



Marie Eugénie – Intimate Notes N.154/04 à 154/10
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N.154/04

When I think of the pain that I cause mortal men, I ought rather think of the pain I give to Jesus Christ if I leave Him. For Jesus Christ loves me, He calls me, He draws me by the sweet odor of his perfumes. He has spoken to my heart, for a long time He troubled it. He sent me the eloquence of Father L[acordaire], he made me hear what I did not want to hear

He has permitted that, an attraction of my imagination made me read good books. He took away my confessor in order to give me one that is zealous, ardent, full of authority and of charity without weakness. He made him direct me wonderfully with a blend of kindness and severity. Finally and above all, He has placed me in a wonderful position which alone ought to assure my vocation.

I have seen enough of the world to understand the danger for me, to know its vanity which I know in depth, for I know after all how little it fills the heart and how the bother of one's dress, the annoyance of unkindnesses, the weight of the boring, the deceived expectation, the fear of blame, the fatigue, the feeling of not being understood, the time lost, the discontentment with self, compensate for a few mortal pleasures for the soul since these are the pleasures of vanity. I have lived enough in the world without liking it, I can get along well without it, its joys were not difficult to sacrifice for a friend, a propriety —And I would find them difficult to sacrifice for Jesus Christ —

And yet as God seems to have wished to treat me as his beloved; He leaves me all the merit of a sacrifice, leaving me - despite the fact that I knew the emptiness of a certain love of the world, of the memory of having been pleasing to it, of the means of going towards it, of enjoying it, of being loved by it, flattered - in fine, all my liberty because, in his goodness, He wants me to have merit [of leaving it] before Him. He seems to press me, Himself, to make me worthy of the bounties He prepares for me.

At the same time, He fills me with light concerning the sin of the world, its little conformity to Jesus Christ, on the nature of the pleasure I find in it, on egoism, vanity, guilt for the love I have of the world, and I see it with such a light that I would be all the more guilty were I to resist than many Christians would be to sin against the primitive commandments of the law since they are not so aware of their duties towards it. Yes, I should be frightened by the light that I have; the one that led the Wise men to the Christ's crib was not more resplendent, and the light imposes an obligation to follow it. If I resist the Holy Spirit, as I sometimes want to, I would not be a lukewarm Christian, I would be a reprobate, I don't know to what extreme I would go.

The Spirit struggles with me like an eagle, sometimes all the powers of my soul are overwhelmed, even my body succumbs and I feel broken, annihilated, panting, trembling like a leaf. But if I unite myself to the will of God, if as his servant, I put myself entirely at his disposition with the will to do all that He wants, no matter how it is shown to me, to suffer all that He pleases, I immediately regain my peace. Prayer, everything becomes sweet, easy and nothing frightens me. What I must ask God is that He overcome me truly in these combats, that He take away my force of resistance, that He tame me, that He break me!

God calls me to solitude by an attraction that I cannot resist. If I think of hesitating in my resolve, of turning back, the combat is violent and breaks me; all the powers of my soul are troubled, reduced to nothing. I could not live in this state. But as soon as I entrust myself entirely into his hands, I experience an intimate peace, so deep, so calming, so sweet that I am angry to admit it to those whom I love. I feel that it will sweeten all for me and console me for everything. I can then be sad, but I don't suffer. The depths of my soul are plunged into a superior atmosphere of calm, of love and unction. I cannot express these things, never before have I felt anything similar, my mind does not understand, I cannot account for it. If another told me about such an experience, I would not believe it, but it is impossible for me not to see very forcefully and seriously.

What does the rest matter! life is so short, we shall find each other above...

N.154/05 Reticence in following vocation as foundress

You believed me capable of belonging to God, of serving Him in the state of virginity and you spoke to me of an educational institute. This is very great, I know, however it is not that to which I feel called. Willingly, I would let myself go because that would be more attractive to me than any religious call. I would keep the very lively enjoyment of study. I would have a less hard life and that is less frightening for the sensuality of my flesh and to my pride of spirit. But it is just that which makes me think that this is not the life for me. When one enters religion and is influenced in one's choice by the idea of sacrifices, of the amount of mortifications, one hardly has the spirit of that state which should consist in an entire sacrifice and self-abnegation. If I measure what I want to give and I do not accept wholeheartedly all that can please God, because my flesh would murmur, assuredly I have reason to be concerned about the future of my vocation. I would be making a hypocritical oblation, a theft of the holocaust, and I could hardly expect the graces which God bestows on those who give themselves sincerely to Him and which are necessary for one to be faithful to the holiness of the vows of the religious profession.

