

SPIRITUAL CALENDAR

A thought for each day of the year



Edited by Antonio Belsito

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FOREWORD

This new edition of the Spiritual Calendar provides a welcome opportunity to make contact with the vibrant spirituality of Blessed Antonio Rosmini, the “householder” of the Gospel “who brings out from his storeroom things both new and old”. Each daily reflection is a pearl of wisdom which reaches out to the concrete situations of life shedding light and encouraging a response based on truth and charity.

The selection of the passages was made by Fr Giorgio Versini, who absorbed the rich spiritual teaching of Blessed Rosmini both in his thoughts and in his life. He was an exemplary “Rosminian”, steeped in humility, open to friendship, and deeply committed to union with God. He was a spiritual master in his own right, and many postulants, novices, scholastics, Ascribed members, and others who came for spiritual direction found in him the evangelical simplicity and wisdom that brought them closer to God.

His selection is illuminating and displays his wide knowledge of the writings of Blessed Antonio Rosmini, and his profound understanding. Thus we find in the Spiritual Calendar all the major foundation stones of Blessed Rosmini's ascetical teaching: the principle of passivity, the principle of "indifference", the concept of justice, trust in Divine Providence, love for the Church, the spirit of intelligence, love of neighbour, love and union with God, and love of Mary. There are also deep and revealing passages on some of his philosophical and theological views, especially on the distinction between the natural and supernatural world, the source of morality, the description of grace, the effects of grace on the soul, and the abiding and mysterious presence of the three Persons of the Trinity in the soul of every baptised person.

There is no attempt to select the thought of the day in accordance with the Church's daily liturgical calendar; but there are more general criteria within which the selection is made, namely, the liturgical "seasons" of the Church's year, and some major events in the life of Blessed Rosmini.

Thus, for example, *February* is connected with the foundation of the Institute of Charity, *March* has as its focus the season of Lent, and *April* the Easter season; *May* is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, whereas *June* is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. *July* is the month connected with the death of Blessed Rosmini, while *September* is the month traditionally linked to the start of the new scholastic year. *October* is the month of our Lady of the Rosary, *November* is dedicated to the dead, and, finally, *December* is linked to the feast of the Immaculate Conception and to the Christmas festivities.

We recommend a methodical reading of the Spiritual Calendar, possibly at the start of the day, to savour the simplicity and the depth of each thought, and to make it a thing of the heart: "Cor ad cor loquitur".

We give a full list of the books from which each passage has been taken; as a norm, books available in English have an English title and can be obtained by writing to: The Rosmini Centre, 433 Fosse Way, Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake, Leicester, LE7 4SJ; e-mail address, aabelsito@hotmail.com; tel. 01509813078. All other books are available in the Italian language only.

A Belsito

Feast of St Michael, St Gabriel, St Raphael 2011

Abbreviations and titles of books used in the Spiritual Calendar

- AAS = About the Author's Studies, Durham 2004
- Apol. = Apologetica, Milano 1848
- AS = Antropologia Soprannaturale, Roma 1983
- CAT = Catechetica, Opere Varie, Milano 1838
- Cant. = Il Cantico di Maria Vergine dichiarato, in OS, Roma 1985
- CMV = Il Cantico di Maria Vergine dichiarato, Roma 1925
- COI = Catechismo disposto secondo l'ordine delle idee, Roma 1898
- CSC = Constitutions of the Society of Charity, Durham

DP	=	Discorsi Parrocchiali, Roma 1986
EC	=	Della Educazione Cristiana, Roma 1994
FW	=	Five Wounds of the Church, Durham 1987
ME	=	Manuale dell'Esercitatore, Roma 1986
MCP	=	Maxims of Christian Perfection, Rosmini Centre 2008
PR	=	Philosophy of Right, Durham 1995
Pred	=	Predicazione, Milano 1843
PSM	=	Principi della Scienza Morale, Roma 1990
SA	=	Storia dell'Amore, Roma 2002
SL	=	A Society of Love, Durham
TCM	=	Trattato della Coscienza Morale, Roma 1954
Theod	=	Theodicy, Durham 2009
Theos=		Theosophy, Durham 2007
TTP	=	Talks to Priests, New City Press 1982

*Many quotations are taken from the **Epistolario Completo di Antonio Rosmini**, available only in Italian. Each letter is identified by the place from which it was written and the date.*

*There is a smaller collection in English, **The Ascetical Letters of Antonio Rosmini**, in 7 Volumes, produced by Fr J Morris and Fr D Sullivan: the volumes of this English collection of Letters can be obtained from the Rosmini Centre in Leicestershire.*

We acknowledge the use made of all previous translations into English, both of the Letters and of the other works quoted above.

We thank Mark Jacques and Stephen Ward for their invaluable assistance in proof reading the text.

JANUARY



18 November 2007 - Beatification of Blessed Rosmini

1st January

I beseech the Lord to shower His blessings on you in this New Year. May He speed you to that precious holiness to which He invites us all and in comparison with which the whole universe is as nothing.

Stresa, 6.01.51

2nd January

Let us remain in a state of happiness, not the happiness which is found in the world, which is boisterous and which dissipates the spirit; rather, a quiet and placid joyfulness, which has its source mainly in the purity of our conscience, in the grace of the Holy Spirit which is diffused in our hearts, and in our resignation to the divine will.

Milan, 05.05.26

3rd January

The love which our holy religion inspires in its faithful followers is the radiant proof of its truth; and it is this love which often convinces even the most obstinate of opponents.

Stresa, 24.11.43

4th January

It is peculiar to charity not only to be compassionate towards our neighbour, but also to look at him in the most favourable light. Even should it happen that, on account of this benevolent disposition, some error of judgment should occur, it is still a fortunate error since it increases one's merit before God and contributes to unity among people.

Stresa, 17.09.52

5th January

God's charity rises far above all present circumstances. We have to see with the eyes of faith the same charity in all God's powerful, just and wise works. God is equally good in all that He disposes because He is always charity. He is such through His essence, with which He works and foresees all things.

SL p. 79

6th January

Only those without the gift of faith, or those who limit their attention to particular things and events, without looking at them as a whole and in their final, lasting outcome, will be scandalised by what occurs in the world. In many of the events which take place, people without faith will simply be unable to discern the impulse and guiding hand of infinite charity. Charity in all its sublimity will be outside their range of vision.

SL p. 79

7th January

It is by loving one another in God that friends, even when they are far apart from one another, are always most close and united together; and this union is not brought about by talk or letters or any other sort of communication: it is entirely internal and spiritual, independent of material circumstances. In this case, what one loves is not the success of one's friend but the friend himself, and that within him which is the most excellent part — his soul and his eternal salvation.

Milan, 5.08.27

8th January

I thank you for the affection you show me in the Lord. This will grow all the greater the closer becomes our union in God, the centre of every true union. It is indeed only our God who unites: all else separates.

Rovereto, 14.06.37

9th January

Jesus wanted the commandment of love which he taught (not simply to our ears but to our hearts) to be the most beautiful and pleasing mark of his true disciples.

Stresa, 24.11.43

10th January

Christ, by loving every human being and by making all human beings lovable in Him, has made of the whole world our neighbour. Therefore, Moses' commandment is still true, but with a new meaning. The command to love our neighbour is true for both the Old and the New Testament, but there is a difference. In the Old Testament, the love of charity did not have the power to go beyond the nation, whereas in the New Testament, love has been given by Christ's redemption and grace powerful wings to take it everywhere in the world.

DP, p. 155

11 January

Let us always keep in mind that God is a Holy God. Such is His name; holiness forms His name because it fulfils His nature and is the end of all His activities. He does nothing that is not due to holiness; He wills nothing that is not in accordance with holiness. Holiness is therefore essentially willed by God Himself and in the creature of which He is the end.

TTP, p. 333

12 January

If all the individuals composing the human race, especially Christians, have the desire and the hope, they can always be saved, granted that there is no hardening of heart, as in those who no longer have the desire or have lost hope. No one can truly say, "I want to but cannot".

Theodicy, 997

13 January

Imprinted in the soul, there should be this supreme and immutable maxim from the teaching of our Lord: that it is profitable for every person to engage in the sublime work of becoming like God, since this is never in opposition to proper human occupations.

EC, 54

14 January

All Christians would desire to be perfect, if only they knew the gift of God and Who is the One who has called them to be children of God.

Calvario, 01.03.28

15 January

In those who profess the Christian religion, all things should be reduced to this one point: to desire to be far more just than they are, and to pray for it without ceasing, without measure or limit, so that they may be made one with Jesus, even as Jesus is one with the Father.

MCP, I, No. 3

16 January

All Christians should always remember to walk in the presence of the Lord. This exercise would guard all those who do it faithfully from every sin; moreover, it would make them holy.

Cat. p. 317

17 January

I value a thousand times more a drop of morality than an ocean of human knowledge.

Rovereto, 28.09.15

18 January

Jesus Christ never once praised the talents of the intellect, but He always praised those of the heart. The intellect belongs to the devil as well, who is the most evil being; but not the heart. People appreciate more a good heart than a strong intellect. Therefore even in the world powerful minds are considered dangerous and have often many enemies. People with a good heart are loved by everyone.

Milan, 27.01.27

19 January

It is our duty to persevere united in prayer. Prayer is a most powerful weapon, through which we obtain all that is necessary for our soul and for the kingdom of God on earth, even miracles.

Stresa, 03.09.53

20 January

To pray and to know how to pray, that is, to ask from the heart not for the frivolous things of this world, but for what is necessary, the grace of fulfilling our duties of justice and charity, this is indeed the great secret. Many know the secret in theory, but fail to practise it, and so they cannot be said to know it really, not having the light and persuasion that lead to action.

Ronciglione, 15.10.49

21 January

The grace to know how to pray is the greatest of all graces, and if we ask God for it unceasingly and with all our heart, He will grant it to us and we shall become holy.

Stresa, 30.03.50

22 January

I firmly believe that it is so seriously important to understand what we pray with the lips, that I have no doubt that if all who pray did so with their understanding and consequently with their heart, the whole people of God would be reformed and the whole Church renewed.

