



17 October 1875

REPARATION, ADORATION, THANKSGIVING

Saint Marie Eugenie of Jesus

My dear Daughters,

Those among us who have been many years in our religious life ought to examine ourselves and search our hearts to the depths to see whether we have made ourselves worthy, or at least whether we are striving to make ourselves worthy, of our double vocation of prayer and zeal.

It is a fact that God has called us to a life of prayer, to more continual worship of the Blessed Sacrament, to gratitude for and adoration of His infinite perfections, in order that we may compensate for what so many indifferent people, so many sinners fail to do. He has called us to work for the spread of His kingdom in souls, and so our business in life is to counteract everything that is against Him in the world. And alas! almost everything is against Him.

Without doubt there is in our day a greater love for Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. But at the same time there is hatred, infernal hatred towards Him, that is expressed by sacrileges. Two have been committed lately in the diocese of Nîmes, and they were obviously intended as insults to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, because the Sacred Vessels were left to burn while the Hosts were taken away. That shows the hatred for Our Lord and for religion which is the most outstanding characteristic of our day.

There was a time when indifference seemed the most characteristic of evil of society, but now people are not indifferent. Obviously there are men who are carried away by love of pleasure or absorbed by business and who live in a sort of practical indifference. But as a general rule, people either love God or hate Him. At the root of revolt and hostility there is hatred of God and religion, and specially hatred of Our Lord Jesus Christ and of His Church. We have it in our power to repair for scandals and sacrileges by adoration and by giving ourselves to prayer. If our Lord's reign is rejected by the world, we can, we ought, to establish it without reserve in our souls.

That is done by prayer and adoration. But let me tell you, Sisters, that it is also done by obedience. You see, obedience immolates us wholly, not only before God but before creatures, creatures as weak and imperfect as ourselves. They represent God merely because they have been chosen for that purpose. Obedience is clearly the very best reparation for the spirit of revolt that urges men to hate God and His Church and to rise in revolt against authority.

As regards prayer, you may say that many good Christians in the world pray a lot. But the fact remains that they people who do not pray are more numerous. Statistics show that in this great city of Paris barely 5% of the population perform their Easter duty. Perhaps a few more go to Sunday Mass, pray a little and are not altogether without religion. But one may ask, how many are they? Without doubt half the people of Paris have no respect for God, and practise no religion. Not only do they live like animals but the people who do practise religion irritate them. How much reparation we have to make my dear Daughters! We can do so, as I was saying, by more continuous, more insistent, more fervent prayer. But make no mistake about it. The only way to live up to this beautiful vocation of ours is to throw ourselves heart and soul into it, by giving ourselves wholly to Our Lord, and if it were possible, by giving more than oneself, giving oneself once for oneself and ten times for the people who do not give themselves, because the number of religious compared to the number of wicked people who refuse to love God must be one to ten. And to make up for their refusal to love is our privilege. Alas! far from loving God as they should, many of them hate Him. The others remain tepid, careless, indifferent. They live for this world alone, and not at all for the supernatural nor for eternity nor for the wonderful divine gift that God brought into this world.

This is the only aspect of our life that I want to speak about today. We must examine if we are living up to it. This is the work that awaits those who enter. They must realize that God called them to make atonement, to adore, to establish in their hearts the reign of God whose rights are so often denied, and to pay Him by abundant reparation and worship and homage that others do not offer with the generosity that they should.

Because, Sisters, when all is said and done, why are we here? Why were we not born into a family where God was ignored? Why, after we were baptized, were we so fortunate as to have our forehead signed with the Sign of the Cross? Or in other cases, how did it happen that when we were older God came in our heart bringing a love that our parents had not thought of teaching us? As a holy writer expressed it, why did God touch the secret spot in the depth of our soul, the soul He has made for Himself, and make us realize that He wanted us to love Him alone and above all things? Ought not this choice of God, this loving kindness, this mercy, be enough to make us give ourselves wholly and with eagerness, so as to repay by worship, adoration, prayer and by our undivided love the goodness of Him who has loved us so?

To this adoration and gratitude we ought to add atonement, reparation, to compensate for all that wicked men fail to offer to God. It follows that our gift of self should be very ardent, very continuous, very complete. We must keep nothing for self. If we take pleasure in anything that is not according to God's good pleasure it must be sacrificed. If we are tempted to keep our freedom in anything, instead of offering it to God, let us sacrifice it heartily so that nothing will be refused that could be given.

This applies to every age and degree: to novices so that they may make progress in the gift of self; to postulants so that they may begin the noviceship seriously; to older nuns so that they may strive to make some progress each day in God's holy love, so that their gift of self may grow in generosity and that anything that remains not yet entirely given in spite of their goodwill may be given now at last. because my belief is that all their life long they have wished to give all, although they may not yet have achieved the total gift of self that they have always desired.