On the other hand, leaving the world just to avoid temptations, I would take with me more dangerous ones, the satisfaction of studies, the confidence that I would be tempted to place in them, the pride coming from knowledge that I would necessarily have to acquire in order to be useful, the vanity of the success I could have with my lessons, the habit of commanding children and a great ease in raising myself up and seeing my abnegation as very great since I wouldn't see any other. On the contrary, all the young women who surround me, coming from the convent to find the comfort of their families or comfortable marriages which I would have renounced, I would imagine that I had done a great deal and forget all that I am lacking..

Moreover, I don't have the qualities of a good teacher, I am and I shall be for a long time a woman incapable of the correct tenue, that dignity, the follow through, so necessary for children. My mind is not logical enough, nor have I enough simplicity and lucidity. I don't know what purpose I could serve, at least, I would certainly doubt my usefulness often and it would worry me and pain me.

On the contrary, a Sister of Charity, I would be sure to renounce myself perfectly, in my body and mind, sure then to receive the blessing of God. The good that I would like to take to religious life, the peace of heart, the trust to do something good and not to err in my way, I would have that. I will always be able to care for the sick, I would be convinced that in doing so I was doing something pleasing to God, that I was not making a mistake and would not risk taking any responsibility. At the same time, in seeing so much suffering, so much death, in seeing the last anguish of sinners or the patience of holy sick people, I would always love my state which assures a Christian end. I would always thank the Lord more and more for having called me to it, I would have a humble opinion of myself and of the little that I do in seeing the poor people, [who are] abject in the eyes of the world, endure and suffer so much more than I would have ever sacrificed.

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Religious feelings are infinite, there is always a new phase, a new aspect. Each day, the intelligence discovers new admirations, the heart new contemplations. The last word of love or of truth is never spoken; we are nourished each day without ever being filled; we always desire more; and let no one say that the impenetrable stops us, that we are brought up short before the mysteries of this love and this truth....

N.154/10

If I had seen my brother tear himself away from my arms to go and fight and pray on the tomb of Christ, perhaps I would have tried to hold him back, perhaps I would have closed my arms around him in despair, but I would never have cursed him; I would not have blamed his heart. Very well then! There is a Catholic Crusade in our times also, the crusade of the Lord, the crusade of faith. And I also want to bring my stone to the edifice of glory and salvation that humble architects build and, if it is necessary, I want to mix my drop of blood with theirs. The sacrifice of self is the condition of all usefulness, of all virtue. To leave you, you whom I love, is a sacrifice similar to death. And I, who believe that I would know how to die for the Lord, I would hesitate when the Lord asks it!...Imagine that I die; that I die happy, to begin to live a great and divine life. God has done so much for me, I want to do something for his name. Not that he has need of me, but it is that we should not oppose the plan of God. He is pleased to make his power burst forth in that which is little, but the worm must not refuse, the clay not rebel against the potter that turns it. Without the Virgin's fidelity to the graces she had received, without her consent to the plan of God for her, the earth might never have seen its Savior. God has made us free; free even to counter his designs for neither sin nor its punishments were in his plan, - a frightening power when we think that ... the smallest act of revolt on our part has been able to produce so much evil or hinder so much good. But think also with joy that the sacrifice of ourselves, conformity to the will of God, fidelity to obey the inspirations of grace, can -despite our nothingness - produce a great good. We resituate ourselves in the order of God's

Providence, we leave Him free to pour out on us the treasures of his goodness, and as He likes to do great things with weak means, we cannot know the good that He allows us to do, as we could not either fathom the evil of which we could have been the cause.

So it is that, a year ago, my heart beat at the name of my contemporaries, illustrious defenders of the faith: La Mennais, before his fall, Lacordaire, Montalembert, and all the others, so that I dreamed of being a man in order to be so useful like them, and said that they saved the country in bringing it back to the sources of Truth. I hardly thought that it would be perhaps given to me, full of wretchedness and weaknesses, to associate myself with their great destinies. And yet so it is, for my humble sacrifice, if it is complete, God will bless it, as [He blesses] their grand ideas. Perhaps I shall accomplish great things, perhaps I shall have saints as children, and perhaps they, in turn, will have influence for salvation. All that can be, if I only know how to die perfectly to myself so that Jesus Christ can live in me, the God who deigns to descend there. Then He will place there what He can reward. What a marvel of love. There one can only humble oneself and adore.