TTP, p. 40

23 January

What an infinite blessing is holy faith! It is a whole treasury of the wonders of God's love for us. Our limited reason cannot comprehend such infinite displays of love, but what is there to wonder at in this? God is God and we are mere men. The fact that we find it difficult to grasp such mysteries is itself a fresh argument for their truth.

Stresa, 08.06.43

24 January

Revealed truths about God display profound obscurity and necessary mysteries; grace itself can but give an initial and indistinct perception. This is the source of the great longing of saintly people: to see, through the broken veil, the beautiful face of God, amidst their constant prayers and meditations on their journey through the dark night when they feel it surrounds them. Christians in this present life walk in this darkness and in this light by a high decree of Divine Providence so that their merits may increase in the obscurity of faith, and their desire for the eternal light may become sharper so as to sustain and give value to their actions and expectations.

AS, I, p. 107

25 January

I have never understood why some people should lament that they do not know what to do with their time, as if our Lord Jesus Christ, by His command to love our brothers and sisters, has not offered to everyone an immense field in which to use and even exhaust all our strength and time; and such labour, which our divine Master has given us, is not only plentiful but also enjoyable and far reaching.

Stresa, 17.09.52

26 January

There is nothing small in what we do in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, if we are guided by faith. All our deeds are great since in all of them there is Jesus Christ. It is human pride which obscures our understanding, making it unable to perceive Jesus Christ in all things. It is when Jesus Christ is not seen in all things that we are forced to measure the greatness of things and of our actions by themselves, by their external appearance, by their number, by their pomposity, in a word, by their false appearance which does not show anything truly great, since the only truly great reality is our Lord Jesus Christ.

Recoaro, 07.08.28

27 January

How beautiful and useful it is to think of Jesus all the time, and to keep our gaze on Him in all things, as the Apostles did! We must not only think of Him as God, which could cause bewilderment and fear, but we must see Him as man, as one of us, clothed with the same body, a man subject to all human weaknesses, except sin, who shares our joys and sorrows, who has pity on us, who comforts us, who brings happiness, who encourages

us, who helps us, who corrects us, who is always faithful, always a friend, always present as a close companion. Yes, indeed! The love for Jesus has become feeble in many hearts! How I wish that Christians would do their utmost to restore it and to re-kindle it.

EC, no. 205

28 January

The love for Jesus makes holy and guides all other natural affections, which, as a result, do not make us blind but help us fulfil whatever good we see that will benefit others. Merely natural and human affections do not know what is good; but affections ruled by the love for Jesus know what is truly good and use human things with thanksgiving, in order to obtain that true goodness, outside which there is only the appearance of goodness.

Rovereto, 07.09.27

29 January

Be persuaded that the visible world is a constant deception: love without ceasing the invisible things, virtue, grace, and the sweet joy of supernatural gifts.

Stresa, 12.05.48

30 January

All our true good consists in our sanctification, and all our evil consists in losing some degree of our sanctification.

Domodossola, 07.08.36

31 January

The Church established public feasts to commemorate the great deeds of our loving God, which either provided for her foundation or for her splendour. Similarly, all Christians have experienced special actions from God, which brought to their soul salvation or an increase in grace. Christians could imitate the Church profitably if they celebrated their private events of grace with private solemnity, in the same way as the Church celebrates her public feasts with public solemnity. The most important private celebration should be the anniversary of their Baptism.

EC, no. 301

FEBRUARY



Sacro Monte Calvario - Domodossola

1 February

What I most wish from the Lord on this earth is to be able to purify myself from my innumerable defects, and to be healed from my countless failings, to hear in my heart the word of God and to keep it. O omnipotent word! Blessed are those who hear it and keep it! Such persons know that it is fire, which burns but does not consume (unless they are made of straw); but that it purifies, it brings life and immortality. This is the resting place for my will, and for my love.

Rome, 06.10.29

2 February

One of the dispositions most favourable to growing in perfection is to take great account of even small faults. When we are really convinced that any

moral defect is of very great importance, far more so than any physical ill, then we do not think we can ever be too severely punished, or sufficiently humbled for the defects we have committed. This conviction, both true and praiseworthy, was fully verified in the souls of the Saints.

Stresa, 23.04.45

3 February

For my part, I regard it as a safe rule of conduct, full of hope, to desire righteousness and to hold on tirelessly to this desire, this resolution, even when we feel we are falling short and lacking the strength to rise up again, when our love is turned to stone, and we are weighed down by the overpowering burden of the clay from which we were made.

Calvario, 01.03.28

4 February

Souls who appreciate the value of virtue feel that they never advance far enough. It seems to them that their pace is too slow and hesitant. This is indeed true, in the sense that who among weak mankind can say that he does his duty and acts as is required by the beauty of virtue and the greatness and lovable nature of God?

Stresa, 28.03.50

5 February

The more we purify ourselves of the *sins we know we have*, the more we acquire the light to see the *sins we do not know we have*, thus purifying ourselves of these also. St. Teresa compared the supernatural light that penetrates the soul to the beam from the sun which, entering a room through the glass of the windows, reveals the innumerable particles of dust pressing and hitting each other in a continuous vortex in motion, whereas before nothing could be seen. Similarly, the soul enlightened by grace sees in itself many defects, which it could not see before.

TCM, no. 455

6 February

I shall confine myself to giving you only one piece of advice, and that is to make a habit of reading the *New Testament*, particularly the words of our Lord Jesus Christ himself, which have sweetness and infinite power. They are adapted to both the learned and the unlearned; they have a heavenly savour, offer divine nourishment, and contain perfect truth, where no merely human thoughts enter; and they embody inexhaustible wisdom.

The actual words of Jesus Christ: here is food suitable for you, and indeed adapted to all of us. The parts of the New Testament other than the Gospels serve to make us understand better the words of Christ.

Stresa, 17.11.44

7 February

You could also read profitably some of the books of the Old Testament, especially the Psalms, the Wisdom books, Tobiah, Judith, Esther, Job, and Deuteronomy. When you do this, try to relate these books to Jesus Christ and His love. For truly, they all look to Christ: properly understood, they all announce and glorify the One who is to come. To sum up then, our thoughts must always return to the words of Christ: we must dwell and repose in Him with our whole soul. In His words we learn above all His own special commandment, and what was a new feature in His divine precept: the love of our neighbour.

Ibid.

8 February

We read in St. Paul: *We are not to do evil so that good may come* (Rom. 3, 8). I find all the Fathers in agreement, all ecclesiastical writers, and the conscience of all the faithful too, in holding that Christianity is a doctrine of such rectitude and justice that it will never permit the least sin, even when through such a sin one could save the whole world and open the prison of hell.

Sacra di S. Michele, 22.03.37

9 February

Unfortunately our mind, while we live in this world, fills itself up with a mass of false ideas, though they may appear to be pious; and our heart fills itself up with a mass of false and useless desires, though they seem to be religious! No, we must rid our minds of such encumbrances, our hearts of such vain rubbish. Instead we must put on the simplicity of thought and feeling that is to be found in the Gospel.

Calvario, 28.02.31

10 February

It is very desirable that the spiritual man, without losing sight of any part of Christ's teaching, should choose some luminous point on which to concentrate his thoughts as a concise rule of conduct, which will guide him by the shortest route to his journey's end.

Stresa, 08.04.53

11 February

There is nothing more delightful than the will of God, and indeed there is nothing lovable outside it; and there is no other good than to know it and to do it. Moreover, should the adorable will of our God ask of us a sacrifice which is repugnant to our nature, then, it seems to me, we ought to embrace God's will with our whole heart in joyful faithfulness to it!

Rovereto, 05.02.43

12 February

To love the will of God in pleasant events requires little love, or perhaps no love at all; but to love it in adversities, this is indeed pure love, like gold which has been refined by the fire, a love that brings joy to the heart while it suffers.

Ibid.

13 February

The Will of God: what a sublime phrase! What light for the person who knows and loves God! What ineffable and infinite goodness, containing all that is good! O most holy, most wise, most sublime Will of God! There is nothing good outside it, but a mere illusion of good. *May your Will be done!* How fortunate we are when our will follows closely the most holy, the most perfect and loving Will of the Almighty God who alone can transform our evils into goodness, and our misfortunes into opportunities for rejoicing!

Stresa, 24.04.46

14 February

The phrase *to do much* for the Lord certainly requires an explanation, in order to take a correct view of the matter and avoid illusion. If by the word *much* many external actions are indicated, or one work rather than another, it may happen that what seems much in the eyes of men is little, and even less than nothing in the eyes of God. *Much* is never done in the spiritual life, except when what is done is in keeping with the will of God.

Stresa, 20.10.52

15 February

We need to be continually purifying our intentions, so that nothing merely human comes into our affairs, but rather that everything we do may be genuinely in and for God; so that we wish for nothing in all circumstances except the will of God. We are to be moved only by what the love of God suggests, and we are to work, too, with a holy magnanimity and liberty of conscience, basing ourselves always on the holy law and the life-giving word of Jesus Christ.

Trent, 09.12.31

16 February

Increase of love means increase of spiritual power, diminution of love diminution of power to do good. We must then enlarge our hearts. We are called by God to have a great heart so that we may love much; and to scorn all that is little, narrow or mean. In this matter there should be a holy rivalry among you; he who loves most will find himself most strongly attached to his vocation to the Institute.

Stresa, 08.04.53

17 February

The love which is our law and by which we are compelled, must be the most powerful of all our loves; moreover, it must be stronger than all our pains.

Pred. p. 189

18 February

My greatest desire is that we all love God, as God loves all. How I wish that the fire of divine love could truly burn in us, and that we could live only for His love, or that we could die for the sake of such love!

Rovereto, 06.10.28

19 February

To benefit one person is certainly a meritorious action; but to set up a constant source of benefits reaching out to many people, particularly if such benefits are of a spiritual nature, is, I believe, a deed so great that only God knows the extent of its merit.

Rovereto, 09.07.21

20 February

Our badge, the badge given us by our Master, is *universal charity*.

Stresa, 05.05.40

21 February

I am quite happy here, thanks be to God. Solitude is dear to me, because it draws my mind in profound thoughts, and it helps create around me a society which is better than the society of men. Nonetheless, it is not these mountains, and these valleys, and this peace and this silence that possess my heart. Material places are too narrow for us, our place is in God. Ah! In that place we are most comfortable but how narrow is the way that leads to life! It is after the narrow road that one comes to the immense open space where the joy of the heart expands to infinity

Calvario, 18.04.28

22 February

The true spirit of the Institute of Charity is a spirit of humility, which finds all its delight and treasure in the secret life of the soul in God; but it is also a spirit of *charity*, which makes those who are clothed with it alive and active.

