

AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
ST. MARGARET MARY ALACOQUE

Translation from the original by Fr. Melchiorre Arnoldi

PREFACE

St Margaret Mary Alacoque was born on July 22, 1647 at Verovres (France) She joined the Congregation of the Visitation and after a life as enclôstered nun, she passed away on October 17, 1690 at Paray-le-Monial (France) She was canonized in 1920 Her feast falls on October 16, the very day of the election of Pope John Paul II

In obedience to her Superior, Mother de Saumaise, she started to write her autobiography in 1673 We can learn from her writings the great revelations she received from the Sacred Heart of Jesus and how she lived up true devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

As a matter of fact, devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus was known many years before the times of St Margaret Mary, and had its centre in the monastery of Hefta in the Middle Ages, but with St Margaret Mary Alacoque devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus became popular and spread all over the world

Nobody can understand well the spirit of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus without taking into consideration what St Margaret Mary Alacoque wrote in regard She is a mile stone in the field of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a model to keep in mind and to imitate if we want to live according to the spirit of this devotion Not without reason, Jesus called her " Beloved Disciple of My Sacred Heart"

Fr Melchiorre Arnoldi

15 June, 1999

1- SHE STARTS WRITING HER AUTOBIOGRAPHY FOR THE SAKE OF OBEDIENCE

It is only out of love for You, my God, that I have submitted myself to the task of writing, out of obedience, I humbly beg You for forgiveness because of the reluctance I had shown in doing so

I considered the order to write as it were coming from You as a punishment for the excessive joy that I had experienced in effacing myself in total oblivion in front of the creatures and for the precautions I had taken to reach this goal

I had just obtained approval from the people that I considered able to help me reach this goal and had just burned what I had written in obedience- that little that I had in my hands- when I received the order to write it again.

My Infinite God, make me write nothing else than what will increase your glory and bring about more humiliations for me

2- HER HORROR FOR SIN AND HER VOW OF CHASTITY.

O my Only Love, how grateful I feel towards You for having privileged me since my childhood by becoming my Master and the Lord of my heart, despite the oppositions I had made.

As soon as I reached the years of discretion, You made me understand the ugliness of sin, so that the smallest stain of sin turned out to be for me a terrible pain. And to check my natural vivacity, it was enough to tell me that I was offending the Lord! This would stop me immediately and refrain me from what I wanted to do

In addition, without understanding the meaning- I felt the interior urge to utter these words, " My God, I consecrate my virginity to You and I make the vow of chastity. "

I remember that once I uttered this vow at the moment of consecration between the lifting up of the host and the chalice at the Mass I was attending, kneeling on the cold floor, regardless of the cold weather. However, I did not grasp what these words meant neither the meaning of the word " vow of chastity".

My only inclination was to go to lonely places and hide myself, such as to a forest, but the thought of coming across with men refrained me from doing so.

3-THE PROTECTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

The Blessed Virgin took always care of me, to her I had recourse in my needs, and she protected me from many dangers. I was afraid to recur to her Divine Son, and so I recurred always to her and used to offer her the recitation of my rosary, kneeling on the stony floor or genuflecting and kissing the ground at every Hail Mary.

4-THE DEATH OF HER FATHER-1655

My father died when I was still a child. I was the only daughter and my mother, occupied in caring for her five sons, was seldom at home, therefore I grew till the age of eight and half without any instruction except that which I could receive from servants and farmers

5-AT THE BOARDING SCHOOL OF THE POOR CLARE OF CHAROLLES WHERE SHE RECEIVED HER FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

I was put into a boarding school where at the age of nine I received my First Holy Communion; and the First Holy Communion made me feel distaste for all pleasures and enjoyments of childhood, so that I could not taste any of them even those which I liked very much before.

And whenever I wanted to play with my schoolmates, I felt something which diverted me from this and moved me to withdraw to a remote corner

Only then I could enjoy peace of conscience. Then I felt moved to prostrate myself in prayer, always by kneeling with my bare knees on the floor, and making frequent genuflexions, provided that I was not seen by others. And when I was seen by someone to do so, I felt disturbed

I had a strong desire to imitate the nuns, for I considered them as saints. It seemed to me that if I had become a nun myself, I would be a saint. This thought enkindled in me such desire of religious life that my spirit had no more rest.

However, I did not find them as devout as I expected them to be. Since I did not know other nuns, I thought I would remain with them.

6-A LONG ILLNESS. SHE IS CURED THROUGH THE INTERCESSION OF OUR LADY.

Meanwhile I became so sick that I could not walk for about four years. My bones were piercing my skin in every part. This was the reason why I was left in the convent only for two years and there was no remedy to my disease except by consecrating myself to the Blessed Virgin, promising her that if I had recovered I would belong totally to her as one of her daughters. As soon as I made this vow, I recovered and enjoyed the special protection of Our Lady, so that she became the master of my heart, to such an extent that she considered me as her property!

She directed me as a person consecrated to her, admonishing me for my faults and teaching me how to do God's will. It happened once that while I was reciting the rosary seating, Our Lady appeared to me and scolded me in such a way that I will never forget it, although I was still very young. She said, "I am surprised, my daughter, about your treating me so negligently" These words made such impression on me that they became a norm for the rest of my life

7-SHE ENTERED A PERIOD OF LAXITY

After I recovered, I wanted to enjoy life freely, without worrying about keeping my promises. But, my Lord, at that time I did not think about what You would make me understand and experience later on, i. e. that having the Sacred Heart begotten me on the Calvary, among so great torments, my life could not be sustained except through the cross, which would be the best food for me. And see how it happened!

As soon as I felt life restored within me, I gave in to vanities and affections of the creatures, imaging that the tenderness of my mother and brothers in my regard was authorizing me to enjoy myself and have good time

But You, My Lord, let me know how far distant I was from my good by following my inclinations and enjoy life not according to Your designs, which were very different from mine

8-FAMILY TROUBLES

My mother was deprived of all authority at home, others had taken power to such an extent that both my mother and I were reduced to a state of harsh slavery. I do not mean to blame the people I am referring to, for my Lord did not allow me cherish such thoughts, but He wanted me to consider such people as the instruments for the fulfillment of his Holy Will.

We had no rights at home and were allowed to do nothing without asking for permission. It was a continual struggle! Everything was kept under lock and key, so that it happened that frequently I could not even find a suitable dress to go to Mass and I had to borrow cap and dress. Then I felt the state of slavery which I had fallen into, and things went so far that I could not even go out without the permission of these three persons [Her maternal grand-mother, her aunt and her paternal grand-aunt].

It was at that time that I turned my heart and my spirit toward the Lord, to find consolation in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

However, living in a village far distant from the church, I could not go to church without seeking permission from these persons and it happened that if one granted me permission, another denied it. And when I was expressing my wishes in tears, I was scolded saying that I pretended to go to Mass and to the Benediction instead of saying that I was going to meet my boy-friends eager to be kissed and caressed by them.

I myself felt such horror for these things that I would rather prefer to be cut to pieces than to give in to such thoughts. Then, not knowing where to take refuge, I hid in some corners of the garden where I could kneel down and weep in front of my Lord, relying on the intercession of the Blessed Mother in whom I placed all my trust.

I spent the whole day without eating and drinking! This had become a habit for me. The villagers, in the evening, gave me some milk and some fruit out of compassion for me.

When I returned home, I was caught with fear and trembled, as if I were a miserable criminal going to be punished. I would prefer to go around begging for food rather than to eat at home under these circumstances.

As soon as I returned home, I was scolded harshly for not having taken care of the children of those benefactors of my soul, and without being allowed to utter a single word, I started to work with the servants.

I used to spend the nights as I had spent the days, weeping at the feet of the crucifix who once showed me how he wanted to become the absolute master of my heart, to model me on the image of his suffering life, i.e. he wanted to become my Master and be present in my soul to make me behave as He behaved among the cruel torments that He had undergone out of love for me.

9-"ECCE HOMO" (HERE IS THE MAN) AND HER LOVE FOR SUFFERING

From that time onward my soul was so impressed that I would like that my pains would not stop for a single instant. He (Jesus) was always present to me in the form of the crucifix or in the shape of "ECCE HOMO" (HERE IS THE MAN) carrying His cross, and this sight produced in me a deep sense of compassion for Him and love for His

suffering, so that all my pains seemed to be very light in comparison with the desire I had to suffer in order to become more similar to Him in His suffering.

I felt great pain on seeing His hands, which sometimes were on the point of striking me, refrained in order not to discharge their rigour on me

I was moved to provide all types of services to those benefactors of my soul, ready to sacrifice myself for them. I experienced no greater joy than that of doing good to them and speaking good of them. However, it was not I who did what I am writing or must write despite my reluctance, but my Sovereign Lord, who after having taken possession of my will, did not allow me to utter even a single word of complaint, criticism or resentment against those people, nor did He permit that others took compassion on me. He told me that I had to behave in that way for the whole span of my life, and whenever I could not avoid speaking about it, He would make me able to show all the good reasons that the others had and all the wrongs on my part adding-and this is true- that my sins deserved much more

To write about these things, which I have always kept secret, trying even to cancel them from my memory, and put all of them into the hands of my good Master, I had to make extreme violence to myself. When I complained to Him, I received this answer, "Go on, my daughter, go on, in regard to this as to other reluctances it is necessary that My will be done"

10- RELUCTANCE TO WRITE ABOUT HER LIFE OUR LORD URGED HER TO DO SO

"My Lord, how can I remember what happened more than twenty years ago?" He answered me, "Do you know that I am the eternal memory of my Heavenly Father who does not forget anything and in Whom the past and future are as the present. Write then, for I will dictate to you, and I promise to infuse the unction of my grace into your writings so that I may be glorified

Above all, I want this from you to show that I like to play down all the precautions taken by you to hide the abundance of the graces whereby I have enriched the soul of a miserable creature as you are, and you should never forget them in order to thank me without ceasing. Moreover, I want to instruct you so that you would never monopolize such graces nor being reluctant to share them with others because I am willing to make use of your heart as a channel to convey these graces-according to my plans- to the souls, because many of them through such means will be saved from eternal damnation, as I will show you later on

Finally, I want that it will become manifest that I am the Eternal Truth who cannot deceive, I am faithful to my promises, and the graces I have bestowed on you can stand all the exams and tests "

By these words I felt so strengthened that, despite my great fear that what I had written may be seen, I am determined to carry on at all costs and fulfil the will of my Sovereign Master

11-THE ILLNESS OF MY MOTHER

The most horrible cross of mine was that of being unable to alleviate the crosses of my mother. Her crosses were one hundred-fold heavier than mine, although for fear of offending the Lord by telling about it and taking delight in telling, I refrained to tell what

I felt in my spirit During her sickness my pains were innumerable Being she under my care, due to my little help, she had to suffer a lot, also due to the fact that everything was kept under lock and key, and I had sometimes to go begging for eggs and other necessities in order to help her This was by no means a light torment because of my timidity in regard to the farmers of the village, who often gossiped a lot .

My mother was suffering from a deadly ERYSIPELAS Her head had swollen horribly and she was entrusted to the care of country surgeon who treated her with blood letting and said that without a miracle my mother would die. Nobody took pity on her, and I myself suffered a lot because I did not know to whom I should turn for help except to the Blessed Virgin Mary and my Sovereign Master to whom I could tell all my troubles, which were continual, because I did not receive other than abuses, insults and accusations

Once, having taken part in the Mass on the feast of the Circumcision of our Lord, I begged Him to be the like a doctor and find remedies for the disease of my mother or to teach me how to treat her The Lord granted my petitions, out of His mercy, and when I went home, the cheek of my mother which was swollen showed an open wound as big as the palm of a hand from which came out pus and a very bad smell that nobody wanted to go close to her Till that time I did not have the courage to watch wounds or touch them, for after all I would not be able to dress them.

However, I started to do my best to dress the wound of my mother, without any balsam except that of God's Providence Day after day I cut away the rotten flesh and felt moved by great courage and trust in the bounty of my Divine Lord that I cannot retell, I had the impression that Jesus was always standing at my side, so my mother eventually recovered against all expectations

During the all span of time of her illness, I never went to bed nor could I sleep. I very seldom took food and day and night I remained at the bedside of my mother.

My Master considered me and strengthened me to accept the will of God in everything

In all that occurred to me, I used to say to my Lord," My Divine Sovereign! If You did not will it, all this would not have happened; however, I thank You because You gave me the chance to become more similar to You"

12- ATTRACTION FOR PRAYER

In such circumstances I felt the attraction to pray To such extent that I suffered a lot for being unable to know a practical method of prayer. Being out of touch with religious, I knew only the word PRAYER, and this word alone was fascinating me

I turned to my Sovereign Master and He taught me how He liked me to pray; His teaching helped me for the rest of my life.

He told me to prostrate myself in His presence asking humbly for forgiveness of all that I have done in contrast with His will; and after having adored Him, I offered Him my prayers without knowing how I could continue to pray

Then He presented Himself to me in the mystery He wanted to be considered and attracted my spirit so strongly to Himself by keeping my soul and all my faculties so immersed in Him that no distractions were possible.

Although this exercise was extremely pleasant, I did not consider it as a form of prayer. I was always eager to apply myself to prayer and I was keeping on saying to the

Lord that once I had learned the method of prayer, I would dedicate as much time as I could do it.

13-HER LOVE FOR THE BLESSED SACRAMENT AND HER STRONG DESIRE FOR HOLY COMMUNION

Nevertheless His Divine Goodness was keeping me so absorbed in contemplation that I lost the taste for oral prayers: I could not recite them in front of the Blessed Sacrament any longer, because I was so absorbed in His divine presence that I did not feel annoyed I would have liked to spend days and nights without eating and drinking and without knowing what I was doing except that of being consumed in His presence like a burning candle to repay His love by my love. I was unable to stay at the back of the church, and despite the great embarrassment that I felt within myself, I could not help but coming near the altar and kneeling as closest as possible to the Blessed Sacrament. I considered happy and felt envious only of those who could receive Holy Communion frequently and were free to spend time in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. I had the impression of having disregard in regard to the Blessed Sacrament for not having used properly time in His presence.

I tried to gain the favour of the people mentioned above and get permission to spend time in front of the Blessed Sacrament. It happened that as a punishment for my sins I was unable to sleep at night and the parish priest announced from the pulpit that those who had not slept at night of the Vigil of Christmas could not receive Holy Communion the following day. So that feast, so joyful in itself, turned out to be a day of tears for me. Tears were my ordinary food and replaced all enjoyments.

14-HER GRAVIEST SIN

I committed serious crimes! Once at the time of carnival, together with other girls, I put on a mask to please the people and this fault caused me pains and tears for the rest of my life, and there is the other fault I committed by consenting to dress with vanity, always with the aim of pleasing the persons mentioned above, and God chose them as the instruments of his justice to punish me for the offenses I had made to Him by my sins.

However, those people were virtuous persons and were not aware of doing evil in making us suffer, neither I was convinced they were doing something wrong, it was the Lord who wanted that, so I did not keep any grudge.

15-CONFUSION IN TELLING

My Lord, have pity on my weakness for the extreme pain and confusion I feel in writing these facts because I remember my long delay in surrendering myself to Your will to write down these memoirs.

My God, sustain me so that I shall not fail under the rigours of Your just reproaches. No! I promise to You, with the help of Your grace, that I will not resist any longer- even though this decision will cost my life and draw the scorn from creatures and cause the powers of Hell to attack me violently, for I will not consider all this other than a punishment I deserve for my delay. I beg pardon for it, and meanwhile I ask You for the grace to do Your will in everything, despite all my reluctance, due to my self-love.

16-SHE IS ASKED IN MARRIAGE

I can say that, as the years passed by, my crosses increased because Satan put into action several plans- good in the eyes of the world- to make me break my vow of chastity. I was in a position to see and deal with many people. What a torture for me! From one part my family- especially my mother- was urging me with continuous tears and laments, insisting on the fact that she had set so many hopes on me in order to give up that miserable life in that house, and she was thinking that once I got married, she could stay with me.

On the other part, the Lord was pressing my heart so strongly that I had no rest. I always kept in mind my vow and if I had broken it, I would be punished with terrible pains. The Devil was taking advantage of my tender love for my mother and make me become very much impressed by her tears. In addition, the Devil was making me think that if I had become a nun, this would cause my mother's death, and then I would be responsible for it in front of God, since my mother could be helped only by me.

This interior struggle caused me a lot of sufferings, because we loved each other so tenderly that life would be impossible without seeing each other even for a single instant.

Then the desire of becoming a nun was accompanying me along with the horror of impurity. Oh! What a martyrdom! I was restless and in tears not knowing anyone with whom I could share my pains and being unable to come to a decision.

Eventually my tender love for my mother got the upper hand, I thought that by having made the vow of chastity when I was still a child and at a time when I did not know what it meant, I could be dispensed from it.

In addition I was afraid to put limits to my freedom. I was saying to myself that by becoming a nun I could not be free to fast, to give alms and to do penance as I wanted; and that religious life demands from those who enter it a level of holiness which I could never attain, and therefore I would get lost in Hell.

