

**MIRROR OF THE VIRTUES**

**OF**

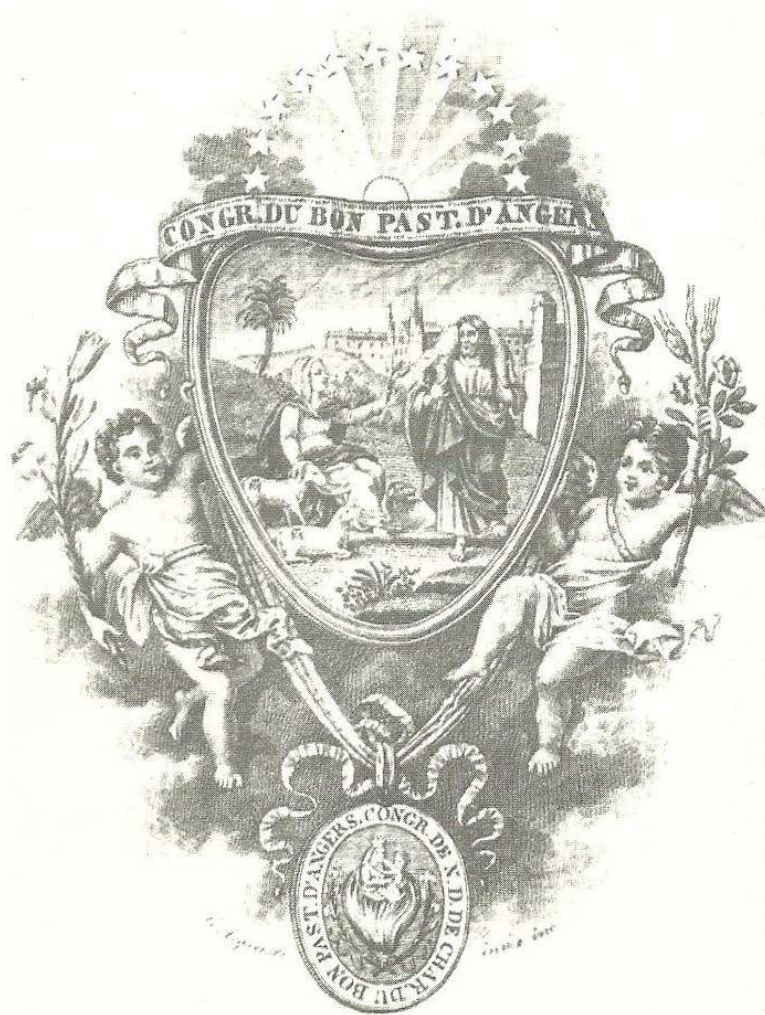
**MOTHER MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA PELLETIER,**

**FOUNDRESS OF THE CONGREGATION OF OUR LADY OF CHARITY**

**OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD OF ANGERS.**

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1888



Engraving in the first "Constitutions for the religious of O.L. of Charity of the Good Shepherd of Angers" printed in Rome in 1836 (Salviucci Printers)

## DEDICATION

The Jubilee Year of Redemption 1983 is also the 50th anniversary of the beatification of our Foundress. The Sisters of the Cincinnati Province are therefore happy to present you this second edition of our historic document. It has become necessary in order to satisfy the demands of many who desire to deepen their appreciation of the spirituality of Saint Mary Euphrasia Pelletier. May it help you experience her spirit and the great heritage she left us - through the insight of Mother Augustine of Jesus Fernandez Concha!

We dedicate this edition of *Mirror of Virtues* to Sister Marie Bernadette Fox, Superior General, who has stimulated new interest in our spirituality.

## PRESENTATION

The booklet *Mirror of Virtues* was among the documents submitted by witnesses under the force of oath, in the Ordinary Process which led to the beatification of Mother Mary Euphrasia Pelletier by Pope Pius XI, April 30, 1933, and her inscription in the *Directory of Saints* by Pope Pius X11, May 2, 1940.(1)

We learn from the Process that it was originally written in Spanish by Sister M. Augustine of Jesus, aged 53, Provincial at Santiago, Chile. It was entitled: *Espiritu de la Madre Maria de Santa Euphrasia Pelletier*. The editing had been requested by the Bishop-Administrator of Santiago, Joachim Larrain Candarillas who was certain Mother Euphrasia would be canonized.'

Mother Augustine herself gives us her source of information. She attests, in the Process, that invited in 1867 to Angers by our Foundress (who died in 1868 at 72 years of age): "I spent several hours each day in intimate conversation with her. My room was next to hers so I heard her early each morning hastening to Chapel. I sat beside her as she gave her daily instructions to the novices and to the community. I was also beside her at table and at recreation. . . This booklet which I myself have written with the help of Sister Therese Letocart, contains the exact truth about her as I Was thus able to observe her and to hear her myself."

Sister Therese later translated the volume into French and it was published in 1886. The Tribunal at the Ordinary Process affirms that the "life, mission, teaching, and the virtues of the Foundress of the Good Shepherd are described in this book with striking evidence.' '(4) Father Marius Roux, OMI, spiritual director of Mother Euphrasia the last six years of her life, testified: ". . . I have read also the *Mirror of Virtues*. Seeing the book and comparing it with the person it is about, I find it is perfectly in accord with what I myself have seen and heard. Reading it, I found myself saying that if I were called to testify, I would have nothing to say differently from what this book tells us about her. " (5)

At our General Chapter of 1886, the 95 Capitulars signed a Petition to the Holy Father requesting him to open the Cause of our Foundress. Ninety of them had known her personally and intimately. Mother Augustine and Sister Therese were delegated by our second Superior General, Mother Peter de Coudenhove, to present this petition to Rome, to Pope Leo XIII. They also presented an authenticated copy of the canonical process on three miracles obtained through Mother Euphrasia's intercession in Santiago, and our booklet *Mirror of Virtues*. It thus became one of the principal documents at the opening of the Cause for the beatification of our Foundress in 1887.(6)

Mother Augustine remained in Angers for two years as the liaison between our Congregation and Rome and the Bishop of Angers concerning the Process. She was the third witness in the Ordinary Process held in France and the first witness in the Apostolic Process opened in Rome in 1897. The Tribunal of the Ordinary Process gave her this beautiful tribute:

"One sister had lived continuously 110 days with the Foundress during the last year of her life. But this religious, Provincial in Chile, had a superior intelligence especially concerning spiritual things. She had received very exceptional confidences from the Foundress who had also foretold her future to her. She had consulted all the sisters, all the documents, especially the Annals of the Congregation. She had edited the *Mirror of Virtues* and also gathered the material for the book of *Conferences of the Servant of God*. . . Favored with extraordinary divine communications, she had done all she could to obtain the opening of the Cause only under the impulse of an interior word which the Lord made her hear many times in Santiago and in Angers: 'I desire to glorify my faithful spouse who glorified me so greatly.' This religious is an absolutely exceptional witness by the authority of her holiness, her wisdom, her lights and her greatness of soul. She testified during six months in thirty-six sessions. She was subjected by one of the judges to rigorous and extenuating examinations and questioning, so cleverly worded and intricate, as to trouble the most experienced soul; but nothing could disturb her profound peace or draw the least imprudent word from her. The Tribunal was deeply impressed by this great

religious and does not hesitate to consider her the Number One witness in the Cause."

Mother Augustine was born March 15, 1835, in Santiago, Chile, and baptized Josefa Florentina. Her parents Don Pedro Fernandez Recio, and Dona Rosa de Santiago Concha were of the noblest and most christian of Santiago. They had ten children, three of whom died in infancy. Among the seven were three boys, one Don Rafael who became a bishop; and four daughters, two of whom - Josefa and Rosa the youngest, entered the Good Shepherd.

In his life of Mother Euphrasia Pelletier, Msgr. Pasquier tells us that after her visit with our Foundress, June 18, 1867 - "Mother Euphrasia remained always present to Mother Augustine's heart and mind crowned with the halo of sanctity. Each year she celebrated June 18 - the day they first met - as the most beautiful day of her life." Early in 1867 in a letter to Mother Augustine, Mother Euphrasia had expressed the desire to see her and her sister who was a novice: "I would like to know the two religious of Chile who are the principal foundresses of Good Shepherd in South America." And she added: "I desire to be not only your mother but even more your friend. I feel my soul is united with yours." Mother Euphrasia wished to share her own spirit with the "beloved daughter of my soul" as she called Mother Augustine. In fact Mother Augustine seems to have had the same gifts of government, management, zeal and compassion which marked our Foundress so profoundly and all her undertakings.

Mother Augustine was actively engaged during 65 years in expanding our Charism throughout South America in her role of Provincial and then of Visitor. She was present at eight General Chapters, the last one in 1911 when she was 76 years of age - her last visit to our "dear Sion" as she called our mother-house. Her life history is that of our congregation in South America and is interlaced with the history of the development of that continent. She worked assiduously for the promotion of the Cause of Mother Euphrasia and longed to see her beatification. What stimulated her were the inner words she had heard from the Lord several times and finally her experience before the

Blessed Sacrament February 7, 1880: "It is urgent that my faithful spouse be glorified, she has so greatly glorified me."- And Mother Augustine: "But Lord, that will cost so much and we are poor.» - The answer: "The mountains will give gold and silver if need be!" So when questioned by the Tribunal why she so desired Mother Euphrasia's canonization her reply was: "In order to accomplish the Will of God!" She had to explain her answer in the privacy of Confession and then before the whole Tribunal!"

Mother Augustine died at 93 years of age, January 13, 1928, smiling at her Ninito she was holding in her hands.

Sister Rose-Virginie Warnig.  
Columbus, Ohio, April 30, 1983

## Notes

1. Report on the Process, (English translation) p. 2.
2. introduction to the Cause of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia Pelletier, p. 2.
3. Ibid., p. 5-6.
4. Report on the Process, p. 2.
5. introduction of the Cause, p. 68.
6. Report on the Process, p. 2.
7. Ibid., p. 18.
8. Bulletin of the Good Shepherd, June 1928, N. 3. 9 Ibid.



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TO OUR VERY HONOURED MOTHER MARY OF ST. PETER DE  
COUDENHOVE, SECOND SUPERIORGENERAL OF THE  
CONGREGATION OF OUR LADY OF CHARITY OF THE GOOD  
SHEPHERD OF ANGERS.

MOST HONOURED MOTHER-GENERAL,

As a tribute of inviolable attachment to our holy Congregation, we offer you these pages gathered both from our remembrance of our late venerated Mother and Founder, and from the record of her Instructions due to your zeal for the maintenance of the spirit and teaching of her, the one among a thousand, chosen of God to establish throughout the world asylums of His mercy for the salvation of souls.

On receiving these Instructions, we hastened to translate them into the language of St. Teresa, in order that your numerous daughters of the Spanish Race might feed their souls on the very quintessence of our vocation ; and while reading them, might bless, not only the name of our venerated Mother and Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia, Founder, but also that of her to whom we owe the possession of this inestimable treasure.

Though intended for our Religious family only, in compliance with the request of our Right Rev. Prelates, we have had these few recollections printed in Spanish under the title " Mirror of the Virtues of the Reverend Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia Pelletier, Foundress of the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd of Angers."

As several of the Prioresses who met at the Mother House for the General Chapter in 1886 have desired us to translate this little volume into French, to comply with their request, and in hope of contributing to the glory of the memory of our venerated Mother and Founder, we have undertaken this task, although we feel how inadequate it is to set forth the merits of her whose teaching it records. We now present it to you, beloved Mother-General, augmented by some letters of our venerated Mother and Founder.

Chili owes an immense debt of gratitude to our venerated Mother and Foundress, for it has obtained by her intercession many signal favours:-the rapid development of the works of our Congregation, which has spread from thence to the Argentine Republic and Eastern provinces, as she had predicted ; further, the cure of many persons who were seriously ill, besides spiritual and temporal graces, and above all numerous conversions. We therefore declare that our most earnest prayer to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary is, that we may see her proclaimed by our Holy Mother the Church worthy of the homage She pays to the saints. Then, and then alone, will our love and gratitude be satisfied. Will not God Himself hasten to glorify His faithful Spouse, who lived only to love Him and to win souls for Him?

May it please Heaven to hearken to this prayer, and to preserve to us her who, like a firm rock,\* aided by the Spirit of Wisdom, Light, and Strength, which God poured out on our venerated Mother and Foundress, not only upholds our Institute, but continues to extend it, and to increase the numbers of its Houses and of its subjects.

YOUR DAUGHTERS OF THE CHILIAN PROVINCE.  
DEUS LAUDETUR!

\* Note.-This is an allusion to the name of our present Mother-General, Mary of St. Peter-Petra, a rock.

Angers, June 12th, 1886.

MOST HONOURED MOTHER-GENERAL.

We, the undersigned Provincials and Prioresses of the Congregation in General Chapter assembled at our Mother House, being of one heart and one mind through our humble and sincere submission to you, whom we have had the happiness of proclaiming for the fourth time our Mother and Superior-General, beg you would be pleased to petition our most Holy Lord the Pope, for the introduction of the Cause of our virtuous Mother and Founder, Mary of St. Euphrasia Pelletier. As many of us have been privileged to witness the heroic virtues she practised during the years she governed the Congregation, and have experienced the effects of her powerful and continual protection, and have also obtained through her intercession many signal favours (*of* which three have been authenticated) we confidently hope that Holy Church will judge her worthy to be raised to our altars.

We must not omit to add that this desire is shared by many illustrious Prelates and holy Priests, by communities *of* different Orders, and *by* a great number *of* persons *of* eminent piety, who are filled with admiration for our Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia Pelletier, the founder of a hundred and ten Houses in the five parts of the world, whose whole life was spent in the exercise *of* the most sublime charity.

Your very humble and devoted daughters and servants in our Lord,

SISTER MARY OF ST. GABRIEL CHAFFAUX, Provincial of France.  
SISTER MARY OF OUR SAVIOUR SCHAEFERS, Provincial of Rome.  
SISTER MARY OF THE HEART OF MARY TOURVILLE, Provincial of St. Louis  
(U.S. America).  
SISTER MARY OF ST. AUGUSTINE OF JESUS FERNANDEZ CONCHA,  
Provincial of Santiago (Chili).  
SISTER MARY OF THE COMPASSION BARTLEY, Provincial of Limerick  
(Ireland).  
SISTER MARY OF ST. MATILDA NAVILLE, Provincial of Cairo (Egypt).

SISTER MARY OF ST. LAMBERT BOUCHY, Provincial of Munster (Prussia).  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. JOSEPH PARRISH, Provincial of England.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. JOSEPH DAVID, Provincial of Cincinnati (U.S. A.)  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. ALPHONSUS LIGUORI CADOTTE, Provincial of  
 Montreal (Canada).  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. IGNATIUS MURRAY, Provincial of Philadelphia (U.S.A.)  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. ANSELM WELLS, Provincial of Louisville (U.S A.).  
 SISTER MARY OF THE VISITATION LEUSCH, Prioress of Bangalore  
 (East Indies).  
 SISTER MARY OF THE HOLY INFANCY KLEIN, Prioress of Arras.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST PETZ, Prioress of Nice.  
 SISTER MARY OF THE ANNUNCIATION DESGRANGES, Prioress of Ecully.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. MARINA VERGER, Prioress of Perpignan.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. IRENEEUS GONTER, Prioress of Nancy.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. THERESA Heins, Prime ss of Strasbourg.  
 SISTER MARY OF JESUS BRUNING, Prioress of Grenoble.  
 SISTER MARY OF THE EPIPHANY CUNY, Prioress of Amiens.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. OLYMPLADE DAHME, Prioress at Pro.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. ALEXIS BARBERY, Prioress of Poitiers.  
 SISTER MARY OF THE ARCHANGELS ANNOITE, Primes, of Lille.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. IGNATIUS OF JESUS DOETZHOFFER, Prioress of  
 Baumgartenberg,  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. EULALIE GRAS, Prioress of Viterbo.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. COLUMBA METZ, Prioress of Moulins.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. RENE BOUCHERON, Prioress of Angoulême.  
 SISTER MARY OF OUR SAVIOUR ELFEN, Prioress of Cologne.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. THERESA LETOCART, Prioress of Sall Felipe (Chili).  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. ELIAS LEBRUN, PRIORESS at Avignon.  
 SISTER MARY OF THE CHILD JESUS AUBERTIN, Prioress of Metz.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. BERNARD FLINN, Prioress of St. Paul (U. S. America).  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. MAGDALEN OF JESUS HOLDEN, Prioress Of Belfast  
 (Ireland).  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. MAGDALEN OF JESUS DEVEREUX, Prioress of New  
 ROSS (Ireland).  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. PHILIP NERI ALLEGUEN, Prioress of Liverpool.  
 SISTER MARY OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES COUNSELLOR, Prioress of  
 Manchester.

SISTER MARY OF ST. WEREBURGH MAGUIRE, Prioress of Cardiff  
(Wales),

SISTER MARY OF ST. GERTRUDE MOLLOY, Prioress of Columbus (U.S.A.)

SISTER MARY OF LORETTO O'BRIEN, Prioress of Brooklyn, (U.S. America).

SISTER MARY OF MOUNT CARMEL ELDER, Prioress of Memphis (U.S.A.)

SISTER MARY OF THE HOLY CROSS M'CABE, Prioress of Normandy (U.S.A)

SISTER MARY OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST JACKSON, Prioress Of Cleveland  
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SISTER MARY OF ST. URSULA SHAW, Prioress of Indianapolis, Indiana  
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SISTER MARY OF ST. IGNATIUS LALOR, Prioress of Aden (Arabia).

SISTER MARY OF ST. ROSALIE CLEARY, Prioress of Colombo (Ceylon).

SISTER MARY OF ST. FRANCIS PATRICK DOHERTY, Prioress of Detroit  
(U.S. America).

SISTER MARY OF ST. PHILOMENA JOHNSON, Prioress of West Philadelphia  
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SISTER MARY OF THE ANGEL GUARDIAN LEWIS, Prioress of Denver,  
Colorado (U.S. America).

SISTER MARY OF ST. MATILDA DOLBOIS, Prioress of St. Omer,

SISTER MARY OF ST. IGNATIUS OF JESUS SOMMER, Prioress of Louvain.

SISTER MARY OF ST. JULIUS, Prioress of PUY.

SISTER MARY OF LORETTO SCHIPP, Prioress of Bourges.

SISTER MARY OF ST. CHARLES JENNY, Prioress of El Biar, Algiers (Africa).

SISTER MARY OF ST. HELENA LARIVIÈRE, Prioress of Montreal.

SISTER MARY OF ST. ESTELLE XAMBEU, Prioress of SUEZ (Egypt).

SISTER MARY OF ST. EUPHRASIA LEMAIRE, Prioress of Arles.

SISTER MARY OF LORETTO BERNARD, Prioress of Bastin.

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SISTER MARY OF ST. GERTRUDE O'BRIEN, Prioress of Cincinnati, Ohio  
(U.S. America).

SISTER MARY EUPHRASIA OF MARY HENRY, Prioress of Troyes.