Stresa, 23.06.46

23 February

How very pleasing it is to me, that idea I have heard from you more than once, that one must have a *great heart*, and that Christians offend the Lord by making it narrow. Truly nothing is so vast that it does not seem narrow and restrictive to the heart of a true disciple!

Rovereto, 10.12.25

24 February

Charity expects great things, and therefore so does the Institute of Charity; and these great things can come only if we greatly develop our charitable activity. The outside world also expects much, and expends great energy; but it is not the energy of charity. The Institute expects immense activity, but in the charity of Christ.

Rovereto, 25.03.42

25 February

Nearly all religious communities quickly acquire what is called *esprit de corps*. This to us constitutes a certain limitation, deriving from a hidden pride, not an individual thing but something collective, though its effects

spread to its members. There is then a lessening of that charity which seeks to unite all men in a single body, no matter what their ties, their membership of a particular society, their differences.

Rovereto, 24.01.26

26 February

God has allowed the Religious Orders to deviate more or less from their original charism, in order that no flesh should boast in His sight. No human society is incorruptible, save only the Church of Jesus Christ, in virtue of a special favour which He obtained from His Father with a strong cry and with tears. Therefore the Church is the work of God and not of man, it alone is founded on the divine Word, which is the firmament of the spiritual universe, as it is written, "*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away*".

Rovereto, 24.08.27

27 February

The Apostles were truly, very truly, religious as far as the essence is concerned, and they made perpetual vows, since they bound themselves irrevocably and perpetually to the following of Christ. It is this perpetual and irrevocable sacrifice of oneself which constitutes the excellence of the religious vows. It involves the unlimited consecration of oneself; something that is not to be found in the rest of the faithful.

Stresa, 02.02.41

28 February

Concerning the doctrine of religious vocation, it is true in general that we speak of following a counsel, not a command; and so there is no sin when someone does not follow the counsel, since sin always consists in transgressing against a command. Nonetheless it is certain that when someone fails to accept a religious vocation when he could well do so, he deprives himself of an infinite good. Moreover, we have no way of knowing what obligations arise in someone else through internal inspirations of grace. We can be certain that God requires of certain individuals what He does not ask of all, so that for these a counsel may in fact be a command even though normally speaking it would not be one.

Turin, 11.03.37

29 February

I am fond of that article of the *Summa*, the last one of the Second Part, in which St. Thomas shows that, when it comes to choosing the religious state, there is no need to ask advice from others, for the advice has already been given by Jesus Christ. So although our divine Master did not make it a precept for His disciples, nonetheless it is certain that those who take this path purely out of a loving desire to follow Jesus Christ more closely and perfect themselves can never be deceived.

Stresa, 07.07.46

MARCH



Ave Crux spes unica!

1 March

Even in the solitude of this hill, where God has placed me, where there is so much opportunity to raise our soul to Him, where there is no pomp and the constant deception of the world, even here we are in the midst of dangers, even here we must engage in the battle against ourselves and the devil, and we cannot hope to win unless we take up the shield of faith and the helmet of salvation and the sword of the word of God. Truly the life of man on earth is a constant struggle.

2 March

“Whoever wishes to come after Me must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me”. This is the law so clearly given to us, a secret law, unknown to the world, more profound than any philosophy. The profession of this law of self-denial and mortification implies in practice a continual struggle with ourselves, since it is something superior to all our natural tendencies. Our limited nature holds within itself an egotistical element; and so we have to ask God continually for the grace to become victors in this terrible battle which lasts as long as life itself.

Ronciglione, 15.10.49

3 March

The way of perfection is summed up in a few words: *the desire to be mortified, especially as regards our reason*, as St. Philip Neri said.

Trent, 09.02.34

4 March

It is just that man should account himself as nothing, and account God to be all in all. It is just also that man should know that glory belongs not to him who is nothing, but to Him who is all in all, and that therefore he should not desire any glory for himself but should wish to give all possible glory to God alone. It is also just that the man who knows these things should feel a certain distress whenever he is praised by others, because “nothing” cannot desire to be praised without usurpation. On the contrary, he should feel a great delight when he sees men glorifying God. Man, however, is not merely nothing but worse than nothing, that is a sinner; and it is just that he should desire to be despised, and he should rejoice when he is ill-treated by men. These sentiments should be deeply and indelibly engraved in the heart of a religious.

Stresa, 24.09.50

5 March

Anyone who is not humble without limit is unsuitable for the grandeur of charity. Pride knows nothing of charity, which has no part with the proud and does not enter any heart swollen with pride. The humiliation of the Son of God brought charity to the humble. Listen to St. Paul: *Christ Jesus, though He was divine by nature, did not count His equality to God as something to be grasped, but emptied Himself, assuming the condition of*

a slave and becoming like man; and being found in human form he humbled himself even unto death, death on a cross.

SL, p.81

6 March

The defects of others must not make us cold towards them, or make our charity tepid; and may humility persuade us to see greater faults in ourselves than in others, and believe that the burdens we place on others to bear are heavier than the ones they cause us.

Albano, 16.09.49

7 March

We must not fear false accusations against us; we ought, however, to draw some profit from them, both by knowing ourselves better, and by overcoming those vices which we come to know in the light of other people's criticism. I would like those who have enemies to read for their consolation the book by the pagan author Plutarch, *De capienda ex hostibus utilitate* [*On how to draw profit from enemies*].

Rovereto, 05.03.42

8 March

Love correction, and receive it with a grateful heart and serene countenance, mindful of what the divine Master JESUS said, *He who is of God, listens to the words of God.*

Stresa, 25.12.41

9 March

It is a mistake to think that we can inspire humility in others by mortifying and humbling them. No, it is rather by praising them in the Lord that we make them advance, and by humbling ourselves sincerely, *without any affectation*, and by actions rather than by words.

Rho, 08.05.36

10 March

External actions of humility, performed with sincerity, are most useful to the man who wishes to conquer pride, and have been performed by all the Saints. They must, however, come from the heart, and must be a sincere expression of our interior feelings, or at least of sentiments we wish to acquire.

Stresa, 03.02.44

11 March

Pride consists in an excessive self-esteem, in overrating one's own position. The spirit of pride is very subtle, and embeds itself where one would hardly suspect. Sometimes, while retaining an appearance of humility, the soul may be inwardly penetrated by a subtle pride: something that I would fear more than any external dignity.

Rovereto, 24.01.26

12 March

Humility is most gracious, and the humble man is loved and appreciated by everyone, for he never offends and he willingly yields to the ideas and desires of others, even at the cost of sacrifice. People listen attentively to him, and his words seep into their hearts like fragrant oil.

TP, p. 149

13 March

Virtuous persons always notice and deplore their own vices, rather than the vices of others, from whom they always find something to learn. The proud person, instead, without being appointed judge by God, condemns others without mercy, forgetting his own sinfulness. This is the way of the Pharisee condemned by God. This is the evil way of blind pride.

Stresa, 13.02.44

14 March

The Scriptures are one continual lesson of humility; they teach it in all sorts of ways, by means of the incidents narrated, by the style, by the very words.

Domodossola, 25.04.28

15 March

Endeavour to know your own weakness and ignorance. These two things are never sufficiently understood, and they produce self-distrust without discouragement.

Stresa, 19.10.36

16 March

There is no better time for the practice of humility and patience than the time of sickness. How greatly we are assisted in recognising the just judgments of God, when we experience signs of decay and realize that death is hanging over us. All vain presumption falls away, and the falseness of pride gives way to the knowledge of our own nothingness. Every remnant of self-confidence dies within us, and in its place arises in our heart a spirit of self-abandonment and a most loving confidence in God alone.

Rovereto, 13.09.30

17 March

The great wisdom of Providence in purifying and perfecting us consists in placing us in circumstances diametrically opposed to our own will; in this way we are obliged to mortify and conquer ourselves and watch continually. Otherwise, if everything were to our liking, we should go to sleep and never know what it is to fight with valour.

Rovereto, 02.09.30

18 March

Let us thank the Lord for all that He gives us, for good health and for sickness. In His infinite wisdom and goodness, He knows how much we will benefit from being humiliated and tempted, and from being comforted and supported, and He grants the one or the other according to our needs, and always for the one purpose established by Providence, to prepare and help us reach His eternal kingdom.

Stresa, 04.02.55

19 March

We must not deceive ourselves, my dear brother: anyone who does not pray cannot keep his footing, cannot stand before God. Anyone who prays little does little good; but whoever prays much does much good; and we are obliged, through our profession of a life that is burning with charity, to do much good. So we have to pray a great deal, and if we do not really carry out such obligation, we fall short of our duty.

Stresa, 04.02.50

20 March

We have always to bear in mind that our state of contemplation must never be a state of inertia. Rather, it is a state of preparation in which we build up our fervour, our generosity, and grow in grace so that we shall be

ready for, and zealous in, the works to which the Lord may call us. We have to remain hidden, like lions in their den, while we give ourselves to contemplation in our houses: we must be like drawn bows, like a vessel of corked wine, a force contained until the moment when it can burst out with all the greater power.

Calvario, 12.12.32

21 March

Generally I take very little notice of praise, because I know it is not always sincere. However, when it comes to the advice, admonitions and even reproofs of friends, there is no deception here: these carry the seal of sincerity; they are a gift from the heart!

Stresa, 17.09.36

22 March

I cannot express to you how great is the unworthiness I see in myself; I cannot even fully take it in, and the truth of this is borne out by the joy which I feel when I think of this, since joy comes only from the truth, and God does not allow it to result from error.

Calvario, 04.06.30

23 March

You know that in my letters I am in the habit of imitating Cato who ended his speeches in the Senate with the words, "Delenda Carthago" [We must destroy Carthago]. For me, Carthago is my own self. My dear brother, let us try, day and night, to humble ourselves, and we shall be happy, in spite of the many things which come our way and are outside our control.

