

## UNION WITH OUR LORD'S AIM IN HIS SUFFERINGS

6<sup>th</sup> April 1879.

My dear daughters,

There is only thing I want to recommend to you today, when you meditate on the Passion, when you suffer, when you practise mortification to be like Our Lord, try to make His purpose your own. His purpose in His sufferings was to give glory to His Father, to atone for sin; to give back to God the glory sin had robbed Him of His Father's glory. That was His first concern, His first aim, and His second, like unto the first, was man's salvation.

We, each one of us, have been called to Religion for the salvation of others, and first of all for that of our children. Our aim, our most ardent desire, must be their sanctification and salvation, we have to strive to train them in habits of solid virtue, so we must not confine our efforts to the nicer characters, to those who have fewer faults. Should we not lavish our greatest care and solicitude on the less favoured children?

When Our Lord came, there were few men on earth who were not wicked. Jews and pagans alike lived under the sway of their passions. As for the Jews they proved this by crucifying Our Lord. How far all men were from the way of salvation, given up to vice of every kind! These were the men that our Lord came to save. He loved then and He suffered and died for them.

Now look at our children. Those who are more prone to evil will be in greater danger of falling away when they leave school and start life in the world. If our love for souls is great, these are the very children we shall take to our heart this Passion-tide. Each of us might take one of them and make her the object of special prayer and solicitude, striving to win for her an outpouring of Our Lord's

Precious Blood to transform her.

All your life long, when you are dealing with the children, remember that you have got to be more eager to do good to those who are less gifted, less attractive more troublesome, and who have more faults and failings. Our Lord took care to teach us this. He said: "If you love those who love you what title have you to a reward? Will not the publicans, the very heathen do as much?" But if you do good to those you do not naturally like, that is behaving like a Christian. You are then acting under the influence of Our Lord's own Spirit.

You must take a life-long resolution to devote yourself with greater ardour, greater patience, greater care and solicitude to the children who are disagreeable and troublesome and who seem to care nothing for God. It is futile to say, "What can you expect? She is so troublesome, the things of faith mean nothing to her." But, my dear daughters, the very reason why she has been entrusted to you is that by the virtue of God in you, by your love of God, your spirit of sacrifice and prayer, she should be changed, and that from being so little open to the things of God, so little amenable to grace, she should be changed and should become a true lover of Christ Our Lord.

That is for the children. But we have to look further. I should like each of you to say: "My God there are souls who live separated from you. There are sinners fighting against Grace who do not intend to go to the Sacraments. During Holy Week my heart is set on winning you one such sinner." Ask Our Lady to choose the right one for you. She knows souls she wants to snatch from sin, souls for whom she suffered, like a poor mother who sees one of her children lost in spite of her prayers and efforts. Adopt one of these souls and offer acts of virtue and sacrifices, as many as you can, to draw it to God. The kind of sacrifices I beg you to offer most of all are acts of humility,

of patience, of abnegation of your will and judgment, acts of the virtue God most wants of you, that will be an antidote to your faults, so that Our Lord's own perfection may be able to shine unhindered in your soul. Add whatever penances you are allowed to do. Put up with whatever you have to bear, in your health, in the daily round, and make a sheaf of all this for the salvation of "your" sinner. Like that, each one can hope to win soul for God this week.

We can apply to ourselves what the Bishop of Poitiers said to some Carmelites: 'Not only we try to save souls by prayer, as do all nuns. But our very work of education itself is for the salvation of souls.' That goes well with our spirit which was expressed by the vow we used formerly to make to spread Our Lord's Kingdom in souls. This spirit must so fill each of you that you will rise above self by a burning desire to save souls, and give yourselves wholly to our double apostleship: the inner one of prayer and fervour, and the other one of teaching of devotedness and patience.

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