SISTER MARY OF ST. FRANCIS OF SALES LAMBERT, Prioress of Cambay.  
 SISTER MARY OF THE HEART OF JESUS DE LANDSBERG, Prioress of  
 Barcelona.  
 SISTER MARY OF S F. BERTHA DUTHOIT , Prioress of Sens.  
 SISTER MARY OF Sr. PHILOMENA BIANCARDI, Pi of Malta.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. ALOYSIUS CHARLTON, Prioress of Boston,  
 Massachusetts (U.S. America).  
 SISTER MARY OF 'IF. MAGDALEN OF JESUS CRILLY, Prioress of Waterford.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. BERNARD SCARZELLI, Prioress of Turin.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. PHILOMENA SONNHALDER, Prioress of Loos.  
 SISTER MARY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION MORTEL-MANS,  
 Prioress of Schaerbeck (Belgium).  
 SISTER MARY OF BETHLEHEM GUIZZARDI, Prioress of Bologna.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. ELIZABETH VIAL, Prioress of Naples.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. FRANCIS XAVIER FITZPATRICK, Prioress of Oporto.  
 SISTER MARY OF Sr. GENEVIÈVE Benso, Prioress of Portici.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. ALOYSIUS GONZAGA POUCH, Prioress of Reggio  
 Bell Emilia.  
 SISTER MARY OF THE VISITATION MORSELLI, Prioress of Modena.  
 SISTER MARY OF THERESA HAEVAL, Prioress of Aix-la Chapelle.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. EUGENIE QUANT, Prioress of Haarlem (Holland).  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. JOSEPH CLEARY, Prioress of Baltimore (U.S.A.)  
 SISTER MARY IMMACULATE O'GRADY, Prioress of Troy (U.S. America).  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. CHRISTINA LUECKRATH, Prioress of Cholet.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. JOSEPHINE MEUNIER, Prioress of Orleans.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. ROSALIE MEUNIER, Prioress of Annonay.  
 SISTER MARY OF BETHLEHEM ROSE, Prioress of Namur.  
 SISTER MARY OF VICTORIES PAULLI, Prioress of Lyons.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. PHILOTHEA, Prioress of Saint Florent.  
 SISTER MARY OF ST. ANGELICA CLEARY, Prioress of Chicago (U.S.A.)  
 SISTER MARY ROSE OF JESUS DE LA CARRERA, Prioress of Conception  
 (Chili).



Mother Mary Euphrasia Pelletier, superior of the Monastery of O.L. of Charity called the Refuge, of Tours, at 29 years of age, 1825. And foundress of that of Angers under the title "Good Shepherd" in 1829 (Oil painting of 1825)



## CHAPTER I.

### *Her Faith.*

I

Among the virtues which adorned the soul of our venerated Mother and Foundress, Mary of St. Euphrasia Pelletier, those which the Church calls " Theological " were most conspicuous. Her Faith was fervent, and was manifested both in her words and deeds. No sooner had she obtained from the Holy See that our Institute should be governed by a Superior General, than her first petition was that the Constitutions might be revised and again approved at Rome, in absolute dependence on the Protector of the Congregation, His Eminence Cardinal Odescalchi, Vicar of His Holiness.

With this act of Faith and submission to the authority of the Church, she began her wonderful mission of founding a hundred and ten Convents of her Institute, whose proper and distinctive end is to labour for the salvation of souls, particularly the most abandoned, by instructing and con. firming them in the Faith.

The greater number of these houses were founded in such complete poverty and absolute want of all human support, that we might say their sole foundation was Divine Providence. When sending her daughters to these missions, she used to say to them : " Gold and silver I have none, but that which I have, I give you : in the name of the Good Shepherd, arise and walk, confident that you will extend His kingdom." \* One of her biographers adds :-" And her daughters arose, their souls filled with the Faith of their Mother, and their hearts inflamed with her Charity; and they went forth, and extended the dominion of Jesus Christ over souls."

\* Acts iii. 6.

The Sovereign Pontiff Gregory XVI. having resolved to establish a House of the Good Shepherd in Rome, His Eminence Cardinal Odescalchi made known this intention to our Mother, telling her at the same time that this desire of the Holy Father was worthy of being recommended to Our Lord every day until it was accomplished. In order to found this House, she went to Rome, where she arrived on the 14th of June, 1838. As soon as she entered the Holy City, carried away by the ardor of her Faith, this devoted child of the Church prostrated herself to the ground, and with eyes and heart overflowing with the deepest devotion, reverently kissed its sacred soil.

II

The words of the apostle, "The just man lives by faith" \* were continually on her lips. No one could see her at prayer, assisting at the Holy Sacrifice, or receiving Holy Communion, without being filled with devotion. In the Blessed Sacrament she sought light and strength, and in this her example gave efficacy to her words. " Our Institute," she would say, " is founded on Faith and love. Faith is the gift of God, it is the root and foundation of all virtue. A Religious who has lively Faith, sees God in all and everywhere. If all our actions were done in a spirit of Faith, they would all be meritorious, and would be imputed to us unto justice and sanctification. It is the spirit of Faith which animates the whole spiritual life; it is impossible for our good actions to have all the perfection they ought to have, unless they are animated by the spirit of Faith. Seek then to have that Faith which will make you love your vocation more and more, and walk with courage in the ways of God."

One of the recommendations she gave most frequently was that of instructing "the children" \* solidly in the truths of our holy Religion ; she often repeated to her daughters : " Strive to strengthen the Faith in the souls entrusted to your care ; weary not of labouring to impress the law of God upon their hearts ; be very exact in teaching them the Catechism, speaking in such a way as to be easily understood by all, that being thoroughly instructed in the truths of our holy Religion, they may be less exposed to go astray. Our vocation, my dear daughters, has for its end the reformation of morals, and the grounding of souls

\*Gal. iii. II.

in the Faith, hence each one is under an obligation of labouring to strengthen herself in the Belief of the Catholic Church, and of grounding herself thoroughly in the truths of our holy Religion, lest she run the risk of losing her own soul, or of allowing others to perish for want of instruction in the doctrine they are to profess. Remember that the whole of our lives must be consecrated to the propagation of our holy Faith, and the sanctification of souls. To form hearts, we must instruct them ; we must therefore enlighten our own minds by the study of the truths of Religion, preserving intact, in the very centre of our Souls, the deep roots of our Catholic convictions, in order to transmit them to the souls entrusted to us. These instructions will be to them either a guide accompanying them wherever they go, or a gnawing worm leaving them no peace, if they have the misfortune to offend God. The great means of labouring with profit for the good of souls, is to instruct them in the truths of the Faith, endeavouring to impress them deeply on their hearts by the teaching of the Catechism, and by explaining the maxims of the Gospel, the only way which leads to holiness. Would you be true mothers to the children of the different classes,\* devote yourselves to the study of religion, nor can I too earnestly recommend to you that of the Catechism, a book which should never be out of your bands. However long your life may be, you will always need its teaching, either for yourselves or others. Frequently read sacred history and the history of the Church. Do not read books which have not been approved, nor allow penitents or children to read them."

On her own part, the watchful sentinel of Israel took care that the breviaries used by the Religious of the Congregation should be printed and approved at Rome ; and when sending them to the different Houses, she addressed a circular to her daughters, which began with the words They are our Fathers and Masters in the Faith."

\* "The Children" is a term used by the nuns of the Good Shepherd when speaking of any of the girls or women under their care, irrespective of age, and they in return are always called " Mother."

On other occasions she would say Spare no pains to prepare your religious instructions remember that Our Lord says in the Gospel, 'If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the pit.† Nothing is more dangerous than ignorance. Where will you find a more unreasonable person than one who is ignorant of the true religion?

" We must always let true Humility accompany our study; it will prevent our short-sightedness from pretending to fathom the impenetrable secrets of God's wisdom. For whoever would soar aloft on the wings of Pride, to gaze on the mysteries of Faith, will fall miserably into the abyss of error; witness Tertullian and Origen, to whom may be applied the words : ' Do not attempt to search into the divine mysteries of Faith, for they are far beyond our knowledge.' He who would know too much ends by knowing nothing; far from becoming learned, he will be a fool in punishment of his Presumption and Pride.

" Beware of all novelties in the teaching of morals or religion. Superiors must take care lest the poison of false doctrine find its way into their community. St. Paul warns us against novel and false doctrine, saying, 'Let, us not be as children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine.'\* Ever strive, dear children, to advance in knowledge; read the Epistles and Gospels again and again. Remain ever steadfast in the teachings of the Catholic Church.

" The devil's emissaries spare no pains to ruin souls; it is, therefore, most essential that we should be prudent and well instructed in order to defend ourselves from his artifices. It is from the teaching of Jesus Christ alone that you can hope to obtain light, justice and sanctity, whether for yourselves or for others. Converse often among yourselves about Holy Church in order to maintain yourselves in the

\* 'The different Classes " so often spoken of in this book refer to the Penitent's Class, Preservation Clam, Reformatory School, and School for deserted children, each having a separate house and playground in the large enclosure of our Mother House at Angers. The Convent for the Magdalens is also entirely separate, but still within the enclosure.

† Matt- Xv. 14,

love and submission we all owe to her. Speak often to the children of the different classes of our Holy Mother the Church, that they may know her better, may cling to her more closely, and that their Faith may be awakened and strengthened. Those of you whose duty it is to catechise the children should give them notice of the coming festivals, and explain to them the purpose thereof; so that they may learn to enter into the spirit of the Church, and may thank Our Lord for His mercy in enlightening them with the doctrine of the Gospel.

"I could speak for ever of our Mother, the Holy Church, of the love we owe her, and the obligation we are under to pray continually for her. No religious congregation is more strictly bound than ours to continue closely united to her, since none stand in such need of her protection and support. Let us then always remain closely united to her, so that, come what may, she may ever be able to recognise us as a mother recognises her obedient and devoted children. When you go to a new Foundation, consider that, as children of the Church, you hold your mission from her; and, animated with this faith, labour like apostles for the conversion of souls.

" The Church is the Ship in which are preserved the treasures of our Faith and of our Hope. Jesus Christ Himself is the Pilot Who guides her; she is always persecuted, but always remains victorious. Pray then-pray without ceasing -for Holy Church, which you love so dearly. Let us not fear to devote and sacrifice ourselves, that her conquests may be multiplied, and that the splendour of her beauty may be more and more manifest.

" Our Institute enjoys the blessing and protection of the Church ; her Head is our Superior by a double title. Do you know whence comes the special protection God extends to us, and why it is that our Congregation spreads throughout the whole world ? I repeat what I have already said : it comes from our adherence to the Church.

\* Eph. iv. 14.

Oh! how I love Holy Church, our Mother and Mistress! What an immense consolation it is to reflect that our Congregation works for her exaltation 1 Everything will pass away, but the Holy, Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church will never pass away. When the Holy Father suffers, I also suffer. Holy Church and the Sovereign Pontiff-these are the beginning and end of all I have to say to you."

#### IV.

In the exercise of her Apostolic life, she converted the most hardened sinners, and strengthened in the Faith souls newly converted to Catholicity. Her strong and ardent Faith continued with her till death; before receiving the Holy Viaticum she exclaimed, in presence of the whole community, 11 1 protest that I die a daughter of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church." After her thanksgiving she added, " My children, above all, cling to Holy Church."

## CHAPTER II

### *Her Hope.*

I

FROM this Faith, so pure, so firm, so deeply rooted in the soul of our venerated Mother, sprang, as from a clear fountain, that Hope in God which nothing could shake, and which was her support in the accomplishment of her heroic mission.

In the work of her vocation of labouring for the salvation of erring souls, she supported and encouraged many who from the remembrance of their past wanderings were violently tempted to despair, and were exposed to terrible assaults. She reminded them of the great Mercy of God, and the infinite merits of His passion and holy death. She succeeded by these means in causing hope to revive in these poor and in keeping it alive until their last breath.

II

What was the support upon which this servant of God relied for the great undertakings she carried out? Simply and solely upon Christian Hope. She herself tells us, in words full of power, " Hope for no assistance, but that of God alone, for all trust in man is vain. ' My strength is in silence and Hope.'\* ' I have suffered, but the Lord has strengthened me, and from the thought of His mercies my soul has received fresh vigour.' 'We must accustom ourselves to live for God alone, and look to Him alone for our reward.' This is what I have heard in prayer these ten years : 'Wait, keep silence, suffer and hope.' Our Institute is not the work of man, it is Divine; the adorable designs of Providence will infallibly be accomplished. Whatever efforts hell may make, God will always triumph. There is a special Providence for the Houses of the Good Shepherd; often they seem to be without resource, but never have they wanted what is strictly necessary: in one way or

\* Is. xxx. 15.

another God always helps them. In this House of Angers, considerable sums are required every year, and, without either funds or revenue, each year Divine Providence sends us what is needed. We must acknowledge it, our Congregation is a continual miracle of God's Providence. Be then at peace, my dear daughters ; continue to tend with love and zeal the sheep and lambs of the Good Shepherd, serve them faithfully, and rest assured that He will not fail to provide for all our necessities."

The Countess Geneviève d'Andigné, the intimate friend of our venerated Mother, and the witness of her apostolic labours, loved to call her " The Mother of Hope."

In the moment of conflict, she used to say : " We must always hope in God for the grace we need; and in order to win it from Him, let us be fervent, not serving Him with lukewarmness. Go to the combat with confidence, go, and you will not be overcome by your adversary. But if, through your want of courage and confidence, a single House fail to be founded, the souls who might have been saved in it will cry against you for vengeance.

" Fear much your own misery, your own weakness, but never let your confidence in God fail : that should be boundless. Doubt it not, He will be with you. 'Those who hope in the Lord,' says the prophet Isaias, 'shall not only soar like eagles, but shall run without being weary.' \* However great the difficulties you have to overcome, however hard and painful the sufferings you may be called upon to endure, never lose courage, lest your want of Confidence render you unworthy of God's help." Thus did she strengthen the hearts of her religious children by her sublime Hope, and taught them to keep their eyes steadily lifted up to the "mountain from whence comes help." \* During the last days of her life she frequently consoled her sorrowing children by saying: " Be at peace; as for me, I go to God, where I shall be better able to help you than I can here "

\* Is. X1. 31. \* Ps. CXX1. 1.



## CHAPTER III.

### *Her Charity.*

#### I

THE love of God above all things, and the love of her neighbour in and for God, were, in the soul of our venerated Mother, like a glorious sun, filling her whole being with its splendour, and inflaming her will with that zeal, as ardent as it was universal, which enabled her to extend to the five parts of the world the glory of God and the work of the salvation of souls.

From her childhood, the mission to which heaven destined her was foreshadowed front time to time, When at school at Tours with the pious Ursuline nuns, young Rose Virginie Pelletier, perceiving some of her companions to be badly disposed, was so grieved at seeing God offended, that she sought the aid of two other of her schoolfellows, begging them to unite with her in imploring from the Holy Ghost the light and grace needed for their amendment. They made for this intention a triduum before the Feast of Pentecost, and their prayers were so effectual that from that time a spirit of true piety spread among all the scholars, and a marked change took place in those who had been the most unsatisfactory.

The fire of the love of God continuing to burn and increase in her soul, she one day set out, like another Teresa, not in search of martyrdom, but to seek souls whom she might win back to God. When just eighteen years old, to satisfy her desire of labouring for the salvation of erring souls, she asked to be received as Postulant in the Convent of Our Lady of Charity of the Refuge at Tours. Here she found a martyrdom, the more painful since it repressed and restricted the zeal which was to her soul what breath is to our bodily life.

The great French Revolution, conformably with its purpose of abolishing every religious institute, suppressed the Houses of Our Lady of Charity of the Refuge. When the revolutionary hurricane had spent

itself, those of the Religious of the House at Tours who had survived this calamity, being gradually encouraged by more favourable circumstances, formed themselves again into a community. They had been robbed of everything, and found themselves in such straitened circumstances that they were able to receive a very small number of penitents; they had not even forty. On taking the Habit, the 8th of September, 1815, the young Postulant received the name of Sister Mary of St. Euphrasia. On the 9th of September, 1817, she pronounced her vows, and was soon after given the direction of the Class of Penitents ; a charge which, although much above her age and experience, was far below her zeal, devoured as she was by an insatiable desire that all souls should live only for God, serving Him in all holiness and justice. A few years after she was unanimously elected Superioress of the Community, although she had not yet attained the age required by the canons of the Church. A dispensation was, however, asked for, and obtained in consideration of her virtue and merits. As Superior, her zeal had more scope; she received a greater number of penitents, and instituted for repentant souls, who desired to consecrate themselves to God by religious vows, the Community of Magdalen Sisters; a project which had occupied her mind for some years. Charity is inspired with creative power; it alone could have inspired our venerated Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia with the idea of multiplying the progeny of the illustrious penitent of the Gospel, the faithful lover of the Divine Master. And when later her zeal opened to her a wider field of action, we see her extend this progeny to the ends of the earth.

## II

In the year 1829, when only thirty-three years of age, she was called upon to found a House of Our Lady of Charity of the Refuge, at Angers. The Foundations of Poitiers, Grenoble, and Metz soon followed. Six years later, the Holy See, yielding to her earnest prayer, allowed the election of a Superior-General, thereby giving wings to her burning charity, and granted to her the whole world as a sphere for her zeal. From that moment her charity, like a boundless ocean, overflowed to

the remotest corners of the earth, even to the wandering tribes of Ethiopia, Nubia and Abyssinia.

One of the characteristics of true Charity is the necessity it is under of imparting itself to others. From the heart of our venerated Mother, fired as it was with divine love, came forth these burning words to her Religious : "Now that the Holy See has allowed the election of a Superior General, with all the blessings of the Head of the Church, the worthy successor of St. Peter, who desires to see our Houses multiply throughout the Universe, you will go to pitch your tents from one end of the earth to the other. *One* town, *one* Foundation must not suffice to satisfy your zeal; it must embrace the whole world. St. Paul said, I am neither Greek nor Roman; I belong to all countries.! St. Francis Xavier said also, ' I am not only a Spaniard, I am an Indian, a Chinese, a Japanese ; in fact, I am of every nation to which I have the happiness of preaching the Gospel.' See, my dear daughters, what should be your sentiments. It is in such dispositions that one should. live according to our Institute. We must rouse ourselves, and set out on the march. Since we are all shepherds, one little corner of the world must not hold us down. For myself, I do not wish it to be said of me that I am French. I am Italian, English, German, Spanish, American, Indian, African ; I am of all countries where there are souls to be saved. We must not fear to go to the most distant shores, as soon as we, know that there, too, are sheep to be brought back to the fold. Sheep of Italy, of Bavaria, of all the countries of Europe ; sheep of America, Africa, Asia, Oceania, we must go in search of them all. The more eagerly you hasten to respond to their cry for help, the greater will be your conquests."

Impelled by this divine Charity, in the year 1840, she sent some of her daughters to seek a footing in London, where they might receive and shelter the sheep who had wandered from the Good Shepherd. They reached the great Protestant city unknown, and without friends ; with no other provision for the future than their burning charity and thirst for souls. Here, amidst unheard of sacrifices and contradictions of all kinds, the little seed took root, and grew into a tree bearing much fruit. Love, strong as death, alone wrought this miracle.

When our venerated Mother visited this Foundation in 1844, Passing through London she entered a Catholic Church in order to adore the Blessed Sacrament. Not perceiving any lamp burning, she anxiously sought the tabernacle where her God was hidden. She was conducted to the Sacristy, where the faint light of a little lamp pointed out the spot where the Blessed Sacrament was reserved. Prostrate before it, she promised Our Lord to raise temples in His honour in England ; and she had the consolation of fulfilling her promise.

" When I meditate on our vocation," she would say, I feel myself consumed with zeal ; sometimes I think I hear the childish voices of little savages who seem to say, Mother, Mother ! come and save us."