17- THE WORLD ATTRACTS HER : INTERIOR STRUGGLE

I started to pay attention to the world and dress well to please people and enjoy life as I could. But You, my Lord, were the only witness of this great and continual struggle that I suffered within myself to which I would have certainly given in without the extraordinary help of Your mercy which had different plans from those of my heart, and You repeatedly made it known that it would be very difficult to resist the pressure of your love, despite the fact my malice and infidelity made me retort to all means in order to resist and extinguish all His interior movements within me.

However, everything was without effect... When I was with friends enjoying life, He attacked my heart with firing darts that my heart was pierced from side to side, and the pains I experienced were making me all astounded. But this was not enough for my ungrateful heart. To make it stop, I felt as I was bound with ropes and pulled violently to follow the one who was calling me to solitary places, where He scolded me severely because He was jealous of my miserable heart, which was subjected to horrible persecutions.

And as soon as I had asked Him for pardon with my face on the ground, He induced me to scourge myself severely, but afterward, I restarted to be as before in my resistance and vanities.

At night when I took out those garments of the Devil, my dress, which were the instruments of his malice, my Sovereign Master appeared to me, in the shape of the time of His scourging, all disfigured, reproaching me severely and showing me how my vanities had reduced Him in those conditions and how I was wasting so precious time of which I would give strict account at the moment of my death, saying that I was betraying and persecuting Him notwithstanding the many proves of love He had given me and His desire to make me similar to Him.

All this stuck so strongly to my mind and pierced my heart so painfully that it caused me to weep bitterly, and it would be difficult to retell how much I suffered and what I experienced.

18-CORPORAL PENANCE

I did not know anything about spiritual life because I had not heard about it. I knew only what my Divine Master had taught me and made me do with His loving pressure. In order to punish myself for the sins I had committed and become more similar to Him and in order to lessen my pangs of conscience, I fastened ropes with knots around my chest tightening them so strongly that I could breathe and eat with difficulty. I remained in that state for so long that they penetrated into my flesh to the point that it was very painful to take them away, and it happened that they often removed pieces of flesh.

The same torture I inflicted to my body by fastening little chains around my arms and when I took them away, pieces of flesh were removed with them. I used to sleep on hard wood or on knotty and thorny woods by making them become my bed.

I scourged myself, in the attempt to alleviate my internal torment, which was so strong that all the other pains caused by external agents-I mean humiliations and contradictions mentioned above, which were without cease and seemed to become more severe-seemed to be a refreshment. They were a refreshment in comparison to my internal anxieties. I had to make continual pressure on myself to put up with them in silence, and keep them hidden as my Divine Master had taught me. Nothing of all appeared externally, the only thing that people noticed was that I was becoming more and more pale and was losing weight.

I was tormented by the fear of offending the Lord because my sins seemed to be without stop; they seemed to me so enormous that I wondered how Hell was not opening its mouth under my feet to bury me, such a miserable sinner.

I was unable to make confession frequently, though my wish was to make confession every day. I consider holy those who spent much time in the confessional box and I thought that they were different from me, who was unable to confess my sins, and this made me shed tears.

19-DESIRE FOR RELIGIOUS LIFE

I spent several years suffering for struggles and other types of pains without comfort, except my Lord Jesus Christ, who had become my Master and Guide. The desire of religious life was so strong in me that I came to the conclusion of embracing it at all costs.

However, this wish of mine could not materialize only five years later, during which my pains and struggles became more and more severe and, at the same time, I tried to intensify my acts of corporal punishment in the measure that my Divine Master allowed.

Then He changed tactics. He showed me the beauty of the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, saying that in practicing them one becomes a saint. He said that to me because in my prayers I had begged Him to make me become a saint.

I used to read only the book "The Lives of the Saints" and on opening it, I used to say to myself, "I should find a saint easy to imitate in order to be able to do what he did and become a saint myself". But soon after I felt desolate in experiencing how much I was offending the Lord. I was thinking that the saints had not offended the Lord as much as I did or if they had offended Him, they made reparation for their sins for many years. This thought stirred up the desire to imitate them.

However, my Divine Master was instilling in me such a strong fear to do my will, that since that time, I learned that whatever I had done could not please Him unless it was done out of love and obedience. This enkindled in me the desire to love Him and to follow the norms of obedience in all my actions. However, I did not grasp the meaning of love and obedience, I believed that it was a crime to say that I loved my God since my actions were contrary to my words.

20-CHARITY TOWARDS THE POOR AND THE SICK

I kept on begging my lord to teach me and let me know what He wanted me to do in order to please Him and love Him. He granted my petitions in this way! He inspired me with a great love for the poor, so that I had no other desire but to be in touch with them, and He granted me a tender compassion for their miseries so that if I could I would deprive myself of everything. All the money I possessed was for the poor children, to attract them to learn catechism and to pray. They were coming and sometimes they were so many that in Winter I did not know how find a suitable place to gather them. I tried to harbour them in a big room, but often times they were chased away. This made me feel miserable because I was not willing to let others know what I was doing. People thought that I was giving the poor stolen things, on the contrary, I gave them only what was mine and I would not do it without getting permission...

I tried to show great affection to my mother in order to obtain permission to give what I had to the poor, and since she loved me very much, I could easily obtain such permission. Whenever my petitions were not granted, I kept quiet for some moments, then I continued to disturb her insisting with my requests. In fact, I could not do anything without her permission. I was not only depending on my mother but also on the other members of my family, although this was costing very much and it was like a torture for me. I believed that I had to submit myself to all those in regard of whom I felt reluctance, because this would make me practise obedience and train me to practise it also in the convent.

Since I had to ask for permissions for everything at all times, I felt strong repulsions which made my slavery intolerable, also because this way of treating the members of my family increased the authority of my benefactors, so that no nun was more under control than me.

However, my strong desire to please my Lord made me overcome all the difficulties and made me attentive to do what was more in contrast with my inclinations and towards

what I felt more repulsion I was so keen to do so and whenever I had opposed some resistance, I considered it a sin to confess

The sight of wounds was horrifying me and to overcome myself I dress them and kissed them. Since I was unable to dress them properly, I asked my Divine Master to supply my ignorance so that wounds used to heal up in a short time- despite the fact that they were very bad – making use of no other ointment but that of His Providence. I trusted more His Divine Goodness than human remedies

21- REPROACHES FROM OUR LORD WHO STARTED TO REVEAL HIS PLANS TO HER

It was naturally inclined to love pleasures and amusements. However, I could not enjoy any of them despite the fact now and then I was still looking for them. The sorrowful image which appeared to me- the image of my scourged Jesus - helped me to refrain from giving in to pleasures.

“Do you want to enjoy this pleasure?” He said to me in a tone of reproach. I never enjoyed pleasures, on the contrary, I tasted all kinds of bitterness out of love for you, to conquer your heart. And you are still willing to argue about this?” All this impressed my spirit but I confess candidly that I did not understand all this because I was rude and little versed in spiritual matters. If I did something good, it was due to the strength I received from the interior impulse that the Lord bestowed on me. Such impulse was so strong that I could not overcome it.

This is a grave motive of confusion for me while I am writing it down, because I would like to make people understand that I deserve the most severe eternal punishments for all the continual resistance that I opposed to God and to His graces, In addition, I should also acknowledge how great His mercy is!

It seemed that He had decided to follow me and to counterpoise continually His goodness to my malice, His love to my ingratitude, and all this was the cause of deep regret for all my life!

For so many graces I did not show gratitude to my Sovereign Saviour, who so lovely had taken care of me, since I was in the cradle and has never stopped ever since.

Once I was deeply surprised by the fact that my defeats and infidelities did not discourage Him. He answered me, “It is because I want to make you a mixture of my love and of my mercy.” And another time he said to me, “I have chosen you as my spouse and both of us have exchanged vows of mutual fidelity when you took the vow of chastity to please me. It was I who moved you to make this vow before the world could get any share in your heart, it is because I wanted your heart to be completely pure, without any trace of earthly affections, and to keep it pure I deprived your will of malice so that it could not be spoiled.”

22-JESUS PUTS HER UNDER THE CARE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

“Then I entrusted you to the care of my Holy Mother so that you could be shaped according to My plans.”

She has always been my good mother and never refused to help me, I recurred to her in all my troubles, in all my needs and with such trust that it seemed to me that I had nothing to be afraid of under her maternal protection.

At that time I vowed to fast in her honour every Saturday and to recite the Little Office of the Immaculate Conception as soon as I had learned how to read, and to make seven genuflections all the days of my life in reciting seven Hail Mary in honour of her seven sorrows. I committed myself to her as her slave-girl begging her to accept me as such. I used to talk with her as her daughter with simplicity, without reservations, as to a good mother, for whom I felt a tender love ever since. However, when she saw me on the point of giving in under the terrible contradictions which were shaking my spirit, she reproached me severely.

23-SHE IS ON THE POINT OF GIVING IN BECAUSE OF THE TENDERNESS OF HIS FAMILY MEMBERS AND THE ALLUREMENTS OF THE DEVIL

I could not withstand any longer the persecutions from the part of my relatives and the tears of my mother who loved me with special tenderness. She insisted on saying that a young lady in her twenties should make up her mind and get married. I was on the point of giving consent to her proposal while Satan was keeping on warning me by saying: "You, miserable creature, what do you expect to do as a nun? You will become the laughing stock of the world because you will surely be unable to persevere; then what a shame to take off the religious habit and leave the convent! Where will you go to hide yourself?"

Then I was melting in tears because I had a sense of horror for men. All the same I could not make up my mind. My Divine Master, who was keeping my vow always under my eyes, eventually took pity on me.

24-OUR LORD RESTORED PEACE IN HER

Once, after Holy Communion - I remember it well - He showed me that He was the most beautiful, the richest, the most powerful, the most perfect and the most ideal of lovers; and He made me understand that by having betrothed myself to Him for many years, it was inconceivable that I would break all my promises to Him and prefer another one. He said, "Mind that if you treat me in that way, I will abandon you for ever. On the contrary, if you are faithful to me, I will never abandon you and I will make you turn out victorious over all your enemies. I make allowances for your ignorance because you do not know me well but if you are faithful to me and follow Me, I will manifest Myself to you and make you know Me."

In saying this He granted me such great interior calm that my soul found itself in a state of great peace that I decided rather die than to change my mind. I had the impression that my traps were destroyed and that I had nothing more to be afraid of, considering that religious life would be like a kind of purgatory but it would be better to be purified for the rest of my life than to be sent down into Hell which I had merited by all my great sins and resistance to God.

25- SHE WILL BE A NUN DESPITE HER RELUCTANCE

Then I determined to embrace religious life [to become a nun]. The Divine Spouse of my soul for fear that I would escape again, asked me to give Him permission to control my liberty and master it for I was so weak. I had no difficulty to surrender myself to Him and from that time onward He took possession of my life in such way that could not

enjoy anything for the rest of my life. He penetrated so deeply into my heart that I renewed my vow of chastity and started to understand its meaning. I promised that even if this would cost me a thousand lives, I would become a nun at all costs. I said it clearly to my relatives to make them give up all plans for my marriage.

My mother, after knowing my decision, did not weep in my presence, but she used to weep when others raised this matter to her. These people continued to say that this fact would cause my mother's death, that I had abandoned her, that I would be responsible in front of God for she had nobody to rely on. They said that I could become a nun after her death. A brother of mine, who loved me very much, tried all means to make me change mind and offered a part of his real estate to help me to find a better partner in the world. However, my heart became like a stone, although I had to remain in the world for three years more among the turmoil of so many struggles.

26-PEOPLE TRIED TO MAKE HER JOIN THE URSULINES OF MACON

An uncle of mine who had a daughter in the convent, knowing of my desire to become a nun tried all the possible ways to make me enter the same convent. But since I did not feel any attraction for the type of life of the Ursuline Sisters, I insisted by saying that if I had entered that convent, it will be only out of love for you, while I desire to enter a convent where there are no relatives of mine, nor acquaintances, and to be a nun only out of love for God." Since I did not know what Religious Congregation I should join- I did not know any of them- I was afraid to make a mistakes. I loved that cousin of mine very much, she was making use of the authority of my uncle, who I was not able to oppose, for he was my tutor and claimed to love me as his daughter, and wanted me near to him. He did not allow my brother to take me home for he felt to be responsible for me. My brother, who had not yet given consent for my entry into convent, got angry with me, thinking that I was planning to join the Ursulines against his will and without the consent of my family. Nothing of this was true. On the contrary, the more they pressed me to enter the convent and the more I was reluctant became of my internal impulse.

A secret voice was telling me. "I do not want you there, I want you in St. Mary's Convent"

27- SHE IS ADVISED AGAINST JOINING THE CONGREGATION OF THE VISITATION

However, they did not allow me to see the convent of the St. Mary's [Congregation of the Visitation], although some of my relatives were living there.

They told me things so frightening, that even the most determined person would give up, however, the more they attempted to make me abandon my desire to join that Congregation [Visitation] and the more I felt a great desire to join it, fascinated by the sweet name of Mary. This name was the surest omen that I would find what I was looking for.

Once, while I was watching the portrait of St. Francis de Sales, I had the impression that this saint was looking at me with paternal affection, calling me his daughter and from that time on I considered him as my good father. But I did not tell people about this, and I was unable to detach from my cousin and her community. She showed me so great concern that I was unable to resist.

28- SHE IS CALLED BACK HOME SUDDENLY

Then, when the doors of the convent of St Mary were on the point to be open for me, I learned that my brother had become severely sick and that my mother was on the point of death. I set out immediately to go to see them and overcome all the obstacles although I was depressed, above all for the fact that I felt compelled to enter a convent where my Lord did not want me. I walked all the night without stopping for ten miles.

I was freed from one cross to shoulder another heavier that I will not try to describe! It will be sufficient to say that all my pains doubled. They tried to convince me that my mother could not live without me, considering the fact that my short absence had caused her such severe illness and that I should be responsible in front of God for my mother's death. Since all these things were repeated to me by clerics, they caused me a new torment, considering the fact that I loved my mother very much.

The Devil was taking advantage of all this to make me think that my entering into convent would cause my eternal damnation.

29-THE IMAGE OF THE SUFFERING JESUS

On the other hand, my Divine Master inspired me with such strong desire to abandon everything and follow Him that I could not have rest. He inspired me with the desire of imitating His life of suffering so that my pains seemed to be nothing. I doubled my penance and, at times, I knelt at the feet of my crucifix saying, "My Divine Saviour, I would be very happy if you sculptured in me Your suffering image". And He answered me, "This is my plan too, and you should not oppose it, but rather collaborate to make it come true."

And to offer Him some drops of blood, I fastened my fingers tightly and punctured them with nails. During Lent I scourged myself. But despite the fact that I scourged myself every day to honour the blows He received when He was scourged. Despite the fact that I scourged myself for long, I obtained little blood to offer to my Lord in return for the much blood He had shed for me. During the three days of carnival I would like to be reduced to pieces in order to make reparation for the offenses that the sinners were committing against His Divine Majesty.

I fasted when possible, by taking only bread and water and donating to the poor the food given to me.

30-HER FERVENT DESIRE FOR HOLY COMMUNION

My greatest joy in quitting the world was due to the fact that I could receive the Holy Communion frequently. Until that time I was allowed to receive Holy Communion only seldom, while I would consider myself the happiest person in the world if I could receive the Holy Communion and spend the nights alone in front of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, for I felt so safe there once I could do so! I could be so happy that my great timidity would not be an impediment any longer.

The days before receiving Holy Communion I felt like to be plunged into deep silence, to the point that I could not speak without making great efforts, because I was so absorbed in the consideration of the action I was about to do, and after Holy Communion I would not like to eat and drink nor to see or speak due to the great joy and peace I was experiencing.

I isolated myself as much as I could to learn how to love my Sovereign God, who was urging me to reciprocate His love. In fact I was afraid of being unable to love Him despite my best efforts, for I did not know a method for prayer. I knew only what I had been taught i.e. to abandon myself to the Divine motions of the Holy Spirit, when I could be alone with my God. But this was not possible, for I had to waste all days long with the servants. In the evenings, I used to be scolded for not having done what I had to do to please the people with whom I was living. And I was scolded so harshly that I did not even have the courage to eat, so I used to withdraw where I could, to get some moments of peace which I liked very much.

I complained to my Divine Master for being unable to please Him in all what I was doing, because the acts of penitence were of my own choice and there was in them much of my liking, so that they were pleasing me, and I considered valid only what was done for the sake of obedience.

"Oh, my Lord", I used to say "Send me someone who can lead me to you"

"Am I not enough for you?" was the answer, "What are you afraid of?" A child loved as I love you, can be perished in the arms of an almighty Father?"

