



March 17, 1889¹

Imitation of Jesus Christ

Striving for Union through Love

My dear Sisters,

I will say only a few words to remind you of what you were told this morning, that it is Our Lord Whom you must imitate your whole life. How do you imitate Him inwardly? What is the degree of likeness, of union formed in the depths of your heart with this sovereign Master Who is your model? And it is to the extent that each of us takes on a greater likeness to this Divine Model that we will also have greater likeness to one another, so that we may have unity of vision, of thought, of judgment, because we will judge all things as Jesus Christ did. You know this very beautiful saying which is found at the end of the Chapter on Charity in the Constitutions; you must now put it into practice.

The last time Bishop Gay came, he said something so true and remarkable that I return to it again, although I believe I have already spoken to you about it: “The whole of Religious Life consists in working through love to achieve union.” Judge from this how much the older Sisters must already have worked on this, how much more pronounced union with Our Lord must be in their souls, how much they must have acquired something that makes their likeness to Our Lord more evident. They must have inclinations of humility, poverty, obedience, and all the other qualities that are those of Our Lord.

Continuous prayer was also a characteristic of Our Lord, since the Gospel tells us that He spent the night in prayer and that He addressed His Father before and after all His actions.

During this Lent, I would like it to be one of your concerns to advance in the spirit of prayer. Love is generous; it knows how to overcome our own inclinations, our natural attractions, the impulses inherent in human nature. Love lifts us higher; it binds us to Our Lord in such a way that we seek Him and not ourselves.

Each of you should take a moment for reflection, see what remains of your affections, your tastes, your desires for something human and earthly, and renounce them in order to have in their place something that resembles Our Lord in His childhood, in His public life, or in His Passion.

¹ Unedited Chapter