Negresses were the special objects of her charity; she had made a vow to labour for them. When she was very young, she heard of the cruel treatment to which they were subjected by the iniquitous slave trade; her heart then seemed breaking with sorrow and compassion, and she earnestly longed to remedy such misery. This desire was so deeply impressed on her mind that if, when travelling, she saw any black sheep in a flock, she would sigh, and say : "Ali ! happy shepherd ! You have both white sheep and black sheep! I have white ones, but alas ! the black ones are wanting, though I have been longing for them these years past. " At last, in 1843, her love for these souls was in part satisfied. M. Olivieri, a priest from Geneva, when travelling in Africa, purchased as many negresses as he could, and they were received into different Houses of the Good Shepherd. When the first of these poor children arrived at Angers, our venerated Mother, full of joy, said to her Religious: " Oh ! how we must care for them ! how carefully we must instruct them ! My soul exults with joy when I reflect that these poor children of Ethiopia, of Nubia and Abyssinia, will receive here the white robe of Baptism. Oh! dear sisters, what a beautiful feast we shall keep, the day when the waters of regeneration are poured on the heads of these dear negro children 1 What a consolation it will be, when these souls begin to open their eyes to the truths of Faith! We shall share in the joy of Heaven, and of the Church, when she sees the number of her children increasing. Consider her goodness towards all who come to her ; with what tenderness she welcomes those who cast

themselves into her arms! Of late, some Japanese arrived in Rome. The Pope would not allow even a Cardinal to baptize them, He Himself baptized them with his own hands. Oh! how great is our happiness, in being in the bosom of the true Church, and in being irrevocably bound to her ! Let us never weary of rendering thanks to God for this inestimable benefit." In the same year, 1843, the first House of the Congregation was founded in Africa ; let us listen to the words with *which she* encouraged her Religious when sending them to exercise their charity in that country. " It is now more than fourteen hundred years ago , my dear Sisters, go since our holy father, St. Augustine, composed the rule which we follow, and *which is* the wonder of the whole *Church*. For centuries no Cloistered Order has penetrated into Africa; and during that time, the Divine Office has not risen up to God in that country; it is granted to us to cause it to be again heard in that land, once so famous. For you, my dear Sisters, this great privilege has been reserved. Your departure for Africa fills our hearts with joy. Read our holy rule, and see what unction there is in every line of it. Consider the opening words: 'Before all things, let God be loved, and next our neighbour.' The love St. Augustine had for God was so great ! how he will rejoice now in our mission! I doubt not that his powerful intercession has contributed greatly to our undertaking. The people of these countries, *though barbarous*, still love and reverence the memory of this great Saint; they have especially preserved the remembrance of his love for souls. Hippo has been destroyed, but the site of the tomb of St. Augustine is still held in veneration. Monseigneur Dupuch has caused a chapel to be built on the spot, *which is* a place of pilgrimage not for Catholics only, but also for the Arabs. You will see these places, my dear Sisters, as well as that where St. Augustine composed the admirable book of his Confessions. You Will recall, when you do so, that fifth century, when so great a number of Religious fought under the rule of this celebrated Saint. I was thinking yesterday evening, and again this morning, that our century will revive the primitive fervour of the Church in Africa. We know, my dear Sisters, that you will receive a hearty welcome in Algeria; the Arabs and Bedouins like white; therefore your religious Habit will be an object of respect to them. You will have many penitents, many souls to save. Monseigneur Dupuch, the Bishop of Algiers, who asked for us to go there, told me that when he was

saying mass in our *chapel*, at the altar of St. Philomena, the Saint informed him that he would find in our Congregation, Religious fitted for the work he desired to establish in Africa. These words remained impressed on his mind ; and in truth, it is the protection of St. Philomena which has brought the matter to a conclusion, notwithstanding the efforts of hell to prevent it. Other providential circumstances have not been wanting, even so far as finding money for the journey; but, dear daughters, if you wish always to obtain such special favours, keep your holy rule faithfully; sing the Office as it is marked in our Directory of the Choir, and remember the words of St. Augustine: 'Do not mar the harmony of your chants by the discordant tones of your life.' Be very obedient; remember that when you were summoned to go to Africa, it was said to you : ' Daughters of obedience, daughters of the love of God, go to Africa, go by obedience and love ; remain there by obedience and love.' Oh! I entreat you, weary not of your mission, whatever difficulties may arise. You may rest assured the African will respect you, and that God will bless you ; but once more, I repeat, be humble, be obedient, and charitable, after the example of St. Augustine."

Charity, we have said, was the very life of our venerated *Mother*. *Hardly* had the Good Shepherd set foot in Africa, when in the same year, 1843, it set foot also in North America, *where it* was to develop wonderfully, winning souls to' love God, even from among Protestants, as it had already won them in England, and as it was soon to do in Scotland, in Ireland, and *throughout Germany*.

In September, 1845, she communicated to her daughters the news of the foundation of a House at Imola, in the following words:- "Great will be your joy, beloved daughters, on hearing of a letter we received this morning, and which we are now going to read to you. This letter is written by His Eminence Cardinal Mastai Ferretti, Archbishop of Imola, \* to tell us of the arrival of our sisters in that city. The following is a translation:-

'VERY REVEREND MOTHER-GENERAL,

Your Reverence has no doubt already received from your daughters themselves the news of their safe arrival at Imola, but it is only right that I should myself inform you of it; and at the same time express the great consolation I experience in finding myself enriched by this little flock of consecrated virgins, who, in a few days, will undertake the mission of saving so many lost sheep. I feel sure that, with the help of God, they will bring them back to the fold of Jesus Christ, the Prince of Shepherds. Blessed for ever be the God of Mercy. I beg your Reverence also to accept the assurance of my profound gratitude.

I have the consolation of having them near me, in my palace. I have good reason to thank Our Lord, Who holds the hearts of men in His Hands; I think that He has placed those of your Reverence's daughters in His own Heart.

' I will not fail to help them in all their needs : it is with this desire that I am happy to assure you that I remain,

With the most profound esteem, your attached servant,

'J. M. CARDINAL MASTAI, Archbishop.

Imola, 14th, September, 1845. '

"We may well say, my dear daughters, that Our Lord, for the sake of the poor souls whom we seek to bring back to Him, pours down upon us His graces and His love; blessing our work here, and reserving for us in Heaven that happiness and joy which is laid up for those who labour for His glory. Since Pius IX.

Is it not true that although we may often have to suffer humiliations, yet not one of us would have received such honour in the world, as we receive as Religious? Ought we not, therefore, for this very reason to bear ourselves with great humility and interior self-abasement ? God deigns to call the great ones of this world, and to inspire them with zeal and benevolence towards our work. He has heard our prayers

for subjects after His own Heart, and has sent them in great numbers. In gratitude for so many graces we ought more than ever to strive to please the Sacred Heart of Jesus, by doing our best to advance in perfection, and by performing all our actions with fervour and love. Let our prayer and our labour be for the salvation of souls, and we should ever remember, that if, instead of consecrating our whole lives to this purpose, we act otherwise, we are false to our vocation, we know not how sublime it is, and have neither the love nor the spirit peculiar to it."

In 1851, when making her visitation of our Houses in Germany, she had the happiness of seeing sixty children, who had received Holy Baptism, and she exclaimed, " I venture to say that each of our Houses is a garden of delights, on which God pours out His sweetest and most fruitful blessings ! Oh ! who can count the mercies of the Lord towards us,- His increasing benefits Our hearts ought to melt with love and gratitude 1 How true it is that the portion that has fallen to us is magnificent 1 God Himself is become our inheritance, even in this life ! May our holy Congregation be the place of our repose for ever : may we pass in it the night of our exile, until the sun of our heavenly country rises and shines upon us ! "

Souls full of charity have no greater happiness than to tighten the sufferings of others. No one can tell what the heart of our venerated Mother felt when the congregation first took charge of a House of Correction, and it was in her power to change the hard lot of the prisoners and deliver them from their dark cells and oppressive punishments. Her charity seemed to redouble towards these unfortunate beings ; the prison was transformed into an asylum of piety and labour. In 1853 the French Government confided to the Congregation young girls under detention ; and our venerated Mother herself received them at our House of Nazareth, near Angers. She thus relates their arrival : "With joy I find myself once more in your midst, dear daughters. I could wish you had all been at Nazareth to receive the last colony of young prisoners. The ' diligence ' from Rennes was behind time, so that they did not arrive until about ten o'clock at night. At first they appeared downcast and timid, but once they found themselves before the wood fire, which crackled on the great kitchen



hearth, our little birds began to chirp. They were served with hot soup, meat, wine, etc. This opened their hearts altogether; it was so long since they had partaken of such a feast !

## II

The following morning there was a fresh surprise for them ; the prison dress was changed for the clothes you have been making with so much eagerness and charity. They looked at one another, hardly understanding such a transformation, and their delight and astonishment increased when they were taken out to the garden and allowed to run about. 'Are we no longer in prison?' asked one of them. 'My children,' we replied, 'you are at the "Good Shepherd," where you will learn to love and serve the good God; and you will also be taught to work, so that when you return to your families you may be able to assist them.'

'Thank you, sister.'

'You must not speak like that,' said one of the bigger girls, 'they are mothers here; ' and she gave force to her words by an energetic gesture.

"Well, dear daughters, let us be true mothers to these poor children, vigilant shepherds to this new flock. The task will be a difficult one, but the reward will be great. The townspeople are much interested in our new work. His lordship sees it with pleasure; he has promised to come and say mass at our dear House of Nazareth."

Nothing is impossible to a soul that is possessed by the love of God. In 1854, the Good Shepherd pitched its tent in Asia at the cost of great hardships, but the fruit has surpassed all expectations. Our sisters write from the house of Mepore, India: " We have pagans to convert, idolaters to instruct ; this work inflames our zeal, and fills us with unspeakable consolation." A few years later, when they celebrated the feast of St. Euphrasia by the baptism of a great number of little Hindoos, the heart of our beloved Mother overflowed with joy at the *thought of* gaining so many souls to God. Love never says "Enough."

Our venerated Mother continued still to gain souls for her Divine King. She established other houses in Asia, in Africa, in South America, and at Melbourne in Australia,

The sacred seeds of charity were sown in the five portions of the world by the revered hand of our venerated Mother, Mary of St. Euphrasia Pelletier, whose whole life was consecrated to the love of God and her neighbour ; and as this seed is blessed, it continues, and will ever continue to increase a thousandfold, producing fruits of life and of everlasting love. "Remember," she would say to her Religious, how many souls are still out of the way of salvation. We must beseech the Divine Master to make them hear His voice, so that, according to His Word, there may be but I one Fold and one Shepherd.\*

" Never forget that by charity alone you will gain souls. Oh, my daughters ! what charity you ought to have for the souls whom the Church confides to you in the name of the Divine Shepherd, and His tender Mother, the Blessed Virgin. Love them; yes, love them much ; console, encourage these sick sheep ; try to make them happy, very happy, by the help of God. This is a duty ; nourish them with the overflowing charity *which should* reign in your hearts. Oh, my God ! what cannot love do ? What great plans are carried out by the strength of love 1 By love our Institute was founded : and you, dear sisters, it was love for God that brought you here ! Ah ! let us proclaim aloud : You are not slaves under constraint. No! you are the beloved children of the Heart of Jesus. You are the willing victims of the love *which reigns* in your souls."

### III.

During the space of nearly forty years that she governed the Congregation our venerated Mother never wearied of recommending the practice of great charity to her Religious. The last instructions we received from her lips were still on charity. , "God is charity,"\* she said;

\* John x. 16. \* I John iv. 8.

" I always come back to that, like the beloved disciple. Love one another," and she might have added, "as I have loved you," for she loved her daughters with the most tender, unflinching, solid and maternal charity. All were persuaded that no one loved them as did this true Mother; it seemed as if in her heart, *which was* an ocean of charity, each was loved with a love of predilection. This love seemed only to increase towards those who were separated from her and for each of their Houses. She told us that one day, during her first visit to Rome, being in the Vatican Basilica at the foot of the altar, where the sacred bodies of the Princes of the *Church*, St. Peter and St. Paul, repose, she felt strongly impelled to offer her life, if it should be necessary, for each of the Houses of the Congregation. On another occasion, when speaking to the community, she said, "Oh, my beloved daughters! I would have you exercise great affection towards the Houses of our Institute, above all to the poorest, helping them in every possible way ; this charity and consideration will help you to grow more and more in holiness. No letter should ever be sent hence to cause pain to our sisters, and if, unhappily, such a thing were to happen, I publicly declare that it shall not be with my knowledge. I own, my daughters, that one of the thoughts which occupy me day and night is how to support our poor Foundations. When I know that one of our communities is suffering privations I feel I should like to sell myself in order to relieve them. Be also very charitable to our sisters who may come here when travelling; welcome them most heartily. Listen how the Apostle St. Paul taught the early Christians the practice of fraternal charity: 'I recommend to you Phoebe, our sister, deaconess of the Church that is in Cencrea. Receive her in the name of Our Lord, as you would welcome the saints; assist her as she deserves in everything as she may need it, for she has assisted many of us, and me in particular.\*' The same Apostle, writing to the Church at Corinth, says to them : 'I entreat you to show great deference to all who by their labour contribute to the glory of God! And further, 'They have consoled my heart,' and truly, my dear sisters, you greatly console my heart when I see you welcome our sisters with such cordiality. I Exercise hospitality towards all.» † These words apply particularly to us, since charity is the very essence of our vocation.

" We may say that the Mother House is like the house of an indulgent grandmother, where all the children and grandchildren who come on a visit are received with caresses. When our sisters visit us, we should extend our care to the most trifling things which concern them. We should cause them to rest, cheer them, have their habits washed, do all we can to give them pleasure, behaving towards them with the greatest cordiality, humility and charity. Converse with a holy freedom with our sisters who feel so much joy in coming here; show them how glad you are to see them. We must act in such a way that it may be said of us in the words of Holy Scripture 'The whole multitude were of one heart and of one soul neither did any of them say that of the things that he possessed anything was his own, but all things were in common among them.' \*

" The customs of the inhabitants of Lebanon partake of the spirit of the ancient Patriarchs; when they entertain strangers, they show them so much attention (especially to priests and religious), that it is impossible to describe the respect they pay them and the care they lavish on them. Among other things, they present them with perfumes in abundance, the freshest milk, the best fruits, the sweetest cream, the most excellent cheese; they kiss their hands, and summon their whole family to come and salute them and ask their blessing. They consider it an honour to be allowed to assist them to mount their horses, touching their garments with reverence ; and when they depart they continue to follow them with their eyes, to salute them, and accompany them with their prayers. Let it not be said, dear sisters, that the people of Mount Lebanon surpass you in the practice of fraternal charity.

" Abbot Apollo, who was Superior of several of the Houses in the Thebaïd, often told his monks that when their brethren visited them, they should treat them with great respect. I always read with renewed pleasure what is related on this subject in the life of St. Anthony. This great Saint, perceiving that his disciples continually came to visit him, set to work to cultivate vegetables and gather fruit, in order the better to

\* Rom. xvi. 1. 2, † Rom, xii. 13\* Acts iv. 32.

entertain them when they came to see him. The day that he entertained his sons was always kept as a great festival, and when they parted he sent them away delighted, being himself overjoyed to have cheered and recreated them. This is how the saints act; let us learn of them to do likewise. We must always remember that there should be amongst us but one heart and one soul. People in the world imagine that nuns are unhappy and sad, that they live without loving one another. No, no, my daughters, you can bear witness to the contrary. Gathered together here from different countries, we are so many affectionate sisters, and we know what it costs us when we have to part from one another. No one will blame us if at that moment tears pay the tribute of affection, since St. Paul himself, that great Apostle who had endured with courage bonds, scourging and imprisonments, was himself moved to the depths of his soul by the tears shed by the faithful, when he bade them farewell.

" And the daughters of St. Teresa, although they were so submissive and detached, yet they, too, wept when they had to part from one mother. St. Bernard having received letters from his brethren when he was at a distance from them, in which they complained of the grief his absence caused them, wrote back to them: 'You say that my absence grieves you ; 1, for my part, beg you to think how painful it is to me to be away from you ; neither is the proportion equal between my lot and yours, for it is a very different thing for a community to be deprived of only one member and for one to be deprived of all his brethren.

" My dear daughters, nourish in your hearts a lively affection for all our sisters, and for our Mother House. Is not Angers the cradle of your religious infancy, should it not, therefore, be the centre of your affections ? Yes, assuredly; and its memory should be indelible in your hearts. You know well I do not speak now of the mere walls when I say you should love Angers. I mean that you must lovingly imitate in every respect its spirit of regularity, zeal, piety and charity. You are now in the best of dispositions, but you must be on your guard, lest, as years go

by, you lose your fervour, and the spirit of selfishness turn you from the path you have entered upon. If this should happen, you would be going astray."

In the last general assembly at the Mother House,\* she said, "What a consolation it is to be thus re-united to-day ! How happy it makes me, dear daughters, to be surrounded by you, and to see the affectionate charity, peace, and spirit of union there is among you. No one feels herself a stranger here. Americans, English, Irish, Germans, Italians, French, etc. You all have but one heart and one soul; you re-animate my courage, which sometimes might waver. Ah ! our work is, indeed, the work of God; He will place you all in His Heart.

"Of old the Feast of Tabernacles was kept in Jerusalem. It was a time of solemn reunion, a feast of thanksgiving which God Himself had commanded Moses to institute among the people of Israel, in memory of the special protection He had granted them during the forty years in the desert. At the appointed time all the tribes set out joyously to go up to Jerusalem ; they came from all parts to share in this Festival. It was a great grief to those who were prevented from coming, and each family was represented by its head at least, or by one of its members, who set out joyfully in the name of all. On arriving at Jerusalem, the pilgrims met together in the fields, where they pitched tents called tabernacles.. They covered these tents with leaves and branches of trees. The inhabitants of the city came out to join them, and during the eight days the Festival lasted, they did not return to their houses, in order to perpetuate the memory of their having lived in tents in the desert for so long a time, when God had bestowed such special mercies on them. They met together for prayer and sacrifices; one of the elders of the people read the law aloud, and each tribe amended what was defective in its observance, Singing and music were not wanting at these religious gatherings, and we may be sure that recreation and social repasts were not forgotten.

\*On the occasion of the General Chapter, which was held in 1864 for the elections, when our venerated Mother was re elected for the last time.

"May we not say, dear daughters, that this is just what is now taking place among ourselves, in this Mother House? My heart overflows with joy and gratitude when I see you all assembled here, and I am carried back in thought to the beautiful Feast of Tabernacles, which God's people celebrated at Jerusalem with so much solemnity.

" Is it not true that all the tribes of our Israel have vied with each other in coming to our Jerusalem to celebrate this feast of thanksgiving in our beloved Sion, where God is pleased to pour out such abundant treasures of grace on the people He has chosen for Himself? Is not each of our religious families represented by its head? Oh! yes, dear daughters, well may you sing in the choir ' Quid retribuam? '\* Rejoice together; keep festival; read again the holy law; renew your promises; give thanks to the Lord for all He has done for your Congregation. Love it always as you do now. I do not fear to say that if you continue to love your vocation, your vows, to love one another and to help and uphold one another, you will be capable of doing wonders, and will go straight to heaven. This spirit of charity, simplicity, and gratitude is the life and soul of our Institute. Having this, you will possess all things, and God will continue to pour down upon you the dew of His blessing. And it is only in so far as you have this spirit that you will be able to win souls for God. You are all members of the Congregation, and each of you should be animated by its spirit, since you have been formed by it and for it. Why do I say that you must possess and must keep up the spirit of your Institute in your hearts? It is because our Institute is very closely united to Holy Church, because it has the blessing and protection of the Church, because the head of the Church is your first Superior, both as Christians and as religious. Terrible storms often rise up against us ; sometimes we seem to be surrounded by impenetrable darkness, then our eyes turn towards Rome, and thence comes to us light and help. Observe, dear daughters, when the Head of the Church suffers, we suffer also ; when the Bark of Peter is tempest-tossed, our little frail skiff is tossed about and shaken. At such times we must keep it more firmly than ever attached to the Bark that can never founder, and so be saved with it. I saw the truth of this exemplified during our voyage to Rome.

\* PS. CXV. 12.

A terrible tempest arose; it seemed as if our ship must inevitably be dashed to pieces, but our watchful pilot said, 'Fear nothing, our vessel is seaworthy, she will not perish.' And with a firm hand he held the helm, and he did not take his eye off the vessel except to look -up at the sky, and see that she was in the right course. Around us there were little boats, which were tossed about on the waves as if they were cockle-shells. Two poor fishermen were in one of them, which was on the point of sinking, when we heard the cry, ' Lower the boat ! ' Two strong sailors at once came forward, and by dint of courage and hard rowing they succeeded in saving them. They were surrounded by all the passengers, who could not praise them sufficiently ; the little boat was fastened to the ship, and could now defy the winds and the waves.