Stresa, 13.07.52

24 March

Is what the world calls *madness* truly so? If so, then the cross of Christ is madness too; and so is the Gospel; and so is the action of the Apostles, who exposed themselves to all sorts of dangers among barbarian nations; so is the witness of faith given by the holy martyrs! Yet in reality how desirable is this kind of "madness"; would that I had this same madness, and that it was incurable and went to extremes! This divine madness is something for which I long and for which I daily plead to God.

Rovereto, 22.06.30

25 March

Who will be able to measure the height or the depth of the Love of Christ? The heights of human pride are indeed great, but they are measurable; only the height of God is immeasurable. The depths of human abjection found in corrupt flesh are great, but the abyss of the penitent, long-suffering, dying humanity of our Redeemer is very much deeper. Charity, which far out-distances every created thing, can triumph over all, because everything else is less than itself, and it does indeed triumph.

SL, p. 84

26 March

It would be an injustice that a just person should suffer the cruellest death if the person had not accepted it and voluntarily renounced his right. Yet, as accepted by Christ such great suffering, undeservedly received and of infinite value, became credit. The justice of the Father required this credit to be paid because a law of eternal justice requires that *“anyone who suffers undeserved suffering should be compensated with equivalent happiness”*. The compensation and joy Christ desired from His Father was indeed the salvation of His brethren, of all human beings.

Theod. No. 760

27 March

Jesus Christ has died for us; He has preserved our life up to now so that we may have the time to cleanse ourselves in His Blood. What matters about our penance is not that it should be long, but that it should be from the heart; and the best penance of all is patience in face of the crosses He sends us; and out of His love He adapts these crosses to what our shoulders can bear, at the same time helping us to carry them.

Stresa, 14.07.42

28 March

The hand of God, who is all powerful and all wise, created the heavens, and wants to form us too for heavenly love; and the discipline of suffering, through which He trains us, is no less to be admired than the creation of the universe, though for the most part it is hidden, and seems to destroy rather than build.

Rovereto, 05.02.36

29 March

When our human nature feels itself weighed down by grief, we must allow it an outlet; but then we must enter into ourselves, and within our souls, in which holy Baptism has infused faith, we shall find in this divine light great solace, great consolation. Oh, how the light of faith changes the way we see things! Supernatural truth transforms evils that are intolerable to nature into sources of unspeakable happiness! All things appear differently when enlightened by faith, and the splendour of supernatural truth changes into a source of ineffable joy the most intractable of our evils!

Stresa, 21.08.42

30 March

First of all I urge you to cultivate *recollection and interior fervour*. Pray mentally, speak continually with God, with Christ, heart to heart. Walk always in the presence of God: invoke Him, thank Him; humble yourself and feel compunction.

Stresa, 08.02.42

31 March

Prayer is able to gain everything: without it we can do nothing.

Stresa, 15.10.36

APRIL



The Lord is truly risen!

1 April

The Resurrection of our Saviour is the most solid foundation of our religion, since it proved beyond doubt that He was truly God, and that, consequently, His teaching, on which our religion is based, is divine.

COI, No. 721

2 April

St. Paul attributes our justification to the Resurrection of Christ, since if it is true that it was merited for us by Christ's passion, it was achieved and completed by His Resurrection, through which Christ acquired His dominion over us and transformed us according to His loving heart. If Christ had not risen from the dead, He would not have communicated His glorious life; we would not arise from the dead, but would remain under the curse of sin.

IVG, p.180

3 April

If Christ had not risen, there would be no hope of eternal life. Christians would be the most wretched among men, since their hope would be only for the present life, a life deprived of pleasures, and seen by them as more like death than life.

Ibid. p. 182

4 April

Christ loved His human nature, and He loved it in His brethren too. On the basis of His love for it, He restored the fullness of human nature, which had been destroyed by death, by means of the eventual bodily resurrection of every human being. He defeated the evil plan of the devil to destroy our weak and mortal nature, which God had intended, as the work of His hands, to be immortal. He abolished Original Sin, which was the result of the corruption of human nature, by granting to all resurrected bodies, which are free from actual sin, a perfect body like His own.

Ibid. p. 175

5 April

Christ's death was a credit of such infinite value that it not only paid for the debt due by fallen humanity to Divine Justice, but it also merited for men indescribable gifts of great price. This is why Holy Scripture attributes the salvation of the world to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

6 April

Christ proclaimed: *"I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in Me, even if he is dead, shall live; and whoever lives and believes in Me, shall never die"* (Jn. 11, 25). In another passage, He said to the Father: *"I in them and You in Me"* (Jn. 17, 23). If Christ is life, and if He is in His disciples, it follows that they will always have life so long as they are one with Christ; they will have a life which, by its own nature, cannot end. It is Christ who confers on them eternal life the moment they are filled with grace and become one body with Him.

Ibid. p.186

7 April

It was not enough to destroy the old man, the offspring of Adam; it was necessary to bring to life the new man, which is what Christ did when He shared with us the new life of His Resurrection. Because man is one with Christ and a member of that very same Body of which Christ is the Head, he is bound to participate in all the vicissitudes of the Head, dying with Him and being raised to life with Him.

Ibid. p. 181

8 April

Why should a man, who is truly one with Christ, be concerned to accumulate a few and uncertain material goods, worrying over them, when he knows that in Christ he has all things? If there is anything that he needs in order to achieve his supernatural end, the only thing he considers his true treasure, he knows that Christ will provide for it, thus avoiding anxieties and troubles. This belief makes him appreciate Christ's words about the blessedness of that poverty to which was promised the kingdom of heaven.

Ibid. p. 147

9 April

We are not like those who do not have any hope beyond this sorrowful life. For us, the treasure of infinite value is to be found beyond this mortal life. There we shall find the haven, the kingdom, the crown of justice and the triumph of mercy.

Rovereto, 30.07.37

10 April

I'll leave with you this maxim: life should be guided by ideas which do not pass away, being the same today and tomorrow. Despise ideas which change from day to day; ignore them, and do not take them as rules for your actions.

Stresa, 02.11.54

11 April

Above all, keep your mind tranquil, and do not imagine it is an act of virtue to depreciate yourself unreasonably, much less to want to gain virtue by violence and with agitation. When a person becomes upset and gives himself up to sadness and tears, he often arouses temptations and makes them stronger.

Stresa, 23.12.53

12 April

God and our guardian Angel always infuse true joy in the soul, taking away the sadness and the anxiety put there by the devil. The devil, on the other hand, uses arguments which seem to be true to destroy the joy he finds in the soul.

ME, p.79

13 April

Jesus Christ alone is the Saviour of the world. He leads us to God, our true end, by means of His Blood, by His grace, by His constant action on the soul, and by His will. In this work of salvation, Intelligence, strength, wealth, human endeavours count for nothing. Nothing at all can save us, except the power of Jesus Christ.

Catechetica, p. 389

14 April

Cut off from Christ, man is dead in relation to the life of grace, which is his ultimate end. If he is one with Christ, he receives from Christ His supernatural life, and attains the fullness of life.

Ibid. p. 392

15 April

Christianity as a whole is hidden in this solemn phrase: “*In Christ*”, since it expresses the reality of the mystical union of man with Christ. The essence of Christianity consists precisely in the union and incorporation of man with Christ.

IVG, p. 153

16 April

According to Christian philosophy, many temporal benefits can be obtained by prayer, without the need for miracles. This truth presupposes another truth, that when at the beginning God had chosen the order of events which follow one another, He had foreseen, from that very moment, all the prayers and the desires of the just, with the result that He had predisposed things in such a wonderful way in the universe that those prayers were answered in the natural succession of events by granting the requested favour or some greater favour. In this way God disposed that this or that benefit was in harmony with the universal good.

Theod. No. 256

17 April

We know that we do God’s will both when we fulfil the duties and the obligations demanded by our state in life, and when we strive to achieve perfection in all things that we are obliged to do.

TTP, p. 335

18 April

The same principle that urges us to live up to the duties of our state as willed by God, making good use of its time, will compel the Christian to love his work, in particular the art and profession he practises, and to be diligent in it. If he makes progress, he will regard it a merit before God, being His will that he should apply himself fully in the state in which God has placed him.

MP, VII, No 6

19 April

How earnestly the spiritual man must watch and pray that he may attain to the knowledge of himself and of the secret workings of his own soul!

Stresa, 08.04.53

20 April

Faith and grace dwell habitually within us, even without our knowing it. We must not confuse them with the “feeling” which may be associated with faith and grace; and we must not think that our spiritual condition is subject to rapid change without a serious cause.

Rome, 09.10.35

21 April

There is no doubt that the greatest grace the Lord can give us is the opportunity to suffer something for love of Him. If we were without such sufferings, we should always be wretched, because of our attachment to ourselves and to the things of this earth, which are only vanity and misery. The eyes of our spirit would be blind, unable to see where our true happiness lay; we should lack a genuine spiritual life. This is why, sure of the mercy of God, I certainly ought to, and do in fact, count among my greatest blessings the bodily infirmities He sends me, with which I live, and which keep me alert, since they in part reveal me to myself. However, the complete revelation will come only with death.

Calvario, 21.06.28

22 April

Temporal misfortunes make the heart better, that is, more humble, more loving, more charitable, and more detached from vanity, which it finds repulsive.

Stresa, 25.03.45

23 April

If we are tried and even overwhelmed by evils, this brings our thoughts down from the clouds, and forces us willy-nilly to recognise what we really are, without illusions. So the sense of our own wretchedness is by grace made the means of leading us to God. For when we find nothing in ourselves but wretchedness, and nothing in the world outside us but tribulation, then our hearts, which cannot do without goodness and love, at last turn to God, out of a sort of happy necessity (of which grace makes use), and we abandon ourselves to Him. We then come to acknowledge Him as our only good, and feel profoundly the truth of those words of Christ, “*Come to me, all you who are weary and heavily burdened, and I will give you rest*”.

Calvario, 23.09.32

24 April

If I had to suggest to you a remedy against all discouragement and sadness, I would advise you to turn to the words of our Lord Himself as the Evangelists report them. They are full of delight and bring peace to the heart.

Stresa, 01.01.41

25 April

Let us be content and happy always in the hands of the Lord who is close to us and lives in us. Let us accustom ourselves to His presence and be ever aware of Him. He will give increase to our charity, because He is essentially all love.