31- CONFESSION MADE TO A FRANCISCAN ON THE OCCASION OF THE JUBILEE

I had no idea about spiritual direction, I had only a great desire to obey. His Divine Mercy disposed that at the time of the Jubilee a Franciscan priest came to our house and stayed overnight to give us the possibility to make our general confession. I had spent a couple of weeks to write down my sins, although I had made my general confession every time I had the opportunity to do so, but I had the impression of not having confessed my sins properly. I felt very sorry for my great sins; they not only made me shed many tears, but I would like from the bottom of my heart to publicize them to the whole world. My greatest sin consisted in being blind and unable to know them or to confess them for they were so enormous. For this reason I wrote down what I could find in books regarding confession, and, at that time, I wrote down sins that I felt horrified only to utter. But I said to myself, "I may have done it. I don't know, I don't remember, but it's a right thing to confess them with shame to satisfy the Divine Justice"

Certainly, if I had committed those sins that I confessed I would fall into a state of despair. If after that confession my Master had not assured me of having forgiven all that was not done with malice. I made therefore my confession to that good Father who did not want to listen to what I had written. I begged him to allow me to satisfy my conscience because I was a greater sinner than what he could believe.

This confession brought great peace to my soul. I told the Father something about my type of life and I received many good advice. However, I did not tell him everything for I was afraid of pride, being my nature inclined very much to vanity. I had the impression of doing everything out of vanity, for I was not able to distinguish between feelings and giving consent to my feelings.

This made me suffer a lot because I was terrorized in front of sin that makes the souls separate from God. That good Father promised to give me some instruments to do penitence, and I told him how my brother was keeping me in the world, after four or five years that I was trying to become a nun. He was able to instill in my brother such remorse that my brother suddenly asked me if I was persevering in my resolution. After I had

answered him in these terms. "Either die than to give up my resolution ", he promised to grant my request.

32-BARGAINING TO MAKE HER JOIN THE URSULINE SISTERS

My brother went to arrange for my dowry at the convent of that cousin of mine who had not stopped to persecute me

My mother and my relatives wanted me to be a nun in that convent. I did not know how to defend myself. When I was going there I prayed the Blessed Virgin, my good director, interposing St. Hyacinth, to whom I had addressed my prayers and I had many Masses celebrated in honor of the Blessed Virgin who said to me, in order to console me, "Do not weep, you will be my daughter and I will always be your mother". These words gave me great peace and left no doubt in me that they will come true despite all the oppositions. My brother on his way back from the convent, said to me, "They want four thousand francs, it is up to you to dispose of your goods as you like, because the matter has not yet been settled".

Then I said to him: "It will never be settled. I want to go to St. Mary's in a convent far away from here, where there are no relatives of mine nor acquaintances, because I want to be a nun only out of love for God."

33-SHE WILL ENTER THE CONVENT OF VISITATION. PARAYLE-MONIAL ATTRACTS HER IMMEDIATELY

I want to leave the world completely and withdraw into a remote corner to forget the world forever and to be forgotten, I wanted to see the world no more! Many convents were proposed to me, but I could not make up my mind, however, when they utter the name of Paray, my heart was filled with joy and I consented immediately to enter Paray

However, I had to visit the nuns who had taken care of me when I was eight years of age and there I had to stand a heavy battle. They wanted me to join their Congregation by saying that I was their daughter and were complaining for the fact that I was willing to abandon them in that way, while they were loving me so tenderly, and they said that they could not bear the fact that I was going to enter the St. Mary's Convent being they sure that I could not succeed. And, since they were insisting by saying that I could not adapt myself to that type of life, I said: "Let me try!". They made me promise that in case I leave St. Mary's Convent, I would enter their convent. However, despite the fact that they insisted, my heart remained unshakable and was even more steady in its determination by repeating these words, "Either win or die!"

34-DEAR "PARAY", IT'S HERE THAT I WANT YOU

I omit to mention all the other struggles I had to undergo in order to reach the place of my happiness, the dear Paray. As soon as I entered into the guest-room Jesus told me interiorly: "It's here that I want you". Then I said to my brother that it was necessary to agree at any cost [about the dowry] because I was determined not to enter any other convent

This surprised him very much because he had taken me there only for a visit, as I had asked him to do, without making him surmise that I wanted to enter that convent. I did not want to go back home before everything was settled. After that, it seemed that I had

started a new life for I felt so happy and peaceful. I was so cheerful that those who did not know me said, "Look what a type of nun is this!"

In fact, I did not make up with jewels as in the past, I took pleasure in thinking that I was belonging completely to my Lord!

While I am writing these lines I feel within me this kind reproach!

" See, my daughter, if you could find a father full of love for his only son as I am full of love for you, a father who gave proofs of love as I have given and I will give you, in fact since your childhood I treated you with much patience and care to shape you according to my wishes, waiting for you without getting offended for your delay!

You must bear in mind that if you will ungrateful to me and do not refer to me the glory of all good in you, You will cause the source of all good dry up in your regard "

35-MARGARET QUILTS THE WORLD AND ENTERS THE CONVENT

(20 June 1671)

Eventually after long waiting the day of departure from the world came. Never before I had experienced such a deep joy and firmness in my heart which had become unaffected both by friendship and pains caused to me by people and above all by my mother.

I did not shed even a tear in departing from all of them. I had the impression of being a slave freed from prison and from chains entering into the house of my beloved to take possession and to enjoy, as I like, the beloved presence of Jesus, His riches, his love!

And it was exactly this what He suggested to my raptured heart... I did not find an explanation about my vocation to enter Holy Mary's convent, except that of re-affirming my will to be a daughter of the Blessed Mother.

I must admit, however, that at the moment of my entry- it was a Saturday – all the pains that I had suffered till that the moment and other more, assailed me with such violence that I felt, while I was crossing the threshold of the convent, that my spirit was about to depart from my body. But very soon I realized clearly that our Lord had taken away my sack of slavery and dressed me with His cloth of joy. And in a fit of joy I exclaimed, " It's here that the Lord wants me." Very soon I felt absorbed by the thought that the convent was a holy place and that all the people living there were saints and that the very name of Holy Mary was expressing clearly the duty of becoming a saint at all costs. But in order to reach this goal one should deny himself and sacrifice everything without reservation and without hesitation... This made sweet for me what at the beginning I considered to be more difficult.

In the morning-for a few days- I woke at the sound of these words which I could not understand clearly. " DILEXISTI JUSTITIAM. "(You loved holiness) and the following, and other times at the words. "AUDI FILIA ET VIDE"(Listen my daughter and see). And again these words: "O JERUSALEM, HOUSE OF ISRAEL, THE LORD WILL GUIDE YOU IN ALL YOUR WAYS AND WILL NEVER ABANDON YOU " I told all this to my good Directress without understanding the meaning of it. I considered her along with my Superior like Jesus on earth.

And since I did not know nor have spiritual direction, I was able to subject myself in obedience to her, so that every word of hers seemed to be like an oracle, then I understood that I had nothing more to fear by obeying.

36-THE WELL PREPARED CANVAS

I asked my Mistress to teach me how to pray, since I was eager to know it. She was wondering about this fact that, on entering the convent at the age of twenty-three, I did not know yet a method of prayer.

And when she became convinced of this, she said: "Go and kneel in front of the Lord as a canvas in front of a painter" I would like to have an explanation of these words because I did not understand their meaning; however, I did not dare to insist and internally I heard this voice. "Come, I will teach you".

When I started my prayer, my Lord made me know how my soul was like a canvas well prepared on which He wanted to paint the traits of His suffering life, all spent in love in distress, in detachment, in silence, in self-denial until His death. He wanted to engrave all this in my soul, after having purified it from all the stains caused by earthly affections, self-love and attachments to creatures and to all my nature was inclined to. At that moment He emptied myself and made my soul bare and enlightened it with the desire of loving and suffering, so that I had no rest ever since. He chased me so closely that I could not think of anything else than to find the way to love Him and to crucify myself. And His goodness has been so great in my regard that I did not fail to provide me with the means to do so.

37-TOO MUCH ZEAL FOR ACTS OF PENITENCE. SHE IS REMINDED BY ST FRANCIS THE SALES TO OBEY

Although I did not conceal anything from my Mistress, I had planned to extend her permission beyond her intentions.

However, while I was doing so, my Holy Founder (St FRANCIS DE SALES) reproached me severely and did not allow me to continue (to do what I had planned to do) so that from that moment onward I did not have the courage to try again, because his words remained sculptured in my heart. He said, "Do not believe, my daughter, to be able to please the Lord by going beyond the limits of obedience, since obedience-and not austerities-is the basis and the main pillar of this Congregation".

38-THE TAKING OF THE RELIGIOUS HABIT (25 AUGUST 1671)

I spent the time of my probation period with the desire of belonging to the Lord totally for He was accompanying me with his mercy without stop, to make me become happy, being clothed in our religious habit.

My Divine Master made me see that the time of my betrothal had arrived, and therefore He had got more power over my life. This made me feel the obligation to double my love for Him with a love of preference. He made me understand that-as the best lovers-He would make me taste at that time the sweetest taken of His love, which, in fact were so excessive that made me be raptured in ecstasies by putting me in the impossibility to act. All this plunged me into an abyss of confusion that I did not dare to show myself in public.

I was therefore admonished that this was not according to the spirit of the Daughters of St Mary, for they should look for the ordinary way of holiness, and if I did not withdraw from this type of behaviour I would not be incorporated in that community.

39-THEY TRY TO MAKE HER FOLLOW THE ORDINARY WAY OF SPIRITUAL LIFE

This placed me into a state of great desolation; I tried my best to withdraw from this path but in vain. And my good Mistress tried her best without letting me know about it. She knew that I loved prayer so much and that I wanted to learn more about prayer, but I was unable despite my best efforts to follow the methods that I was advised to adopt, because I found myself always under the guidance of my Divine Master, despite my best attempts to forget it and distance myself from Him. She put me under the care of an official who kept me busy even during my prayers. When I turned to my Mistress to get permission to pray in another time, she reproached me strongly by telling me to pray among the activities of my novitiate. I submitted myself to her directions and nothing could take me away from the sweetness and consolations which filled my spirit. I was ordered to go to listen to the points of meditation in the morning and then to go to sweep the floor until Prime. Then I had to give a report of my prayer or of what my Divine Master was doing within me and for me, as I had no other aim than to obey. I found an immense joy despite the fact that my body was suffering for it. Then I sang this song,

THE MORE LOVE IS OPPOSED

AND THE MORE I GET INFLAMED OF IT ...

DAY AND NIGHT AMONG CRUEL TORMENTS

WHO CAN TAKE HIM (JESUS) AWAY FROM ME?

THE MORE BITTER ARE MY PAINS, AND THE MORE JESUS PRESSES ME TO HIS HEART

40-EAGERNESS FOR HUMILIATIONS AND MORTIFICATIONS

I was eager of humiliations and penitence despite the fact that my sensitive nature reacted strongly. My Divine Master always exhorted me to ask for them and so I could find good ones, because although I was refused to carry out those of my choice-for I was not worthy of them-I was given others against my inclinations unexpectedly which made me overcome myself with tremendous efforts and say to my Master, "Oh, My Lord, please come to my aid, for you are the cause of them". And he answered: "Acknowledge then that you can do nothing without Me, but I will never deprive you of My help if you always keep your nothingness and your weakness plunged into my strength".

41-AN HEROIC EFFORT IN OVERCOMING PHYSICAL RELUCTANCE

I will recall only one of those occasions of tests superior to my energies on which He made me experience the effects of His promise. It was something in regard to which all our family felt natural repulsion [a natural disliking for cheese], so my brother in discussing the conditions for my admission into the convent, made clear that I should never be forced to eat cheese. This was granted without difficulty being a trifle. However, I had to surrender myself also in regard to this matter, because I was attacked strongly from every side, that I had no escape. It seemed to me that it would be one thousand times easier to sacrifice my life than to do that, and if I had not loved my vocation more than my life, I would have betrayed my vocation, rather than to do what they were forcing me to do. However, I was resisting in vain because my Sovereign Master wanted me to do that sacrifice from which many others were depending. For three days I underwent a terrible struggle to the point to move people to compassion, above all my Mistress, in whose presence I was trying myself to do what she required from me but eventually my courage was failing. I felt so sorry for not being able to overcome my

natural repulsion, and I was repeating to my Lord! "Oh, why do You not deprive me of my life rather than to put me into the condition of being disobedient "

Eventually my Mistress rejected me. "Go-she said-you are not worthy to obey! Now I forbid you to do what I have ordered you. " This was enough for me. I immediately protested. "Either win or die" Then I went to church and put myself in front of the Blessed Sacrament-my habitual refuge-and stayed there to weep for three or four hours in order to get the strength to overcome myself

"Oh! My Lord, did you really abandon me? Is it that there is still some reservation in my sacrifice so that not all of me will be consumed in perfect holocaust"

But my Lord, willing to push to the extreme the fidelity of my love for Him-I would demonstrate it later on-took pleasure in seeing His unworthy slave-girl struggle between divine love and natural repulsion

Eventually Divine Love came out victorious, because, without any other comfort, without any other weapon except the words, " Love knows no reservations", I went to prostrate myself in front of my Mistress, begging her to grant me, out of mercy, to carry out what she had ordered me. Eventually I succeeded despite the fact that I always felt reluctance in regard to that food any time it was given me, for about eight years.

42-THIS SACRIFICE ATTRACTED A NEW ABUNDANCE OF GRACES FROM THE LORD ON HER SOUL

After this first sacrifice, all the graces, all the favours of my Sovereign Master doubled and flooded my soul to the point that I felt compelled to repeat often, " My Lord, please refrain this torrent lest I get suffocated . . . or enlarge my capacity to receive them!"

I avoid telling all the acts of predilection and the profusion of pure love I enjoyed because they are such great gifts that I am unable to describe properly.

43-SHE EXPERIENCES DOUBTS ABOUT HER VOCATION BUT OUR LORD HELPS HER

I was the prey of new attacks the more I approached the time of my Religious Profession. I was told that it was evident that I did not absorb the spirit of the Visitation that avoids all types of religious practices likely to give way to illusions. I reported all this to my Sovereign saying, "Oh, my Lord, will you be the cause for my dismissal from the convent!" He answered me, "Tell your Superior that she has nothing to be afraid of in accepting you, I will be your guarantor and, if she believes it, I will be your caution"

After I had reported this to my Superior, she gave me the order to beg the Lord, as a security caution, to make me useful to religious life through the exact practice of the rules. And His loving goodness answered me in this way, "Then, my daughter, I grant it to you and I will make you useful to your community more than what you can imagine, but in a way only known to me. And from now on I will adapt my graces to the spirit of your Rule, to the will of your Superiors and to your weakness, so that you should be always on the alert when something impedes you to keep the norms of your Rule, which I prefer to everything. In addition, I am very glad when you give preference to the will of your Superior rather than to Mine, whenever you are forbidden to carry out what I have ordered you. Let them do of you what they please, I will find way to make my plans come true, by using means which apparently seem to be inadequate. I want to direct you

internally, and your heart in a special because in it I have established the empire of My pure love and I will not renounce at any price”.

My Superior and my Mistress were very pleased and the effects of the divine declarations seemed very reasonable to them, so that they did not doubt that these words were coming from the Divine Truth, I did not feel any trouble in myself and I tried to follow obedience in all, despite the fact that this made me suffer quite a bit.

The proofs of esteem, however, and the complacence turned out to be an unbearable martyrdom and I considered it as a just punishment due to my sins which seemed to be so big that all torments would be considered a light suffering in expiation and satisfaction in regard to the Divine Justice

44-MARGARET MARY MAKES HER FINAL PROFESSION (6 November 1672)

After I had received the long awaited grace of making my Religious Profession, just on the day that our Lord wanted me as His spouse, something happened which I cannot express. I will only say that He treated me as a spouse on Mt Tabor. This made me suffer because I was seeing myself dissimilar from my Spouse who I contemplated as disfigured and wounded on Mt. Calvary. Then I was told, “Let me do everything at its proper time, now I want you to be the object of my love who wants to treat you as I like, as the children do with their dolls. It is necessary that you abandon yourself to Me in that way without aims and resistance, allowing Me to do what I please. You will not lose anything by doing so.

He promised not to abandon me forever, and added, “You should be always ready to welcome Me, because from now on I want to establish my dwelling within you to talk and entertain Myself with you

45-SHE IS FAVOURED WITH A MYSTERIOUS PRESENCE OF HER DIVINE MASTER

From that moment onward He favoured me with the gift of His Divine presence in a way never experienced before, because I had never received a grace so great, as I consider it from the effects it produced in me continually. I was seeing Him and I was feeling Him at my side, I could hear him and feel His presence better than I could perceive Him with my corporal senses which could distract me from that divine intimacy; in this state I could not oppose any obstacle because I was completely passive. This grace plunged me into a state of deep annihilation. I felt to be plunged into the abyss of my nothingness, from which I dare not to get away out of respect toward that Infinite Majesty, in front of which I would have liked to remain forever prostrated with my face on the ground or kneeling down. And I do so every time my work and my weakness permit. To take another posture less respectful will give me no peace and so-except when I am in the presence of others-I do not dare to sit down considering my unworthiness which Jesus make me feel more and more so that I do not dare to show myself in public because I am so confused that I would prefer that the whole world takes no notice of me except in order to despise me and humble me, because I do not deserve anything else

Jesus, the only object of my life, delights in seeing me treated in this way and despite the sensitiveness of my proud nature, He does not allow me to find comfort in creatures, except when I find occasions for being contradicted, humiliated and rejected, for such things are like a delicious food for me. This type of food is always provided to me by my

Lord and He never says that it's enough. Moreover, whenever from creatures or from my part there is lack of humiliations, He supplements them. But when humiliations come from my Lord I feel them so painful that it will be too long to describe them.