" I seemed to see in this the image of your Mother House that little bark so often tossed by the tempest, and in danger of being cast on the rocks! It would long since have been wrecked, had it not been fastened by such strong ties to the Bark of Peter. We must then always steer our little skiff towards Rome, and we shall have nothing to fear. My dear children, Angers will always be your boat, the poor pilot will always be ready to help you, to save you, her arms will be ever open to welcome you. You are constantly occupied in bringing back souls to the Divine Shepherd, in raising altars to His honour; this is why the representative of Jesus Christ takes so much interest in our Congregation. Nothing is more pleasing to him than to see devotion to the Blessed Sacrament increasing and taking root, especially in countries such as England, Ireland, Africa, America, etc. To my mind, the foundation of our House in London is most wonderful: -that we should have been able to erect a convent in a Protestant country, to triumph over the obstacles that a host of enemies placed in our way ; that we should even be protected by the people of the country themselves : this is, in truth, a miracle wrought by God's grace and mercy. Let us have confidence, then, that it will be the same with other Houses we are asked for. Shall I tell you whence comes this special protection God extends to us? how it is that our Congregation is spreading into so many countries ? I must repeat what I have already said : it is on account of our attachment to the Church. Oh ! how I love the Holy Church, oui Mother! What a consolation it is to think that our



Congregation labours for her exaltation. Everything passes away, but the Catholic, Apostolic, arid Roman Church will never pass away.

" Do you know what draws down this particular blessing of God which sustains our Institute, and which gives it so much strength ? It is the union that we maintain among ourselves : it is obedience, -in a word, it is the spirit of unity. If, unhappily, this spirit were to fail, the Institute would waste away, the Congregation would become like a beautiful tree whose leaves are fading, whose flowers fall, whose branches wither, fruit would be wanting, because a worm is secretly gnawing at the root, and eating it away. Oh! I entreat you, my daughters, act so that such a misfortune may never befall us. Do everything to keep in the religious sentiments that now animate you ; hand them down to future generations, and your Congregation will always be like 'a tree planted by the water side,'\* extending on all sides its branches, loaded with leaves, flowers and fruit.

" The Feast of Tabernacles was held every year by the Jewish people. The time it lasted was a most solemn and holy time. God had commanded that the law by which this solemn reunion was prescribed should be had in memory by all the descendants of the Hebrews, that they might understand that they were strangers and pilgrims upon earth. Our solemn assemblies do not take place so frequently, but the remembrance of them must be handed down to future generations, in order that they may have a great respect and love for them. Happy they who shall come like you, at the appointed time, to bless and thank God, and to strengthen themselves in unity, and rejoice together in His holy presence. Yes, happy they who shall make this pilgrimage, to renew their vows on this holy spot, and to preserve to posterity the spirit of zeal and union which is the life of our Institute. Their journey will be blessed, and one day they will arrive at that I city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker was God.'

" There, the fatigues of the way will be forgotten; and if it is true that even in this life, our life of charity and union affords us days of joy

\* Ps. i. 3.

and unspeakable happiness, what will it be when the chosen souls who have served God here shall find themselves in the kingdom of bliss, peace, and perpetual union? Sacred Institute! I will die in thy arms, and thou wilt bear me to the bosom of my God! "

#### IV.

Her love and profound reverence for the blessed Trinity was always kindling within her fresh zeal for the salvation of souls. She frequently considered how each of the three Divine Persons had contributed to the mystery of the Incarnation, in order that souls might be redeemed, and from her heart, inflamed by these considerations, the cry would burst forth, "See! see the love of God! He loves us passionately, and we-shall we never do anything for Him ? Shall we make Him no return? Ah! yes; we will seek out and draw towards Him some of those souls so dear to His Heart. We will offer them to Him as a pledge of our love and gratitude. God alone must be the sole object of our love. Let charity then be your life, let it animate all you do-the recitation of the office, the singing of psalms, your work-nothing should have any other end but the glory of God and the salvation of souls My heart is filled with joy when I hear you singing the Holy Office. I am filled with devotion, for I feel that your fervent and piety contribute powerfully to the conversion of souls. My dear daughters, what you cannot accomplish by labour, you must do by prayer. My God ! what are we doing in this world, why are we here, if not to contribute to the salvation of our neighbour ? Let us unite ourselves to Our Lord in the Most Blessed Sacrament, where He continually annihilates Himself, offering Himself as a victim to His Eternal Father, to make reparation for the crimes of souls who refuse to understand the evils which their iniquities accumulate on their own heads. Nevertheless Jesus loves these souls. He shows to His Eternal Father the wounds with which He has allowed Himself to be covered, in order to save them. These souls are His; they belong to Him by so many titles. He desires that all may be saved and be His for all eternity.

## V.

If this charity for the sanctification and salvation of souls, with which the heart of our venerated Mother was filled, is the most evident proof of her love for God (since the love of God is the basis and foundation of the love of our neighbour), yet it manifested itself in many other ways, and chiefly by the perfect conformity of her will with the Divine Will. She seemed to be ever on the watch to know God's Will, that she might fulfil it in the least things. One day, when we were representing to her the difficulties there were in an undertaking that was contemplated, her reply was "My daughter, it is the Will of God, and I would traverse the whole world to accomplish it if it were necessary." This love imposed many sacrifices upon her, privations of every kind, especially in the separation it involved from her beloved daughters, whom she loved so tenderly and whom she was obliged sometimes to send to distant countries, to unwholesome climates, and on arduous undertakings.

The Divine Will was the rule of her life, and her conformity with it enabled her to accomplish great things for the glory of God and the good of souls. How often she repeated the words, "I press the will of God to my heart." She repeated them again when her last moment was approaching, as also those which were the echo of her life, "The zeal of God's house hath eaten me up." The fire of divine love which burnt in her heart from her childhood did not grow cold during her whole life; by this sacred love alone could our venerated Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia Pelletier have wrought or accomplished her great works; for if for a single one there are so many difficulties to overcome, and if it cannot be solidly established unless the Cross is deeply implanted in it, what sufferings must not this great servant of God have endured in the establishment of a hundred and ten monasteries, and the conquest of so many souls? Glorious Mission! which left *her* no moment of rest or repose! Prayer and work filled up her day, and the night was divided between prayer and suffering. Early in the morning we saw her on her

\* Ps. lxxviii. 10.

way to the Church, as *though thirsting* for the Divine Food of the Blessed Sacrament, *which she* received every morning with fresh fervour ; and in her thanksgiving she never allowed a day to pass (as she used to say) without asking among other graces that Our Lord would give to her congregation the Eucharistic food, peace, and daily bread.

## VI.

Even on her deathbed she did not cease her mission of charity; faithful imitator of the Good Shepherd, who, from the pulpit of the Cross, gave us His most sublime lessons. From her bed of suffering, closely united to Jesus Christ in His Passion, she did not cease to exhort her children to live in charity, to tend the flock committed to their care with maternal solicitude, to preserve their sacred Institute intact. From it she addressed the most affectionate words to her Religious scattered throughout the whole world, assuring them that she had loved them to the end, that she would love them even beyond the grave, that her heart would ever remain with them. With the same affection she received those who had the sad consolation of being present during those days of suffering. The very eve of her death, when Mother Mary of St. Ignatius Weld, Provincial of England, and her Assistant Were coming into her cell, she held out her arms to them, saying, 11 Come, come, my dear daughters; love is stronger than death. God has preserved my life in order that I may have the consolation of blessing you once more and of pressing you to my heart." During the morning of the following day, she spoke to several of the Prioresses, appointed a Superior for the House of Miserghin, some Sisters to establish a house at Aden, and others to go to India; she spoke to each in private until, feeling the hour of her death had come, she cried out Farewell, my daughters!" She had said to us: "I leave you, as my last legacy, the love of the Cross, and zeal for the salvation of souls."

## VII.

Let us penetrate into the sanctuary of this heart which has just ceased to beat; we shall discover the ingenious compacts which love inspired her to make with God—that every beating of *her heart* should be a prayer to obtain mercy and pardon for sinners ; that every breath she drew might be an act of contrition equal to the penance of the *fervent* Magdalen; that her blood might cease to flow in her veins sooner than that shed by the sacred humanity of Our Lord should remain without fruit for souls; that the food of *her life* might be to work unceasingly for the glory of God and the salvation of souls ; that when, to refresh her mind, she would turn her eyes to His Divine Majesty, strength might augment in her soul ; that the natural movements of her eyes might be so many supplications to the Divine Mercy to look with a favourable eye on souls not in a state of grace, and to obtain for them the happiness of beholding eternally the splendour of the beatific vision; that each of her looks might have power to turn souls to God, and win them to the love of their Creator. (This explains the power of her eye ; how often one look from her was sufficient to change the most hardened hearts.) That her repose might be *watchfulness* to prevent Satan from robbing Him of souls; that in exchange for the bodily thirst, which she refused to quench, Our Lord would allow her to be consumed by the same thirst which He *suffered on* the Cross for the salvation of souls. Thus divine love consumed the holocaust. justly were the words inscribed on the stone which covers her *venerated remains*: " O Lord, the zeal of Thy house *hath eaten* me up." " \*

\* Ps. lxxviii. 10.

## CHAPTER IV.

### The Cardinal Virtues.

#### I.

OUR venerated Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia Pelletier practised the cardinal virtues in an eminent degree. Her prudence was no mere human prudence. From her youth, the reading of the Holy Scriptures had been the daily food of her soul; she seemed not only to know them by heart, but to be imbued with their spirit, and her works, as well as her words, were actuated by their heavenly doctrine. What prudence did she not require to establish and govern a hundred and ten convents and monasteries, among so many different nations, some of them at a great distance ; still more, to deal with natives of all countries, and of such different social position ; to make herself beloved as she was, not only by her own children, but by all who depended upon her ? The Count de Neuville, the illustrious founder of our Mother House, in the first letter he wrote to her after her departure for Rome, says: 11 The days which followed your departure have been sorrowful ones. Ah 1 madame, how much you are beloved by your community, and by all your flock 1 This attachment speaks loudly against all that calumny has dared to invent against you, for only the best of mothers could win such love."

It might be said of our venerated Mother that, like the Apostle of the Gentiles, she made herself all to all, to gain all to God. Whenever her conscience would allow it, she always yielded to others, saying : "It is better to bend than to break." Prudence guided her even in the most trifling matters ; she used to say : " Let us always take a middle course, not allowing ourselves to be carried away by too rigorous a spirit with regard to corporal necessities, lest the greater number, being unable to bear it, be driven to the opposite extreme. Be wise as serpents, and simple as doves." She frequently repeated to us the following maxims : " Prudence consists in a just discernment of what we should do, and what we should not do, according to the circumstances in which we are

placed. ' Let thine eyes look straight on, and let thine eyelids go before thy steps.' » \*

" Do nothing without reflection ; those who act thoughtlessly, without considering what they are about, end by falling into the abyss. He who wishes to live prudently must live by reflection. Act with prudence, above all in dealing with our penitents and children. Great prudence is needed also in our intercourse with people in the world. It is easier to prevent evil than to remedy it.

"Do not think that reflection and prudence will prevent your being amiable and cheerful. On the contrary, these virtues bring peace of conscience, and this peace fills the soul with the purest joy, and renders it attentive and docile to the voice of the Holy Ghost."

## II.

The virtue of justice was firmly established in her soul. She was always occupied in advancing the glory of God, and doing good to her neighbour. It may be said with truth that in her Congregation "Justice and peace have kissed each other." † This virtue caused her frequently to address to her daughters the following exhortation: " Be holy, because the God whom you serve is holy, and it is His will for you that you should become holy. In these words are contained all the desires of my heart. Be just to your neighbour, taking care to wrong no one. Never listen to anything, never say anything, which could in any way injure the reputation of others. If any dispute arise, condemn no one, and defend the absent. Holy Scripture says, ' There is a way that appears right to a man, but it leadeth to death.'\*

" Say not that it is sufficient for you to think of your own perfection ; you know that for a Religious of the Good Shepherd it is an obligation of justice to labour for the salvation of souls. You often ask me how I guided the penitents when I was their mistress ; it was by justice and kindness. Be really mothers to them. I say it a thousand times, you will

\* Prov. IV. 25. † Ps. 1XXXIV. II.

get far more from them by that prudent condescension with which true charity will inspire you, than by severity. We should keep what is bitter for ourselves and give what is sweet to others, like the fig tree, which retains all bitterness, and gives only sweetness. Never use violence. A cup of sweet milk given at the right moment to one of our poor penitents will do more to bring her into good dispositions, than an act of severity. But if it is a mistake to find fault too often, it is also a mistake not to do so at all. Some. times it is necessary to make the weight of authority felt. I remember being once obliged to speak very severely to one of our penitents. On first coming to us she seemed converted, but afterwards fell away, and gave great scandal to her companions. Kindness had no effect upon her, but a humiliation conquered her, and she returned to her duty. Nevertheless these are means which should be but rarely used. You all know how necessary it is that you should watch over yourselves, that you may not give way to movements of impatience. If you feel that you cannot reprove calmly, it is better not to do so at all. I When a person has need of correction,' says Fénelon, ' if he perceives that he who corrects him is moved by any passion, he will with difficulty restrain his own.' "

Another recommendation of our venerated Mother was, not to keep people waiting a long time in the parlour, in order not to give them any cause for impatience, especially the poor, towards whom she was extremely kind, treating them always with the most delicate consideration. " Do not make a poor workingman lose his time by waiting, when he comes to see his daughter," she would say, " When the evening comes, who will give bread to his family ? Let us be kind, very kind to the poor." To the workmen employed about the house, in addition to their wages, she would give fruit, and every possible assistance; they were treated as if they belonged to the large family of the Good Shepherd, Everything that was bought for the house was punctually paid for, in order not to inconvenience anyone. In return, how everyone loved her ! She was careful to see that the young children were instructed, not only most solidly in religious knowledge, but also in reading, writing, arithmetic, and needlework, that they might have the

\* Prov. XV1. 25.



means of living respectably, and of fulfilling their duty by helping their parents, and with devotedness to their families.

Her maternal solicitude that all should have what was necessary never left her, even in her last days. Every year, before the winter came on, she made enquiry as to whether the community and children of the different classes had warm clothing and good shoes. She constantly took care that the food should be wholesome and sufficient, and that on Feasts and days which the Church keeps more solemnly, something extra should be given, as a mark of rejoicing ; following in this the example of our Saviour, who gave honey to His Apostles, and prepared their food Himself. This care extended to all the houses of the Congregation.

Her solicitude that all should have abundant spiritual help was still greater. She arranged that in our Mother House three masses should be celebrated every day, and that all the Feasts of the ecclesiastical year should be solemnly kept. She took care that the foreign Religious should be able to make their confessions and hear sermons in their own language, that the different classes of Magdalens, penitents and preservation children should make an annual retreat, with the greatest possible recollection, and that all should approach the sacraments frequently, with the necessary dispositions. The insatiable longing of her soul was that all should serve God in holiness and justice.

The virtue of fortitude shone with the brightest lustre in our venerated Mother. Putting all her trust in God, she surmounted the great difficulties she met with in the various works she continued to undertake to the end of Let life, without ever allowing her courage to fail. Her invincible patience was the fruit of her constant meditations on the life of Our Lord, of the Blessed Virgin, and the holy Apostles and Martyrs. Illustrious and pious ecclesiastics, who admired her strength of soul, said that it was also the fruit of having been educated with the daughters of the noble martyrs of the Revolution.

It is easy to understand how furiously hell was enraged against this servant of Christ, since her work tended directly to snatch from it its victims. Deeply convinced of this, she used to say, " Prepare yourselves for crosses, wherever you go ; do not be surprised if you are crucified; the devil is enraged against Religious of the Good Shepherd, because they snatch souls from hell. Lean upon the Cross; your lamp will burn with the oil of tribulation, and its flame will only be the more pure. When everything unites to try us, when we have not a moment of repose, when each hour brings a fresh trial, our watchword must be ' Fiat!'-' Be it so!' Love humiliations, crosses, sufferings-they are so many steps to lead you safely to the summit of the holy mountain. With love for her vocation, with Holy Communion, and her Constitutions, a Religious of the Good Shepherd can do anything. Thus provided, you will be able to cross the seas, and if you are asked, ' Who are you? Why are you come ?' you will answer, ' I am the spouse of the Good Shepherd, a daughter of Our Lady of Charity ; heaven is my country ; I have come to win souls to God.' I could wish that we might be so lost and hidden in God, as no longer to feel the darts which sinners hurl at us. What wounds creatures cause to a sensitive heart 1 God grant that the last may be an arrow of His love.

"We are founded on Mount Calvary, my dear daughters; from this height you will learn to be strong, and not let yourselves be disturbed by the injustice of men. Oh ! how hard it is to have to bear the injustice of men, and how often has it been a stumbling-block to souls 1 Let us always live in such a manner as to be able to say with confidence: ' I live by God, I work for God alone.'"

At the end of a year which had been full of crosses, she said to us, "My dear daughters, this year has brought us great sufferings, great trials, and at the same time, much progress. Like the cedars of Lebanon, we have had to endure the strokes of the axe, in order that we may grow more vigorously ; this will maintain us in fervour. From time to time the Father of the family comes to sow crosses among us ; and, not content with casting the seed of suffering here and there, He causes it to penetrate deeply into our souls, making its endure persecution and calumny, in order that humility may be deeply rooted in

us, that we may grow and spread, so that the fruit of the good works of our holy vocation may be multiplied. God has great designs on our Institute, and it is only by the way of the Cross that we shall be able to accomplish them. These works, which cost us so many sighs, so much labour- these works, for which we sacrifice our whole lives, do you not see how they are criticised, contradicted, and sometimes even calumniated ? So long as they do not prosper, even our friends reproach us with imprudence and want of forethought, and our enemies laugh at us. How foolish, then, we shall be, if we have any other motive but that of pleasing God ! Courage, then; go forward ! Save souls! Increase the number of tabernacles where our Lord resides on earth; this will redouble your confidence at the end of your life, because it will give you a title to hope for mercy from the Sovereign judge. Keep this hope in your hearts: it will console you in your difficulties, and sustain your courage, and the souls to whose salvation you will have contributed will plead your cause at God's tribunal, crying out, I Soul for soul, O Lord! This good Mother helped to save my soul, without her I should have perished ; it is she who by Thy Grace converted me ; have mercy on her, as she had mercy on me.' Fly then, dear daughters ; hasten, full of courage to save souls." On our part, we said, the soul of our venerated mother is truly "the house of the Lord, solidly built, and founded on a rock."\*

#### IV.

Temperance was, so to say, innate in our venerated Mother. Her life was angelic : we never knew her to bestow a thought on her corporal necessities. Her food was always frugal, her clothing, and everything she used, very poor. No entreaties could get her to admit of what we thought necessary for her relief in overwhelming and incessant labours; and she lived and died thus, giving us a great example of mortification and forgetfulness of self. She had consecrated every moment of her life to work efficaciously and without relaxation for the glory of God, and the good of souls, impelled by the thirst which

\* Offertory of dedication of a church.

consumed her, which she sometimes expressed, saying, "I feel an ardent longing to save souls, which burns and consumes my whole being."

## CHAPTER V.

### **Her four Religious Vows: Poverty, Chastity, obedience, and the Salvation of Souls.**

#### I.

THE perfection with which our venerated Mother practised all religious virtues, from the first day she entered the cloister, was such, that her superiors, to satisfy her ardent desire of being united to Our Lord by the holy Vows, granted her the singular favour of making them in Chapter, at the end of the first year of her noviciate, while waiting for the time prescribed for pronouncing them publicly before the Altar.

#### II.

Truly poor in spirit, her sole treasure on earth was the Blessed Sacrament, and the souls redeemed by the Precious Blood of our adorable Saviour.

In the commencement of the foundation of our Mother House, she practised poverty in a heroic degree, some times having no other food than nettles boiled in water. As there were not sufficient beds, the sisters occupied them by turns, according as they had need of rest. They were also in want of candles. These hardships were pleasant to her, for in this way she shared in the poverty of Jesus Christ. Formed in this school, her Religious also knew how to make the sacrifices their poverty required of them, when founding many of the Houses of the Congregation.

In her instructions she speaks with a holy and penetrating sweetness of the attractions and blessings of the virtue of holy poverty. "The greatest charm we find in holy poverty," she says, "is, that it is a means of saving a greater number of souls; because, with economy, order, and industry, we can maintain the works already established, and found others."

