



1 August 1875

TO ATTACH ONESELF ONLY TO JESUS CHRIST

Saint Marie Eugenie of Jesus

My dear Daughters,

I did not dwell long enough the other day on this thought that the means, the strength, the soul of detachment is the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the attachment to His divine Person.

On becoming a religious, Sisters, we must clearly understand that it is necessary to orient our whole life heavenwards; and then, throughout the years, apply oneself continuously to eliminating all the ties attaching us to the earthly, gradually removing or at least diminishing every anxiety that comes from this world.

As we kneel before the Blessed Sacrament, we should say: “It is only for you, O my God, that I am here. You are my life! My thoughts, my fatigue, my affections are all yours, and since I cannot remain at your feet, my life must somehow be a continuous prayer. Prayer must be the soul of my life; my thoughts, my work must be part of this fullness with which I want to belong to you!” Thus must we, at the feet of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, set aside all earthly preoccupations from our soul, all our difficulties, all our attractions.

I wonder whether those of you who have read the life of St. Catherine of Genoa have noticed that the first lesson Our Lord gave her was this one: “You must not say whether something pleases or displeases you: if it displeases you, you must work at it long enough to render yourself indifferent or to even get to embrace it willingly; if, on the contrary, it pleases you, you must distance yourself from it so that I alone please you. Neither must you say ‘I love this, I do not love that! I alone must claim all your affection.’”

This is the great formula of detachment: Jesus Christ, the only object of the affections! This requires effort, work. Our Lord gives this lesson to Catherine, a soul already far advanced in His ways. When she feels repugnances, she must try to overcome them; when she feels attractions, she must resist them, keep away from the desired object, from that which she loves. And all this so as to unite herself to God alone, even at moments when God deprives her of His felt presence.

Sisters, the human has this tremendous power - it “does not hide itself” as St. Augustine remarks. The material presents itself forcefully, seeping in through all the senses, whereas the supernatural enter our inmost self only by faith. This is why a religious has to live more and more by faith, she must let supernatural realities penetrate her very being so that they sustain

her above the visible, above the sensible. She must detach herself from the earthly if she wants to attain the life of prayer.

But it is not merely solitude nor isolation from creatures that will lead us to this - it is the soul detached from things of this life and attached in faithfulness to Our Lord Jesus Christ.