46-TWO TYPES OF HOLINESS. HOLINESS OF LOVE, HOLINESS OF JUSTICE

He favoured me with His intimate conversation, at times as a friend, at times as a spouse full of love, at times as a tender father full of love for His only son or in other ways, I will avoid describing the effects that such intimate conversation produced in me. I will only say that He made me know that there are two types of holiness: the holiness of love, the holiness of justice, both of them very exigent and always active in me. The first would make me suffer something like a most painful purgatory in order to relieve the pains of the holy souls of purgatory who were permitted by God to turn to for help. The holiness of justice, so feared and so terrible for the sinners, would make me feel the weight of his just rigour, by making me suffer for the sinners and in particular for the people consecrated to Him (priest, brothers and nuns) for whom I will show later in what you should suffer out of love for Me.

"But, my God, You know my ignorance and my inability to express what happened between Your Sovereign Majesty and Your miserable and unworthy handmaid, due to the effects of Your love and of Your graces, let me say a little of what can be understood to demonstrate the excesses of generosity your love granted to an instrument so miserable and unworthy as I am!"

47-ST MARGARET TRIES TO SHUN THE EXTRAORDINARY WAYS OF HOLINESS AND COMPLAINS TO OUR LORD

I did not conceal anything from my Mistress and my Superior although I could not often understand what I said to them. They tried to explain to me that all this was a sign of extraordinary way of holiness, not in agreement with the type of life of the Daughters of St. Mary's Convent. I was so afflicted about this in a way that I cannot tell, meanwhile I was multiplying my resistance to such extraordinary ways. But all in vain, because that Spirit was so strong that I could not escape from it and all my faculties were completely absorbed in Him. I did not omit any possible effort to practise the form of prayer they taught me, but this did not help me at all.

Despite the fact that I was reading and re-reading the points of mediation, all of them vanished from my mind!

I could not learn and retain in my mind anything except what my Master wanted to teach me. And how much suffering in all this! In fact they were trying to destroy what He was operating in me and in addition they wanted me to do the same. I was resisting Him as far as I could, following the orders I was given to shun that divine power that was stronger than mine.

I used to complain to Him by saying, " My Divine Master, why don't You leave me walk on the common path of the Daughters of St. Mary? Did you guide me to your Holy House to destroy me? Please, grant these graces to those chosen souls who can correspond and glorify You better than me, who will not oppose so much resistance!

I want only to love You and to bear the cross; yes, this is sufficient for me in order to become a good nun since I desire it very much!"

I heard this voice, "Let us fight, My dear daughter, I am pleased with you, let us wait and see who will be the winner: the Creator or the creature, the Strength or the weakness, the Almighty or the powerless, but the one who will turn out to be the winner, he will be so for ever and ever!"

These words put me in a state of extreme confusion. He added, "Learn how I do not feel offended for these struggles, I am not offended for your resistance because you want to obey. I sacrificed my life for the sake of obedience! I want you to know that I am the absolute master of my gifts and of my creatures, and nothing can impede me to accomplish my desires. Not only this, but I want you to do what your Superiors tell you to do, and moreover I do not want you to do what I tell you to do if your Superiors do not consent. I love obedience and without obedience it's impossible to please me!"

All this pleased my Superior very much, and she told me to abandon myself freely to the Divine Power. I did it with joy and great peace of soul, and I was delivered from the cruel struggles that I was suffering from!

48-OUR LORD REQUIRES A NEW ACT OF RENUNCIATION TO HERSELF

After the Holy Communion, He invited me to renew the offering of my freedom and of my all being to Him. I did with all my heart. I said to Him, "At one condition, My Lord, that nothing appeared outside except what will turn to my humiliation and abjection in front of creatures and make me more abject and esteemed less by them; because, my Lord, I feel my weakness and I am afraid to betray You, I am afraid that Your gifts will be not too safe in me..."

"Do not be afraid, My daughter," He answered me, "I will arrange everything well, for I am Your guardian and I will make you unable to resist Me". "Then, O Lord, will You make me live without suffering?"

At that moment I saw a big cross which I was unable to measure, all covered with flowers.

49-THE FLOWERS AND THE THORNS OF THE CROSS THREE STRONG DESIRES

"Look at the bed of my faithful spouses, where you will taste the sweetness of my pure love; little by little the flowers will fall down and you will get only the thorns that are concealed for the sake of your weakness, but they will make feel their stings so sharply that you will need all the strength My love to bear the pains they will cause to you".

Such words gave me great comfort because I thought that there will never be either pains or humiliations or scorns able to extinguish the strong thirst for suffering that was tormenting me. I never experienced other pain as strong as that of not suffering enough, because the love of my God gave me rest neither by day nor by night; and such joys were afflicting me. I would rather prefer the bare cross and have the body oppressed by austerities, labours and I took on myself as many as I could bear for I could not live a single instant without suffering. The more I suffered and the more I appeared that Holiness of Love that was enkindled in me without stop, such as the desire to suffer, to love and to receive Holy Communion, the desire to die and get united with Him!

50-SHE TAKES CARE OF THE DONKEY AND ITS LITTLE ONE DURING HER RETREAT OF RELIGIOUS PROFESSION AND RECEIVES THE GRACE OF AN ARDENT LOVE FOR THE CROSS

I did not worry about time and place because my Sovereign was accompanying me everywhere. I was completely indifferent in regard to all dispositions that my superiors were taking in my regard, being convinced that since Jesus had given Himself to me without any merit from my part, but only as a result of His sheer goodness, nobody could succeed in taking Him away from me. And this thought made me very happy everywhere. I experimented that during the retreat in preparation for my Religious Profession for I was ordered to take care of the donkey and its little one in the garden.

They kept me very busy because I had not the permission to control them with the halter, I was ordered to confine them to a small patch of land to prevent dangers. I was compelled to run in continuation. I had no rest until evening when I had to go to take supper. During the recitation of the Matins [a part of Divine office] I had to go to the stable to feed them. I was so happy for such task that I would like to carry it on for the rest of my life. My Sovereign was keeping me company to the point while tending those animals I was not distracted in any way. On the contrary, it was then that I received precious graces that I had not yet experimented in regard to the mystery of the Passion and Death of the Lord. It is such a deep abyss that it will take too long time to describe. I will escape it, and I remember that He granted me so much love for the cross that I could not live a single instant without suffering and suffering in silence, without any consolation, without any relief of compassion my regard; then I wished to die together with this Sovereign of my soul, crushed under the cross, consisting of all types of reviling, pains, humiliations and scorns. And this grace is accompanying me every day of my life so that, due to divine mercy I am going through such things which are genuine demands of pure love. He always provides me with a great abundance of such food, so delicious for His taste to the point that He never puts a stop!

51-EXIGENCES OF GOD'S HOLINESS

My Divine Master, after a fault of mine, instructed me by saying, "Know that I am a Holy Master who teaches holiness. I am pure and I cannot tolerate the smallest stains. You should act with simplicity of heart, with pure and right intention in My presence.

The reason why is that I cannot tolerate even the least trick and I will make you understand how by becoming your tutor out of an excess of my love for you, I teach and model you as I like, according to my plans, and I cannot tolerate lukewarm and coward souls; and if I am understanding in putting up with your weakness, I am not less severe and just in correcting and punishing your infidelities".

And He made me experience this in all my life; I can say that He did not let pass the smallest faults due to my will or negligence without reproaching and punishing me always for the sake of His mercy and infinite goodness!

I must admit that nothing was so painful and terrible for me as to see Him, even for a short instant, disgusted for my fault. Every other pain such as reprimands and mortification, were nothing in comparison. This induced me to ask for penance for my faults because He was satisfied only with the type which I received by order.

What He reproached me about with more severity was the lack of respect in front of the Blessed Sacrament especially during the recitation of Divine Office and Prayer: the defects against purify of intention and vain curiosity.

52-HE REJECTS EVERY FRUIT OF OUR WILL

And although His most pure and clear-sighted eyes discover even the least defeats in regard to charity and humility, to condemn them severely, however, nothing can be compared to lack of obedience toward the Superior and the Rule. And the smallest objection to the Superior, by showing reluctance, is a fault that He cannot tolerate in a Religious person.

"You are mistaken-He said to me- if you think to please me by those actions and mortification, chosen by your free will, making your Superior consent to your requests. Oh, you must know that I reject such practices as rotten fruits of personal will which I detest in a religious soul! I would prefer that the person accepted some enjoyments rather than burden herself with austerities and fasting dictated by personal will".

Whenever I make some mortification and penance of my choice and without the order of my Superior, He does not allow me not even to offer them to Him and reproaches me imposing a chastisement on me as for every other fault of mine, because each fault gets its particular punishment in this purgatory where He purifies me to make me less unworthy of His Divine Presence, of His communication and divine operations, for it is He who does everything within me!

Once, at the end of the song Ave Mary Stella, during which I had scourged myself as I had been ordered, He said to me, "Here is my part" and since I was continuing to scourge myself He added: "Here is the part of devil!" and on hearing such words I stopped immediately. Another time, while scourging myself for the souls in purgatory since I wanted to carry on beyond the time fixed by obedience, those poor souls surrounded me complaining for the fact that I was beating them. This induced me to resolve rather to die than to go beyond, even in the least, the limits of obedience. For every fault He assigned me a particular act of penance.

Nothing turned out to be difficult for me, because He kept all the rigour of my pains and sufferings nearly completely absorbed in the sweetness of His love; sweetness which I wanted to taste bitterness, anguish, abandonment, agonies, reviling and other torments. But He answered me that I had to submit myself to all His divine dispositions without determining rules for Him. He said, "You will understand later on how I am a wise and skilful director who knows how to lead souls safely, when they abandon themselves to me, forgetting themselves".

53-SHE IS RESTING ON THE BREAST OF OUR LORD WHO SHOWS HER, FOR THE FIRST TIME, HIS HEART

While one day I was in front of the Blessed Sacrament feeling all at my ease-ordinarily this was not possible because of my occupations-I felt invested by Divine Presence with such strength, as to forget myself and the place where I was staying. I abandoned myself to that Divine Spirit entrusting my heart to His powerful love. Jesus made me rest on His Heart for long and revealed the marvels of His love to me and the unspeakable secrets of His Sacred Heart that He had concealed from me until that moment. He did it in such effective and clear way that I could not have any doubt, since the effects of this grace in me were so clear that I have to admit them despite my fear to be wrong. Now I want to describe what happened. He (Jesus) said to me: "My Divine Heart is loving men so much and you in particular, that being unable to refrain the flames

of its ardent charity, it wants to manifest it through you to people to enrich them with its precious treasures which I am disclosing to you, since they contain all the sanctifying and saving graces necessary to divert them from the abyss of eternal damnation.

I have chosen you as an abyss of indignity and ignorance for the materialization of this plan, so that it will appear that everything was done by Me!"

Then He asked me to offer Him my heart and I begged Him to accept it. He took it and put into his Adorable Heart, in which I could see it to be like an atom burnt in the furnace of His Heart, then He took it out and placed it where He had taken it out saying: "See, my beloved, a precious pledge of my love that contains in your heart a small spark of its burning flames and with such a heart you should get consumed till the last instant of your life

Its ardour will not get extinguished and you will not find comfort except for a short while. I will seal the consolations with the blood of my cross, so that you will find more humiliations and sufferings than comfort. I want then that you ask for this love with simplicity both in order to practise what your constitutions prescribe and to give you the consolation of shedding your blood on the cross of the humiliations

54-AS A PROOF OF THIS GREAT GRACE SHE WILL FEEL IN CONTINUATION A PAIN AT HER SIDE. "BELOVED DISCIPLE OF THE SACRED HEART"

"To show that the great grace you have received is not a fruit of your imagination but the foundation of all the graces I am going to bestow on you, although I have closed the wound of your side, you will feel a pain that will never stop. If until now you were called my slave, from now on you shall be called "The Beloved Disciple of My Sacred Heart "

After this remarkable favour so prolonged in time, I did not know if I was in Heaven or on earth and I remained for a few days all inflamed and elate. I was raptured in God to such an extent that I could not master myself to say a simple word without great efforts, and I found it difficult to take part in recreation and to take food because I was lacking the strength to overcome such difficulty! All this caused me extreme humiliation ..

I could not sleep any more, because that wound causing me precious suffering was producing so intense flames of love to make me feel consumed and burnt alive

At the same time I experienced the greatness of God so deeply that I could not express myself in front of my Superior, I would like to do so, despite the uneasiness and confusion that telling such graces caused to me, due to my great unworthiness

I would have preferred one thousand times more to tell my sins to the whole world, this would give me great comfort if I were allowed to do so; I would prefer to read aloud my general confession, in refectory, to make the others know all my sinfulness, so that people would not consider the graces I have received as the fruit of my merits

55-ON THE FIRST FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH THE SACRED HEART APPEARS TO HER AS A BRIGHT SUN AND AS A BURNING FURNACE

The grace I have just spoken about regarding the pain at my side, every FIRST FRIDAY of the month revived in this way. The Sacred Heart appeared to me in the form of the sun shining with a dazzling light, the flaming rays of it were penetrating into my heart, which immediately felt to be burnt to ashes. It was on those occasions that my Divine Master told me how much He expected from me and revealed the secrets of His loving Heart

Once, while the Blessed Sacrament was exposed on the altar, I became absorbed completely in prayer and Jesus Christ, My beloved Lord, showed Himself to me. He was triumphant in glory, and showed me His five wounds shining like five suns. From His Holy Humanity there were flames coming out from every part but in particular from adorable bosom which looked like a furnace. At a certain moment He showed me His loving and most lovable Heart, which was the source of these flames. It was then that He manifested the unspeakable marvels of His pure love to me and to what excess His tenderness for people had grown, despite the fact that He receives from them only ingratitude.

He added, "This makes Me suffer more than what I suffered during my Passion. If people would reciprocate in some way My love for them, I would consider to be little what I suffered for them; but I would, if possible, suffer even more!... However, they answer My love with coldness and they disregard My eagerness to do good to them! "

56-HOW TO REPAIR THE INGRATITUDES OF PEOPLE

"You, at least, give Me the consolation of making up for their ingratitude as far as you can". And since I was telling Him that I would be unable to do so, He said, "Take, and see how to make up for what you lack!" In that moment, that Divine Heart opened up and sent out a flame so strong that I thought to be burnt up because it penetrated in me to the point that I could not stand it. Thus I begged Him to have pity on my weakness.

"I will be your strength" He said, "Don't be afraid of anything, only be attentive to my voice and to what I will ask from you to make you ready for the accomplishment of My plans".

57-SHE WILL RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE ACCORDING TO OBEDIENCE, ESPECIALLY ON THE FIRST FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH SHE WILL MAKE "THE HOLY HOUR"

"Above all, you should receive Holy Communion as often as possible when obedience allows it, despite the humiliations and mortification that this will cause to you, but you should accept them as a token of love from My part. In addition, you should receive Holy Communion on the first Friday of each month. And all the nights between Thursday and Friday I will make you share the deadly sadness that I endured in the Garden of the Olives. This will make you enter-without noticing it-into a type of agony more painful than death. In order to follow Me in that humble prayer that at that time, when I was crushed by so much suffering, I addressed to my Father, you should get up between eleven o'clock and midnight, you should prostrate yourself, face to the ground, for one hour with Me to appease the wrath of God, begging God's mercy for sinners and also to sweeten, in a certain way, the bitterness that I felt when the apostles abandoned Me, so that I had to scold them for being unable to watch with Me for one hour. During that hour you should do what I will teach you. Listen, then, my daughter, do not believe easily nor trust all the inspirations out of your initiative, because Satan is trying all systems to deceive you. Therefore, You should do nothing without the approval of those who direct you, so that, by relying on obedience, Satan will be unable to deceive you... for he has no power on those who obey!"

58-HER SUPERIOR HUMILIATES HER AND DOES NOT GRANT HER ANYTHING. MARGARET MARY GETS HIGH FEVER

All during that time I was not in possession of my faculties and I did not know where I was staying when they came to take me away from that place. When they saw that I could not answer nor stand up except with great pains, they led me to Mother Superior, who finding me out of my senses, all red and trembling, when I fell to my knees on the ground, she scolded me and humiliated me with all her energy. All this pleased me and gave me great comfort, because I felt to be a great criminal and ashamed of myself so that even the worst treatments seemed very sweet for me. And after having told her what had happened, despite my great embarrassment, she started again to humiliate me more and more, and that time she did not grant me anything of what I had asked for, according to the demands of Our Lord and she considered all what I said as nonsense. This consoled me very much and I left her with great peace of conscience. The fire which was consuming me, made me get into a state of high and continual fever. Since I enjoyed too much suffering, I did not complain in any way; I did not speak about this until my strength failed, and the doctor discovered that I had been with fever for long. I had more than sixty attacks of fever. I never experienced such great consolation, because the extreme pains of my body relieved a little my thirst for suffering. That consuming fire could not feed and be appeased except through the wood of the cross of all types of sufferings, scorns, humiliations and pains, and there no suffering which could equal that of being unable to suffer enough! People had the impression that I was about to die.