"The Bishops of different countries are calling us to go there, but some are poor, they have no resources; we must then help these worthy Prelates of the Church, by' carefully practising poverty. In poverty you will find all riches ; for he who has nothing possesses all things ; God Himself is become his inheritance. True poverty produces peace and plenty. In the stable of Bethlehem, we find our God teaching us all the virtues belonging to our vocation ; in the stable shall we find our foundations. They are there, and the stable is for them a source of blessings and riches : those which have been begun in the greatest poverty are now the very ones which have the happiness of sheltering the greatest number of penitents. Such are the blessings holy poverty brings, when it is accompanied by steadfast confidence in God."

Her watchful care to maintain common life in all its perfection, extended to the smallest things. She would not allow of exceptions without real necessity. Nothing escaped her vigilance on this point, neither the quality of the paper that was used, nor the covers of the books, nor the pins that were used, nor the manner of wearing the religious habit, which we ought to take great care of, nor the employment of time, for she said, 11 Order and cleanliness enter into the practice of the vow of poverty." We had in her a most perfect model of this virtue. From her novitiate, she practised poverty with extreme care, denying herself whatever was not absolutely necessary, to such an extent that she had not by her even a single pin more than was needed to dress herself.

In the spirit of detachment she had promised to God, at her Profession, not even to dispose of the indulgences she might gain in favour of any particular soul in Purgatory ; and she kept this promise throughout her life. In her illnesses, we had great difficulty in persuading her to accept even the ordinary little comforts which are usually provided for the sick; everything seemed too good for her.

In her latter days, we could not prevail upon her to light a wax taper in order to read the letters brought by the evening post, she being unwilling to substitute it for the customary candle which she deemed more in keeping with the requirements of holy poverty. Having on one

occasion given permission for some alterations, not wholly indispensable, to be made in the grounds, she thought she had failed in holy poverty, and felt so much regret, that she repeatedly said : 11 Oh ! do not let us do that again, dear sisters ! " This spirit of poverty continues to shine in our Mother House, where everything seems to sing a hymn to the holy poverty of its Foundress.

### III.

The angelic innocence our venerated Mother preserved all her life was reflected in her exterior. Constant meditation on the sanctity of God inflamed her more and more with the desire that nothing in souls should offend His most pure eyes. From this desire came the strength and self-abnegation with which she undertook the sublime task of rehabilitating fallen women in the sight of God and of society, healing the wounds and miseries of their souls; and to accomplish this restoration she found her way even into the prisons of criminal women, where, as a lily among thorns, the perfume of her virginal purity drew down from heaven graces upon these hearts sunk in the mire ; and this unwonted atmosphere of purity made them love virtue and hate vice.

If evils are overcome by their opposites, with what purity, with what innocence, must the soul of our venerated Mother have been filled ; what grace and strength must not God have bestowed upon her, whom He chose among a thousand, to confide to her the hallowed mission of bearing throughout the world healing to souls defiled by vice. Even after her death, her countenance, her body, preserved the impress, so to speak, of her virginal purity. The beauty of her feet, when uncovered, attracted attention, and caused us to say, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good tidings, who preach peace." \*

### IV.

Her obedience was at once so exact, and so loving, that she might have said with the Psalmist, " My soul hath coveted to long for Thy justifications." † -Behold, I have longed after Thy precepts, quicken me by Thy justice." " O Lord ! my portion, I have said, I will keep Thy

law." " I have been delighted in the way of Thy testimonies, as in all riches." " The law of Thy mouth is good to me above thousands of gold and silver."

Penetrated with these sentiments, she kept the holy rule, and encouraged us, as much by her example as by her words, to practice it even to the least details, because in them all we ought to find the expression of God's Will. " The rule," she used to say, " is the \* Star which is to lead you to heaven'; ; †† the I Pillar of fire which is to enlighten you in the densest darkness." " Wherever obedience sends you, wherever there are souls to save, you should be happy." " As the ivy clings to the oak, so should a Religious of the Good Shepherd cling to obedience. It matters little in what convent your Mount Moriah may be, go there, and you will taste torrents of delight. Fly with courage, and without questioning, wherever you are sent, and you will have the blessing of heaven." " Like the compass, which points always towards the north, you must always turn towards Rome, towards obedience "

On her death-bed, the sentinel of Israel still kept watch, recommending that the exercises of community should continue with punctuality and fidelity ; uniting herself in spirit to each exercise, and when the bell rang, she made a sign to us to go where obedience called us. A faithful imitator of Jesus our Redeemer, who was obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross, she dies on the sweet cross of religious obedience, consumed with the thirst of increasing the number of souls who obey the Will of the Eternal Father, and are able to say: « All is consummated."\* She had fulfilled her mission, leaving in the five portions of the world asylums of the mercy of the Good Shepherd, and having sown the seed of self-sacrifice and holy zeal. The Lord had doubtless said to her: " I will give thee a new name ; thou shalt be called I «*My good pleasure is in her.*' " †

\*Isa. lii. 7. † PS. exviii. 20, 40, 57, 14, 72. Matt. ii 2. Exodus xiii. 21.

\* John xix. 30. Isa. I.Xii. 2, 4.



## V.

Besides the three vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, the Religious of our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd of Angers make a fourth, which is according to the words of the Constitutions, to imitate, as far as by the assistance of Divine Grace they can, the most ardent charity with which the most loving Heart of Jesus, the Son of Mary, and that of Mary, the Mother of Jesus, are inflamed towards souls created after the image and likeness of God, and redeemed by the Precious Blood of His Son."

This fourth vow, the very essence of our vocation, was the object to which our venerated Mother ever consecrated her life, full and laborious as it was, and which may be summed up in the one divine word-Charity. Her aspiration was the love of God ; her respiration, the love of her neighbour. Her work contains in itself all the works of mercy, both corporal and spiritual :- (1) To feed the hungry, and to give drink to the thirsty. At the Good Shepherd, there are hundreds of poor people to be fed every day, and that without any other income than that earned by needlework, usually so poorly paid ; but our merciful Father, Who feeds the little birds, does not allow those who seek Him to suffer want. (2) To harbour the harbourless. The orphan, poor and forsaken, the young girl exposed to fall into temptation, the unfortunate woman who has wandered from the right path, find at the Good Shepherd not only a lodging, but a home with all they require. (3) To clothe the naked. The greater number of the children and penitents who enter, exchange their own clothes for a clean and suitable dress supplied by the House. (4) To visit the sick. To attend those poor victims of misfortune in their illnesses is also an ordinary duty of the Religious of the Good Shepherd. (5) To visit and ransom captives. Notwithstanding the barriers and walls which prevent the consolations of charity from reaching poor prisoners, our venerated Mother found her way into the prisons, and taught her daughters willingly to leave the calm repose of the cloister and make themselves, so to speak, prisoners of charity; living with criminals, wiping away their tears, and loosening their chains. And the Religious of the Good Shepherd, bearing in her bosom the virtues which her Mother has taught her, changes the prison into an

abode of order, industry, piety, and peace. (6) To redeem the captive. Our venerated Mother frequently said to us : 11 You are all Religious for the redemption of captives; to co-operate in redeeming souls from the slavery of sin is your employment, and it is the most beautiful on the face of the earth." Her immense charity was able to find, even in her poverty, the means of redeeming a large number of negresses, poor slaves from the wilds of Africa, and little pagans from Asia ; and in the Houses of the Good Shepherd they found the true freedom of Catholicity, a Christian education, and maternal care. (7) To bury the dead. The charity of the Religious of the Good Shepherd is not yet exhausted. After having tended the sick with the greatest zeal and devotion to their last sigh, lavishing on them all the consolations of religion, they give honourable burial to those who die within their walls.

If, in the corporal works of mercy, the Congregation of the Good Shepherd displays so much charity, what will not be its zeal, devotion, and self-denial in relieving the needs of the soul? (1) To instruct the ignorant. To make God known and loved, to teach the way of truth to ignorant souls, without exception of country or race, without stopping at any difficulty, was the lot our venerated Mother chose for herself, and has left as a rich inheritance to her Congregation. (2) To admonish sinners. To cure the soul and preserve it from the leprosy of sin is the special end of our fourth vow, and requires the greatest self-abnegation, watchfulness by night as well as by day, unalterable sweetness and patience, boundless compassion and mercy. (3) To counsel the doubtful. To guide numbers of children and penitents whom youth, inexperience, often, too, their bad tendencies and unhappy antecedents, would lead to ruin, it is necessary to keep up a gentle pressure of prudent counsel and wise direction, such as charity alone can inspire. Many also of those who have left our Houses return from time to time, to seek counsel in the midst of the dangers of the world. (4) To comfort the afflicted. Among the many souls whom the Good Shepherd welcomes to His fold, there are not wanting those who have to be consoled; and this consolation cannot be given by kind words only; their troubles must be entered into heartily, and sacrifices must be made, in order to obtain grace for them from God with peace and joy. (5) To bear wrongs patiently. In these asylums, where so many miseries

come to seek a remedy, we must know how to bear all that is most disagreeable and repugnant to nature; for this unwearied patience is required night and day, a patience which is universal, heroic. Such ought to be the distinctive character of the Religious of the Good Shepherd, according to the spirit of her Institute, and the example and teaching of its Founder. (6) To forgive injuries. From the very nature of the work which is the main end of the Congregation, we must expect to suffer many contradictions, and even persecutions. Often, in return for constant and disinterested kindness, we receive nothing but insults and ingratitude. To a heart so great, so noble, so magnanimous, so profoundly Christian as that of our venerated Mother, few joys equalled that of returning good for evil, and showing special kindness to those who had offended her. In imitation of Jesus, her Divine Model, she never had anything in her heart but feelings of mercy, and on her lips words of peace and blessing for her persecutors. (7) To pray for the living and the dead. Prayer, so essential a part of the life of this Congregation, includes everyone without exception ; the souls in Purgatory have a large share in the daily offerings. The charity of our venerated Mother caused her often to deprive herself of rest and sleep, in order to pray for the souls detained in torments, and deprived of the sight of God. She prayed also with indescribable fervour for Holy Church, for the Vicar of Jesus Christ, and implored Divine Mercy to pardon sinners. She practised with joy, and till her last breath, the sublime charity which our fourth vow contains, and always exhorted us to be very faithful to it. Her last and most tender recommendations when dying, were on the care of the flock entrusted to us, the maternal solicitude required to provide for all its spiritual and temporal needs, and to sustain this Holy Institute, which gains so many souls to God. We will here record some of her words on this subject : 11 My beloved daughters, the particular end of our Congregation is Charity; charity which urges us to walk in the steps of the Divine Shepherd, going in search of the poor sheep that have strayed far from the fold. Oh! how unworthy we should be of the name of co-workers with the Good Shepherd, if we were not animated by a boundless charity towards souls, particularly towards our poor penitents. They call us by the sweet name of mother: we must be so, according to grace and the love of God; it is for us to co-operate in their spiritual regeneration, and to

labour in restoring the life of grace in their souls. How beautiful, how sublime, is our vocation ! '~-« How often the piety of these souls who have returned to God, and are sincerely converted, has touched our hearts, and even brought tears to our eyes ! I have known one of them to remain in prayer for two or three hours together, with perfect recollection ; another appeared to me never to commit a wilful fault. Four Magdalena, fearing to fail in perseverance, prayed that they might die, and obtained their petition, for they were soon after called to Heaven. The good and fervent dispositions in which our penitents die, encourage and strengthen us to continue our work without allowing any obstacle to deter us. What a consolation it is to think, when we close their eyes, that they will open them to the brightness of heaven ! " 11 If you have not, my dear daughters, sufficient room to receive all the poor penitents who come and knock at the door, beg the angels to come and push back your walls, in order that not one of these dear sheep of the Good Shepherd may remain outside the fold. I have promised Almighty God never to refuse admission to any penitent. Oh! yes, yes, I love them with all the strength of my soul." ,Our motto should be I zeal,' and this zeal should embrace the whole world. Let us consecrate ourselves wholly to the salvation of souls, let us be ready to sacrifice our life for them, and so we shall glorify the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. How well filled is the life of a Religious of the Good Shepherd, who has an ardent love for her vocation, who offers herself every day to God as a living victim for souls, and thinks of nothing but what is pleasing to God ! She can say with the Apostle : I I live, not I, but Christ liveth in me.' My dear daughters, God in His mercy has chosen you, and has given you the most sublime vocation, show your gratitude to Him, cease not to pray, to combat and to suffer, to maintain this vocation of charity. Love, yes, love your vocation; for this holy and generous love will impart strength to you so as to enable you to surmount all obstacles. This love enlightens the soul, and makes it fruitful in all virtues ; it establishes between God and the soul a holy union which the angels behold with admiration; which makes a religious house another Thabor, a foretaste of heaven. Shall we not then kiss with joy the precious chains of our holy vows? Shall we not implore the Most High to fasten them still more closely around us, and to make them eternal? Oh! let not either fire or sword make us unfaithful to our holy vows ! Bear this sweet yoke with

joy, and never forget the alliance you have made with the Lord our God. The spouse in the Canticles is bound by a hair; the Religious, by prayer, mortification, and self-abnegation, should consolidate her vows, and make her heart a solitude and tabernacle for God."

vi.

The supernatural light with which Our Lord enlightened her, while it showed her the beauty of the vows of religion, at the same time revealed to her the full extent of the obligations they entail ; and caused her to say that, though she should have continued for thirty years exhorting her daughters to their faithful fulfilment, with no other result than that of preventing one single act of infidelity, she would not think her words wasted. With the same light, she prepared us for the annual renewal of our holy vows, which is made solemnly in honour of the Blessed Virgin, on the Feast of her Presentation in the Temple, and is preceded by a triduum, and for the renewal which is made every month in private; making us meditate attentively on every word of our holy constitutions concerning these acts, exciting us to imitate the saints, whose favourite practice was the frequent renewal of their vows. "11 Make these acts," she said, , with all the fervour of your soul : they are so useful to recall to our minds our holy engagements, and to imprint the remembrance of them deeply on our hearts ; to strengthen us in our good resolutions; to efface, by the ardour of the charity which ought to accompany them, a multitude of imperfections and faults, which thoughtlessness, inadvertence, or distraction may have caused us to commit. In order that these frequent renewals may be more efficacious and more pleasing to our Lord, let us repeat the words of our consecration, in union with the Most Blessed Virgin, offering hers, which was so perfect, to God at the same time."

When she was about to receive Holy Viaticum, she renewed aloud, in presence of the Sacred Host, the vows which she had practised with such loving fidelity, and had always renewed with more and more fervour; and she did this with such angelic devotion that the community was deeply edified.

## CHAPTER VI.

### *Her Humility.*

#### I..

HUMILITY, *which is* the foundation of all other virtues, was deeply rooted in the soul of our venerated Mother. From this virtue sprang her unshaken confidence in God; to Him she looked for everything, putting no trust in herself. In the fulfilment of the noble mission He had confided to her, she looked on herself only as the unworthy instrument of the Will of God. When favoured with graces which are most precious in the eyes of a Christian and religious soul,- the blessing of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, those of their Eminences the Cardinals and Prelates of the Church-she received them with humble gratitude, praising the goodness of God, whom she beheld in His representatives.

When Monseigneur Regnier, Vicar-General of the diocese of Angers, made known to the Community of Angers the Apostolic Decree for the election of a Superior-General, he said: " I come to announce to you a great favour, but beware of its making you proud." One of the Religious, rising at once, replied with respectful dignity : " Reverend Father, the same Mother who has taught us not to be cast down by adversity, has also taught us not to be elated by prosperity."

Thirteen letters had been written to Rome against our Mother, and she was advised to defend herself; but after consulting God, her only support, she preferred to be silent, and abandon herself entirely to Divine Providence. She excused her assailants, saying that in acting thus, they thought they were doing their duty. God blessed the humility of His servant. One day, Pope Gregory XVI. asked Cardinal de Gregorio how many letters had been written against Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia. "Thirteen, Holy Father," replied the Cardinal. " What reply has she made ? " continued the Holy Father, " None," answered the Cardinal. "Then," said the Pope, " she has truth on her side." His

Holiness then determined to grant a Superior-General, and caused a brief to that effect to be drawn up without further delay.

Our Mother, Mary of St. Euphrasia, who had laboured so hard, and prayed and suffered so much, to obtain that the Congregation should be governed by a Superior- General, at last saw her desire granted. Next to God, we owe this to her energetic zeal ; it was she who took the initiative in everything, by the gift she had of subjugating hearts for the glory and interests of God. Far from having aimed at being the head of a Congregation, as some have ventured to insinuate, we had constant proofs of the purity of her intention, and of her humility, which made her often say: „So convinced am I, my dear daughters, that what has been done in our Congregation has not been done by me, that I have never had to reproach myself with a single feeling of pride on this point. It is you who have done all; for what could I have done alone ?" It is true that her Religious were most devoted to her; but it was her ardent spirit which inflamed them, and inspired them with that passion, if we may so call it, for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, which she possessed in so high a degree.

Honoured by the princes and great ones of the world, she wished always to keep herself little in her own eyes . When she went to visit our royal Convent at Munich, she was received at the railway station with truly I honours. Our Mother, with humble simplicity, remarked :«This must be done to honour the Blessed Virgin, in the person of her humble little slave." She could praised even in her own presence without danger, for she seemed to take nothing of it for herself. Nothing drew her out of her self-annihilation. One day, when two illustrious Prelates were bidding farewell to our numerous Community at Angers, they told a young gentleman who accompanied them to ask this holy Mother for her blessing, which would draw down on him graces from heaven: and they saw the noble young man kneel down with great respect, and, joining his hands, he asked our venerated Mother for her blessing, which she gave him with seraphic humility.

## II.

The persecutions, which hell alone could have raised against her, were proportioned to the glory and honour she received later on from those who did justice to her worth and virtue. They consisted, for the most part, in opposition to her plans for the good of souls, ill-natured interpretations of her purest intentions, disapproval of her works, reproaches from those she had always served and honoured ; - such was the trial she endured for many a long year. What thorns could be more piercing to a heart so noble, so upright, so sensitive, so tender, so full of exquisite delicacy towards every one? Our Mother bore these cruel sufferings with a humility, a patience, and a meekness which never failed. Amid this alternation of honours and humiliations, she grew in humility, as well as in confidence towards God, saying: " When humiliations and contradictions fall upon us, we draw near to God with more consolation. We need crosses and humiliations; if they were wanting we should perish; no good work is done without humility and suffering."

## III.

In the year 1842, speaking of the wonderful development she foresaw for our Congregation, she said : 11 Upon the cross of humility and poverty many Houses will rise, and some of them will become large and flourishing. Where and how I know not, but I do know it will be so. One of those which I seem to see, promises nothing but humiliations, persecutions, sufferings, and extreme poverty; but on the other hand, there will be Protestants to be instructed and converted, many souls to be saved ; and this is the House I wish for most, and which most excites my ambition."

