

Marie-Paule Speaks to Us

In recent years, the review “Le Royaume” has reprinted a past text from the Spiritual Letter Box by Marie-Paule in each issue, but she signed many other articles which would also deserve to be published once again. This is what the review intends to do from now on under the general title, “Marie-Paule Speaks to Us”, thus encouraging us to benefit even more from her maternal exhortations and teachings. – Editorial Staff

WHAT A COMBAT!

It sometimes happens that men and women, in the course of their lives and whatever may be their vocation, have doubts about themselves, grope about, and sometimes lose their footing in the tortuous paths of their thoughts tormented by the inrush of reflections which are too pervaded by the human.

Formed in the image of God, receptacles of grace through baptism – grace which is constantly renewed or augmented through absolution –, men and women, nourished on the Eucharist, are called to live joyfully the presence of God, who manifests himself through the different events of their lives. Through sanctifying grace, and with a loftiness of sentiment and a supernatural outlook, they discover God, according to His wisdom and His goodness.

Our earthly life, which, in fact, is an exile – for the true life is the eternal life –, can become, if we so wish, a little paradise in our hearts and souls, depending upon the way in which we support the vicissitudes of this life. We are not lacking the examples of this in the lives of the great saints. Today, let us pause for just a moment over the “*little way of the spiritual childhood*” of Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, a way accessible to all and rewarding for everyone.

To be so young and to understand so well the merciful goodness of the Father! To be so young and to accept so well the multiple vexations of life, transforming them into jewels of eternity! Yes, to be so young and yet so profound in her sentiments and her human reflections, which, with the simplicity of a child, she transposed to a level of wisdom totally impregnated with divine love! When we have God for a father, there is no age for understanding Him and loving Him ever more and more.

When parents are open to the spiritual life, the coming generations can become the promise of the Church, in producing marvelous spiritual and apostolic fruit.

But what a lamentable emptiness prevails today in the world of souls, souls that run after an ephemeral happiness that begets nothing but disappointments and cruel disillusionment. What way is there out of such a labyrinth seething with all the vices which engender suicides and murders, and teeming with all the lives which have become insupportable because shameless passions are harvesting an ever increasing

number of victims and producing beings that are drained, anxious, discouraged or revolted for life?

To understand, to love, and to help those suffering such a nightmare, can aid them to emerge from the apathy into which they have sunk, and bring them progressively, and not without difficulty – as though in a cure of detoxification of the heart –, to find serenity in the peace of a conscience renewed by grace which rests and gladdens the soul through the beneficent outpourings of love.

So, ought one to go back over a past which is best forgotten? The important thing is to open all the avenues leading to the light and to love. One must live the true love, imbue oneself with it, in order to be able to give it, to share it, and to lead souls to God. “*How can God pardon me my life of sin?*” – this is a question often asked us, verbally and in writing, by those trying to reform themselves, but still impotent and frightened because they are turned back upon their past.

A PERPETUAL COMBAT

We are born with the original taint; we grow up with an atavism of qualities and faults with which we have to come to grips over the course of the years. Such is the fundamental law and principle of our lives, something which, however, can become a consolation if we know how to profit from what is positive in us, while seeking to eliminate that which is negative. Let us remember that life is a perpetual combat; no one can avoid this combat. Whether we exist in a life of asceticism, fighting against our imperfections, or on the steep slope of a life tormented by passions, there is always the combat. But, in each case, it is the effort put forth that counts. Just as long as we are ready to make the effort, there is hope, and this hope will one day make victories possible.

It is the efforts which count, and it is love which transforms everything. So, it is only right and fitting that we have our regard turned forward, and never despair, in loading ourselves with blame in an exaggerated contempt of self. We are made in the image of God, but God knows our limitations and our weakness, and that is why He will judge us on love – but on authentic love. Strong in that love which draws us towards Him, we can neither despair of nor refuse His attentions, for

His grace is offered in greater abundance there where there is the greatest need for it.