59-THE THREE DIVINE PERSONS OF THE BLESSED TRINITY APPEARED TO HER

Our Lord was granting me His graces in abundance; and I received a grace of incomparable value. During an exstasis I saw the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity who filled my soul with great joy. I cannot explain what happened at that time, I can only say that it seemed to me that the Eternal Father, on showing me a big cross all covered with thorns and with all the other instruments of the Passions, said.

"Take my daughter, this cross, it's the same gift I gave to My beloved Son." "And I"-said Jesus to me, "will nail you to it as I was nailed to it, but I will be your faithful companion". And the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity told me that being nothing else than Love, He will consume me on that cross and purify me too.

My soul entered into a state peace and joy inconceivable and the impression that those three Divine Persons left in my soul remains unchanged.

They appeared to me in the shape of three young men dressed in white, shining, of the same age, height and beauty. I did not understand then, but I could understand later on, the great pains symbolized in that vision.

60-SHE IS URGED TO ASK FOR GOOD HEALTH AS A PROOF OF THOSE REVELATIONS

Since I was ordered to ask the Lord for the grace of recovery, I begged Him-although I was afraid to be listened.

But I was told that from my recovery they could see if what was taking place in me was coming from good Spirit, and in such case I would be granted what I had asked for both

in regard to receiving Holy Communion on the First Fridays and the Hour of Adoration from eleven o'clock to midnight on every Thursday. I reported all these things to our Lord for the sake of obedience and I recovered at the same time. In fact, Our Lady, my dear Mother, granted me the favour of her presence and caressed me tenderly and after a long conversation said to me,

"Take courage, my dear daughter, in the health that I grant you from the part of My Divine Son, because You have ahead of you a long and painful journey to make, always on the cross, pierced by nails and thorns and tortured by scourges. However, do not be afraid, I will never abandon you, I promise to assist you."

This promise materialized from that time on in all the great needs I had. My Sovereign Lord continued always to gratify me with His divine presence actual and tender, as I had said before, having promised me that will last for ever. Actually He never deprived me of it, despite my faults, no matter of what kind they could be.

61-HOLINESS WHICH CANNOT TOLERATE ANY SORT OF STAIN

But, since His Holiness cannot tolerate the least stain of sin, He made me notice even the least imperfections, being unwilling to tolerate any of those which come from will or negligence, and since I am so imperfect and miserable that I commit a number of faults, although against my Will, I must confess that I am greatly embarrassed to appear in front of His Majesty when I have fallen into some acts of infidelity, and there are no kinds of tortures that I will refuse rather than to stand the presence of this Holy Lord, when my soul is stained by some faults, it would be one thousand times more tolerable to plunge myself into a burning furnace.

62-OUR LORD SHOWS HER, IN A PORTRAIT, THE SUMMARY OF ALL HER MISERIES

Once, while I was speaking about myself, I had a light feeling of vanity. Oh! My Lord, how many tears and how many wailing it cost me! Because, when I met Him face to face, He, with a stern face, reproached me saying,

"What have you, who are but power and ashes? Of what do you boast? Of yours, you possess only misery and nothingness and you should keep this in mind constantly and never go out of the abyss of your nothingness! And in order to make you remember what you are, I want to put under your eyes the picture of your life". Immediately He showed me this horrible portrait where there was the description of what I was (this shocked me to the point that without His help I could not tolerate myself) unable to understand how the excess of His great bounty and mercy had not yet plunged me into Hell and could tolerate me, since I could not tolerate myself. This was the crucible in which He punished my least motions of vain complacency, so that sometimes I felt compelled to say to Him. "O my God! Make me die or conceal this portrait from my sight, because on seeing it I cannot live!" In fact, it caused me such feelings of hatred for myself that being not allowed for the sake of obedience to carry out the vengeance that such sight demanded from me I suffered inexplicable pains. At the same time, I knew that this Sovereign of my soul accepted all that obedience asked me to do and was particularly pleased to see me humiliated, and this made me very faithful in accusing myself for my faults and receive the penance I deserved - no matter how severe it was- it seemed to be a charitable refreshment in comparison with those He imposed on me, while He was discovering

defects in what I considered to be the most pure and perfect actions. And He made me understand this once on All Saints' Day when He said to me interiorly,
"NOTHING IMPURE IN INNOCENCE, NOTHING IS LOST IN POWER,
NOTHING PASSES IN THAT BLESSED KINGDOM, ALL THERE IS CHANGED
INTO LOVE"

The explanation that I received of these words helped me as a topic of meditation for long. NOTHING IMPURE IN THE INNOCENCE means that I should not tolerate anything which is impure both in my soul and my body. NOTHING IS LOST IN POWER means that I should abandon everything into His hands because He is powerful and we will lose nothing when we give it to Him. About the two other expressions, the regard Heaven where nothing passes, because everything is eternal and consumed in love. At the same time, I could see a ray of that glory. O my Lord, what joy and desire of heavenly things in my poor heart! And since I was making my retreat, I spent the whole day in great joy. I was on the point- it seemed to me- to go and enjoy Heaven forever! However, the words that I heard made me know how far away from that goal I was! Here they are:

YOUR HEART YEARS IN VAIN TO GO IN, AS YOU BELIEVE...
OH, THE SOUL CAN ONLY REACH IT THROUGH THE PATH OF THE CROSS

Then I saw how much I had to suffer during this life, all my being shivered, although from that picture I could not see the effects that I experienced later on.

63-GOD REQUIRES HUMILITY AND SIMPLICITY IN CONFESSION

And while I was preparing for my annual confession, with great anxiety in order to recall to mind all my sins, my Divine Master said to me, "Why are you torturing Yourself? Do what you can. I will make up for the rest. In this sacrament I expect only to find a contrite and humble heart which-with the sincere will of not offending me any longer-confesses its sins with sincerity; then I forgive without delay, and the result is perfect amendment of life."

64-SHE FEARS THAT THE SPIRIT WHO LEAD HER BE NOT THE SPIRIT OF GOD

That Sovereign Spirit, who acted in me independently from myself had such a strong control on me, both on my body and soul, so that it was not any longer in my power to stir up in my heart any movement of joy or sadness apart from His will; and even my spirit could do anything different from what He wanted me to do. This created in me a great fear of being deceived, although I was reassured both from His part and from the people who directed my soul (my Superior) that there was no danger at all.

He did not give me directors to examine His behavior in my regard, letting them great freedom to approve it or not. My pain consisted in the fact that instead of freeing me from the illusion in which I believed to be, made me follow it more deeply by telling me -both the confessors and the others- to abandon myself to the power of that Spirit and let Him direct me without reservations, and even if He made me the laughingstock of Satan- this was what I was afraid of- I should not stop following His impulse.

65-THE GARMENT OF INNOCENCE

I made my annual confession after which I had the impression of being despoiled of everything and, at the same time, dressed in a white garment and meanwhile I heard these words. " Here is the garment of innocence by which I dress your soul so that you live up only the life of God-Man, i e You should live as you were living no more to let Me live in you In fact I am your life and you should live only for Me and in Me You should act as you were not acting to let Me act and work in you and for you, putting all your preoccupations into my hands You should not have a proper will, letting Me make decisions for you in everything and always "

66-DOUBLE PORTRAITS OF A HAPPY LIFE AND OF A CRUCIFIED LIFE

Once the Unique Love of my soul appeared to me holding in one hand the portrait of a life the most happy that one can imagine for a nun, all peaceful, full of interior and exterior consolations, all spent in perfect good health, surrounded by the praises and esteem of the creatures and with other things pleasing our nature. On the other hand, He was holding a portrait of a type of life all spent in poverty and objection, a crucified life among all sorts of humiliations, scorns and contradictions, with a lot of suffering, both physical and spiritual.

In showing these two portraits to me, He said: " Choose, my daughter, the one you prefer, I will grant you the same graces no matter what is your choice" I prostrated myself at His feet to adore Him and I said, " I want nothing else that You and let You choose for me". And after having urged me to choose, I said to Him, " My Lord, I don't want anything else than You and I let You choose for me". And since He insisted that should choose, I said to Him "You are my All, o my God! Do for me what is more suitable for Your greater glory, without considering my interests, or satisfactions. Do what pleases You most, and this will sufficient for me". Then He told me that St Mary Magdalene had chosen the best portion, that will be never taken away from me, because He will be my heritage forever. And while showing me the portrait of the crucifixion, He said, "Look what I have chosen for you and what pleases Me most both in order to fulfil My plans and to make you more similar to me The other portrait is the life of enjoyment and not of merit, it's the life in Heaven". Thus I accepted this portrait of death and crucifixion and kissed the hand of the One who offered it to me, and despite the fact that my nature was shuddering, I embraced it with all the affection of my heart and while pressing it on my breast I felt that it got engraved in me so deeply that I had the impression of being made up with what I had seen described in it.

67-GOD HIMSELF INSPIRES HER SUPERIOR ABOUT THE WAY TO DIRECT HER

I found myself changed in regard to my interior dispositions to the point of not recognizing myself... However, I left everything to the discretion of my Superior from whom I could not conceal anything, or omit to do whatever she had ordered me, provided that all this was coming from her directly. However, this spirit who possessed me made me feel horrible reluctance when she was guiding me or ordering me something according to the advice of others. He had promised me to give her-and not to others-the necessary light to guide me according to His plans.

68- SATAN GETS PERMISSION TO TEMPT HER

Since I received the greatest graces from His Bounty during Holy Communion and during the night, in particular the nights between Thursday and Friday, the favours I received were inexplicable. He informed me once that Satan had asked Him for permission to test me in the crucible of contradictions, humiliations and temptations, as gold in the furnace, and He had given him permission except in regard to purity, because He hates impurity to the point that He did not allow the enemy to trouble me in any way in regard to purity. But for all other types of temptations I should be on the alert, especially in regard to the temptations of pride, despair, gluttony. In regard to gluttony I was afraid more than death. He assured me that there was no reason whatever for being afraid because he would stand at my side as an impregnable fortress within me. He would fight for me and would be the price of my victories. He would surround me with His power so that I would not fall; however, I should be vigilant continually on my exterior and He would take care of my interior.

I had not to wait for long to feel the menaces of my persecutor. In fact, he appeared to me in the form of a terrifying Negro, his eyes flaming as two char-coals, gnashing the teeth, saying: "Damned! I will get hold of you! And if I can snatch you with my clutches, You will see what I can do to you. I will ruin you from every part". And although he menaced me in these and others ways, I was not afraid at all because I felt to be strengthened from inside and it seemed to me that I would not be afraid of all the ranges of Hell because I was afraid of nothing being fortified from inside; moreover, it seemed to me that I would be able to challenge all the threat of Hell relying on the great strength that I felt within me, thanks to the small crucifix that I was carrying on my breast night and day to which my Deliverer had granted the special power to keep away from me the fury of Hell.

69- SHE IS THE OBJECT OF PERSECUTIONS, BUT SHE IS PROTECTED BY HER GUARDIAN ANGEL WHO AT THE RIGHT MOMENT EVEN REPROACHED HER.

Once he pulled me down the staircase while I was holding a warming-pan with fire, without making it spill and I found myself down, without hurting myself, while those who saw me fall down believed that I had broken my legs; but I felt my guardian angel had sustained me, for this I had the chance to rejoice frequently of his presence and to be often scolded and corrected by him.

Once that I had meddled in speaking about the marriage of a relative, he made me understand that this was not proper for a nun and scolded me so severely and told me that unless I would abstain from meddling in such conversation, he would hide his face from me. He could not tolerate the least fault in regard to modesty or lack of respect in regard to my Sovereign Master, in front of whom he prostrated himself on the ground and wanted me to do the same; and I did so as frequently as I could and I found no better postures for my continuous sufferings in body and spirit, because this was the most consonant with my nothingness, which I never forget because I felt always plunged into it, no matter if in moments of suffering or rejoicing so that I could not taste any pleasure.

70-THE HEAVENLY BREAD OF SUFFERING

Since the Holiness of Love encourages me with such strength to suffer in order to reciprocate His love, I could not find better rest than in feeling my body immersed in sufferings and my spirit plunged in all kinds of desolation and all my being surrounded

with humiliations, scorns, contradictions, and these things were never lacking, thanks to God! The Lord did not let me without such trials for a single instant, both interiorly and exteriorly

When such a healthy bread seemed to diminish, I tried to find a similar one through mortification, and my sensitive and proud nature were giving me abundant matters. My Divine Lord did not like me to miss any opportunity, and if sometimes I missed an opportunity, due to the great violence that I felt in overcoming my reluctance, He made me suffer twice more! If He wanted something from me, He stirred me up to such an extent that any resistance seemed to be impossible, and when I was trying to delay, then I felt much suffering! He knew how to touch the weak side of my nature to induce me to react against my inclinations. On this point, His divine requests were continuous!

71-SHE OVERCOMES HER SENSITIVNESS WITH HEROIC ACTS

I was so sensitive that the smallest dirt was nauseating me. He reproached me so sharply that once, having to clean up after the vomiting of a patient, I could not help but lapping and swallowing that refuse, telling the Lord, "If I had one thousand bodies, one thousand loves, one thousand lives, I will sacrifice all of them in order to be always submitted!" Then I tasted such sweetness, that I would have desired to have similar occasions every day to learn how to overcome myself without any other witness than God.

But His Bounty, to which I was indebted for having given me the strength to overcome myself, did not omit to show me His approval. The following night-if I remember well-He allowed me to keep my mouth on the wound of His Heart for two or three hours. It would be very difficult to express what I felt at that time and the great effects that such a grace produced in my soul and in my heart! But it can be sufficient what I said to make known the immense bounty and mercy of my God toward a so miserable soul.

However, He never wanted to diminish my sensibility, nor my strong reluctance, both in order to make me honour what He suffered in the Garden of the Olives and to give me the chance for victory and humiliations. But, unfortunately, I am not faithful and fail frequently: and at times He seemed to be happy to oppose my pride and make me well grounded on the distrust of myself, seeing that without His help I could do only evil, fall down continually without the possibility of rising up again. Then this Greatest Good of my soul comes to my aid and as a good father He stretches out the arms of His love and says, "Do you see that you can do nothing without Me!" And this makes me feel a great gratitude towards His loving goodness, which makes me weep because I see that He is not taking revenge for my sins and continual infidelities but answers them with the excess of His love, by which He seems to triumph over my ingratitude. Sometimes He displays them under my eyes together with the great number of His graces, making me unable to express myself except through my tears. Then I suffer in a way I cannot tell!

In this way this Divine Love amuses Himself with His unworthy slave! Once that I was assisting a person suffering from dysentery, I felt some motions of nausea, He reproached me so severely that, in order to repair my negligence, I felt irresistibly moved to put my tongue into that dirt and to take it into my mouth. and I was going to swallow it if He had not reminded me that I could not take food without permission from my superiors. Then He said to me, "You are mad!" "O my Lord"-I answered Him-"I do it to please You, to attract Your Heart to me and I hope You will not refuse it! And You, Lord, who

have tried all possible means to win over men's hearts but they refuse and often chase you away!" "It's true, my daughter, my love caused me to sacrifice everything for them without obtaining the least token of love, so I want that you make up for their ingratitude by relying on the merits of My Heart. Yes, I want to give you My Heart! . . . "

But before all, you must become His victim of immolation to avert the punishments that My angry Father is ready to inflict on a certain community to correct it in His just wrath

72-JESUS DEMANDS FROM HER A BIG SACRIFICE IN FAVOUR OF HER COMMUNITY

And he showed me that community with its defects, causing God's anger, and at the same time, He disclosed to me all that I had to suffer in order to appease God's wrath

At this piece of news a thrill of horror caught up all my being and I did not have the courage to sacrifice myself. I said that being not free to dispose of myself, I had to get the permission from my Superior. Actually the fear of getting such permission made me avoid asking for it. But the Lord was following me without stop, without giving me rest. Eventually I broke out into tears and I felt compelled to tell my Superior about the desire of God. She, on seeing my pain, told me to sacrifice myself totally, according to His desire.

O my Lord, it was then that my anguish doubled for not having the courage to say "Yes" . . . and I was keeping on my resistance! . . .