How often our Mother said to us Fear not to be too humble, my dear daughters ; our models are Jesus and Mary; we shall never attain to the perfect imitation of their Humility. Which of us had no other cradle than a stable, and has lived like them, only in humiliation and contempt ? In the tabernacle, Jesus continues His life of humiliation, teaching us all the sublimity of this virtue. When the soul is cast down by humiliation, it goes to Him, to seek the strength it needs. He gives this



strength, making the soul taste the sweetness of the cross ; and His Sacred Heart repeats to it the divine lesson : I Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart.' \* He will teach it also that ' humility is the key to the treasures of His Heart, and that humility enables us to do work for souls.' Oh! my dear daughters! if you were truly humble, what valuable Religious you would be! You would be golden Religious ! If our holy Rule does not require of us great austerities, it imposes on us instead the obligation of being truly humble. I would like our Constitution on Humility to be written in large letters on the walls of our Houses, and engraved with the pencil of divine love on our hearts ; because, if we observed it faithfully, we should have nothing to fear, whether in time or eternity ; with humility alone, without practising other austerities than those imposed by the Rule, you may make great progress in holiness. Would to God that we could say at all times with the Royal Prophet: ' Thou knowest, O Lord, that in prosperity my heart was not exalted, nor were my eyes lofty.' \* Ground your. selves well, therefore, in true humility, my dear daughters, for the proud fall like dry leaves. Our Divine Lord has said ' He who exalts himself shall be humbled, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted.' † The proud man builds his house upon the sand, and he that is humble, upon the firm rock, which neither persecution nor calumny can shake. + One of our Sisters, who is at this moment undergoing great troubles, writes to me : I My Mother, I am ready to suffer contempt, and to be crucified, provided that our work prospers ; that suffices to make me happy.' One who had not humility would risk imperilling a House, or even the whole Congregation, in order to defend her beloved self. For my part, I would rather see devils walking about in our cloisters, than proud Religious ; the devils would at least be known as such, whereas two or three proud Religious would be enough to sow discord in a community. The wise man says: I Among the proud there are always contentions.' I implore you, my dear daughters, do not be numbered amongst those sanctimonious, thin-skinned folks, who cannot bear the least contradiction. It is incredible to what an extent pride blinds poor mortals, and makes them ridiculous. A person who was once found fault with by

\* St. Mat. xi. 29.

his Superior answered: ! I cover myself with the mantle of my humility.' To which his Superior replied :! I think you might wear that cloak in the dog days, without danger of suffocation.' Nothing is found in souls more rarely than true humility, because this virtue is so contrary to our fallen nature since the first sin ; and nevertheless, to wish to attain perfection without grounding ourselves first in humility, is to build in the air. It is for want of humility that there is, unhappily, so little solid virtue, and so little sincere piety. Humility should be the first virtue of a Religious of the Good Shepherd. Without humility, it is impossible to found a House, or even to govern a class of children well, much less a class of penitents ; for we must be humble in order to draw on ourselves and them graces from the Heart of Jesus. Imitate the meekness of this Sacred Heart, and bear patiently all the occasions of suffering you will meet with in the exercise of our fourth vow. When I was Mistress of Penitents, I found by experience that the more indocile they were by nature, the more rude and ignorant, the more necessary it was to treat them with gentleness and consideration, to win them to God. Let humility produce charity in us; and, instead of despising these poor victims of sin, let us remember what St. Augustine says; that there is no crime, however great, that another has committed, which we too might not commit, were we not prevented by the grace of God. We owe it to the mercy of God alone, that we were not born among idolators or Protestants, but have had good parents who gave us a pious and Christian education. Let us thank God with humble gratitude for this great blessing, and that of our vocation. What consolation a humble and crucified life brings at the hour of death ! I have seen it in some of our Sisters whom I have assisted at their last moments. I asked one of them, who had suffered much, and who had always said with great humility: ' It is my fault,' whether she was happy, and, remarking that she was full of joy, I asked her what she saw; she answered simply: I see St. Philomena;' and she repeated with great devotion the holy names of Jesus and Mary, more than a hundred times; and her last breath was an effort to pronounce once more these sacred names. If, even in this life, God so rewards humble souls, what reward will He not give them in heaven ?

\* Ps. C.... 1. † Luke xviii. 14 Luke vi. 48. Prov. Xiii. 10.

Let us then love humility, and a hidden life, and meditate on these words of the Apostle: I My life is hidden with Christ in God.' \*

Never, my dear daughters, are we more full of life, than when we are hidden in God, and, as it were, dead to the eyes of the world."

#### IV.

To these instructions, our Mother, who was herself so humble, added her constant example. Having reached the end of her holy life, at the moment she was about to receive Holy Viaticum, she made a sign that she wished to speak; and, in the most humble and touching words, she asked pardon of the whole Congregation for the bad example she had given, and for having served it so ill. Another day, she said, 11 Oh how beautiful heaven is ! I see Our Lord Jesus Christ filling his elect with torrents of delight. My soul is plunged in an ocean of peace. I hope Our Lord will show mercy to me on account of our fourth vow." Thus ended the existence of her, who enjoyed so much calling herself the little slave of Mary ; and after having fought the good fight, her humility made her hope, not for the crown of justice, but for that of mercy.

I Col. iii 3.

## CHAPTER VII.

### *Her Gratitude.*

#### I.

OUR holy Constitutions say: "Humble souls are full of gratitude . . . . . The Sisters shall have a special devotion to this virtue, and shall show to their Founders and benefactors great thankfulness, and to all their friends; behaving towards them with much respect."

With what perfection our venerated Mother fulfilled this precept! Profoundly humble, and persuaded that she deserved nothing, gratitude overflowed in her heart for the smallest benefits, the least attention. The immense gratitude she felt to the Founders and benefactors of the Congregation is in part expressed in the words she addressed to her Religious, to imprint in their hearts the sentiments that filled her own: "Under God, my dear daughters, next to the Most Blessed Virgin and Holy Church, who have covered you with their protection, to whom do you owe most gratitude? None of you must ever forget the name of our venerable Founder, Father John Eudes. The hymn of your gratitude will rise unceasingly to heaven, to thank God for having inspired this good Father to create our Institute, which is one of the masterpieces of zeal for the salvation of souls. You ought to make yourselves acquainted with the beginnings of this Congregation, founded by the Venerable Father Eudes.

"You will never forget that the signal favour of having the Congregation governed by a Superior-General was granted to us by our Holy Father Pope Gregory XVI., who issued the decree of its erection in the year 1835

"You should know also that the holy Cardinal Odescalchi was then given to us as our Protector at Rome; and when he quitted the purple to enter the Society of Jesus, Cardinal della Porta succeeded him, and then His Eminence Cardinal Patrizzi.

" You must cherish in your memory the name of the august Pius IX., who has given us so many marks of his goodness; you must always pronounce with gratitude his venerated and blessed name.

" Could you ever forget Monseigneur Charles Montault, Bishop of Angers, who not only interested himself in the foundation of this House, but also worked hard for the election of a Superior-General ?

"You know also how much we owe to the Reverend Father Vaures, French Penitentiary at Rome, who did everything in his power for this same end.

"We will record in our annals the benefits we have received from the Roman Court.

"We will also write in them the name of M. le Comte Augustin de Is Potherie de Neuville, \* who sold the castle

\* *M. le Comte Augustin le Roy de I& Potherie de Neuville*, educated at Stonyhurst *College*, was an exemplary Christian. At the age of twenty one he made a vow of chastity, and a vow to recite every day the Office of the Immaculate Conception. He was accustomed to pass in prayer the hour from midnight till one o'clock in the morning, meditating on the humiliations of *(he Incarnate Word*. During *these long* watches, he received great lights as to the future of the Congregation of the Good *Shepherd of Angers*.

It required all *the authority* of Monseigneur the Bishop to make him enter within the enclosure, *although* as Founder he had a right to do so. Almost always, before musing his arrival to be announced, he passed half-an-hour in the exterior church. Our Mother used to go to receive him with ceremony, accompanied by her Assistants-General, or some of the Religious. Before going upstairs to the Community room, M. le Comte always approached the statue of Our Lady, saying plea. santly : " Allow Mary's knight to salute his lady ; " at other times he called her his Queen. One day, he said to her in a low voice : « Your servant has nothing left to give to the daughters of you Heart, oh ! thou who art rich, pour down upon them a shower of gold and spiritual blessings."

When he spoke of God, which was often, we felt that his words came from a heart overflowing with love.

M. de Neuville died on the 4th of December, 1843, as holily as he had lived.

of his ancestors and made himself poor, to found this House of Angers.

" His revered name ought to be written on every door of the House, on every tree of our enclosure. What tongue could ever tell all his generosity towards us? The stream of his benefits never ceased to flow. He reduced himself to live so poorly that, when he was ill, his friends were moved to tears when they visited him. Well, my dear daughters, this man, generous to so heroic a degree, always said he had done nothing.

"The Prioress of one of our Houses in Rome obtained from the Sovereign Pontiff, for the feast of this venerated Father, a plenary indulgence *In articulo mortis*, *which he* could dispose of in favour of several members of his family at his choice. I Never,' said he, I have I had such consolation in my life. Who could have inspired her with such a beautiful thought?» The answer was easy: the Religious had been inspired by gratitude.

"We will inscribe in our annals the name of the Countess d'Andigné de Villequier, who has supported this House of Angers by her liberal gifts and affectionate friendship. What is there this worthy and pious benefactress has not done for us ?

" We will write in the list of benefactors our two Sisters, Assistants-General Mary Chantal of Jesus Cesbron de Is Roche, and Mary Teresa of Jesus de Couespel, who gave up their property, and edified us by their regularity and devotedness. Can it be possible that in course of time the remembrance of these revered names should be effaced among us ? No! I cannot think so.

" My dear daughters, 'all this must be preserved in writing. I cannot too strongly recommend to all our Houses to have their annals kept with care. The annual circulars, also, will serve as a continuation of our history: they will be a new hymn, perpetually rising to the glory of God from our several religious families.

" Pray much, my dear daughters, for your benefactors *whether spiritual* or temporal: offer faithfully for them the Communions prescribed by our holy Rule; beg Our Lord to give them all they need, and all they desire. Imitate the simplicity of the good Franciscan Brother Giles, who, addressing himself to the Blessed Virgin, said to her with great devotion : I My good Mother, grant to our benefactors all they ask of you : show that you love those who do us good in your name; otherwise they will no longer bring us candles to burn before your picture, and then what should we do to get them ? ' Say always with great attention the words in the prayer of our office: *Benefactoribus nostris sempiterna bona retribue.*' -1 O Lord recompense our benefactors by giving them eternal rewards.' In the same way, after meals: - Retribue *dignare, Domine, Exc.*'-'Vouchsafe, O Lord, to reward with eternal life all those who have done us good.' Say always, with great attention, the De *Profundis* we say in common for our benefactors, whenever we leave the Refectory. The sentiment of gratitude gives birth to great and noble *thoughts*. *Ingratitude* is hateful. I dread it more than anything else. For pity's sake, never be ungrateful. On the contrary, act in such a way that gratitude may give a double life to all your good actions. The best definition we can give of gratitude is expressed in these words : I Gratitude is the memory of the heart.' The heart which has no memory, which does not know how to cherish a recollection, is but a poor heart.

" It is said of the seraphic Saint of Carmel, that she was the most grateful woman in the world ; this virtue was one of the most distinctive marks of her sublime sanctity. She herself wrote with great humility to her Religious ; I Gratitude is not a virtue in me, it is a natural instinct. In fact, I am so constituted, that it is sufficient for anyone to give me a sardine, to cause me to feel grateful affection for the giver.' "

One way in which our Mother showed her gratitude to our great benefactor, M. de Neuville, was as follows; Louis, one of his servants, had become very infirm, and they were thinking of placing him in a hospital. When our Mother heard of it, she said to M. de Neuville ; " No ! my good Father, he shall not go to the hospital ; he has served you too faithfully, and been too devoted to the Good Shepherd for that. We

have, outside our Enclosure, a room all ready for him ; he will only have a step to go to reach the church, and he will also see his good master more frequently. Tears came to the eyes of M. de Neuville, as he expressed his pleasure at the arrangement. Louis lived for some time, surrounded by the attention and care our Mother caused to be shown him, and he had the happiness of being frequently visited by his noble master.

All the Founders and benefactors of the different Houses of the Congregation acquired a special claim to her gratitude; they had a place in her heart, which gave them a large share in her remembrance, and above all in her prayers. Under all circumstances it was a happiness to her to be able to testify the gratitude she felt. It would be impossible to express the gratitude with which her heart overflowed, when receiving, during her last illness, marks of special benevolence from the august person of the Sovereign Pontiff Pius IX., from their Eminences Cardinal Patrizzi, our Protector, and the Cardinal Archbishops of Cambrai and of Westminster; from His Grace the Archbishop of Aix, and from their Lordships the Bishops of Orleans, Arras, and Poitiers, as also from the Most Reverend Dom Guéranger, Abbot of Solesmes. On the eve of her death, she sent a message to His Grace the Archbishop of Santiago, saying that she recommended herself to his holy prayers, and would preserve an eternal gratitude towards him.

We were touched by the humility with which she thanked us for all we did for her; for our prayers, our tears, the little attentions we showed her, and the letters which arrived from all parts. When she was told that our Penitents were praying for her, she replied : " What a consolation it is to know that those poor children are praying for me; go and thank them." When some one pitied her, because she could not take anything but water, she said ; " St. Francis Xavier, on his barren shore, had not such good water to drink."

The virtue of gratitude was so predominant in our venerated Mother, that it made her say: " Gratitude is a cause of martyrdom to



me." We may say that this virtue did not end with her life, but that she carried it with her into eternity.

We have already said it, but we cannot repeat it too often, gratitude was a special characteristic of our venerated Mother, and she never allowed an opportunity to pass, without giving proofs of it to our illustrious benefactors. Every day she wrote to M. de Neuville, to keep him informed of the little even's that would interest him ; the entrance of a Postulant, a sheep returning to the fold, etc. Her Charity frequently told us that she considered gratitude a sacred duty. It was this feeling that made her propose to the Community the following engagements, which were inscribed in the Book of the Chapter, in the following manner:

Foundation of Masses in Perpetuity  
for  
M. de Neuville and Madame d'Andigné.

Live Jesus and Mary!

The Superior-General and the Religious of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, in Chapter assembled, have, in consideration of the great and singular benefits bestowed on them by M. le Comte Augustin de Neuville, drawn up a formal document in our Monastery of Angers, on the 1st of November, in the year of Our Lord 1836.

The Community promises to have twelve Masses a year said in perpetuity, for the Count Augustin de Neuville, without detriment to what they intend to do later.

Live Jesus and Mary!

The Superior-General and the Religious of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, in Chapter assembled, have, in consideration of the benefits bestowed on them by Madame d'Andigné, drawn up a formal document on the 13th of November, in the year of Our Lord 1836.

The Community promises to have one monthly Mass said in perpetuity for the Countess d'Andigné, our worthy benefactress (after her death), and also to educate two orphans for the same intention, in perpetuity.

The year and date given above,  
At our Monastery-General of Angers.

Our most honoured Mother Mary. of St. Euphrasia, when speaking to us on a later occasion, of this Foundation of Masses, pointed out to us with still greater feelings of gratitude towards our noble benefactors, that neither M. de Neuville nor Madame d'Andigné had asked for Masses after their death.

In our Directory of the Choir also, printed at Angers in 1846, with the necessary approbations, we read as follows : " December 4th. In the Mother House of Angers a solemn service shall be celebrated in perpetuity, for the repose of the soul of the Count le Roy de la Potherie de Neuville, our illustrious Founder, and his family; besides which, fifty Masses shall be said every year for this intention.

On this day, in the same Monastery, the Office for the Dead with three Nocturns shall be said. In the Foundations, they shall only say one Nocturn.

Our venerated Mother earnestly desired to leave to posterity a biography of M. de Neuville, as a memorial of her gratitude, With this intention, she wrote as follows to M. le Comte de Quartrebarbes M. le Comte, you have done great things for the Holy See, and for France; you have written excellently on Anjou ; now I entreat you to write the biography of your venerable relative, M. de Neuville, our holy Founder." M. de Quartrebarbes replied: " Madame, what you ask is impossible. My cousin lived such a retired and interior life, his good works were so hidden, that in his family very little is known about them. We are aware that he has been generous to the Trappists and Trappistines.

The foundation of the Good Shepherd is a monument that will do honour to his memory for ever, and will always be an honour to our

family. For myself and Madame de Quartrebarbes, we are glad that he employed his fortune so well. Every time you announce to me the foundation of a new House of your Institute, I rejoice for the good of souls ; and also because it increases the accidental glory of my cousin." These are the words of the gallant Governor of Ancona; for whom, as well as for the Countess de Quartrebarbes, our venerated Mother always had the most sincere friendship.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### *Her Close Union with God.*

#### I.

THE habitual object of her contemplation, adoration, and praise, was the Most Blessed Trinity; her soul was filled with God, and, as it were, buried in the infinite Ocean of the Divinity. God the Father blessed her memory, God the Son blessed her understanding, God the Holy Ghost blessed her will; and she, in return, spread through the whole Congregation the strength, light, and love wherewith she was filled. Nothing was able to withdraw her soul from that intimate union with God ; and no one could converse with her without feeling the gentle influence of the love of God, which was always overflowing in her heart.

Her earnest desire that all her Religious should attain to a high degree of perfection, impelled her to exhort us unceasingly to fidelity to grace, to do well all our spiritual exercises, to fulfil faithfully and lovingly the Divine Will in all things, and constantly to return thanks to the Divine Goodness, which lavishes such benefits upon us.

Whatever she deemed necessary for the good of the Congregation she earnestly prayed for, and no sooner was her prayer granted, than she poured out her soul in acts of thanksgiving. " You have hearts created to love God," she would say, " render to Him, then, love for love. He alone has a right to our hearts ; let us thank Him especially for the grace of our vocation. Like a heavenly gardener, He has sought you out one by one in the desert of the world, in order to transplant you into His privileged garden. Every day He sends down on your souls the dew of His blessing, to lighten your labour, and troubles. He makes you enjoy great peace, for He wishes you to be happy even in this life. If our hearts suffer when we do not meet with gratitude from others, what an injury do we inflict on the Heart of God when we overlook and slight His benefits. You should wish to have a thousand lives, in order to offer them to God, and to sacrifice them for His love in

return for all He has done for you. I repeat a thousand times, be thankful to Almighty God; let your heart be an altar, upon which the sweet flame of thanksgiving may burn unceasingly ; let your life be an uninterrupted act of gratitude for your vocation. Be grateful to the Blessed Virgin for the protection she has vouchsafed to you. My dear daughters, when you approach Holy Communion, reanimate your gratitude to God, Who gives Himself to your soul, and unites Himself so closely to it that it becomes one with Him. What more could an all-powerful God do for us?

" Holy Communion ought to be our food, our consolation, our greatest delight. This Divine Sacrament is the very life of a Religious of the Good Shepherd; in it she finds her strength, her joy, her glory, and that spirit of selfabnegation and sacrifice which ought to characterise her in this world, so full of briers and thorns, where we are continually surrounded by the difficulties which always accompany the foundation of each of our Houses : no sooner is one begun than storms arise which threaten to destroy it. What need have we not, then, to go to Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, Who is our God, strong and powerful, to appease the tempest.

" Let us nourish ourselves with this living Bread, which is called the Bread of angels, not because the angels partake of it, but because it has virtue to transform into angels those who receive it worthily. If you are in trouble, in darkness, in dryness, go to Communion; if you are in consolation, go to Communion, in order that the love of God may increase in your soul; if you are weary and languid, go to Communion, that the Holy Ghost may sustain you with His strength. The perfect Religious should communicate in order to advance in perfection; the imperfect Religious should communicate that she may obtain the perfection she ought to aim at. St. Teresa, when in trouble and desolation, communicated more frequently. When Jesus Christ is within us, we should keep ourselves in the greatest recollection. Let your thanksgiving be very fervent : think only of Jesus Christ and His love, and you will be terrible to the devils. Observe strictly the time of recollection in the morning prescribed by the rule, until the recreation after dinner, that each one may continue her thanksgiving after prayer

and Holy Communion-thanksgiving which should never be interrupted, never ; and the silence and exercises of the afternoon should be a preparation for the prayer and Communion of the following day; in a word, the thought of this unspeakable gift should occupy us constantly. Oh ! what a great mystery it is, my dear daughters, what a grace! what a favour ! I cannot understand how any Religious can live without frequently uniting herself to her Heavenly Spouse. This union should be her life, her sole happiness, her only rest after labour.

" We should regard the Blessed Eucharist as the pledge and earnest of the everlasting glory promised to the just. To the faithful soul who feeds on this heavenly Bread this Sacrament gives a well-grounded claim for mercy on the day of judgment, and for admission among the citizens of heaven, I recommend you, my dear daughters, often to ask of our Lord the grace to receive the assistance of the Holy Communion at the hour of death. When I see our dear dying sisters receive Holy Viaticum, that is, their provision for the last journey, and then expire soon after, I envy their happiness, and I beg Our Lord to grant me the same grace. Oh ! ask Our Lord to be pleased to do us all this signal favour, and, meanwhile, in order not to be unworthy of 'it, let us always receive Him with great love and fervour. Happy, indeed, are they who enter eternity fortified With the Sacred Body of our Lord.