Stresa, 04.12.50

26 April

When you converse with others use pleasant and encouraging words only. If you keep your soul in the joy which is the mark of holiness, you will be less subject to being bad-tempered and angry. You will do well to imitate the affability of St. Francis de Sales.

Rovereto, 21.12.32

27 April

Have a fear of the imagination, and do not give a hearing to its empty and disturbing judgements of things. Instead, walk always in the light of understanding. Jesus said, "*I have come as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness*".

Stresa, 25.12.41

28 April

To abandon oneself totally in divine Providence: there is no other maxim, perhaps, which more than this succeeds in obtaining peace for the heart and the equanimity proper to the life of Christians.

MP, V, No. 1

29 April

It is enough to have complete confidence in Jesus Christ to be utterly certain of victory over every enemy, and to arrive at the highest perfection, or, which is the same thing, at perfect happiness.

Stresa, 16.11.43

30 April

If we hold God in high esteem, then we know that if we possess Him alone we have everything, nothing is wanting to us. If we believe that we can find God in every place, in all the circumstances of our lives, then doubtless we shall always be perfectly content, in whatever place or situation we find ourselves.

Rovereto, August 1828

MAY



Sacro Monte Calvario - Domodossola

1 May

Our model is, after Christ Himself, the Blessed Virgin. With good reason she is considered by the Church as the archetype of wisdom, since there is no greater wisdom than to live at peace in God and to exult in Him with complete faith in His mercy, giving praise and thanks to Him for all the workings of His Providence, that is, for everything without exception.

Calvario, 04.06.30

2 May

Devotion to our Lady is a wonderful help in bringing serenity to a downcast spirit. The kindly light of our Star is a comfort in every danger.

Milan, 05.05.26

3 May

The Lord has given all the means whereby we may, if we please, maintain ourselves in His grace; and they are means which cannot fail. What better safeguard can we have than the protection of Our Blessed Lady? Is not the dear name of Mary balm for all our wounds? I wonder how often you have experienced the comfort of this name, the aid of her who is the Mother of all who have recourse to Her; for at the mere thought of this Mother of God and our Mother calm returns to the soul and serenity to the mind. Gladness accompanies the mere mention of her name; by invoking it we renew our courage, even in moments of greatest discouragement and fierce conflict, and we put the enemies of the soul to flight. He who trusts in Mary cannot perish.

Rome, 15.08.29

4 May

How consoling is the right we have of saying *Mother* to the Mother of God, who gave us our Redeemer, who cared for Him and followed Him to the cross! There, at the foot of the dying Saviour's cross, we obtained the right to call Mary our Mother, a right sanctioned by the words of Jesus, *Behold your Mother!* For it was during our Redeemer's agony and in the sorrows of His Mother that our adoption took place.

Ibid.

5 May

Amid the disappointments and crosses of this sorrowful life, we find consolation in the thought that Mary's motherhood was proclaimed in the hour of suffering. Indeed, it is in our suffering that the tenderness of this loving Mother finds a vaster field and, so to speak, her realm. Let us keep close to this gracious and loving consoler. Let us put ourselves into her hands and banish all fear. Happy is he who does this!

Ibid.

6 May

We must love God in all His creatures, but especially in Mary, who is the most beautiful of all. I desire to see her loved by us all, within the Institute and without, in heaven and on earth, so that all the universe may be filled with love, and that all be united in love in the Father and the Son, to whom be all glory and honour for ever and ever.

Stresa, 19.04.40

7 May

I place all my trust, after God, in our dear Mother and Leader, Mary; and, as you wisely advise, I entrust to her the whole matter and remain entirely tranquil and at peace. The whole Institute is her child: let our Mother look after us. Meanwhile I can tell you that every day she grants me further graces, fresh consolations.

Stresa, 25.05.41

8 May

Let us find rest in the hands of God, our Father; and in the peace that comes from Jesus, let us continue to draw closer to Him and never to draw breath except for Him, for His love, in His service and for the fulfilment of His adorable will. It often happens than one on a bed of pain draws closer to God in a few hours than in many years in the prosperity of the world. God is just, and no merit is lost or hidden from His eyes. Our most tender Mother Mary is our unfailing advocate before Him. He will refuse her nothing. We have her sacred name on our lips and filial tenderness in our heart.

Stresa, 02.02.52

9 May

This greatest of Virgins and highly favoured Mother of the Saviour, although a most noble member of the Church, is, at the same time and with perfect propriety, the mother of the Church itself, since the Church was born when Our Lord Jesus Christ was born. Therefore the Church has that close resemblance to Mary, which a daughter bears to a mother. Like Mary the Church is endowed with virginal incorruptibility, and, at the same time, with the fecundity of motherhood.

Pred. p. 303

10 May

As the Church begets Christ in us, so Mary begets us in Christ. These two most affectionate of Mothers compete, as it were, with each other, in bringing us up and leading us on to salvation; both providing us with the means to obtain it. Mary does so in heaven, by listening lovingly to our prayers; the Church does so on earth, teaching us how to offer up worthy supplications to our Blessed Queen and Mother.

Ibid.

11 May

Full of grace, indeed, is Mary. She belongs to the two Covenants, and has grace from both: to the Old, which endows her with the grace of motherhood, and to the New which gives her the grace of virginity. She has the grace of chaste splendour before men, and the grace of salvation before God. The dignity and majesty of her exterior gifts delight men; the abundance and perfection of her interior gifts delight God. Hence she is truly *blessed among women*; blessed above all women by virtue of the sacred seed which the Creator enclosed in her womb, and from whence all blessings flow. Thus, she not only has all blessedness as her own possession, but she gave birth to the permanent source of every blessing.

Ibid. P. 306

12 May

Mary has been rightly called *priestess*, because she offered the great sacrifice of the immaculate Victim; but she could also be called *mother of the priesthood* of the New Covenant, being the Mother of Jesus, who is the source of the priesthood. All priesthood, in fact, is a participation in the one and only priesthood of Christ.

TTP, p. 355

13 May

Since Jesus cannot deny anything to Mary, who is His Mother, and since Mary cannot deny anything to us, who are her children, who can fail to see that, if we were truly Mary's children, we would want for nothing and we would have all things?

Ibid. p. 355

14 May

The Christian ought, moreover, to meditate on, and always to imitate, the most profound humility of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whom the Holy Scriptures describe as in a state of perpetual calm, and peace, and quietness. By her own choice, her life, as we find, was humble, retired, and silent: and she was drawn from it only by the voice of God, or by feelings of charity towards her cousin St. Elizabeth.

MP, VI, No 1

15 May

According to human judgment, who would believe that so little had been narrated in the Holy Scriptures of the most perfect of all human creatures? No great work was undertaken by her; yet her life, which the world would

wrongly regard as one of continued inaction, was declared by God to be the most sublime, the most virtuous, the most magnanimous of all lives.

Ibid.

16 May

In all matters, above all, let us keep on praying; this is the most effective means we can use. Let us put everything in the hands of most holy Mary; let us have an unlimited devotion to her; and we shall see how well this good Mother of ours will protect us and bring about a happy conclusion for her devoted children. In short, let have no doubts: let us simply adopt all the means I have mentioned, with lively faith and perseverance.

Stresa, 11.12.41

17 May

We must revive our trust in that loving Mother who desires for us only our true good, and nothing false and merely apparent. She will certainly listen to our prayers if we ask her favour; she will obtain for us the grace we need in order to overcome our enemies and to go forward as victors into her presence to thank her for ever for her great goodness to us.

Stresa, 28.11.45

18 May

The fear of divine judgment is a light which comes from the infinite goodness of God who looks after us with paternal love. This fear must be accompanied by the knowledge of the goodness of our God, which is equally enduring, infinite, and sublime. The Lord, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, will bring to fruition all your holy desires, and will grant you a loving confidence so that you may overcome all fear and find rest in Jesus Christ.

Stresa, 11.08.50

19 May

It has often occurred to me that the reason our Lady did not tell Joseph about the apparition of the angel to her was that she had no proof to offer him, and was so humble that she did not expect to be believed on the strength of her word alone.

Rome, 17.12.29

20 May

Chosen above all women to give to the world its Saviour, God-Incarnate, Mary carried with her the source of all holiness, first, as was fitting, to the home of Elizabeth, which she sanctified; she sanctified the mother of him who was destined to be the precursor of our Saviour; she sanctified the precursor himself, anointing him, as it were, before his birth and made him worthy of his sublime mission.

Cant. No. 1

21 May

When Mary heard Elizabeth so sublimely extol her faith, and the happiness of Mary's glorious election to be the Mother of God, Mary, full of profound humility and gratitude, began at once to acknowledge the Lord as the author of all her glory, and to attribute to Him alone her exaltation. She did not, as false humility is wont to do, pretend not to know, nor did she seek to conceal, the greatness that had been bestowed upon her. On the contrary, she showed herself to be fully conscious of its possession, and freely acknowledged it, but only as the work of the Lord: *My soul, she said, magnifies the Lord.*

Ibid. No. 3

22 May

At the time that Mary declared herself to exult in God her Saviour, she made no allusion to being His mother. This was the secret of her heart, that ineffable secret from which she derived a joy most hidden, a joy all her own, a joy which no one else could understand, and which to no one else could be imparted: *Secretum meum mihi, secretum meum mihi* [My secret to myself, my secret to myself]. All others could only remotely imagine that joy, and she, without a word, left them to imagine it.

Ibid. No. 7

23 May

Mary was the first in the New Testament to confess her faith in the divinity of Jesus Christ. She confessed it long before St. Peter, who, for having said, "*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God*", merited to be made the foundation stone of the Church. Indeed, before Christ was born she confessed Him to be God; before He could have announced Himself to all the world by His preaching, or confirmed it by His miraculous works. For this she fully deserved the praise which Elizabeth pronounced, "*Blessed are you because you have believed*".

Ibid. No. 8

24 May

Since Mary is the most holy of creatures, and since all things were created by God for the service and glory of holiness, she took a place next to Christ in the end for which the world was created, and the end of any work is that which was first conceived in the mind of its creator. Moreover, as the Man-God is the principle of all sanctity and author of all saints, so was Mary the principle of the Man-God; and as the mother precedes the son, no less in the order of thoughts than in that of causes, likewise Mary who could not precede the Divine Word, because He was generated from eternity, could, however, and did precede the Incarnate Word, because she herself gave Him human nature in her most holy womb, and it was this human nature of the Word which became the means of saving mankind and sanctifying all the saints.

