

## **ADORATION: THE FIRST DUTY OF A CREATURE TOWARDS GOD**

27<sup>th</sup> December 1874

My dear Daughters,

Today I want to talk to you about Adoration which is the absolute duty of every creature towards God. Since in our Religious Life we combine Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament with the work of teaching we have to acquire the qualities of nuns who are dedicated to adoration.

You often go to pray at the Crib these days. Do so, dear Daughters, in the spirit of recollection that should be habitual, and make sure that you really know what you mean by adoration. Besides being the deepest respect and highest worship we owe to God, the recognition of His right and His perfections, Adoration is the culminating point of love.

To say, "I adore that person or thing" is the strongest expression of love and worship; and when it is said of a creature it offends Christian ears. A delicious answer was once given by a little boy who when asked: "Do you love God?" said, "Yes, I adore Him."

Adoration then is the perfection of love. It expresses the greatest ardour, the greatest veneration we are capable of, the most complete fidelity in the gift of self, setting aside all that is merely self so as to belong wholly to the one whom we adore.

Now Our Lord by making Himself so small in the Crib appeals to us and asks us for this of adoration. The only fitting response we can make is to give up, to hand over to Him, all that is merely self, losing our life in the life of the Child Jesus. We must say "I adore

you” meaning to the full that we offer Him with complete generosity all that is most alive and vital in our heart, all that is most delicate and vibrating in our power of affection, in fact everything we can give... in order to live, not in and for self, but in and for the Holy Child.

Here we must examine ourselves, and see what the fetters are that keep us back. What are my faults of character that entrench me in self? Am I not more sensitive to what touches myself than to what touches the interest of Our Lord? Could I not by a wholly tender and ardent love, change what makes me live for self into something that would make me live for Jesus? Can I not look at Him in His simplicity and poverty, in His humility and love, so as to be solicitous for Him? Could I not keep close to Him always, to hold the Holy Child as it were in my arms, giving my attention to the things that concern Him? What would enable to pull up the weeds of my wretched little human imperfection that is still so rooted in nature, in the soil of the ‘old Adam’, and transplant it into the soil of Divine Grace in which we were all planted by Baptism. That would make me live for Christ Our Lord, with Him and in Him. That is not only the surest but also the easiest way. Love is the strongest power in our nature. What made St. John so holy, what gave him all the perfections of a great prophet, a great apostle, a great martyr, and confessor for Our Lord? What but love? A wholehearted love, altogether pure and virginal and tender and attached to Our Lord? We too are called to this same love. If Our Lord drew us out of the world, His purpose was to attach us to Himself by a love like St. John’s, so that from the Crib to the Cross, we should never be separated from Him.

St. John first knew Our Lord in His everyday life during the Public Ministry. Some people think that when Jesus was arrested St. John tried to allow Him and left his garment in the soldiers' hands. But what is certain is that he soon came back and that he was with Our Lady on Calvary. There is a tradition that he went with Our lady when she followed the traces of the Precious Blood on the Way of the Cross. He was present when the body of Jesus was embalmed and put in the tomb and on the morning of the Resurrection, when St. Mary Magdalen went to tell the Apostles that Jesus had risen, St. John was the first to get to the tomb.

What enabled him to do all this was the grace of a special love, an ardent, adoring love. Such love was indeed due to him who had come to seek and save us in a way so marvellous as to be quite beyond our power of imagination. He who became a little Child to save us is Our Blessed Saviour, and the love He showed us is so far beyond our thoughts that however we may love Him we shall never come near to making Him a fitting return for a love so admirable and Divine.

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