



2 May 1875

The Spirit of Prayer

Saint Marie Eugenie of Jesus

My dear Daughters,

As we begin this month of May, I think I should recommend to you the spirit of prayer. This is certainly the foundation of the religious life; but there are moments when it would be good to renew and rekindle it in us.

To begin with, silence is given to us in order to facilitate the spirit of prayer, in the same way that separation from the world and the exercises of the religious life help to possess it. But to establish ourselves deeply in prayer, we must always recapture it, give ourselves to it with fervour. Upon entering to our cell at night, we must be occupied with God and the things of God. If we cannot sleep, one must turn ourselves towards the Blessed Sacrament. Upon awaking the next morning, the first movement of the soul should be to enter into the spirit of prayer so that the Great Silence penetrates the soul with thoughts of the Saints and unites us to God before we come in contact with creatures. The Blessed Virgin always lived in the spirit of prayer. The Fathers say that while she slept her heart kept watch. Even in sleep this privileged creature did not interrupt the habitual act of love and union with God. This she asks also of her daughters. During this month consecrated to her, she invites us to spend as much time as we can during the day, talking to her, calling on her for help, putting ourselves under her maternal protection. She calls on us to fill with devotion those hours dedicated to prayer, because between this Office well said, and this prayer well made, this visit to the Blessed Sacrament, we recollect ourselves frequently and renew ourselves as often as possible in the presence of God.

Happy are those whose work does not overburden them with responsibility. There is nothing better in religious life than to be in a job that does not require a great deal of preoccupation, and leaves a certain liberty of spirit. Thus, the co-adjutrix Sisters do not have preoccupations of mind in their work and can easily immerse themselves in God during the hours of the day. This also applies to other employments. For instance, when a sacristine or a linen room Sister is keeping the children at a time when hardly anyone talks to her, each of them can remain in this state of recollection. If prayer is mingled with action you may be sure that more good is being done.

I would like this month of Mary to be for each of you, Sisters, a renewal in this spirit that I have recommended to you today.