Ibid. No. 10

25 May

The obscure maiden, hidden away from the world in a mountain village, and hardly known to her own relatives, heard coming from all the ages the harmonious voice of people celebrating her glories and calling her blessed. This word *blessed* signifies all that is most propitious, most joyful, all that imports the greatest good to a creature. Blessedness is at once the effect and the reward of consummate sanctity. It conveys a praise that befits nothing but evangelical virtue; for it is only the charity of Christ that deserves blessedness.

Ibid. No. 11

26 May

Does not this word *blessed* contain a prophecy which has been already literally fulfilled? Is it not a fact that, throughout the whole world, the faithful delight in calling Mary, "*the Blessed Virgin*", rather than by any other endearing title? We, who live nineteen centuries after Mary uttered this prophecy, can bear witness to its fulfilment. We ourselves contribute in accomplishing it every day.

Ibid.

27 May

Note how Mary, while proclaiming her own blessedness, ascribed all the glory to God alone. She declared that all generations should call her blessed, not, indeed, because she herself had done anything, but because the Lord had done great things to her. She presented herself merely as a

creature who received everything from her Creator; and so she adopted language at all points consistent with perfect truth and perfect humility.

Ibid. No. 12

28 May

He who did such great things to her is omnipotent. By calling God the *Mighty One*, Mary intended to demonstrate the feebleness of all men, and to recognise the fact that none but God should be deemed powerful. She recognised no other power but that which she knew belonged to God, and she could recognise no other greatness than the Divine. In saying that “He who is Mighty” had done great things to her, she implied that the things done to her were great in relation to God Himself. Indeed, the Incarnation wrought in Mary was the greatest of all the Divine works, because it was greater than creation itself.

Ibid. No. 13

29 May

When Mary said that the mercy of God extends to all generations for those who fear Him, she meant that they who have that which is less, that is to say, the holy fear which holds them back from sin, shall also, in due course, have that which is greatest, that is to say, love. They who do what they can will afterwards have the grace to do what they cannot now. All men can, in some way, fear God, with a holy though natural fear. God does not owe them anything, and therefore, says Mary, He will show them mercy.

Ibid. No. 16

30 May

Mary, standing directly between the two Testaments, as the last representative of the ancient Patriarchs and the first of the Saviour’s disciples, sought to make known that, as the mercy which the Lord showed to those who feared Him was continued up to her, so, from her, as if recommencing, it should be continued till the end of time, and be greater in all future generations than ever it had been in the past.

Ibid. No. 17

31 May

Let us all be closely united in the love of Jesus Christ! The love we bear for one another will be the token of our being His disciples. Let us pray without ceasing — and it is in prayer that we shall find our union. This is

true above all when we are of one heart and one soul before the altar,
since there we share the one bread, and this nourishes us all, making us
live with the same life — and so is the symbol of our ineffable oneness.
So, glory to Jesus: He is the Vine of which we are the branches; and glory
to Mary, our dear Mother and our hope: she is the greatest branch of that
Vine.

Calvario, 28.02.31

JUNE



“Father, give me everything”

1 June

The Holy Spirit produced the following extraordinary effects on the Apostles: 1) A most profound knowledge of things divine; 2) An exceptional purity and holiness of life; 3) Great strength in suffering for the sake of justice; 4) The gifts of the Spirit to the highest degree.

COI, No. 738

2 June

The Holy Spirit brings light to the soul so that it may understand, perceive, and love Jesus Christ, the Man-God, begotten of the Father, and sent by the Father into the world. This clear light which Christians have, is somewhat hidden under a veil, while we are in the world; but it will be

revealed in its full splendour once the veil of our bodies has been torn open.

IVG, p. 230

3 June

Man receives through the Eucharist the most sublime of all graces, Christ Jesus Himself, the true bread from heaven, and the author of grace. Christ becomes one with man in the most intimate way under the species of food, and fills the soul with His divine love.

COI, No. 440

4 June

We are all invited to the holy banquet, and we are all called to partake of the Body of the Lord. Christians ought to be full of gratitude for the goodness of the Creator, who has called them to Himself with such generosity. They ought to feel their nothingness, their unworthiness, and approach at the same time this holy banquet with confidence, joy, humility, and praising God with the words of the Blessed Virgin, "*He deigned to look upon the lowliness of His servant*".

EC, No. 199

5 June

Christian life does not begin with physical or intellectual perfection, but with moral perfection. The former two do not count at all, because they are irreparably ruined; but once a new moral life has been recovered supernaturally, then through it the former two are brought back to life, are recovered and given back to us. This moral life is given to Christians through their union to Jesus Christ, who is the bread come down from heaven; and their new dignity, grandeur, power, and the feeling of Christian magnanimity consist in the moral and supernatural life of Jesus Christ in which Christians participate.

IVG, p. 144

6 June

It is quite right to desire to be once more in Church in the presence of our Divine Love, and should anyone reprove this desire, we might answer in the words of Job, *Does not the ear discern words and the palate taste the food?* For one who has these bodily senses it is impossible not to have the corresponding sensations. Likewise, he who has a spiritual sense, a thing which is most rare and sublime, but which all Christians possess who love

Jesus Christ, he, I say, cannot but feel pain at being separated from His Lord and deprived of Him.

Calvario, 21.04.28

7 June

Think about the sentiments which so filled the humble, meek and loving heart of Jesus, and model your attitudes on his. If in your heart you find different sentiments, make war to the death against them, using prayer, mortification and acts of every kind of humility and charity. Without these things, the gentle sweetness of Christ will not find its home in you.

Stresa, 09.03.46

8 June

The heart of Jesus alone is calm and peaceful; and whoever lives in that heart shares that peace. Persecution and external disturbance do not take it away, since they do not at all trouble the heart of Jesus, in whom the faithful disciple lives.

Stresa, 27.02.43

9 June

What a treasure is the peace of Christ! What progress is made by the person who walks in this peace! What light of truth is diffused on him! Such a person, free from the turmoil of passions, from anger and bitterness, sees all things in the light of truth; he judges things rightly, without allowing his imagination to alter facts, and readily distinguishes good from evil, flying from evil and embracing that which is good with simplicity and love.

Stresa, 08.04.53

10 June

When we know ourselves, we shall show great kindness to others, making every allowance for them.

Trent, 14.11.31

11 June

Gentleness is a most delicate virtue: it is easily hurt; a raising of the voice, a hasty gesture, a glance, a smile, a touch of irony, a tone of voice — any of these things can be enough to offend against gentleness. It is as delicate as self-love itself, and nothing is easier to hurt than that.

Domodossola, 20.12.32

12 June

See that your conversation is always open and cordial, full of kindness, pleasant, considerate and innocently cheerful: nothing harsh, severe, insincere or sad.

Milan, 19.03.36

13 June

One of the principal characteristics of the true love which we see in Jesus Christ is *compassion*. Compassionate love is the sweet but painful affection through which we feel in ourselves the sufferings and evils of all our brethren as though they were our own. Through compassion, one person alone suffers all that the others suffer as he amasses in his own heart all the distress of others; and the more perfect the love, the greater the intensity of this kind of suffering. This is what St. Paul meant when he said, "*Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalised, and I am not on fire?*"

SL, p. 98

14 June

Charity is not only to feed the hungry, or to clothe the naked; charity is also not to upset anyone unnecessarily.

EC, No. 314

15 June

I urge you to be happy and cheerful at all times. Be wary of bad moods, and keep in mind St. Francis de Sales' words that one can catch more flies with a drop of honey than with a barrel of vinegar.

Rovereto, 03.06.34

16 June

To be able to tolerate without any displeasure the fact that in debatable matters others hold a different opinion from our own is not only a sign that we have charity in our heart but also a sign that we love the truth. For a man who loves truth knows and openly admits that he can be mistaken. He is aware that the truth may perhaps exist in other people's minds instead of his own.

TTP, p. 319

17 June

Love for the family is praiseworthy; and so is love for one's country. How I wish, however, that Christians should consider family and country as means to promote the glory of the Church of God! How I wish that they should be seen as parts of the greater and nobler society, the Society of the Church, since they are, by God's grace, in the Church of Jesus Christ; and a part is always at the service of its all.

Milan, 13.06.26

18 June

Christians know by faith that all the delight of the Heavenly Father is in Jesus Christ His only-begotten Son; and that the delight of the only-begotten Son Jesus Christ is in the Faithful who form His kingdom. Christians therefore can never err when they set for themselves the whole Church as the object of their affections, thoughts, desires, and actions. As to this, they know with certainty that it is the will of God that the Church shall become the great means by which His holy name is to be fully glorified.

MCP, III, 1-2

19 June

The divine Author of the Church, before leaving this world, prayed the heavenly Father that His Apostles would form together a perfect unity, as He and the Father together form the most perfect unity, being of the same nature. This unity most sublime, of which the God-Man spoke in that splendid prayer that He raised after supper, hours before His passion, was mainly an interior unity, a unity of faith, hope, and love; but reflecting such interior unity there should be an external unity. St. Paul said, *One body and one spirit*, and this means everything, because the body signifies the unity in the order of things visible and external, and the spirit signifies the unity in the order of things which we cannot see.

FW, No. 47

20 June

The Christian knows, by the words of Jesus Christ, that the Church on the earth is founded upon a Rock, against which the powers of the hell cannot prevail: that is to say, upon St. Peter, the chief of the Apostles, and upon the Roman Pontiffs his successors, the Supreme Vicars of Jesus Christ on earth. The Christian ought therefore to cherish in his heart an unbounded affection, attachment, and reverence, for the Holy See of the Roman

Pontiff. He ought, beyond all measure, to love and promote the true and holy glory, the honour and prosperity, of this essential part of the immaculate Spouse of Jesus Christ.

MCP, III, No. 6

21 June

As regards events in the Church we must remain entirely calm, convinced that Jesus Christ lives, that he has all power in heaven and on earth; that he does whatever he wishes, and that nothing happens that is not ordained to his greater glory and his complete triumph.

