

Day 12 of 33

Imitation of Christ, by Thomas á Kempis: Book 1, Chapter 25., cont.

But if thou observest any thing worthy of reproof, beware thou do not the same. And if at any time thou hast done it, labor quickly to amend thyself. As thine eye observeth others, so art thou by others noted again.

How sweet and pleasant a thing it is, to see brethren fervent and devout, obedient and well-disciplined! How sad and grievous a thing it is, to see them walk disorderly, not applying themselves to that for which they are called! How hurtful a thing it is, when they neglect the purpose of their calling and busy themselves in things not committed to their care!

Be mindful of the purpose thou hast embraced, and set always before thee the image of the Crucified. Good cause thou hast to be ashamed in looking upon the life of Jesus Christ, seeing thou hast not as yet endeavored to conform thyself more unto Him, though thou hast been a long time in the way of God. A religious person that exercizeth himself seriously and devoutly in the most holy life and passion of our Lord, shall there abundantly find whatsoever is profitable and necessary for him, neither shall he need to seek any better thing, besides Jesus. O if Jesus crucified would come into our hearts, how quickly and fully should we be. A man fervent and diligent is prepared for all things.

It is harder toil to resist vices and passions, than to sweat in bodily labors. He that avoideth not small faults, by little and little falleth into greater. Thou wilt always rejoice in the evening, if thou spend the day profitably. Be watchful over thyself, stir up thyself, warn thyself, and whatsoever becometh of others, neglect not thyself. The more violent thou uses against thyself, the more shalt thou progress. Amen.

Recite: Veni Creator, Ave Maris Stella, Magnificat, and Glory Be (See Appendix)

THE VIRGIN MARY IN THE KINGDOM

Day 12

The Virgin Mary leaves her cradle and takes her first steps. With her divine acts she solicits God's descent to earth and calls all souls to live in the Divine Will

The soul to the Little Queen of Heaven:

Here I come again to visit you, my dear little infant Mary, in the house of Nazareth. I wish to witness the years of your tender age; I wish to offer you my hand as you take your first steps and speak with your holy mother and father [Anne and] Joachim. After you have been weaned and are able to walk, little as you are, you help Saint Anne in her little tasks. My little mother, how dear and enrapturing you appear! Impart to me your lessons so that I may follow your childhood and learn from you – even in the little human actions – to live in the Kingdom of the Divine Will.

Lesson of the Little Queen of Heaven:

My dear child, my only desire is to keep my child close to me. Without you I feel lonely and have no one in whom to confide my secrets. It is my maternal caring that yearns for my child to be close to me – a child who is in my Heart – so that I may impart to you my lessons and make you understand how to live in the Kingdom of the Divine

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Will. In this kingdom the human will cannot enter, as the light, the sanctity and the power of the Divine Will besiege the human will and make it undergo continual deaths. But do you think that the human will is afflicted because the Divine Will keeps it in the act of continually dying?¹² Oh no, not at all. Rather, it feels joyous, for when the human will dies to itself, the Divine Will is reborn and arises victorious and triumphant in the soul, bringing it endless joy and happiness. Dear child, it is enough for the soul to understand what it means to allow oneself to be dominated by the Divine Will and to experience it, for it to abhor its own will and prefer to be martyred thousands of times than to leave the Divine Will!

Now listen closely to what your tender mother wishes to tell you. I departed from heaven only to do the Will of the Eternal One. Although on earth I possessed my heaven of the Divine Will within me and I was inseparable from my Creator, I also had the privilege of remaining in my heavenly homeland [in the company of the three divine Persons]. Because the Divine Will was within me, I possessed a daughter's rightful claims to remain with them [in heaven]. I let myself be cradled like a tiny little child in their paternal arms and shared in all the joys, happiness, riches and sanctity the divine Persons possess. Indeed, [from the divine Persons] I could take and be filled with as

¹² On Day 17, Mary reveals to Luisa that “the weapons” that make the human will continually die to the Divine Will are “courage”, “trust” and a firm “resolution” (cf. pp. 15, 93).

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much [of their divine qualities] as I pleased, to the point of not being able to fully contain them.