73-SINCE SHE HAD PUT UP RESISTANCE, THE SACRIFICE HAD TO BE UNDERGONE IN MORE PAINFUL CONDITIONS

However, at the Vigil of the Presentation of Our Lord into the Temple, the Divine Justice appeared to me in a terrible form, so that I nearly fainted; and I could not hide myself from His eyes. I was told as St. Paul, "It will be hard for you to oppose resistance to the darts of My Divine Justice! But since you have opposed such a long resistance to avoid the humiliations that you should bear in order to make this sacrifice, I will multiply them. I wanted to demand from you a secret sacrifice, but now I want it to be public in a way and at a time contrary to human logic and accompanied by so humiliating circumstances that will cause you confusion for the rest of your life, both within your spirit and in front of creatures. In this way you will understand what does it mean to resist the Lord!"

Oh, I understood it very well, because I had never fallen into as miserable state before! I will tell something of it, but not all.

After evening prayers I could not come out of the church together with the others, but I remained in the sanctuary weeping and waiting until the last call for supper. I went to take a modest supper because it was the Vigil of the Presentation, and after having dragged my body with great efforts to the meeting place of the community, I felt interiorly so moved to do that sacrifice in a loud voice and as God had ordered me to do and I was compelled to leave and go to my Superior, who was sick at that time. I must confess that I was so out of my faculties, feeling to be like a person fasted hand and feet, that nothing remains free both interiorly and exteriorly except to shed the tears. . . . And I was shedding tears in plenty: they were the only outlet of my suffering. I felt to be the greatest sinner of the world, pulled with ropes to the place of execution. I was seeing God's Holiness armed with the darts of the divine wrath on the point of throwing them to

plunge me-so it seemed to me – into the open mouth of Hell, ready to devour me I felt in my body a voracious fire that was penetrating into the marrows of my bones All my body was shivering in a strange way and could say nothing else than, “ My Lord, have pity on me, according to your great mercy!” And I was growing without cease under the oppression of my suffering, without being able to go to my Superior, except at eight o’clock when a nun, having come across to me, led me there. She was greatly surprised in finding me in that condition, unable to express myself And, in addition, I had the impression that people looking at my face could understand my interior anguish

My Superior knowing that only obedience had power over that Spirit who was keeping me in those conditions ordered me to tell my trouble. I immediately confided to her the sacrifice that the Lord was asking from me in the presence of the community and the reason for what He was asking it from me. I will not tell this reason here in order not to offend charity and the Sacred Heart of Jesus who is the source of charity, because He does not want us to go against charity for whatever reason.

74-THE NIGHT OF AGONY

Eventually having done what My Sovereign expected from me, people passed different judgements on this. However, I put all these things in the hands of God’s mercy I can assure you, it seems to me, that I had never suffered so much, not even if I can put together all the sufferings that I had met till then and all those which I suffered afterwards and those that I might suffer until death, because nothing can be compared to what I suffered that night, when our Lord wanted to gratify His bad slave-girl in order to honour the night of His painful Passion, although mine was only a small trial

I was pushed from one place to another undergoing terrifying embarrassment That night was spent among torments that only God knows and without rest until about the time of Holy Mass when it seems to me to hear this words, “Eventually peace is made, and My holiness of justice is satisfied due to the sacrifice that you have made, in homage to that I made at the moment of the Incarnation in the womb of my Mother, the merit of which I wanted to join to the merit of the sacrifice you have made, in order to apply it to the plan of charity that I had shown to you. You should expect nothing for what you will do or suffer, neither in order to increase your merits nor in satisfaction for your sins nor for any other spiritual advantage: all have been put at my disposal for the sake of charity! Following my example, you should act and suffer in silence, without any other aim except that of God’s glory, to establish my kingdom in the heart of men through you ”

75- SHE CONTINUES TO SUFFER TO APPEASE GOD’S JUSTICE

My Sovereign gave me these holy instructions after having received Him [in the Holy Communion], however, He did not take me out from my state of suffering, in which I experienced unchanging peace by accepting all that I was suffering, and I learned that I would suffer till the day of my judgement, if the will of God should be like that, to the point that I had become only an object of contradiction, a discharge of refuse, scorn and humiliations that I saw with pleasure to fall on me from all sides, without getting any consolation both from heaven and earth. It seemed that everything was conspiring to annihilate me I was questioned without stop and the few answers that I could give with great efforts served as the instruments to increase my torture. I was in the impossibility to eat, to speak, to sleep, and all my rest and occupation consisted in staying prostrate in

front of my God, whose sovereign greatness kept me annihilated in the deepest abyss of my nothingness, always weeping and growing in begging mercy from Him and averting the scourges of His just wrath

And the occupation I had at that time gave my body and my spirit a lot to do so that I felt it as an unbearable torment, especially because, despite my pains, my Sovereign Master did not allow me to omit the least of them, nor to make me get dispensation, from my duties and rules, so that the sovereign power was pushing me as a criminal to the place of a new torture. I found suffering everywhere, and I was caught up in my worries, that I had no more strength nor life to see the pains that were befalling me. But all that did not cause me the least movement of anxiety or complaint, although among such pains I was pushed to do things in a way always most contrary to my nature and inclinations

76-MEALS WERE A TORTURE FOR HER

They noticed the fact that I did not eat, therefore I was scolded severely by my Superior and by my Confessor. They ordered me to eat what I was given at table. This type of order seemed too heavy for me and beyond my strength, but Jesus who did not spare me from sufferings when I had to suffer, gave me the strength to submit myself and to obey. Without excuses or objections, although I felt compelled after every meal to vomit all the food that I had taken. These conditions lasted for a long period and caused great pains at my stomach, so that I could not retain anything of what I had eaten. Then, that type of order was changed into the order to eat what I could. Taking food- I must confess it- caused me great sufferings ever since I went to the dining room as to a place of torture in reparation for my sins. Although I tried my best to eat all that was offered me indifferently, I could not abstain from taking what was less tasty, because I considered it more suitable for my misery and my nothingness. Bread and water seemed to be sufficient for me, all the rest I consider superfluous

77-SHE IS CONSIDERED TO BE POSSESSED BY THE DEVIL

To spend some more words about that state of suffering which was not improving but rather deteriorating because of new events very humiliating for me, I was considered to be possessed by the devil. I was sprinkled with holy water and they traced many signs of the cross on me and recited prayers to cast out the evil spirit from my body; but the One who was in me, did not go away, on the contrary He pressed me to Himself more strongly and said, "I like holy water and I love the cross very much to the point I cannot avoid uniting myself closely to those bear it with Me and out of love for Me!"

These words enkindled in my soul such a strong desire to suffer that what I was suffering seemed to be like a drop of water that instead of quenching my thirst for suffering increased it. I can say that there was not a single part of my being not touched by a special type of suffering both in my spirit and body. All this without receiving compassion or consolation, because the devil was attacking me fiercely; and without that Extraordinary Power that sustained me in all the trials that I have mentioned and fought for me, I would have failed one thousand times

My Superior, eventually, not knowing how to treat me, ordered me to receive Holy Communion and beg the Lord for the sake of the virtue of obedience that I had to practise, to restore me to my former state. After having presented myself to Him, as a

victim, He said to me, " Yes, my daughter, I am coming to you as the Supreme Sacrificer to bestow new energy on you and to provide new tortures for you ". And it happened like that. I found myself so changed that I felt to be like a slave -girl set into liberty. But such relief lasted for a short time. They started to say that it was the devil the one acting within me; and if I were not careful the devil, with his tricks and illusions, would drive me to Hell

78-SHE TRIES TO OPPOSE THE SPIRIT WHO LEADS HER

It was a shock for me (the fact that I was considered to be possessed by the devil) because I was always afraid to be deceived and to deceive-despite my contrary will- I wept bitterly because in no way I could escape the power of that Sovereign Spirit that was acting in me; and despite all my efforts, I could not distance me from Him nor impede His activity in my soul. He had taken possession of all the faculties of my spirit that I had the impression of being plunged into an abyss where all efforts to come out made me plunge into it more deeply: although I made use of all the means that I was suggested to resort to, but all turned out to be ineffective

Sometimes I struggled to the point of exhaustion ...but my Sovereign did not care for that and reassured me so strongly that all my doubts vanished immediately for He repeated to me, " What are you afraid of, since you are in the arms of the Almighty? Could He let you get lost and abandon you in the hands of your enemies being He Himself your Father, your Master, your Sovereign, since your tender age, after having given you continuous proofs of the tender love of His Divine Heart in Whom He has established your temporary and eternal dwelling? As a further proof, tell me what sign of My love you want and I will give it to you. But why are you struggling against the one who is your only true and unique friend?"

All these reproaches caused by my distrust caused me such grief and confusion that I resolved immediately not to request further proofs about the spirit who was guiding me, being ready to accept humbly and cordially all that could occur to me.

79-NEW EXPRESSION OF HER RELUCTANCE IN WRITING HER BIOGRAPHY

My Lord and my God, You alone know the pain that I feel in complying with this order and the struggle I have to undergo to overcome the reluctance and the confusion that I feel in writing all this, grant me the grace to die rather than to write down something different from what comes from Your Spirit and that will not increase Your glory and my humiliation! I beg Your mercy not to let anyone see this writing except the one that You want to examine it, so that I could remain in a state of eternal contempt and oblivion from the part of creatures. O my God, give such consolation to Your poor and miserable hand-maid!

All at a sudden, my petition got this answer, " Entrust everything to My divine will and let Me accomplish my plans without interfering in any way: I will care for everything! "

I continue therefore for the sake of obedience, O my God, without any aim except that of pleasing You, to write despite the torture I suffer because every word I write costs me suffering, May You be glorified forever!

But, see how He showed me His will in regard to this writing: I always felt the attraction to love my Sovereign Lord for His sake, without desiring anything else but

Him alone, I never attached myself to His gifts, no matter how great they were in my regard, and I did not reflect on them, in order to forget everything to be able to think only of Him, because without Him all counts nothing for me

So when I was ordered to write my biography, I thought that it was impossible to write things of the past. However, He convinced me of the contrary because-to facilitate my task- in describing the facts of my life one after the other, He made me feel what I felt at the times these events took place. From this I understood that it is His will that I write these things

80-OUR LORD SENDS HER FATHER DE LA COLOMBIERE

Despite the fears and the pains I was suffering, my spirit was always in a state of unchangeable peace. They made me meet some experts who-far from encouraging me-made me suffer more-, eventually Our Lord sent me Reverend Father de la Colombiere who I had met some years before, when my Sovereign Master-some times after my consecration to Him-had promised to send me one of His Servants to whom I should manifest, according to the knowledge that I had, all the treasures and all the secrets that His Sacred Heart had confided to me; He sent him to me to ensure me that my way was safe and to grant him the treasures of His Heart, such treasures would be granted also in abundance during our conversations. When that holy man came to us, during his talk to the community, I heard within myself these words, " See the one that I am sending to you!" And I notice it at the first talk on the occasion of the Ember Days. Without having seen him or having met each other before, he entertained me for a long time and spoke to me in a way that showed he had already understood what was taking place in me. However, on that occasion I did not want to open my heart to him. Since he had noticed that I wanted to leave him for fear of hindering my community, he asked me if I would like to meet him again later on, to talk together with more calm. Due to my timidity that causes me to avoid such communications, I answered him that being not free to make decisions by myself, I would obey my Superior. I left the confessional box after one and half hour

After a short interval he returned and although I knew that it was God's will for me to open my soul to him, I felt terrible reluctance in meeting him and I manifested this to him. He answered that he was pleased to give me the chance to offer an act of self-denial to God.

81-THE REVEREND FATHER URGES HER AND TELLS HER TO HOLD THE GIFTS OF GOD IN GREAT ESTEEM

Then without difficulty and without standing on ceremonies I manifested what was passing in me, both good and evil. He consoled me very much by encouraging me to be not at all afraid under the guidance of the Spirit who was lending me because it was not distorting me from obedience; he encouraged me to follow the impulses of that Divine Spirit by abandoning myself to Him in order to be sanctified and sacrificed according to His will

He admired the infinite goodness of our Lord that did not take offense for my resistance and taught me to hold in great esteem the gifts of God and to accept with the respect and humility the frequent communications and the familiar talks by which the Lord favored me and obliged me to an unceasing thanksgiving towards His great bounty

When I confided to him that the Sovereign of my soul was following me closely with any regard of time and place and that I could not pray orally except with extreme efforts, to the point that sometimes I was staying with the open mouth unable to utter a single word, especially in reciting the rosary, he told me not to force myself any more, and I should recite only the prayers prescribed by the rule, and recite the rosary only if possible for me.

And when I told him about the special expressions of love that I received from the Beloved of my soul-and I do not want to describe it -he told me that for all this I had very good reasons to humble myself and to admire the great mercy of God in my regard.

However, that Infinite Bounty did not want me to receive any consolation except at the price of humiliations. That long conversation caused me a lot of humiliations and even the Father had to suffer because of me.

They said that I was willing to seduce him by telling my illusions and deceive him as I had done with others. However, he did not bother himself at all, and he continued to help me for all the time he remained in that city and always after then. I wondered one hundred times about the fact that he did not abandon me as others had done, because my way of dealing with him would have hurt anyone. However, I should admit that he did not spare any chance to make me feel humble and to rebuke me... and all this turned out to be very agreeable to me.

82-" PURE LOVE UNITES THESE THREE HEARTS FOR EVER"

One morning when he came to celebrate Mass in our Church, our Lord granted him extraordinary graces and granted them also to me. When I was receiving Holy Communion, Jesus manifested me His Heart as a burning furnace and I saw two other hearts that were going to get united totally with His Hearts for all eternity!"

Then Jesus explained to me the spiritual meaning of such union, destined for the glory of His Sacred Heart who wanted me to reveal his treasures to Fr. de la Colombiere, so that this Father could make propaganda of its value and utility.

For this reason Jesus wanted that we two were like brother and sister sharing especially the spiritual goods. When I explained to Jesus my poverty and the difference existing between me and a man of so high degree of virtue and merits, being I myself a miserable sinner, He reassured me by saying,

"The infinite riches of My Heart will make up and equalize everything. You should talk to him without fear"

That's what I did at our first encounter. The humble readiness based on deep gratitude by which he received the message and many other things regarding him that I related to him from the part of my Divine Sovereign touched me so much that I got more profit than from many sermons. I added that Our Lord had given me these graces in order to be glorified by the souls to whom I would tell orally or in writing, according to His desires, and Jesus did not want me to get worried about what to say or to write, because He would infuse the unction of His grace to obtain the effect He wanted from those who would receive His message well.

I expressed to him my strong reluctance to write and to send sheet with written message to people from whom I received great humiliations. He ordered me never to stop -no matter what kind of pain and humiliation would come out as a result-following the holy motions of that Spirit, and to tell only what He was inspiring me, and after having

written the message, to give the piece of paper to my Superior, and let her do as she pleased And that's what I did.

83-FR DE LA COLOMBIERE ORDERED HER TO WRITE WHAT WAS TAKING PLACE IN HER

How many humiliations caused me this way of doing! The Father also ordered me to write what was taking place in my soul, but I felt a deadly reluctance I wrote for the sake of obedience and then I burned everything, thinking of having done what obedience was demanding from me. I suffered very much because of this. They did not agree and forbade me to continue to do so

84-LAST WILLS WRITTEN BY MOTHER GREYFIE. AS A REWARD OUR LORD MAKES A DONATION TO ST. MARGARET MARY AND SHE WRITE IT WITH HER BLOOD AND ENGRAVE ON HER HEART (31 DECEMBER 1678)

My Sovereign Sacrificer once asked me to make, in His favour and in writing, a kind of Last Wills or total donation without reservation –as I had already done for Him orally- of all the prayers and good works that others would do for me either before and after my death. He asked me to ask my Superior if she wanted to play the role of the notary in redacting this deed. He would compensate her generously. In case the Superior refused, He told me to ask His servant, Father de la Colombiere. However, my Superior accepted my request, and when I presented the Only Love of my soul the deed written by her, He was very pleased and told me He wanted it in order to use it according to His plans and in favour of those He liked. But since His love had despoiled me of everything, He did not set apart for me anything else than the treasures of His Heart, which He gave me immediately, after having made me write with my blood under His dictation the deed. Then with a small knife I signed it on my breast by engraving on it the name of Jesus.

