when He called you to religious life. He is heard more there than anywhere else as it is our most intimate place. Let us listen to what Our Lord says, for there He awakens in us the desire to be better than we have been. May He give us a great fidelity, a greater love, a greater occupation with praise, sacrifice and devotedness, in a word all that makes for holiness.