The Supreme Entity was pleased in seeing that, without fear, but rather, with highest love I filled myself with their qualities, and was I not surprised that they should allow me to acquire as much [of their qualities] as I desired. I was their daughter, one was the Will which animated us, and whatever they desired I desired. Therefore, I felt the qualities of my Father as my very own – the only difference being, I was little and could not embrace or contain all of their qualities; no matter how much I acquired, there was always more that remained, and inasmuch as I remained always a creature, I hadn't the capacity to contain them all. Indeed, the divinity, which is great and immense, embraces everything in one single act.

So, the moment they made me understand that I was to deprive myself of their heavenly joys and our exchanged chaste embraces, I departed from heaven without hesitation and returned to be with my dear parents who loved me very much. [Because of the Divine Will that reigned in me] I was all beloved, enrapturing, cheerful, peaceful and filled with childlike grace, such as to captivate my parents' affection. Their attention was completely fixed on me as I was their jewel. When they took me in their arms, they felt things they had not experienced before and a divine life pulsating within me.

Now, child of my Heart, from the moment my life on earth began to develop, the Divine Will extended its

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Kingdom in all of my acts.¹³ My prayers, words, steps, eating, sleeping and the little tasks with which I helped my mother, were animated by the Divine Will. And since I always carried you in my Heart, I called you, my child, into all of my acts. I called your acts to be together with mine so that in your acts too, even the most menial ones, the Kingdom of the Divine Will might be established.

Listen to how much I loved you. If I prayed, I called your prayers into mine, so that both my prayers and yours might receive one singular value of a Divine Will. If I spoke, with my words I called [into sequence] your words; if I walked, I called [into sequence] your steps; if I did little human actions that are indispensable to all humans – such as taking water, sweeping, helping my mother prepare the wood to start the fire, and many other similar things – I called [into sequence] these same acts when you do them,

¹³ The manner by which Mary called all of our acts into her own, through which the Divine Will extended its kingdom in her soul, is poignantly described by our Lord on August 14, 1912, where he relates: *“When I was on earth, did My hands not lower themselves to work the wood, hammer the nails and help My putative father Joseph? While I was doing this with My own hands and fingers, I created souls, while calling others back to life. I divinized and sanctified all human activity, imparting divine merit to each human action. In the movements of My fingers I called into sequence all the movements of your fingers and those of others [...] imparting to them the merit of My own life [...] By lowering Myself to all of these little and lowly actions that men do in their daily lives such as eating, sleeping, drinking, working [...] in all the actions that are indispensable to all humans, I formed a small divine little coin of incalculable value and made it flow throughout all human actions. So, if My Passion redeemed man, My hidden life provided each human action, even the most insignificant, with divine merit of infinite value”*.

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so that they might receive the value of a Divine Will which could then extend its Kingdom in all of our acts.¹⁴ And while calling you in every one of my acts, I called the Divine Word to descend to earth.

Oh, how much I loved you, my child! I wanted [to reorder] your acts within mine to make you happy and allow you to reign together with me. Oh, how many times I called you and your acts, but, to my greatest sorrow, mine remained alone and I saw yours as if lost within your human will, forming – for however horrible it is to say – a kingdom that is not divine, but human: the kingdom of passions and sin, of unhappiness and misfortunes. Your mother wept over your misfortune, foreseeing the unhappy kingdom into which they would lead you, and my tears are still pouring out with every act your own human will to make you understand the great evil you do.

Now, listen closely to what your tender mother wishes to tell you. If you do the Divine Will, joys and

¹⁴ *Nota bene*: It was not the acts of Mary alone that divinized all human actions and extended God's kingdom in her soul, but principally those of the three divine Persons operating within her – specifically, the second Person of the Trinity. To Luisa Jesus relates this truth: “*I could have done the work of Redemption in very little time, and even with one single word, but during the course of many years, with many hardships and sufferings, I wanted to make man's miseries My own. I wanted to apply Myself to many different actions, so that man might be completely renewed and divinized, even in the most menial tasks. Indeed, once man's actions had been performed by Me who am God and Man, they received new splendor and were impressed with the seal of My divine works. My divinity, hidden within My humanity, wanted to lower itself to such depths as to subject itself to the course of human actions*” (L. Piccarreta, volume 3, January 12, 1900).