Milan, 09.08.27

22 June

The Word, though invisible, dwells on the earth in the souls of His disciples, leaving the mark of His presence in them from generation to generation. He imparts His Spirit to them so that the work of His Church is fresh and new in every age. It can never grow old, as it renews its work in every human being who in some way becomes Christ. This explains why the teaching is always *good news*, or gospel, the name which it has borne from the beginning.

IP, No. 103

23 June

In the struggle which the Church wages against the spirit of evil and human weakness, she seems at times to suffer, as periods of triumph are followed by periods of bitterness and humiliation. This, however, is merely momentary and transitory. As a society, the Church is so constituted that she retains the power of self-restoration and rejuvenation through the governance of pastors with whom Christ promised to be present down the ages and through the charity which He instils in the souls of His faithful and by which He established the Church in the beginning. This explains also the Church's capacity for endless progress.

Ibid.

24 June

Being the Gospel directed at the salvation of the whole of humanity, not only had it to act on the elements of human nature, but it had to accompany it with its divine action through all its advances, and sustain it through all the successive stages of its development. It was necessary that the Gospel should mingle and go forward together with human

persons, and with them become part of their associations; it had to regenerate and save not only the individuals but every society made by them, the family, the nation, and the entire human consortium.

FW, No. 6

25 June

Jesus Christ has power over all things in heaven and on earth, and has merited to become absolute Lord of all men; and He alone, with unspeakable wisdom, power and goodness, rules all events according to His Divine pleasure, and for the greater good of the elect who form His beloved Spouse the Church. The Christian therefore should feel perfectly tranquil and full of joy, resting entirely upon Our Lord, however contrary even to the good of the Church events may seem. But he must not cease from praying earnestly that the will of God may be done on earth as it is in heaven, that is, that men may fulfil the holy law of charity on earth as the saints fulfil it in heaven.

MCP, IV, 1-2

26 June

No one is necessary to the Divine Redeemer for the glorification of His Church, that is, for redeeming mankind from the slavery of sin, in which all men without exception are involved. Only in His mercy, freely bestowed, does He choose from among the redeemed those whom He pleases to raise to such an honour; and even for the greatest works he uses what is weak and contemptible in the eyes of the world.

MCP, IV, 3

27 June

The gentle law of divine Providence is such as to produce remote effects using secondary causes. This is why God wished to convert the world to the gospel by means of the apostles, and now daily makes the vivifying light of His word shine forth through the ministry of those He sends. Why look further? If we put our hopes in Him, He will bless our words. So let us do all we can through prayer, study, diligence and so on, and let us not think beyond this. What we need to think about is our own duties. In this alone we must find peace, leaving the rest to God.

Turin, 24.01.37

28 June

Let God's holy law be the light of our thoughts, and the words of the gospel the end of our speculations, with Jesus Christ as our Master, first and last. It is He who has the words of eternal life: blessed are those who meditate on them, who have them in their heart and mind, and whose study and research have no other aim but to conform their minds to them, correcting and emending their ideas by comparison with them as by a certain norm, so as to give life to all their knowledge by these words. Let everything be done so that God may be glorified in Jesus.

Rome, 06.06.29

29 June

The only weapon carried by the herald of the Gospel, his only rod, is his *voice*; it is with it that he exposes all falsehood, that he binds, and that he condemns. In a word, the Church's ministers are not rulers, but shepherds; they are not kings, but teachers of men. Moreover, Christ sent them to bring the perfection of holiness in His people, which is the final purpose of all things. How great is God's goodness, He has disposed all things for the sake of His chosen people!

EC, No. 161-162

30 June

A way of doing good is through showing a serious and sensible demeanour and being always gentle, kindly, treating all alike, giving good example; and when conversing with people, do not forget this prudent rule, of speaking frankly and directly of the great principles of our religion, such as the love of Jesus Christ, faith, hope in God, charity towards one's neighbour, and so on. Do not descend to minutiae in what you say; avoid all subtlety; do not smother those you are addressing; be brief, but as occasion offers, repeat the truth in plain terms. It is as if you are scattering the seed here and there, and then waiting patiently for the Lord of the harvest to give the increase.

Stresa, 22.01.47

JULY



Blessed Antonio Rosmini

1 July

Oh if only divine love could truly inflame our hearts! Oh if only we could live and die for His love! I can do no other than wish for you what I wish for myself and for all: that the fire of divine love may burn and consume you, or rather, that it may destroy in you what is not of God, so that true, real life may increase in you.

Rovereto, 06.10.28

2 July

Jesus Christ is Lord of all, and the truly wise person listens to His words: *"My sheep listen to my voice"*.

EC, No. 15

3 July

To act according to the spirit of intelligence means nothing else but to act according to reason, without allowing ourselves to be moved or disturbed

by any passion whatsoever. The highest and most universal of all reasons for acting is that of doing always and in everything the Will of God.

Stresa, 24.09.50

4 July

Each individual, in the way he behaves, must — rather than follow what his own reasoning suggests — take as his guide only the one lofty and most simple rule: that is, to follow the will of God in imitation of Christ who, when He explained the reasons for His actions, said that He always did the will of His heavenly Father, and that He acted so that the scriptures might be fulfilled — the scriptures which contained precisely what the Father had from all eternity pre-arranged.

Calvario, 02.10.37

5 July

Prayer is the most sublime of all philosophies, the most instructive of all schools.

Rome, 26.01.30

6 July

The whole study of the Christian life is to be found in these two points: the knowledge of self and the knowledge of God. These produce two opposite effects. Self-knowledge brings with it fear and discouragement, whilst the knowledge of God, on the contrary, instils into the soul unbounded hope and courage. We must be careful not to let one of these feelings exist without the other.

Rovereto, 07.09.27

7 July

O unspeakable goodness of God! He takes offence at our being disheartened; He expects from us a courage as great, if that were possible, as His goodness: an infinite courage. Who could impose this obligation except God, a God infinitely good and infinitely powerful? Let us then in our distress say with the Apostle, "*If God is with us, who is against us?*"

Ibid.

8 July

It is only when we feel we have nothing to hope for from ourselves that we really put our hopes in God. We need experience: the knowledge gained by the mind alone is too cold and ineffectual without that experiential knowledge which Christ and the saints had, according to the Apostle's words: "*He learned obedience through the things he suffered*".

Rovereto, 31.08.27

9 July

The knowledge that all that happens is God's will is so consoling that in itself it is sufficient to ensure tranquillity and contentment. Faith tells us that God is essentially good, and whether humiliation or exaltation comes from Him, it makes no difference. So if we live by faith, as the just should, we shall rejoice equally at the state of the soul in trial or triumph. For my part, I can never cease to thank the Lord for enabling me to understand this most consoling truth. I find myself so happy in my humiliation that I would not wish to escape it, unless it were to conform myself again to the divine will.

Stresa, 25.03.52

10 July

We offend God no less by presumption than by distrust. Pusillanimity is no less unbecoming to a Christian than temerity. Are we not happy in this, that we not only may, but must, have courage in all the circumstances of life?

Rovereto, 07.09.27

11 July

Abandonment to all good works is the note of perfection, the universality of love of neighbour, the sincerity of the charity of Christ! We are certain of pleasing Christ and doing His will, for we are not doing our own will. Charity knows no repugnance and loves all that is good because it loves nothing else but good. Self-love knows repugnance and is limited, because it has no real love for good but only for the semblance of good.

TTP, p. 338

12 July

Let us stand firm in God, without hesitation or doubt, and let us wait in faith: "*Hope in the Lord, be strong, let your heart take courage and hope in the Lord*". The Lord has no greater means of teaching us men than that

of making us wait. Our great defect is excessive haste; it is a wise man who knows how to wait!

Rome, 17.03.29

13 July

When the devil sees that we are courageous, he loses heart, and after a few more attacks he leaves us alone; but if he sees that things are otherwise, that we are cowardly and feeble, this is what he wants: he leaves us no peace, and if we do not at once banish our fear, then he has won the victory. We must pray earnestly with the psalmist, *Save me, Lord, from my feebleness of spirit and rescue me from the storm.*

Calvario, 22.06.30

14 July

If we put our trust in ourselves, it would be the end of us! However, we can rely on the tender love of God to such an extent that we can even expect from Him a change of our heart. He will lead us to respond to His grace by giving us courage and strength, and all that is required to make a generous and full commitment. Do we desire such change of heart? This desire is already a guarantee that God wants to do great works in us; since even the desire for what is good is His gift.

Stresa, 29.04.40

15 July

I do not want you to let the enemy close up your heart, when God wishes us instead to be great and generous of heart. *I ran in the way of your commandments, for you enlarged my heart.* So what I chiefly urge on you is to be more large-hearted. We are sinful, but God is infinitely good. How little we stop to think about that word, '*infinitely*'. If we did, all our fears would vanish. So we must not let ourselves be deceived by the enemy, who sometimes makes our hearts sad, causing us distress which appears under the guise of compunction for our sins. No, our compunction must always be combined with unlimited hope.

Stresa, 20.12.42

16 July

The Lord said, '*Do not be anxious about tomorrow*'. Try to distance your thoughts from what the future may hold, and from the fears which such thoughts can cause. This is already a great act of virtue and of

abandonment into the loving hands of our Lord. This is what constitutes the way of simplicity before God which the Scriptures so much praise.

Stresa, 14.07.42

17 July

Jesus Christ is infinite, and so it would be foolish to say that we have abused His grace beyond forgiveness. There are no limits to His goodness and mercy.

Stresa, 19.10.36

18 July

It seems to me that when it comes to how much we may hope, we cannot raise questions about this or make any estimate of it. This is because God's mercy is infinite, and the basis of our hope is to be found not in ourselves but in that boundless goodness. Therefore our hope must also be unlimited, however good or wicked we are. Or rather, if we want to make a distinction, the wicked must rightly hope the more, since those who are poor can always look to receive a greater amount from the generosity of the rich Lord, and our Lord is the more glorified when he is liberal towards the wicked.

Stresa, 31.07.43

19 July

God knows the times and the moments, and you know my motto: *It is good to await in silence the salvation of God*. This is the key to all that I do, and I have had it put over the door of the cell in which I live at Monte Calvario of Domodossola.

