

**N.161/02** [1837 or 1838]

My mind is too weak for me to risk thinking about God too much – his immensity, his presence everywhere. I confuse myself: either I understand all things in God and God in everything, which is a bit pantheistic, or I understand nothing at all. This infinite, immense, incomprehensible being crushes my intelligence. What I read about it never satisfies me, nearly always it seems too material; it seems to me that they are turning God into a human being or at least separated from all things, while as all things come from him, he cannot be a stranger to them although the way he is present to them is mysterious and incomprehensible for me. But I think that it is not really necessary to torment myself with all this: the word of God became flesh also for the poor in spirit. His sacred humanity is easy to understand, to represent for myself, I can imagine all the most real material images of it. Up to now I have had the happiness of never living really separated from his real presence. So it is to Jesus Christ the man-God that I offer my praises. It is He that I see near me in all the forms that can touch me the most and He who understands the greatness of his Father, renders to God on my behalf all the praises that he is owed.

It is to what I have written here that the words of M. de Bonald apply: There are people who complain of not believing because they want to imagine.

Indeed I would like to imagine the presence of God, his shape, his thought, the way in which he is present, it is mad and ridiculous.

**N 193/02** [1841 or 1844]

If there can be illusion in my way of saying my Office, which nevertheless I doubt – that of saying every word in the name of Jesus imprisoned in us and a prisoner under our vices and wickedness, crying to his Father for us from the depth of our heart, complaining of the resistance and slavery which we make him endure, expressing his perfect love of the Father's commandments, his knowledge of his infinite perfections - two things which He wants to communicate to us. (The psalms and the Little Hours lend themselves particularly to this). Sometimes my soul is tired by this as by a process which keeps it so very empty and in a state of nothingness; but more often it is set on fire by love for this Saviour who prays in her and for her, with a lively sadness for thus imprisoning him, and a desire to give way to him with the pliability of the sacred humanity before the Word. It seems to me that this is in line with much that St. Paul says; but that nevertheless I am a bit fearful of doing it because for me it is not just a pious representation; but the truth itself, and that I adore Jesus Christ author of the prayer in me with the same faith that I adore the Blessed Sacrament, although these two presences are not the same, the first being by grace and by faith and the second by his sacred flesh. But above all I do not open myself to it, and I suffer, rather, a lot of difficulties, through the repugnance I feel of explaining it to my confessor who seems to me not to understand it at all, and who seems to me to not want to give himself the trouble of listening even to the little that I reply to his questions, but he attributes it all to ignorance on my part. If I were to insist, I don't know whether he would not attribute it to something worse, from the way in which he speaks to me of the presence of God everywhere and wants me to concentrate on that. I am put off because the name of Jesus alone helps me more than the thought of the divine immensity, which of course I believe in and adore, but without seeing the way which leads from it to me. In place of this, Jesus is a very safe way, and if he is not the principle of the virtues and it is not He who can be sometimes patient, sometimes humble, sometimes gentle, etc. I would despair of ever acting according to the virtues, given that I am so strongly opposed that when I saw the gaze of God always fixed on me I could not satisfy it, unless Jesus took upon himself to satisfy it in me. It seems to me that all my perfection consists in believing firmly in the aid of the Saviour; letting Him act and giving way to Him, mortifying what nature would produce of itself, and in asking for it in prayer; in receiving what comes and in offering it in homage to the Father. It seems to me that the Church finishes all its prayers in the name of Jesus Christ only to make us aware of this truth that it is He who prays in us. It seems to me that the whole doctrine of grace justifies my attraction, and that it is the characteristic which St. Thomas attributes to the nature of the head of the Church which belongs to Jesus Christ alone. But how on earth can I say all that to my confessor who would never forgive me for thus playing the intellectual and who thinks that my problems come from my ignorance of another way. But doubtless he would not blame me for concentrating on Jesus Christ.

Taken in a certain sense this could end in pantheism, I see only too often conclusions far from the mysticism that they proposing to me and that keeps me on my guard and mistrustful.