God is good. If evil abounds. His grace superabounds. With the heart of a father, He bends down over His prodigal son come back to Him, and He is prepared to celebrate his return: *“There will be more rejoicing in heaven over one repentant sinner than over ninety-nine virtuous men who have no need of repentance.”* (Lk 15:7) Are these words a slap in the face to those who go forward harmoniously before the Lord? Not at all, for these souls are a consolation to the Master.

Those who ascend towards the Master, even with great difficulty, are they not making the most of the graces which are given them? If there is rejoicing in Heaven over a sinner who undergoes conversion, the same is true here below in the Church when souls return to God.

We should be prepared for a spectacular return of souls to God, through Mary. What rejoicing will soon take place in the Church!

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A comparison will help us to understand the goodness of God who overlooks our faults in order to turn His regard, rather, upon an act of virtue performed out of love for Him.

Everything in nature speaks to us of God’s goodness, and serves us as a lesson, if we only stop a little to contemplate and to love.

We know that flowers testify, in their manner, to God’s love. How many times have we not admired a rosebush, in spite of its many thorns, thorns which we shall compare to our defects, to our faults or to our imperfections. But as soon as the rosebuds appear, the rosebush already takes on another appearance which charms the eye and holds the attention. And then, when the roses bloom, what a wonderful sight, one we lovingly contemplate! Do we tarry over the thorns, even if we have been pricked by them? No, we completely forget them in our admiration of the beauty of the roses and in the enjoyment of their perfume. When God looks upon souls returning to Him, He at once forgets the “thorns” of the faults which have hurt Him, in admiring and contemplating the soul renewed by grace (the rosebud) which will blossom and radiate (the perfumed rose) round about it. The wonder of grace is so well expressed by the illustration of the rose, an illustration beautifully presented to us with such eloquence by our teachers of other times.

CONTEMPLATION

But it is not enough to admire, to contemplate beautiful nature: the sky with its rising and setting of the sun; the sea, tranquil or tempestuous; the forest, peaceful or storm-tossed; the thousands of varieties of flowers, cultivated or wild; the world of souls which conceals so much beauty, etc. We must go still further, always advance more and more along the roy-

al road of holiness. It is to this that earth and everyone of us is called.

THE SEARCH FOR GOD

In our search for God, we must not halt midway along the route, for if it is a good thing to contemplate all that God has placed at our disposal, the time must come when we will constantly live this contemplation, because contemplation must become a state of life which will bring it about that our every action will be impregnated with adoration.

Is contemplation uniquely the privilege of monks and religious? Not at all.

Numerous are those of our parents and forebears who have bequeathed to us this thirst for love, in a living faith and a courage equal to any test. Were they pupils in a school of mysticism? Not especially so. But through their love of nature, they learned to speak to God, in all simplicity, in that simplicity which has its source in the light and the truth. It is a treasure bequeathed with love, but one all too often scorned.

Confidence in divine Providence, a life given over totally to the holy will of God, and a solicitude to genuinely live in the grace of the present moment, all of these predispose our minds to adoration and our hearts to love. The fathers and mothers of most of us had a good head on their shoulders, had good judgment, coupled with simplicity of heart, and were capable of recognizing God to be their Father. They worked for the good of the coming generations. Today, in order to follow in their footsteps and wage the interior combat, to the beat of love, we must extricate ourselves from the influence of those who let themselves be guided by knowledge that is cut off from God and is dominated by pride.

The adults of today, despite their advanced knowledge, are in the process of destroying themselves by every means

within their reach. If they carry on as they are, they will leave to the coming generations the specter of a world of hatred and an earth ravaged by modern, powerful inventions – unless God shortly puts an end to the maniacal pride which has the modern man and woman in its grip.

If in the past, God saved His people by using the few in numbers, He will once more be able to save the day, through Mary, in bringing about triumph through conversions rather than corpses.

This is precisely what Marian soldiers are hoping for, to the end that there may be as many souls as possible in the wonderful Heaven which awaits us. For we believe in the reality of the love of a God who is a Father, good and merciful, and in the infinite power of His love.

Mary is with us in all the details of our life as a soldier of Christ. Like her, let us live in love and meditate the Magnificat.

Mother Paul-Marie (*Le Royaume*, no. 59, March 1988, p. 15)