In order to live according to the spirit of her Institute, a Religious of the Good Shepherd should be a soul of prayer, since she is called to be another Christ, a mediator between God and souls. Exterior occupations ought not to withdraw her from interior recollection ; if they are performed with the intention of doing God's will, they will be so many acts of praise and love to her God and Sovereign Lord. Prayer is the most efficacious means of attaining perfection : all the saints have begun their career of sanctity by devoting themselves to this holy exercise of communication with God. Read and imprint on your memory the doctrine of St. Teresa on prayer. For the rest, you will find by experience that the only way to learn to make your meditation well, is to pray. When the disciples of St. John of the Cross went to him to ask him to teach them to make their prayer well, he generally answered, "Pray, go to prayer." I should give the same answer to anyone who came to

me to be taught how to meditate. Imitate the Saints, love to listen to God, make it your delight to occupy yourself with Him in prayer and recollection. Let this holy exercise be the occupation you love best ; if it is so, you will be like the tree mentioned in Holy Scripture, whose leaf is always green, and which gives fruit in due season. Constantly watered by streams of grace, the garden of your soul will be adorned with leaves and flowers ; the germ of good desires will be strengthened, and the fruit of holy virtues be abundant. *But, mark it well, these fruits come only from prayer well made.* You may hope that yours is such, if you feel a great desire to advance in perfection; but if you make no progress in virtue, if you are careless and negligent in the performance of your duties, be sure that there are serious defects in your prayer, since the fruit which should result from it is not to be seen. In this case rouse yourself without losing time, lest you become a useless plant, incapable of receiving the sweet influence of heavenly dew. The heart of a Religious who does not make her meditation, or who is negligent in doing so, is, in the language of Holy Scripture, a dry cistern, which allows the waters of grace to escape.

Give your whole attention to saying the Office, remembering that you are speaking to God Himself, that you are singing the praises of Him Whose justice and majesty fill both heaven and earth. If we were deeply convinced of this truth, we should be angels upon earth, by the union of our souls with God. Try to hear holy Mass with great devotion, and to realise the sanctity of the Sacrifice which is there offered to God.

## II.

Every year our venerated Mother herself prepared the Community for the Retreat in the month of November, which was generally given by one of the fathers of the Society of Jesus, to which she was much attached. To this end she gave special instructions to her daughters, exhorting them to endeavour to derive as much benefit as possible from it. "Retreat," she was in the habit of saying, 11 is the best preparation for death : at such times we should above all think seriously of our last end. The grace which God then pours down on us is another reason for labouring to increase in fervour. If God were to

take an account of what He owes us, and what we owe Him, from the first moment of our lives until now, what would become of us ? Yet we must come to this reckoning some day; all our actions will then be examined in detail; they will be weighed in the balance of Divine justice; let us then be prepared.

In confession, accustom yourselves to be very simple, straightforward, clear, and concise : do not speak of others, but only of yourself At the head of the resolutions you will make during the Retreat, I should wish you to write: 'either to overcome myself or to die.'

"Enter into Retreat with recollection and joy; continue in it with recollection and joy, you will then return to your occupations when it is over with recollection and joy. Melancholy and taciturn virtues, hard and rigid virtues (which are not virtues at all), are not inspired by the Spirit of God, and are not suitable for a Christian soul, much less for a Religious of the Good Shepherd.

" ' Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are modest, whatsoever are just, whatsoever things are holy, whatsoever things are amiable, whatsoever things are of good repute, if there be any virtue, any praise of discipline, think on these things,\*" said the Apostle St. Paul : and as for me, I tell you to make your resolutions according to the instructions the great Apostle here gives you. Those who are called by their vocation to win souls to God should be holy, full of dignity in their manner, courteous to all ; they should be the good odour of Jesus Christ to inspire others with the love of virtue. Their lives should be irreproachable ; their actions always worthy of the Master whom they serve. Remember with what simplicity and yet how forcibly St. Paul describes the character of true and solid piety. Religious who practise real virtue win souls. You must all act in this manner, and you must form yourselves to it during this Retreat. The more you purify your soul, the more will peace and joy abound in your heart; and thus *you* will give more glory to God, more edification to your neighbour, more consolation to my heart, and more honour to the Congregation.

\* PH. IV. S.



I call down upon you with my whole heart that holy peace of soul which is the sign of the elect. May that ineffable peace reign in you during this present life, and throughout all eternity.

" 'Come, my people, withdraw into your houses, close your doors, and hide yourselves for a moment.'

"Souls have been known, who, after ten, fifteen, twenty years of mortal languor in a state of infidelity, on account of the little value they set on the light of grace, have been suddenly and completely changed by a prompt correspondence with an extraordinary light God has given them, either in the exercises of a Retreat, or a fervent Communion, or a well- made meditation, as it happened to that relaxed religious of whom Father Lancisius speaks, who, after a sermon, exclaimed, : 'I will become a Saint, and a Saint at once ' which, in fact, happened.

" Just as the natural light which enlightens the world was the first of the works of creation, so the spiritual light which God makes to shine upon us, is the first of the graces He gives us ; and when this light penetrates into the interior of the soul, it does what natural light does in the material world : it dispels and scatters darkness. It was this Divine Light which shone on the shepherds and Eastern kings, and miraculously guided them to the cave of Bethlehem. It was this light which shone with surpassing brightness in the eyes of St. Paul on the road to Damascus ; that which shone on St. Augustine in the garden at Milan ; it enlightened St. Francis Xavier, when he heard St. Ignatius remind him of the memorable words: 'What shall it profit a man to gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?' These great saints knew how to profit by this grace, and, with the Divine assistance, they advanced from light to light.

" Be faithful, then, my dear daughters, in following this interior light which God grants to each of you ; let it always enlighten and accompany you ; the greater your fidelity to the light of grace, the greater will be the peace you will enjoy, and this will be your happiness while you are on earth. By this light you will walk with a firm step in the blessed paths of the Lord. Let there be light! and we shall always keep

ourselves in the presence of God. How marvellous are the effects of divine light in souls who receive it with docility ! Self-love is destroyed, our mind is purified from imperfections, and the soul is rid of all obstacles to its union with God.

" It sometimes happens, my dear daughters, that Religious imagine that they are less fervent since their entrance into religion than they were in the world; what is the cause of this fancy? It is this-it is written that Our Lord appeared amidst the darkness of the world as a brilliant light, but that the darkness did not comprehend Him. In like manner, souls, while in the world, do not perceive many faults, and make light of certain imperfections ; but here, in the courts of God's House and in the brightness of a new light, they discover the depths of their own nothingness, and are able in a manner to count one by one the imperfections and defects they formerly failed to see. At the same time, let us not lose courage; let us always seek God, and approach Him with humility, hoping to receive light. Let us say with the Psalmist: ' Thou, O Lord, art a lamp to my feet ' \* ; 'O my God, enlighten my darkness' †; and the Lord will open the eyes of our souls, and make known to us our defects, and give us greater earnestness in labouring for our perfection. If sometimes He hides Himself to try us, let us submit to His holy will, without, on that account, ceasing to seek Him, being persuaded that He will not fail to restore His light to us when He sees fit. And where will You most surely 'find Him, my beloved daughters ? You will find Him in the recollection of prayer, and, above all, in Holy Communion. 10 my God,' exclaims the Royal Prophet, 'Thou art the source of light, -and in Thy light we shall see light.' \* Yes, in prayer and Holy Communion we acquire the knowledge of God and of ourselves. The knowledge of God teaches us to love Him, and the knowledge of ourselves teaches us to despise ourselves. Light from on high, like a beacon, will enlighten us in the exercises of our vocation.

\* Ps. cxviii 105. † Ps. xvii. 29.

"The vocation to which God has called you requires a complete abnegation of yourselves, that you may labour to break the chains which bind souls to the devil. You must, therefore, be prepared to meet the assaults of his fury. As you torment hell, the devil turns his rage against you even more violently than against other Religious. You need, then, to be very strong, and how are you to become so? By thinking of nothing but the glory of God and the salvation of souls : this is the end you should always have in view in all you do and all you wish to do. Yes, be sure that if all your actions are animated with this spirit, however little, indifferent, or useless they may appear, they will have great value and great merit, and will be marked with the seal of sanctity. For a soul that acts thus uprightly, there are none of those troubles, discouragements, and sorrows which come, unfortunately, from self-love ; because, entirely forgetting herself, she sees only the good pleasure of God in everything ; she applies to the faithful performance of His adorable will, considering only His glory and the salvation of souls. Therefore, my dear daughters, keep yourselves constantly in the presence of Him who, by one word, one glance, can dissipate the clouds of sadness, and cause sweetness and peace to return to your soul. Seek Him earnestly, tell Him your troubles with confidence, draw near to Him Who is burning with charity, hide yourselves in His Sacred Heart; there you will taste that ineffable peace reserved for the soul that prays, and contemplates in silence the greatness of the hidden God. I entreat you once more, my beloved daughters, be more and more fervent, because I am assured that it is your meditations, your prayers, your fervour and spirit of regularity, which have hitherto done violence to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and have obtained for our holy Institute all the graces we stood in need of. I own that sometimes, when hearing you sing the Holy Office, and the penitents their pious hymns, I have felt, as it were, in ecstasy."

\* Ps. xxxv. 10.

Penetrated with this realization of the presence of God, our venerated Mother had God in view even in the least occupations of her life. One of her daughters, who had the happiness of passing many years in the Mother House, says : " Our Mother is always with God ;

she settles everything with Him," adding, playfully, " even what she has to give us for dinner." She had the habit of referring everything to God ; if one of the many foreign novices, who did not understand French, went to her, lamenting that she was not able to profit by her instructions, which she saw were received with admiration -and delight by her companions, our Mother used to say, with great simplicity, " Console yourself, my child ; make a novena to our Father, St. Joseph ; he will obtain understanding for you," and in deed so it happened.

On certain great feast days, the Pater Noster was sometimes sung while our Mother was going to Communion, and then her soul would melt with filial love and tenderness for God, her Father, and she remained for a long time absorbed in Him. An example of this union with God, which shows still more her absolute dependence on the will of her adorable Master, is the inspiration to found the Generalate. just as the work of redemption began upon earth when the Blessed Virgin uttered the humble words : " Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done unto me according to Thy Word,"\* so our Mother, who had received from heaven the mission of cooperating in the great work of redemption for erring souls scattered throughout the whole world, when presenting to the Holy See the divine inspiration she had received, and soliciting the approbation of the Sovereign Pontiff, began her petition in the very words of Mary : " Behold the handmaid of the Lord ; be it done unto me according to thy word." She herself relates what then happened.

"I felt strongly impelled to do all in my power to obtain permission for the election of a Superior-General in spite of myself. One day, during vespers, at the Magnificat, something seemed to urge me more strongly than ever to do so. When I left the choir, I took refuge in our poor cell, and there, with a trembling hand, I began to write to the Cardinal Vicar at Rome, commencing with these words: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord ; be it done unto me according to thy word " I was so frightened at the step I had taken, that, not knowing what terms to use to express my submission, I ended with these words : "

\* Luke 1. 38.

"Your Eminence, I prostrate myself on the ground; I am at your feet, and I desire only the greater glory of God. If the Sovereign Pontiff and your Eminence see obstacles in the way of this erection, I submit most humbly to your decision. Many contradictions followed this step, and, sometime after having written, a very extraordinary thing happened to me. One night, hardly had I fallen into a less troubled sleep than usual, than I seemed to behold a prelate who was unknown to me; he was dressed as a Cardinal, his countenance expressed gentleness and sanctity ; his whole appearance inspired respect and veneration. He said to me: 'Fear nothing, my daughter, your work will be approved; I am chosen by God to be its Protector.' After these words he disappeared, leaving me full of confidence and consolation. What was my surprise some years later, on my first journey to Rome, to recognise in His Eminence Cardinal Odescalchi the venerated Protector who had appeared to me! I related my dream to him quite simply. His Eminence reflected seriously for some time, and then said : 'There is something remarkable in this ; I, in my turn, will tell you what happened to me with regard to your work. For some time I had been much occupied with the desire of finding a congregation of religious women who would take charge of houses of detention for women, and I constantly asked God that He would vouchsafe to listen to me. Your letter reached me on the Feast of the Annunciation, just as I had finished offering the Holy Sacrifice in the Basilica of St. Peter, to obtain this grace through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin.' "

That union with God which had impelled our venerated Mother to ask the Sovereign Pontiff to approve the Foundation of her Institute, gave her later the strength and light necessary to accomplish so heroic an undertaking.

#### IV.

If her whole life was passed in such intimate union with God, this union appeared to become closer as she drew near her end ; and it showed itself by the holy ejaculations which proceeded from her heart like ardent sighs, "Why do you wish to keep me a prisoner here," said she, " when I long so to go and rest in the bosom of my God ? 'As the hart

panteth after the fountains of water, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God.' \* My God, Thou art my all! Oh! Jesus, be the breath of my life ! Sufferings have been offered to me, I have accepted them. I bear in my body the wounds of our Lord Jesus Christ. I have been crushed, I am covered with wounds, but my bruises have restored life to me. I feel God in me, suffering with me." It was in the most tender transports of love, and busy to the last with her work of co-operating for the salvation of souls, that our Mother Foundress breathed her last.

\* Ps. XI1. 1.

## CHAPTER IX.

### ***Her Intimate Union with God, by the Possession of the, Gifts of the Holy Ghost.***

#### I.

WE saw clearly that our *venerated Mother* Mary of St. Euphrasia *Pelletier* was just and agreeable in the eyes of God. The Eternal Father loved her and took *pleasure in* her soul, *seeing in* her the likeness of His only Son, immolated for His glory. God the Son chose her as an indefatigable companion in *seeking out* the lost sheep. He shared with her the inheritance He had acquired as *Redeemer*, giving her dominion and power in all the regions of the universe.

The Holy Ghost gave her a numerous family of daughters and of souls. He adorned her with His gifts, causing her to relish the sweetness of their fruits.

#### II.

The gift of wisdom, entering her soul in all its fulness, hiled her with all good, extinguishing all that was earthly in her, so that she might *seek the* glory of God alone, and glory only in the Cross of her Beloved Spouse.

*Seeing her* attitude in prayer, her profound reverence before the Blessed Sacrament, her body so motionless, the radiant light which shone in her whole countenance and *eyes, one* could understand the torrents of light with which God flooded her mind, and the transports of love with which He inflamed her soul, transforming her *entirely into* Himself. Like Moses descending the holy mountain, she came forth from these close and loving communings with God, bearing *impressed upon* her whole exterior profound *respect for* the Divinity ; and with such modesty and recollection, that those who came in contact with her *were inspired* with the veneration that is felt for a soul already dwelling in the

higher regions. This *recollection alone* still causes devotion in those of us who had the happiness of *seeing and* admiring it.

Thirsting to procure the glory of God, the King and Master of her soul, Who *possessed her* so entirely, she did not *hesitate to* make any sacrifice in order to extend His kingdom, and, desirous of communicating to us this divine fire of charity, she often said : "Would you like to know, my dear daughters, the most ardent *desire of* my heart? It is this : Increase and multiply, go and *people* the earth; go and extend the mercies of the Lord ; go and gain souls to God." And these words, as ardent as efficacious, moved irresistibly the hearts of her daughters, and rendered them capable of crossing seas and *deserts to* make God known, and to save souls. And what joy filled her heart when, at the price of sacrifices and contradictions without number, she was able to raise another -altar to the thrice Holy God, Whose delight is to be with the children of men, *where He* would be worshipped in spirit and in truth; *where He* would *receive from* her daughters the tribute of continual praise ; and where they would draw down the divine mercy upon souls. Her joy was intensified when it was in her power to restore the worship of God in one of the *temples profaned* by the sacrilegious hand of the Revolution, and left in desolation and abandonment for years. The ardour of her love made her purchase *three of* these ancient abbeys, that of St. Florent at Saumur, of St. Savinien at Sens, and of St. Nicolas at Angers. " Ah she would say, "what happiness fills my heart when a fresh lamp is lighted in a new church of our Congregation, in some old monastery beaten by the tempest, which has served for profane uses, and which we have had the happiness of restoring. One of my greatest joys has been to see the lamp re-lighted before our Lord in the Abbey of St. Florent. Every time I kneel in the light of that lamp, my heart overflows with the sweetest consolation. How many others have we had the happiness of lighting! Whenever I see a lamp burning before the Blessed Sacrament, I cannot help enjoying it. I should like to take its place there night and day, and to die of love at our Lord's feet. How many thoughts are suggested by that lamp alone! The flame which gives light and rises towards heaven represents to me the zeal we ought to have in instructing souls ; its flickering light represents to me our weakness, which, without the help of God, would cause us to fail;



the oil which feeds it, by its amber colour, makes me think of the charity and spirit of sacrifice with which we ought to be filled, so as to be ready to sacrifice ourselves, and to give our life for the salvation of our neighbour."

Whenever she was the means of bringing a soul to God, her own, as it were, melted with joy ; she seemed to share in that which fills Heaven at the sight of a sinner doing penance. A day of unspeakable happiness for her was always that of the baptism of protestants or pagans, whom she caused to be prepared for it with the greatest care, as also for their first Communion.

For this soul, overflowing with loving kindness and compassion, there were other days of special joy; those, for instance, on which she was able to bestow a signal benefit in return for calumnies and insults. She judged everyone with indulgence, and often recommended us to judge no one, and always to take the part of the absent. " Do not desire to know anything but charity," she used to say. This spirit produced peace in her soul ;-peace which shone on her brow, and shed around her a gentle dignity; which attracted all hearts and prepared them to yield to her mild influence: and for her Congregation this peace was the source of tranquility, union and concord.

In the administration of the Mother House, we remark the wisdom with which our Mother regulated everything ; even the smallest details give evidence that the spirit which presided there was inspired. In this blessed House, which is inhabited by eleven hundred persons in its several divisions, among whom are more than three hundred religious of different nationalities, eighty Sister Magdalens, about two hundred penitents, and some hundreds of children, such perfect order reigns, that one cannot fail to be struck by the beauty of God's House. The Feasts of the Church are celebrated with solemnity and magnificence ; silence and profound piety, poverty, humble simplicity, recollection, peace and joy, reign there.

Among the illustrious personages who came from distant countries to visit Angers, desirous of knowing the Foundress of this

Congregation, which began like the grain of mustard-seed, and which now, like a goodly tree, has spread its branches throughout the universe, was an American lady of high position. After she had passed some days at the Mother House, had seen everything, and conversed with our Mother, she exclaimed, like the Queen of Saba: " The word is true which I heard in my country of thy virtues and wisdom. I did not believe them that told me until I came and my eyes had seen, and I had proved that scarce one half of thy wisdom had been told me. Happy are thy servants who stand always before thee, and hear thy wisdom." \*

She in whom this heavenly wisdom shone, being truly enlightened, referred all the glory to God, and gave Him continual thanks, reserving to herself humility, the virtue which adorned every action of her life, and which made her so easy of access, that every one went to her with the greatest confidence to seek consolation, benefits, even sacrifices, at her hands. Charity seemed to be in her a necessity, the dominant passion, if we may say so; to give her an opportunity of exercising it was to do her a favour, so that, after having conferred a benefit, she considered herself the one who had been obliged.

God seemed to take pleasure in manifesting His divine perfections in the soul of our venerated Mother, causing her to bring forth fruit, as a branch of the Vine, the stock whereof is the Word made flesh.

### III.

The gift of understanding gave her clear lights as to God and His divine mysteries, the Holy Scriptures, and particularly the value of souls. Her one thought was to labour, that not one soul for which the Precious Blood of the Son of God Himself was shed, should be lost. " My daughters," she used to say, " there must be no misery or spiritual disease, however loathsome, we must not endeavour to cure with the help of God's grace. I assure you that to be in Heaven would not be a greater joy to me than to labour for souls on earth. I am consumed with

II. Paralip ix. 5.

zeal when I meditate on our holy vocation. If you have faith, my dear daughters, you will hear with joy these words of Holy Scripture, which may be applied to you : I They that instruct many to justice shall shine as stars for all eternity.' \* You who live by faith are of the number of the just, and it is promised that you shall shine, even among the elect, by the sublimity of your vocation. Let this truth sink deeply into your minds, that it is more meritorious to labour for the salvation of souls than to suffer martyrdom, since our life is a perpetual holocaust, a martyrdom the more meritorious as it is the more prolonged. Those of our Sisters who go to difficult missions among Protestants or infidels will have more merit than if in one moment they gave their life for the Faith. We ought to have more at heart to prevent offences against God than to gain our own reward."