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happiness will be given to you as though by right; everything will be in common with [you and] your Creator; weakness and miseries will be banished from you, and you will be the dearest of my children. I will keep you in my own Kingdom to make you live always in the Divine Will.

The soul:

Holy mother, in seeing you cry who can resist and not listen to your holy lessons? With all my heart I promise, I vow never to do my will ever again. And may you, divine mother,¹⁵ never leave me alone; may the power of your presence subdue my will so that I may reign forever and ever in the Will of God.

Aspiration:

Today, to honour me, grant me all of your acts to keep me company in my tender years, reciting to me three prayers of love, in memory of the three years in which I lived with my mother, Saint Anne.

¹⁵ The expression, “*divine* mother”, does not mean that Mary is divine in nature, but that the Divine Will of the three divine Persons with which she unceasingly co-operated from the moment of her Immaculate Conception, operated as one with her human will.

THE VIRGIN MARY IN THE KINGDOM

Exclamation:

Powerful Queen, captivate my heart and enclose it
in the Divine Will.

4 AM HOUR

Twelfth Hour

4 AM

Jesus in the hands of the soldiers

Jesus, my most sweet life, in clinging to your Heart as I sleep, I often feel the piercing of the thorns that penetrate your Most Sacred Heart. I grow desirous to awaken to You so that You may have at least one soul who acknowledges all of your sorrows and unites herself to your Passion; whence I press myself more tightly to your Heart. In feeling more vividly the piercing thorns, I wake up and what do I see? What do I hear? I would like to hide You in my heart to suffer in your place and receive your intense suffering, insults and unimaginable ridicule. Only your love could bear so many outrages... My most patient Jesus, how could one expect anything less from such inhuman people?

I now see them mocking You, as they cover your face with such thick spittle that it veils the light of your beautiful eyes, but in pouring forth rivers of tears for our salvation, You drive that spittle away. And your enemies, with hearts incapable of withstanding the light of your eyes, cover them again with more spittle... Others, becoming more arrogant and evil, open your most sweet mouth and fill it with more nauseating spittle, to the point that they themselves feel nauseated; since some of it flows away, revealing in part, the majesty of your face and supernatural sweetness, they shudder and are moved to shame. So to

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[stifle their shame and] unleash themselves more freely on You, they blindfold You with a miserable rag and, unrestrainedly, hurl themselves on your adorable Person. They beat You without pity, they drag You, stomp on You, repeatedly strike and slap your face, and unleash blows on your head; they scratch You, tear your hair and shove You from one place to next.

Jesus, my love, my heart cannot bear seeing You undergo so many torments. You want me to observe everything, but I prefer to rather cover my eyes and not see such painful scenes that would tear the heart from anyone's chest. And yet, my love for You compels me to observe what You are forced to endure. I see that You take not so much as one breath to prepare a word in your defense while You are like a ragdoll in the hands of these soldiers who can treat You in whatsoever manner they choose. And in seeing them stomp on You I fear You may die beneath their feet.

Jesus, my love and my all, the sorrow I feel for your suffering is so great that I want to shout so loudly as to make myself heard up in the heavens to call the Father, the Holy Spirit and all the angels; I wish to make my voice heard to all corners of the earth; I wish to call our sweet mother first, and then all souls who love You, so that forming a circle around You, we may prevent these insolent soldiers from drawing near You to insult You and torment You yet more. Together with You, we make reparation for all the sins committed at night, especially those of sectarians who desecrate You in [the consecrated Host of]

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your Sacramental Person, and for all the offenses of souls who do not remain faithful in the night of trial.

But I see, my insulted good Jesus that the soldiers, tired and drunk, now wish to rest and, my poor heart oppressed and lacerated by so many of your torments, does not wish to remain alone with You – it feels the need of the company of another. O please, my sweet mother, be my inseparable companion. Let us embrace Jesus together and console him! O Jesus, together with our mother, I kiss You and I bless You and, with her, I will take my sleep of love upon your adorable Heart.