When I had done that, He reassured me that He would compensate one hundred fold all the good that people will do to me, considering it as if it were done to Himself, since I had no more rights. And to the one who had drawn my Last Wills He would give what He gave to St. Clare of Montefalco, enriching every actions of hers with infinite merits; and the love for the Sacred Heart will make her merit the same crown of glory. This consoled me very much because I loved that Mother Superior very much because she nourished my soul abundantly with the delicious bread of mortification and humiliations, pleasing my Divine Sovereign so much, and to please Him I would like that all people could be involved in helping her [to mortify and humble me]

This way, my God grants me the grace of mortification and humiliations without stop and my life is spent totally among physical sufferings, because my secknesses are frequent and other suffering are added

85-ALL TURNS INTO HUMILIATION FOR HER AND SHE DOES NOT FIND ANY COMFORT EXCEPT IN THE LORD

My spirit suffered very much for the abandonment and desolation and in seeing my Lord offended, because He in His goodness always sustains me, among persecutions, contradictions and humiliations from the part of creatures, as well as in regard to temptations coming from the devil who tormented and persecuted me, and also in regard

to the most cruel enemy and the most difficult to defeat i e myself. It is to be noticed the fact, that among the troubles just mentioned, I was overburdened with activities and external affairs which absorbed all my energies. And another not little pain I suffered was that of feeling myself to be the object of horror in regard to all creatures; I had the impression that they could hardly tolerate me while I was unbearable to myself. In these conditions, I cannot tell how painful for me was conversation and dealing with my neighbours. And I could not find any remedy except in the love for my objection in which I kept on considering because everything turned out to be for my humiliation, even the smallest actions. I was mocked as a visionary, a stubborn one in her illusions and imaginations; meanwhile I was not allowed to find the least relief in such bitterness, or any consolation: my Divine Master forbade me to do so. He wanted me to suffer all in silence, after having given me this directive,

"I am going to suffer everything without complaints, because pure love forbids me to be afraid". He wanted me to expect everything from Him. And if I had tried to find some consolation in something else, instead of finding relief, I would encounter new desolation and new torments. I would consider one of the main graces of my Lord the precious gift of the cross, although I had always made bad use of it, becoming unworthy of such a great gift. In addition, I always wished ardently to consume myself in loving people with feelings of love, gratitude and thanksgiving in regard to my Deliverer cherishing such feelings in my heart and enjoying my cross. I can exclaim, "How to repay the Lord for such great gifts? My Lord, how great is Your bounty, by making me take part in the banquet of the saints and take the same food you gave them to maintain them alive, I could make full use of the delicacies of you privileged and faithful friends despite the fact that I am an unworthy and miserable sinner."

86-"WITHOUT THE BLESSED SACRAMENT OF THE EUCHARIST AND WITHOUT CROSS IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO LIVE". SHE BECOMES A PERFECT IMAGE OF THE CRUCIFIED JESUS.

You know well, my Lord, that I without the Blessed Eucharist and without cross, I could not survive in this valley of tears, where I never wanted that my pains diminished because the more my body suffered, and the more my spirit rejoiced and was free to care for Jesus, to get united with the suffering Jesus, ardently wishing to be transformed into a perfect copy of Jesus crucified. I experienced great joy when His Supreme Bounty made use of so many people for the materialization of His divine work, according to His merciful plans. However, this Sovereign never departed from His unworthy victim, of whom He knew the weak points and inability to do good, and sometimes He said to me, "I honor you very much, my dear daughter, when I use so noble just instruments to crucify Me! My eternal Father put me into the cruel hands of ruthless tortures to crucify Me, but for you, I make use of people dedicated to Myself and consecrated to My service, I have put you into their hands and I demand that you offer what they will make you suffer for their eternal Salvation"

I did so with all my heart, and if someone in treating me, offended my God, I offered myself spontaneously to undergo the punishment that those persons deserved. However, I did not have the impression of being unjust in making me suffer, because I was convinced that I deserved much more. I must admit that I enjoy very much in talking

about my happiness in suffering and I would write many volumes in regard, without satisfying my desire, but in such descriptions my self-love found many satisfactions

87-SHE SPENT FIFTY HOURS WITHOUT DRINKING WATER IN HONOUR OF THE THIRST OF JESUS ON THE CROSS

Once my Sovereign Lord made understand that He wanted me to go to a lonely place, not really to wilderness-as He did-but into the solitude of His Sacred Heart where I could enjoy His intimacy, as a friend with his friend. He would give me new teachings about His divine will and grant me new strength to accomplish them, fighting generously till death. I had to suffer many attacks from my enemies, therefore He wanted me to fast for fifty day by taking only bread and water in honour of His fasting in the desert. However, my Superior did not allow me to do so because she wanted me to avoid all kinds of singularity. Then He made me understand how He would like me to spend fifty days without drinking water in honour of the strong thirst His Sacred Heart always suffered for the salvation of the sinners and in hour of the thirst He had suffered on the tree of the cross. I got permission to do this type of penance that seemed to me harder than the first one on because of the great thirst that torments me, which often causes me to drink big cups of water to refresh myself.

88-SHE IS STRONGLY TEMPTED OF DESPAIR, PRIDE AND GLUTTONY

During that long period of time I had to endure hard struggle against Satan who tempted me above all with temptations of despair, showing me that a wicked creature as I was could not expect to go to Heaven, because I had no more love for God and I would be deprived of such love for all eternity. Such temptations made me shed torrents of tears. Some other times the devil attacked me with temptations of vainglory and with the hateful temptation of gluttony, by making me feel strong pangs of hunger, then he showed me all that could stimulate my gluttony; and this took place during the time of prayer. It was a strange type of torture. This type of hunger stopped as soon as I set foot in the dining room to take the meals in common, then I felt such nausea which caused me to make terrible efforts to take some food. After I had left the dining room, I felt again the strong pangs of hunger which seemed to be irresistible. My Superior to whom I did not conceal anything for fear of being deceived, ordered me to ask Jesus for permission to eat when I felt the pang of hunger more strongly. I did so with the greatest efforts because of the great shame that I felt. And instead of sending me to the dining room, she scolded and humbled me strongly, ordering me to reserve my appetite for the time of my regular meals. Then, I stayed calm in my suffering. In regard to my penance of abstaining from drinking, at that time I could not complete it, but, as soon as I had obeyed, I was allowed to start it again, so I spent the all fifty days without drinking, as I used to do every Friday.

I was always happy, no matter if permissions were given me or refund to me. obeying was enough for me!

89-A PARTICULAR TEMPTATION SHE EXPERIENCED ONE DAY WHEN SHE WAS IN FRONT OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT ON BEHALF OF THE KING

My persecutor (Satan) was giving me no rest, he attacked me from all sides, except in regard to purity, because on that point my Divine Master had forbidden him to molest me. However, on one occasion I had to suffer terrible pains, and see why.

My Superior said to me, "Go in front of the Blessed Sacrament and hold the post of the king" When I got there, I was assailed by terrible and duty temptations that made me feel to be in Hell I put up with this torment for several hours in continuation, until my Superior dispensed me from this order, saying that in front of the Blessed Sacrament I should no more hold the post of the king, but that of a good nun of the Visitation

90-SHE EXPERIENCES THE BITTERNESS OF THE CALVARY EVERYWHERE

Jesus wanted from me continuous acts of self-denial. He would sharpen my sensibility and made me reluctance more acute, so that everything had to be done with effort and violence, all this to give me the chance to win also in small and indifferent matters

And really it was like that. He told me that I would not taste sweetness any longer, except in the bitterness of the Calvary and He wanted me to find martyrdom in all that produces joy, pleasure, temporal happiness for others. I experienced this in very sensitive way, because all that can be called pleasure became for me a torture. Even during the recreation time, which sometimes I took, I suffered more than when I had very high fever, since He wanted me to play as all the others. Then I said to Him, "My beloved Sovereign, how much it costs me this time of relaxation!"

The dining room, the bed, all caused such torment to me that when I approached them I burst into groans and tears

In addition, the offices and the waiting room were unbearable and never-as far as I remember- I got there without overcoming terrible reluctance so that often I had to kneel down begging the Lord for the strength to control myself Writing was not less painful, not because I used to write kneeling but because of the pain I felt.

Esteem, praises and approbation made me suffer more than what humiliations, scorns objections can caused pain to vainglorious and ambitious people. On those occasions I could not help but begging the Lord saying, "My Lord, please rouse all the powers of Hell against me but do not allow the tongues if creatures utter praises, flatteries, approvals in my regard, it will be much better to have all the humiliations, pains, contradictions and all types of shame fall on my head!"

91-JESUS WANTS HER TO RECEIVE EVERYTHING AS COMING FROM HIMSELF AND WANTS HER TO CARE ONLY FOR HIM!

He gave me an ardent thirst for humiliations, suffering and contradictions and made me feel them very painful so that at times I could not impede to make this appear externally. It was a great torment for me to realize that due to my poor practice of humility and mortification, I was unable to suffer anything without showing it externally and being noticed. All my relief consisted in loving my objection and thank my Sovereign for allowing me to appear what I really was, to lower myself in the eyes of creatures

In addition, He wanted me to receive everything as coming from Himself, without permitting me to get things by myself. I had to abandon everything into His hands without disposing of anything from my part, to thank Him for pains and for joys and in distressing and humiliating conditions to think that all this was the right punishment for my sins and I deserved even more, and to offer my pains for the people who made me suffer. I had always to speak about Him with the greatest reverence and about people

with expressions of esteem and compassion, and never to speak about myself, or only briefly and with scorn, except in the case that His glory demanded an exception, always to attribute the good and the glory to His supreme greatness and to me all the evil; not to look for consolations outside Him; and when He had granted me some consolations, to be ready to renounce them by doing a sacrifice; not to be attached to anything, to be empty and deprived of everything, not to love anything else but Him, in Him and out of love for Him, in all things not to take into consideration other than Him and the interests of His glory and forgetting myself totally

And although I had to do all my actions only to please Him, He wanted each action to be made in a special way in honour of His Divine Heart. At the time of recreation-for instance-I had to console Him by accepting pains, humiliations, mortification and all the rest that He will send to me and that I should receive all with joy for this purpose. At meals He wanted me to make Him a present of what I found to be more tasty, and the same had to be done in all other activities

In addition, He forbade me to judge, to accuse, to condemn anybody but myself. He favoured me with other directives and since I was worried about their great number, He encouraged me by saying that He was a skilful teacher, very powerful that He could make people practise what He was teaching being very wise in teaching and directing. I can guarantee that despite my natural reluctance, He always made me behave according to His will.

92-THE GREAT REVELATION ABOUT CULT OF THE SACRED HEART(JUNE 1675)

It was on one day of the Octave of the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ, when I was in front of the Blessed Sacrament, then I received from the part of my Lord the immense graces of His Love.

I felt the obligation to reciprocate the gift by loving Him more and more. Then He said to me, "You cannot offer me greater love than by doing what many times I asked you for"

Then, disclosing His Sacred Heart for me, He added. " See the Heart that so loved men and had spared nothing to the point of exhausting Himself and getting consumed to prove My love for them! And in return I don't get from the majority of people anything but ingratitude because of their lack of reverence, sacrileges, indifference, insults in regard to Myself and this Sacrament of Love. But what makes me suffer most is the fact that people consecrated to me do that . . .

" I ask you therefore that on the First Friday after the Octave of the Feast of the Blessed Sacrament there should be a special feast in honour of My Heart, by offering the reparation of honour through an honorable amend and by receiving Holy Communion on that day in order to atone for the sins committed in his regard when He was exposed on the altars. I promised you that my Heart will bestow generously the fruits of His divine love on those who will render Him this honour and care that also others will do the same "

93-SHE HAD TO ASK FR. DE LA COLOMBIERE FOR THE EXECUTION OF THIS PLAN

Since I had answered Him that I did not know how to materialize what I wanted for a long time, He told me to look for His Servant that He had sent to me for the accomplishment of this plan. When I had contacted the Father, he told me to write what the Sacred Heart of Jesus had said and many other things that regarded him personally for the glory of God. The Lord made me find great consolations in this holy man, both for the fact that through him I learned how to collaborate in God's plans and for the fact that he reassured me against my strong fears of being deceived, and such fears made me sigh continually. When the Lord made him leave this town to employ him in the conversion of the infidels, I accepted this shock with total submission to God's will, who made use of him to do me much good during the short period he was with us. And since I was reflecting on this fact, Jesus reproached me by saying, "Is it that I am not sufficient to you since I am your origin and your end?"

All this was enough to make me abandon all totally to Him, since I was sure that the He would not let me lack what is necessary for me.

94-THE FEAST OF ST MARGARET (20 JULY 1685)

However, I did not find the way to make blossom devotion to the Sacred Heart which was the only desire of my life! Look, the first opportunity was given me by His bounty. The feast of the St. Margaret that years was following on Friday; I asked our sister novices of whom I was in charge to offer to the Sacred Heart all the small acts of honour that they wanted to present to me on the occasion of my patron saint feast day. They agreed enthusiastically. They prepared a small altar and placed on it a picture of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, drawn by them, and tried to present Him all the homage that the Sacred Heart inspired them. And this was enough to cause to me and to them many humiliations, contradiction and mortification for the only reason that I was accused of introducing a new devotion.

95-THE SMALL CELEBRATION AT THE NOVITIATE STIRS UP CONTRADICTIONS

All these sufferings made me rejoice deeply, and I was afraid of nothing except that the Sacred Heart remained without honours. All that people murmured against me was always as a sharp sword piercing my heart. I was forbidden to expose pictures of the Sacred Heart; the only thing I was allowed to do was to honour Him in private. Among such problems I did not know to whom I should turn except to Him who was always ready to sustain my drooping spirits, by repeating continually to me: "Do not be afraid! I will reign despite my enemies and all those who will oppose me!" This consoled me very much because I wanted only to see Him reign! I entrusted to Him the defense of my cause while I was suffering in silence.

96-PERSECUTIONS CAUSED BY THE DISMISAL OF THE YOUNG LADY OF CHAMRON

I had to suffer a number of other persecutions, it seemed the all the Hell was turning against me, aiming at destroying me. I must admit that I had never enjoyed deeper peace of soul and never tasted a sweeter joy than when I was threatened to be put into prison or to be taken to the court-as my Divine Master-of a secular judge, being made a laughing-stock and stubborn visionary, due to my imagination and vain illusions.

I say this because I do not want to make people believe that I suffered much but to manifest the great mercy of God in regard to me who did not love or esteem anything more than to suffer, because suffering was my daily food of which I was never tired

97-HER ADRENT DESIRE OF HOLY COMMUNION MAKES THE LORD GRANT HER A VERY SPECIAL WORD WHICH CAUSES HER TO EXPRESS GREAT LOVE AND GRATITUDE

If I was granted the possibility to receive Holy Communion frequently my heart would be completely satisfied. Once while I ardently desired to receive Holy Communion, I could see our Lord when I was busy to carry the rubbish and He said to me, "My daughter, I have heard your yearnings and the desires of your heart are so pleasing to Me that if I had not instituted the Sacrament of Holy Communion, I would institute it for you, in order to have the joy of staying in your heart and rest in it." All those words caused such burning feelings that I felt all my soul raptured in God, without being able to utter other words than these: "Oh love! Oh excess of God's love for such a miserable creatures!" And for the rest of my life those words were a powerful stimulant of gratitude towards this pure love.

98-SHE PRAYS FOR THE SUFFERING SOUL OF A BENEDICTINE MONK

Another time, while I was in front of the Blessed Sacrament on the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ, all at a sudden, I saw a person all immersed in fire, and those flames seemed to reach out to me and burn me up together with that person. From the miserable condition of that soul I understood that he was a soul of the purgatory and this caused me to weep much.

I learned that it was the soul of a Benedictine monk who had heard my confession once and had ordered me to receive Holy Communion

In return, the Lord granted him the favour to recur to me in order to find relief for his pains and to ask me to pass on him the merit of what I would do and suffer for three months. I promised to help him after having received permission from my Superior

He disclosed to me that the first cause of his suffering was to have preferred what was advantageous for him rather than what was advantageous for God's glory, because he was too much attached to his reputation; the second cause, consisted in some defects in regard to charity towards his confreres; the third cause was a too natural affection to creatures and the proofs of affection that he had showed to them while talking about religious matters. a thing which displeases the Lord very much!

I can hardly express how much I had to suffer during those three months. He was not leaving me alone and from his part I saw all in fire and I experienced so acute pains that I could not stop growing and weeping in continuation.

My Superior, moved to compassion, ordered me to do some sort of penance, especially to scourge myself, because the exterior pains took for the sake of charity were alleviating very much those pains that Divine Holiness was inflicting on me to make me taste what divine holiness requests from those miserable souls. After three months I saw him completely different from the first time: he was radiant with joy, shining in glory, on the point of entering into eternal bliss! In thanking me, he promised to protect me in front of God. I was sick but my sickness stopped with his own suffering and very soon I felt well

99-OUR LORD MADE HER SUFFER THE ANGUISH OF A SOUL IN DANGER OF ETERNAL DAMNATION

My Sovereign Master made me know that when He wanted to abandon some souls for whom He wanted me to suffer, he would make me experience the state of a soul rejected by God and undergoing the desolation which such soul experiences on the point of death Oh! Nothing is more horrible than that I cannot find suitable words to express what I felt

Once, while I was working alone, I saw in vision a nun-at that time still alive- and I heard a voice telling me clearly,

"Look, this nun who is such only in name and I am on the point of vomit her from my Heart and abandon her to herself!"

At that moment I was so embarrassed that I fell face to the ground and I remained in that position for a long time without being able to stand up, and meanwhile I offered myself to the Divine Justice in order to suffer according to God's will asking the Lord not to abandon her.