#### IV.

The gift of knowledge always taught her to direct her actions in conformity with the Divine Will, and for the instruction of souls, as well in general as for the particular needs of each. She seemed to know by intuition what was passing in the minds of her daughters. She herself has told us that on different occasions Our Lord showed her in prayer some House of the Congregation, or some of her daughters, discovering to her the designs which He had upon them, which were realised later. Thus, supernaturally enlightened, she was able to console those who were in trouble even before they made known to her their sorrows.

The power which accompanied her words in the instructions she gave to her numerous flock, made it evident that she spoke under the influence of the Holy Ghost, and so filled was she at times with this Divine Spirit that afterwards, on seeing what she had said written down by her daughters, she was astonished, and thus were fulfilled in her these words: "The Lord reveals His secrets to the humble."

\* Dan. xii. 3.

Her words, as full of power as of light, had an unction that was quite heavenly : they fell like balm upon the ear and sank into the depths of the soul.

V.

The gift of fortitude shone in all the great works she undertook and carried out for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. She said with the Apostle : " I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me," \* and the motto of her apostolic life was, "to labour and to suffer." Her mortification was admirable in all she did ; her food was most frugal; repose seemed not to be a necessity to her ; the life of the spirit so absorbed her, that she seemed to forget everything else. Her unremitting endeavours to help on the sanctification of her daughters, to make them so many apostles who should fly to the conquest of souls, to strengthen them by word and example, so that no obstacle should deter them, and no difficulty discourage them, were so many proofs which visibly showed that the spirit of fortitude rested upon her, and imparted to her this supernatural vigour.

Several of the Houses of the Congregation now in a very flourishing condition, owe their existence to the magnanimity which caused her to hope for help from on high in spite of all human forecast. Putting all her trust in God, she, nevertheless, like the Royal Prophet, continued to work unremittingly.

vi.

The gift of counsel maintained her soul in an attitude of expectation, waiting for the Will of God to be manifested before she took any step. This absolute dependence on the Holy Ghost enabled her to preserve perfect calm and tranquility in the midst of the ocean of business which filled her daily life, and the tempests raised by hell, in opposition to the exercise of her zeal.

\* Philippians iv. 13.

She always had recourse to her Superiors with great humility for counsel and directions, listening also with simplicity and child-like candour to the advice of her daughters, and being ready with equal kindness and humility to give it to those who sought it. Her counsel was indeed a treasure; her clear-sightedness always enabled her to find a way out of the greatest difficulties; her arrangements, made with number, weight and measure, seemed inspired ; her words not only pointed out what was best to be done, but at the same time imparted courage and consolation, like an emanation from the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.

vii.

The gift of piety was the principal element of her life. It was deep and earnest towards God, the Blessed Virgin, and the Saints, most compassionate to the Souls in Purgatory, whose sufferings she was most ingenious in relieving, and full of solicitude for her neighbour, towards whom she practised all the spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

Who can describe the delight she experienced in considering herself the child of God, or the tenderness with which she called Him Father with the filial abandonment which made her rest entirely in His adorable providence ? These sentiments, which she longed to communicate to every heart, caused her Dever to weary in seeking, with loving eagerness, to make God better known, loved, and served by all creatures.

\* One of her Superiors was His Eminence Monseigneur Régnier, Cardinal Archbishop of Cambrai, who had founded a House of the Congregation in 1846 at Angoulême, where he was then Bishop ; and in October, 1880, he founded that of Cambrai, saying that before he died he wished to see the daughters of Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia Pelletier established in his Episcopal City.

Her love for Holy Church was innate in her soul. When she was quite a child, she could not be persuaded to go to bed until she had said the five Paters and Aves for the exaltation of our Mother the Holy Church, and she did this with so much seriousness and devotion, that her prayer took her a long time, which was surprising in so young a child. She was faithful to this devotion to the end of her life.

With an ardent desire for the propagation of the Faith, she combined zeal for the magnificence of divine worship.

She would have wished to possess treasures in order to decorate churches worthily, and to enrich them with the most precious sacred vessels and vestments. It was not enough for her, that everything at the Mother House inspired reverence for God's altars ; her solicitude extended to the chapels of the other Houses of the Congregation, and to poor country churches. Her joy was indescribable when she visited the glorious Basilicas in Rome, and witnessed the grandeur of their august ceremonies ; this recollection remained ever fresh in her heart, and she often spoke to us of all she had seen in the Holy City.

The reverence she required of her daughters at prayer and at the office could go no farther ; the body was not to be considered at all, for, she said, "A choir of virgins should be a choir of angels;" and it was something to excite admiration to see more than three hundred Religious assembled in choir, without the slightest noise being heard. This, we may well believe, was an indication of the interior fervour to which she constantly exhorted us, saying : "Try, my dear daughters, to be fervent religious ; keep yourselves in great recollection ; put on the spirit of Our Lord Jesus Christ ; imitate His love of silence, of prayer, of zeal and self-sacrifice. Perform all your spiritual exercises carefully, and try not to cause distractions to your Sisters, who feel the need of uniting themselves more closely to God, and of losing themselves in the delights of prayer. Ah ! my dear daughters, no happiness is equal to that of being closely united to God. When we have the happiness of prostrating ourselves before the Blessed Sacrament, we should be all penetrated with feelings of love and fidelity. How sweet are the hours

passed near the Tabernacle! They are the most precious ones of life ; there we find true consolation, and a peace and happiness which creatures cannot give us. The profound and increasing adoration we owe to God will make you look on your monasteries as so many temples of God, where everything that has breath should praise the Lord and extol His works. Live joyfully with your God, love Him, think only of Him, seek for nothing out of Him, do not let your mind be occupied with anything but Him, live and breathe only for Him ; let this be the atmosphere of your life. Give yourselves without reserve to God, and the day will come when you will fall asleep on His Heart, to awaken in His glory."

Animated with the desire of awakening and increasing piety in all hearts, she omitted nothing that she might have the festivals of the Church celebrated with the greatest possible solemnity, making us understand that sacred ceremonies exercise a powerful and irresistible influence upon souls, even on those which have had the misfortune to go astray from God and virtue. How many people witnessing the ceremony of a First Communion are then reminded of the happy day when they made their own, and have returned to the right path in consequence ! She continually reminded us that, without the spirit of piety, there is no real conversion nor constancy in good; and that we should use all possible means to obtain it from God for our penitents and other persons confided to our care.

A strict observer of the precept of sanctifying holidays, she would not allow certain little occupations, which are sometimes considered lawful, under pretext of piety or devotion. She even required that the altars should be adorned on the eve, in order that the Feast itself should be entirely consecrated to the service of God. She recommended also that the penitents and children should strictly observe the Feasts of the Church.,

Her mission as an apostle, which began in her childhood, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, during the days which precede Pentecost, made this Feast one of unspeakable joy to her. The three days' retreat of Rule which precedes, and the solemn celebration of the

day itself, filled her with fresh zeal and love, transporting her in spirit to the most distant regions to seek and save souls.

When the Feast of Corpus Christi and that of the Sacred Heart of Jesus came round, her own heart, like a burning furnace, was consumed with flames of love and gratitude, and the desire to make reparation for the injuries He receives in the Blessed Sacrament; and it seemed to communicate its ardour to others. During the Octave of the former solemnity, we have in our Congregation the privilege of having the Blessed Sacrament exposed all day, and for about three hours during the second Octave; and at these times the adoration is made very solemnly, hymns, prayers, and acts of reparation succeeding one another.

In every way that her piety could suggest, she honoured the Sacred Heart of Jesus. How eloquently she used to recommend this devotion as indispensable to those who desire to labour with fruit for the salvation of souls <sup>1</sup> She exhorted us also to have recourse to the Sacred Heart of Mary, Refuge of sinners, to obtain the conversion of the penitents. As soon as the Arch-Confraternity was established in the Church of Our Lady of Victories in Paris, she had the Mother House and others affiliated to it. She appointed the Holy Rosary to be said aloud in the different employments of the House, so as to form thus a perpetual Rosary. We may remark in passing that the choir of the Community is hardly ever empty—the Way of the Cross, the Rosary, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, fill up the intervals between one religious exercise and another; and in the cloisters and gardens the Religious constantly have their Rosary in their hand, saying it devoutly as they walk along.

The month of Mary is also kept with great devotion. At the first dawn of day, the garden resounds with the singing of the Litany of Our Lady till the echo dies away in the distance; this first procession is that of the fervent Sister Magdalens. The other classes follow in their turn, and the Community ends the day With a very beautiful procession at eight o'clock in the evening.



Her tender and childlike devotion to the Blessed Virgin made her hasten, by her desires, the day when the Church should declare the mystery of the Immaculate Conception to be an article of Faith. For many years the Community recited the Office of the Immaculate Conception in the choir, before the morning meditation, as an offering of filial reverence, desiring to hasten the glorious 8th of December, 1854, which the whole Congregation celebrated with great rejoicings. In all our Houses, every Saturday before matins, the Community assemble in the choir and, kneeling before the statue of the Blessed Virgin, sing the Inviolata ; the Superioress, holding a lighted candle in her hand, makes an act of homage to the Queen of Heaven, protesting in the name of all present, that they are ready to defend, even with their lives, the dogma of the Immaculate Conception; and place themselves anew under the protection of Mary, whom they acknowledge as the Mother and Superior of the Congregation. In the first year after her election as Superior-General, our venerable Mother caused several statues to be erected in honour of Mary Immaculate.

During a riot which took place in Lyons in the year 1834, the celebrated sanctuary of Fourvières was in danger of being destroyed, and for some time divine worship was interrupted. Our Mother, deeply afflicted by the outrages against the Blessed Virgin, dedicated a little chapel near the Penitents' house to our Lady of Fourvières ; it became a place of expiation where we tried to make reparation, by our devotion to Mary, for the impieties which had been committed.

The great patriarch, St. Joseph, spouse of the Immaculate Mother of God, held the next place in her filial affection. She appointed him Superior-General of the Congregation, and had a monument built in his honour, facing the enclosure door of the Mother House. The large and beautiful statue in stone represents the holy Patriarch leading the Divine Child Jesus by the hand, who, looking lovingly at His foster father, seems to ask him to take Him up in his arms. The monument bears the inscription : " St. Joseph, Superior-General of the Institute, pray for us." And in order that he might receive continual homage in her name, she entreated three Saints to whom she had particular devotion, St. Teresa, St. Euphrasia, and St. Philomena, to offer him their tribute of

praise and blessing. She had the happiness of propagating devotion to St. Joseph throughout the whole world. Every colony of Religious which left the Mother House took with them a statue of the glorious Patriarch, with the sweet obligation of honouring him as they had seen done, and of confiding to him all their affairs. To tell her of some grace obtained by the intercession of St. Joseph, was like making her a present.

She also had recourse with great confidence to St. Joachim and St. Anne, the glorious parents of the Blessed Virgin. In a niche near the monument of St. Joseph, she placed a statue of St. Anne, giving her charge of the postulants, because she had been the mother of the first virgin who had consecrated herself to God, the model of all who follow her example. She frequently invoked the holy Apostles, and St. Mary Magdalen, the Apostle of Apostles, asking her to send many who should imitate her contrition, penance, and love. In how many ways did she not honour this glorious lover of Our Lord, desiring to make her a return for the loving services she had rendered to the Divine Master, and His most Holy Mother, by bearing them company ! On Easter Sunday, at the dawn of day, the Community of Magdalens go in procession to greet our Lord, and then direct their steps to the altar of our Lady, where they sing the Regina Coeli; a holy custom established by our venerated Mother, and which filled her with joy. From her childhood St. Teresa had been the Saint of her choice ; next to the Holy Scriptures, her favourite reading was the life and works of this Saint, and also the annals of Carmel; she never failed to speak of St. Teresa in every instruction and conversation, and even at recreation. " We should have a great devotion to St. Teresa," she would say, " and look on her as one of the principal protectors of the Congregation ; and we must try to imitate her incomparable fervour, and her tender affection for Holy Church."

All holy founders of Religious Orders and Congregations, and those who carry the light of the Gospel to distant nations, had a special attraction for her, as also those who have been remarkable for their humility. She honoured the poor and humble little shepherdess of Pibrac, invoking her every day with the Community ; and when on the 29th of June, 1867, the immortal Pius IX canonised her, as it moved by

a sudden inspiration, she addressed these words to the Saint : " Hitherto we have honoured thee by the title of Blessed Germaine; to-day we say with the Head of the Church, Saint Germaine, pray for us." On the following days, the relic of this Saint (to whose canonisation miracles obtained by her intercession at our House at Bourges had contributed) was carried in solemn procession through the cloisters and gardens.

Her devotion to the nine Choirs of Angels was great and respectful ; she often reminded us of the obligation and necessity of having recourse to these heavenly spirits for help in our vocation of converting souls to God. She was in the habit of invoking the Guardian Angels of persons she had to deal with, and of saluting those of the places she passed through, and of the inhabitants. She addressed ardent prayers to the heavenly spirits who surround the Tabernacle, to supply what was wanting in the love and praise of creatures, and to obtain grace for sinners and perseverance for the just. To increase the confidence of her daughters, when she sent them to new Foundations, she bade them consider the joy they would give to the Guardian Angels of the souls for whose salvation they were going to labour. In imitation of St. Jane Frances de Chantal, she caused pictures of the Angel Guardian to be placed on the doors of the cells and offices of the house, so that all might acquire the habit of invoking these heavenly spirits.

The gift of piety inspired her with boundless veneration for the hierarchy of the Church Militant. Her loyal adherence to the Head of the Church was steadfast; it might be said that the dogma of the Infallibility of the Pope had always been her settled conviction. " At Rome," she used to say, " truth always triumphs. Like those flowers which are called sunflowers, because they always turn towards the sun, your hearts should always be fixed on God and Rome." She told us that in the audiences which were graciously granted to her by Pope Gregory XVI., the Holy Father's presence had impressed her with such reverence, that having once knelt down before His Holiness, she had remained so the 'whole time the audience lasted ; even when she had to move from one side to the other, she had done so on her knees ; and when at last

she withdrew, she felt her soul inundated with new treasures of grace and benediction. She also told us that she numbered among the most precious days of her life, those in which she had had audiences with Cardinal Odescalchi, the first Protector of our Congregation.

Her veneration extended to all the ministers of God. It was touching to see this ancient and venerable Mother, in the last years of her life, show the same respect to a young priest as to a distinguished Prelate. She felt herself honoured when they visited her, and the house of our worthy Chaplains, which is opposite the Convent, was always open to them. Over the outer gateway of the Convent, apartments were prepared for their lordships the Bishops ; she combined the most delicate attentions with a care to provide everything they could possibly require.

She bore the greatest affection to all Religious Orders and Congregations. It was a great joy to her whenever it was in her power to render services to any Community, particularly to the Society of Jesus, and to the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. She had the happiness of helping to reestablish several communities of Nuns, and she always maintained the most cordial and friendly relations with them. The most religious affection united her to the Reverend Mother de Lignac, Superioress of the Ursuline Religious at Tours, by whom she had been educated ; to the Venerable Mother Barat, Foundress of the Society of the Sacred Heart; to the Reverend Mother Marie de St. Louis de Gonzague de Cossé-Brissac, Foundress of the Benedictine Nuns of the Blessed Sacrament at Craon ; to the Reverend Mother de Faillonet, Foundress of the Congregation of Christian Doctrine; to the Reverend Mother Javouhey, Foundress of the Congregation of St. Joseph at Cluny, and most especially to the Reverend Carmelite Mothers of Tours.

These holy friendships had their foundation in her ardent love for God, and for everything consecrated to Him. The same spirit extended itself to all the Houses founded by her throughout the world, and remains rooted in her Institute, where it subsists in all its vigour.

From every Sanctuary of the Good Shepherd, the increase of prayer and the tribute of praise to the Most August Trinity arise unceasingly to Heaven, rendering to each of the Three Divine Persons, glory, love, praise, thanksgiving and benediction, and imploring mercy and pardon for souls

viii.

The gift of the fear of God, as loving as it was filial, in this pure soul, ever kept her on the watch, lest she should fail in fidelity to the least inspiration of grace. " I fear the grace which passes," she said, with St. Augustine; " the least negligence may make us lose it, and this thought terrifies me."

Her noble soul, which never quailed before any contradiction or difficulty, and which in the heat of battle, full of courage and confidence, cried out, with the Apostle: "Who shall separate me from the love of Christ ? " yet trembled, shrank, and was overwhelmed by the thought that a slight infidelity could separate her from the love of her God. Exhorting us to this holy fear, she reminded us of the words of St. Jerome : "Merely to live at Jerusalem and other holy places is not of itself meritorious nor worthy of recompense ; but the merit consists in leading a holy life in these holy places." She then added : " If, by our unfaithfulness, we profane the land of the Saints, we shall fall into the bands of the living God. Jerusalem, unfaithful, and suffering the punishment of her infidelity, is the type of the Religious who does not correspond as she ought with her vocation ; who fails in her sacred duties, and who will be severely punished, Like Jerusalem, God has loaded us with His benefits. He watches over us, shielding us like the apple of eye, covering us with His wings, lavishing on us His tenderest caresses, giving us His prophets to teach us His ways, protecting us from our enemies, and putting them to flight. He surrounds us with a wall of enclosure, which shields us from attacks from without. He never ceases to speak to us in the depths of our souls, to encourage us in our labours, and to urge us to be faithful to His love. He calls us to His holy table, and feeds us with His adorable Body and most Precious Blood. Oh ! if, like ungrateful Jerusalem, a Religious were to abuse so much

grace and so many means of sanctification, what could she expect but the fate of that guilty city ? Let the holy fear of the Lord, dear daughters, be the foundation of your virtue and the basis of your sanctification ; beware of breaking the alliance that God has made with you; do not withdraw yourselves from His holy law; accomplish faithfully all it prescribes; walk always with fidelity in the land of the Saints ; there you will find life, and when the moment for passing into eternity comes, you will have no remorse for the past, nor fear for the future."

In so pure a heart, the fear of displeasing God was in proportion to her ardent love for Him in this way ; she, so to speak, compelled the Divine Spirit to be the constant guest of her soul.

#### IX.

The life and works of our venerated Mother Mary of St. Euphrasia Pelletier show that in her the mystic transformation into the likeness of our Lord was fully completed, and so the Holy Ghost sent her the sweet sleep of death, from which she awoke in eternity, where Our Lord, crowning His own gifts in her, will say to her: " Come, My spouse, bemuse with Me thou hast gone in search of the lost sheep ; come and share My throne, come and be crowned; come, possess the kingdom prepared for thee from the beginning of the world, because I was hungry and thou gavest Me to eat, I was thirsty and thou gavest Me to drink, I was a stranger and thou didst take Me in, I was naked and thou didst clothe Me, I was sick and thou didst visit Me, I was a prisoner and thou earnest to Me. Truly blessed art thou because thou hast been poor in spirit, because thou hast imitated My meekness, because with tears thou hast implored mercy for souls; because My love alone could satisfy thy hunger and quench thy thirst, because, after My example, thou didst always show mercy, because thou hast kept thy heart pure and innocent, because thou didst sow peace wherever thou didst go ; thou art blessed because thou didst desire no other recompense than that of suffering persecution for My glory and to gain souls for Me." And she, referring all the honour to the Most Holy Trinity, will sing before the throne of God, with unspeakable bliss and love, in the unchanging light of Heaven, the hymn of adoration and eternal

praise ; Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost:  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end-  
Amen.

Such was the spirit of this spouse, beloved by God ; a spirit of faith, of love, and of self-sacrifice ; a spirit which made her so pleasing to God, that He crowned her with honour and glory, giving her, as He gave to Abraham, an innumerable generation of virgins, who continue to extend her conquests throughout the whole world, and who, reunited to her in the presence of God, will chant sweet hymns of thanksgiving to Him Who gave them such a Mother.