Then I had the impression that His just wrath was addressed to me; I fell into immense and terrifying anguish and desolation. I had the impression of having an unbearable burden on my shoulders. Its raised my eyes, I could see the Lord irritated against me holding a stick and the scourges, ready to strike me, on the other side, I saw the Hell open to get me into it. I felt a sense of rebellion and confusion. The enemy was attacking me with strong temptations of despair, I was trying to escape the sight of the Lord who was chasing me, but I could not conceal myself from his sight. I would like to suffer all pains rather than that. I suffered from a deep sense of shame being convinced that my pains were known all over the world.

I was unable either to pray either to express my suffering except through tears and by murmuring: "How awful is to fall into the hands of the living God!" other times, throwing myself to the ground and facing it I begged: "Strike, o Lord! Cut, burn and destroy what you do not like, do not spare either my body or my life, or my flesh or my blood in order to save this soul!"

100-SHE OFFERS HERSELF TO THE LORD TO UNDERGO DIVINE ANGER FOR THE SINFUL SOULS

I should admit that I could not bear this painful situation for long if, under the scourges of Divine Justice, I had not been sustained by Divine Mercy. I became sick and I could recover with difficulty.

Many times the Lord made me undergo such painful dispositions. Once, while I was in this situation, after having showed to me the punishments prepared for certain souls, I threw myself to his feet and begged Him saying: "O my Saviour, vent all your anger on me and even cancel my name from the book of life. but do not permit that these souls who cast You so much, get lost! "

He answered me, "They do not love you and will not stop making you suffer,," "This doesn't matter, my Lord, provided that they love You, I will not stop begging You to forgive them"

"Let Me do it. I cannot tolerate them any longer. !"

Embracing Jesus more strongly I added: "No, my Lord, I will not let You go until You have forgiven them" And He added: "Yes, of you accept to pray for them"

"Yes, my Lord, but I will pray always relying on the goods which are the treasures of Your Sacred Heart!" Then He was satisfied!

101-THE SONG OF THE SERAPHIMS, HIS "DIVINE ASSOCIATES"

Another time, while we were working together in processing hemp, I withdrew to a small consider next to the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, and, although I continued to work kneeling down, all at a sudden, I felt strong concentration both interiorly and exteriorly, and I saw the Beloved Sacred Heart of Jesus shining more brightly than the sun the Heart of Jesus was immersed in the flames of His pure love, surrounded by Seraphims who were singing in choir,

"Love triumphs, love rejoices, the love of the Sacred Heart makes people happy."

Those blessed spirits were inviting me to join them in praising the Divine Heart saying that they had come "to join me to present an everlasting homage of love, adoration and praise to the Sacred Heart, and they would take my place in front of the Blessed Sacrament so that through them, I could love Jesus without interruption, and while they joined me in loving Jesus, suffering in my person, I would be able to rejoice in their person"

They immediately wrote this agreement with that Sacred Heart in golden letter and with the indelible character of love. All this lasted for two or three hours, but its effects influenced all my life, both for the help I receive from them and for the sweetness that ever since does not leave me, while I am plunged into an abyss of confusion

From then onward, in my prayers, I call them only with the name of "my divine associates" This grace gave me such a yearning for the purity of intention and such a profound idea of the intention one needs to converse with the Lord, that I feel that my intention is never pure enough

102-AT THE COST OF A PAINFUL SACRIFICE SHE OBTAINED THE GRACE OF THE RECEPTION OF THE LAST SACRAMENTS FOR THE LITTLE SISTER DE SENNECE

Another time, one of our Sisters who had fallen into lethargic sleep, gave no hope of being able to receive the Last Sacraments. All this caused a deep pain to the whole community and in a special way to our Mother (Mother Superior) who ordered me to promise to the Lord whatever He demanded in order to obtain that grace. I had not yet carried out this order when the Sovereign of my soul assured me that little Sister would not pass away without receiving the grace so described, on condition that I promised to do three things for Him which He wanted from me absolutely. The first one was that I should never refuse tasks in community, the second one was that I should never refuse to go to the waiting room, the third one was that I should never refuse to write.

At these conditions, I confess that I was shivering for the reluctance I felt. I answered, "O my Lord, You touch me on my weak points! However, I will ask for permission"

The permission was given me immediately, despite the reluctance I felt and the Lord asked me to make a promise under vow so that I could never withdraw from it. But, alas, how many infidelities I made in this regard! since He did not diminish the reluctance I felt at that time and for the rest of my life. Eventually the little Sister was able to receive the Last Sacraments

103-THE HOLY NAME OF JESUS ON MY HEART

And to show to what extent my infidelity was going, despite such great favours, I should say that, one year, desiring ardently to make my Spiritual Exercises and prepare myself for them a few days before, I wanted for a second time to engrave on my breast the Holy Name of Jesus

But things went in such a way that wounds got formed. I reported the fact to my Mother Superior the day before starting my Spiritual Exercises and she said that it was necessary to apply some remedy to avoid dangerous consequences. Turning then to the Lord, I complained saying, "O my Unique Love, why do You allow that others see the mistake I have made out of love for You? Are You not powerful enough to heal me, since You are the sovereign remedy for all my wrongs"

He, moved in front of the pain I had experienced in disclosing what I had done, promised me that the following day I would recover, and His promise came true. However, I could not yet see Mother Superior when she sent me a note directing me to show my wounds to the nun bringing the note to me, so that she could apply some remedy on my wounds. Since I had recovered, I did not feel the obligation to obey the order waiting for the time I could report the fact to Mother Superior whom I approached immediately, telling her that I had not done what she had ordered me in her note, because I had recovered

My Lord! This delay in obeying caused me a severe chastisement, both from the part of Mother Superior and from the part of my Divine Master, who put me under His feet for five days to weep for my disobedience, invoking forgiveness through continuous penitence! My Mother Superior treated me on that occasion with extreme severity following the inspirations of our Lord. I was deprived of Holy Communion, causing me the greatest pain: I would have preferred death one thousand times more. She compelled me to show my disease to the nun, who having found me cured, did nothing. But the shame and the humiliation were not less because of my recovery.

All this seemed to be nothing and I would bear every other torment because I was saddened at the thought of having offended my Divine Sovereign who, eventually, after having showed to me how much He was displeased for the smallest breach of obedience from the part of a nun, and having made me do penance for it, He personally came in the last days of my Spiritual Exercises to wipe away my the tears and give new life to my soul

However, despite his divine sweetness and caress, my sorrow was still persisting. At the only thought of having offended Him, I was in tears, because He had shown me the value of obedience for a nun! I had never understood it in such a way and it would be too long to retell it. He warned me that, as a punishment for my fault, that Sacred Name- that I had engraved on my breast with much suffering in memory of what He had suffered in taking this Sacred Name, not only will disappear but also the traces of previous engraving, which were still visible, will disappear all together.

I can say that I spent the time of my Spiritual Exercises in pain....

104-MOTHER GREYFIE TELLS HER TO ASK JESUS FOR FIVE MONTHS OF GOOD HEALTH AS A PROOF THAT SHE IS LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD

My diseases were continuous. they did not let me rest for four days in continuation. One morning, while I was depressed to the point that I could not speak, our Mother Superior came to see me and gave me a piece of paper ordering me to execute what was written on it. she needed to discern with certainty if what was occurring in me was coming from the spirit of God, and as a sign that all was coming from Him, she wanted that the Lord would grant me, for the space of five months, perfect good health without any treatment. If it was the Devil acting me or my nature, I should go on with my ordinary ups and downs.

Its is impossible to express the pain I felt in reading that note, the contents of which were already clear to me!

She made me get out of the infirmary uttering words, inspired by the Lord, which were harsh and mortifying for my nature. I showed that sheet to my Sovereign who did not ignore its contents. Jesus declared,

" I assure you, my daughter, that to show her how good is the spirit which leads you, I will grant you as many years of good health as the number of months she required and every other assurance requested by her "

Exactly at the moment of the Elevation of the Blessed Host, I felt-but in the most sensitive way-that I was stripped of a robe left hanging in the air

105-MOTHER GREYFIE CASTS HER OUT OF THE INFIRMARY AND MAKES HER JOIN THE RETREAT. OUR LORD HEALS HER

I felt to be sound and well as a very strong person, recovered since a long time. I spent the months agreed and then I fell in the previous conditions of health.

Once I was with fever and Mother Superior ordered me to get out of the infirmary because- being my turn -I had to make my annual retreat and she said to me , " Go, I trust you to the cares of our Lord Jesus Christ. May He direct you, govern you, heal you according to His will"

This fact surprised me a little, because just in that moment I was shivering with fever. I was happy to obey and to be under the care of the Divine Master, being given a new opportunity to suffer for His sake, indifferent about the way I would spend the time of my retreat, either suffering or rejoicing. " All is all right for me! Provided He is pleased and I can love Him!" I was saying this within myself. But, as soon as I was alone with Him, He appeared to me who was lying on the floor, frozen and growing. He made me get up bestowing a thousand caresses on me and saying. " Now you belong to Me and to My care totally, I want to give you back in good health to those who have put you sick in My hands" And He restored me to such perfect good health that nobody could suspect that I have been sick. All were amazed and in particular my Mother Superior, who knew very well what had happened.

106-SHE EXPERIENCES GREAT JOYS AND GIVES HERSELF TO THE MOST HARSH ACTS OF SELF-DENIAL.

I had never spent the time of my retreat with so many spiritual consolations. I had the real impression of being in Heaven because of those continuous divine favours, tenderness, familiarity with the Lord Jesus Christ, with the Blessed Mother Mary, with

my Garden Angel, and My Blessed Father Francis de Sales! However, I do not intend to describe in detail the very special graces I received at that time, it would too long I should say that my lovable Director in order to console me about the affliction I had experienced since His Sacred and Adorable Name was cancelled from my breast, after I had engraved it with so much pain, wanted to engrave it outside and inside with the seal and engraving tool of His pure love, but in such a way that caused me one thousand more joy and comfort in comparison of the great pain and spasm I had suffered on the occasion of my first engraving!

I was lacking only the cross, without which it's impossible for me to live and taste the least pleasure, spiritual or divine, because all my delights consisted in seeing me similar to my suffering Jesus. Therefore I was always intent to treat my body with all types of hardships permitted me by the freedom I possessed. My body experienced many types of mortification and deprivation of food, and in regard to sleeping, I had prepared a bed full of potsherds on which I reclined with immense joy. My nature was shrinking, but in vain, I did not pay attention to it.

I wanted also to subject myself to a type of penance which attracted me very much, aiming at punishing myself for all the abuses Jesus receives in the Blessed Sacrament from and from the part of those who disowned Him. While I was on the point to carry out my plan, my Sovereign Master forbade me to do so, because He wanted to give me back, in good health, to my Superior, who had entrusted me to His cares and He would rather prefer the sacrifice of renouncing my plan than its execution, because being He spirit, wanted spiritual sacrifices. I was happy to comply with Him.

107-HE PLACES A CROWN OF THORNS ON HER HEAD

One morning, while I was receiving Holy Communion, the sacred host seemed to be shining more than the sun to the point I could not stand its brightness and in it I saw Jesus holding a crown of thorns. A few instants after I had received it in the Holy Communion, He placed it on my head, saying, "Receive, my daughter, this crown symbolic of the one you are going to receive very soon and become similar to Me." I did not understand the meaning at that time; but I knew it from the effects which followed. And these consisted in two terrible blows I received on my head, so that from that moment on I have the impression that my head is surrounded with very sharp thorns, the pains of which will end when I die, I thank the Lord from the bottom of my heart for granting such great graces to His miserable victim.

But, alas, I often tell Him that the victims should be innocent while I am a sinner. I confess, however, that I consider myself more in debt to my Sovereign for His precious crown than if He had offered me all the diamonds of the greatest kings of the earth, much more for the fact that nobody can stole them from me, and they often put me into the happy necessity of being sleepless and spend the time during the night in the company with the object of my love, being unable to recline my head on the pillow, as my Divine Master could not recline His adorable head on the bed of the cross. While thinking about this, I am filled with joy, with an unspeakable consolation as always when I see myself similar to Him in some way.

It was just with such suffering that He wanted me to ask His Divine Father- relying on the merits of His crowning with thorns to which I should unite mine- the conversion of

sinners and the humility for the proud heads, whose haughtiness displeases Him so much

108-SHE BEARS THE CROSS WITH OUR LORD AND ACCEPTS TO BE CRUCIFIED BY AN ACUTE DISEASE

Another time, it was the time of carnival-that's to say five weeks before Ash Wednesday- Jesus appeared to me after Holy Communion in the posture of ECCE HOMO (see the man), carrying the cross, all covered with wounds and bruises, while His adorable blood was streaming from all parts, in a sad voice He said to me. "Is it that nobody would sympathize and share my suffering in the miserable conditions I am put by the sinners, especially in these days?"

I presented myself to Him, prostrating myself to His most Sacred Feet, weeping and growing, and I put on my shoulders that heavy cross full of the most sharp nails. Feeling depressed under that weight, I started to understand in a better way the gravity and malice of sin which I detested so strongly in my heart, to the point of being ready to fall into Hell rather than commit a single deliberate sin "Cursed sin"-I sighed- "how hateful are you for the injury you cause to my Supreme God!"

And the Lord made me understand that it was not enough to carry that cross it was necessary to be nailed to it together with Him to keep Him company sharing his sufferings, His scorns, His humiliations, the wicked treatments He had undergone. Then I abandoned myself into His hands letting him do with me what He liked, allowing myself to be crucified as He liked through a great disease which made me suffer the sharp stings of the thorny cross, among terrible pains which it brought about instead of compassion, scorns and humiliations and other most painful consequences to my nature.

However, what type of suffering can equal the enormity of my crimes which keep me always in an abyss of confusion, since the Lord made me see the horrible aspect of a soul in mortal sin and the gravity of sin itself, which by offending the infinitely lovable Goodness, causes Him such great offense! Such a vision made me suffer very much. Oh, even if I were certain that the good Lord, in his infinite Mercy, is going to forgive all sins without asking us to bear any suffering, I would prefer from the bottom of my heart to have suffered all types of pains as a preventive and restraint against sin, rather than to have incurred the misfortune of committing sin!

109-HER SUFFERING DURING CARNIVAL

Ordinarily I remained in such dispositions of suffering for the entire period of carnival until Ash Wednesday, when it seemed that I was on the point of death, without finding any comfort or relief that would not increase my suffering. However, all at a sudden, I found strength and vigour to fast for the whole Lent, that thanks to the mercy of my Sovereign, I never omitted, although sometimes I was oppressed by many pains and very often, at the stating of an exercise I had the impression of being unable to accomplish it, and then I started another with the same pains, begging the Lord in this way, "O my Lord, grant me the grace to accomplish it". And I thanked my Sovereign because He measured out the moments of my life with of His sufferings, to make strike all the hours of my life on the wheel of His sufferings.

110-OUR LORD AT TIMES GRANT HER JOYS INSTEAD IF THE SUFFERINGS SHE DESIRED

When He wanted to give the grace of a new cross, He used to prepare me for it with many expressions of tenderness and spiritual joys so sublime that it would be difficult to bear them for long. Then I sighed, "My Unique Love, I give up all these delights! Keep them for those holy souls who will be able to glorify You better than me. I desire only You, deprived of everything on the cross, where I want to love You only for Your sake. Please, take away everything so that I may love You without any mistake of self-interest or pleasure!" It was just in those joyful moments that He sometimes liked to go against my desires-as a wise and experienced Director-making me enjoy when I wanted to suffer. I must admit that both joys and pains were coming from Him who had overwhelmed me with favours out of His sheer mercy, because no other creature more than me dared to oppose Him, both due to my infidelities and the fears of being deceived. I marveled hundreds of times for this fact. He did not annihilate me or plunge me into an abyss after such stubbornness...

111-THE DIVINE PRESENCE TURNED TO BE VERY STRICT WHENEVER SHE HAD OFFENDED THE LORD IN SOME WAY

Although my faults were very grave, this Unique Good of my soul did not deprive me of his Presence, as He had promised me. When, however, I had offended Him in some way, His presence was terrible to the point that I would prefer whatever torment rather than to meet that divine presence and be brought in front of the Holiness of God with the soul stained with some sorts of sins. I would conceal myself and run away if possible, but every effort from my part turned out to be useless; wherever I find the one I am escaping, and among horrible torments I have so impression of being in purgatory. In those moments all my being is in pain, without any comfort or desire of being comforted. Then I repeated sadly, "How terrible is to fall into the hands of living God!"

See the way by which He purified me from my faults, when I am not ready and faithful to punish myself. And I did not receive any particular grace from His Bounty which was not preceded by this kind of torments and after having received it, I feel thrown and submerged in a purgatory of humiliations and confusion which makes me suffer beyond all telling!

However, I enjoy an unchangeable peace and I have the impression that nothing can upset the peace of my heart, although my lower part is influenced by passions or by other enemies who try their best to reach their goal. In fact there is nothing that allows Him to be so powerful and gain grounds as in the case of a soul moved by anxieties and uneasiness (He makes her a laughing-stock, unable to accomplish any good).

Original certified on July 22, 1715

Signed by Sr. Anne-Elizabeth De La Garde