Stresa, 26.10.46

20 July

We have to wage war on all feelings of diffidence: they are nothing other than an obvious device of the enemy. Rather, we have to put ever more confidence in Jesus Christ; and when we persevere in this way we will overcome and win the victory, or rather, the grace of Christ will triumph in us.

Stresa, 24.01.48

21 July

I thank you for wanting to share with me the strange and almost unbelievable events by which Providence leads me, though its immutable counsels never fail. When I meditate on these things I wonder at them; and as I wonder, I love; loving them, I celebrate them; celebrating them I give thanks; and thanking God, I am full of happiness. How else could I act, since I know both by reason and by faith, and feel deep within my spirit, that everything God does, or wishes, or allows, is done by an eternal, an infinite, an essential love? Who indeed could be grieved by love?

Albano, 16.09.49

22 July

Seek comfort in the infinite mercy of God. This word “infinite” should fill our hearts with hope. The ways of the Lord are admirable and quite beyond our imaginings. We must adore His majesty and never forget the infinite treasures of His goodness. We must remember that nothing is more pleasing to God than our trust in Him. This trust is always rewarded and gives greatest honour to God because we can give God no greater glory than to praise His goodness.

Stresa, 06.01.51

23 July

My own conviction is that what the Lord wants of me is that I should seek nothing, and as far as is in me, I should refuse nothing, rather, that I should make a total offering of myself to Him, without prejudging what His will may be or putting any sort of limit to it; but instead should make myself entirely His slave and servant. How happy should I be if I could totally identify myself with His will! So I can truthfully say to you: if anyone asks me whether I want to perform the lowliest acts of charity, I would not dare to answer ‘yes’ at once, without adding, too: ‘provided that I am not seeking these, but that divine Providence offers these to me in the light of external circumstances’. So if anyone were to ask me if I want to refuse the nobler works of charity, should Providence offer these to me through external circumstances, I should again not dare to say ‘yes’, and I should not want to refuse them. So it is not merely charity, but charity according to the will of God that I want above all; so that I may do not my own will (under the pretext of charity) but rather that of God, who is charity.

Calvario, 14.04.28

24 July

Knowledge is not our sole aspiration: we want to love what we know. Complete knowledge of anything always arouses affection in us. Love perfects knowledge, and we, who know, love because we know. In the being we love we find good, the full term of the act of which we are the potency. Hence, we can appropriately define the human being as “a *potency whose ultimate act is to be united to the limitless Being through loving knowledge*”. This tendency or moral, rational instinct (which St. Augustine calls the weight of the human being) moves and guides all our development.

Theos. I No. 35

25 July

Human love was born of God. The Garden of Eden was its birthplace, and innocence was its twin.

SA, p. 29

26 July

The serpent, which robbed the world of charity, and ushered in death, was called by Jesus *a murderer*. St. John wrote, “*Whoever hates his brother is a murderer*”. This is the same as saying that whoever hates his brother has in him that evil seed which was in Cain, and which is in all violent people, a seed that constantly generates death.

Ibid. p. 33

27 July

Charity is to be joined with wisdom if we are to do good to our neighbour with the perfect love of Christ. This wisdom consists in observing the order of charity. The supreme order of charity, which is supreme wisdom, is known to God alone, because it consists in the greatest good of the whole universe. Our chief care, therefore, must be to investigate and know the will of God. When we know it, in all its sovereign wisdom and goodness, we must carry it out with burning charity.

Const. No. 183

28 July

Although the Institute is far from seeking anything of its own accord, it is equally keen on being anxious and attentive not to neglect any slightest opportunity for good that God’s bounty affords it, or to go against the indications of divine Providence. Rather, it does not spare itself in following them.

Stresa, 17.11.42

29 July

It is true that the *Constitutions* urge the members of the Institute to be bound by all that Superiors may command (as is recommended also by St. Basil in his Rule, and by all other holy Founders); but, on the other hand, Superiors are obliged to use all discretion and not to impose burdens beyond the strength of their subjects.

Domodossola, 28.07.37

30 July

Even if we had a Solomon in the Institute, he would afford me no pleasure or consolation if he were not obedient; rather he would cause me sorrow. In the Institute the only sort of virtue we value is that taught by Jesus Christ; and all true virtue is summed up in obedience and love.

Stresa, 09.02.43

31 July

The Disciples of Christ, who profess universal charity, and all true Christians on earth, are like seeds of unity and peace scattered among men.

DC, p. 157

AUGUST



“Father, you see into the depths of my soul, make me good”

1 August

The whole duty of man is to carry out what morality requires of him, modelling himself on the One who said: *‘Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart.’* So anyone who really lives by the gospel is faithful and generous in his humility and meekness; he is not afraid to proclaim

the whole truth (in which he finds his own good) and to witness to Christ; and neither out of faintheartedness nor out of a presumptuous hope of producing some good which is not willed by God does he act according to human maxims or the destructive spirit of this world.

Calvario, 17.10.32

2 August

The gospel is sufficient in itself; God is everything, and the just man places all his hopes in the things of eternity, and this is the source of happiness even in this world, just as a river joins the sea. I do not say that this is the source of all the happiness that we in our greed imagine and wish for; but rather of that temporal happiness which God finds most in conformity with the merciful design he has in mind for those who are destined for eternal life. Sorrow and the cross will always be dear to those who are the disciples of Jesus Christ, and will never be absent from their lives; but at the same time their wonderful and universal charity will lead them to think only of ways in which they can lighten the weight of the cross that their brethren have to carry.

Ibid

3 August

Truth is the principle of morality; and *acknowledgement of truth* is the highest of duties, the essential and proper act of morality. So we must not be surprised if in the Scriptures the word *truth* is often a synonym for moral goodness, and the word *lie* is used to indicate any form of sin. Every sin can be reduced to a lie which we pronounce to ourselves: before we commit the external act of sin, we deceive and seduce ourselves in the intimacy of the mind; and the foundation of all external sins is an interior lying word. This is why the righteous man, so dear to the Lord, is wisely described as, "*He who speaks the truth in his heart*"; and it is also true that "*the law of the Lord is truth*".

PSM, p.138

4 August

Our God is the God of truth, and our Lord is Truth in person; but sad to say, in the world truth is little loved, and so God is little loved.

Verona, 13.09.41

5 August

The truth loses nothing, either of its worth or of the light it sheds, because of the injustice with which it meets. Rather, we must be ready to suffer something for our love of this truth for which above all He suffered who is Truth itself. Truly no one can greatly love truth in this world without being rewarded by receiving insults and abuse from men; but to a generous-hearted man such insults are most dear: it is the honour he covets.

Stresa, 08.03.43

6 August

Impiety, and all it sets out to achieve, cannot last because it tends to suppress truth and systematic knowledge by eliminating the elements it finds troublesome in them. Human beings have been united by their Creator with truth in the depths of their being, and soon turn back from their mistaken paths in order to seek the sublime element of truth they have discarded, unaware they were throwing away an essential, vital part of themselves.

PR, IV, No. 489

7 August

Do we love truth to a boundless degree? This is a question people rarely ask themselves, or else they merely ask it in passing and give it little consideration, since it seems to them too general and ordinary. Neither do they make any attempt to realise its full importance.

TTP, p.314

8 August

How very necessary it is for us Christians, for us priests to love the truth above all things and in all things, the truth which is the only teacher of intellects, which begins to shine naturally in the mind and supernaturally in the light of the divine Word, communicated by sanctifying grace: the complete, substantial and eloquent truth.

Ibid.

9 August

How much is contained in this very simple and most ordinary expression, *loving the truth!* How very easy it is to fail in this primary and simple duty, a most delicate duty that is violated by a thought, a word, or the smallest action. Yes, the truth is first of all violated *in thought* when we harbour false and rash judgments of persons and things. This is the first seed of all evil. Why do we speak evil? Solely because we have first thought evil,

because we have filled our heads with wrong and prejudiced opinions, because we are accustomed to consider things invariably in a manner quite favourable to our own desires and passions and not in an impartial and equitable way.

Ibid.

10 August

The whole Christian life is an alternation of consolation and aridity. Consolation is not a sign that we are making progress; and aridity does not mean that we are going backwards. We have to live by faith. Faith must help you not to be presumptuous during consolation, and not to lose heart in aridity. Jesus Christ is ever the same, *yesterday, today, and for ever.*

Rovereto, 09.12.35

11 August

It belongs to perfection to be able to combine and harmonise in everyday life those virtues which, at first glance, seem to be opposed and almost to exclude each other. We know that it is impossible for one truth to be opposed to another; we know also that it is impossible for any virtue ever to be really opposed to another virtue. The art is to bind together in a loving concord those virtues which have a contrary tendency and which preside over our faculties and passions. This art is practised and possessed by the perfect man alone, and this is precisely where one who has consecrated himself to the study of perfection must give his attention.

Stresa, 25.09.50

12 August

Let us be constant in prayer, seeking in it all our comfort and wisdom. If we no longer live for ourselves but allow Christ to become our true life, then He will bind us to Him and make use of us for the greatest glory of His name, for ever and ever.

Milan, 18.04.27

13 August

What sublime peace will be ours if we allow Jesus to do all things in us without any interference on our part! What seeming folly to the world, if we allow Jesus to take full charge of all our actions and initiatives! This is the person I long to become, foolish and inactive in the eyes of the world,

but full of wisdom and life in Jesus, who received from the Father His eternal and divine glory.

Ibid.

14 August

To experience temptations caused by the devil, our enemy, is a trial that the Lord allows; but you oppose them, trusting in your loving Lord, with a firm will. Do everything you can to know and love the Lord, and take pleasure in delightful interchange with Him. In this way it will be easy for you to pray to Him and beg His help. You will find this something spiritually delightful, though costly to the flesh.

Stresa, 30.03.50

15 August

The Virgin Mary was raised higher than any other creature, because she is the Mother of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and was the most humble, the most holy, and perfect of all creatures.

COI, No. 762

16 August

Generally speaking, I urge you as forcefully as I can to make great efforts to attain great *meekness* and *gentleness*, as I have previously recommended you to do. If you are to act like this, you need to preserve a constant inner calm and to outwardly show cheerfulness. There is nothing to equal a happy disposition for disposing us to meekness. Moreover a little holy cheerfulness raises the spirits of others, banishing melancholy, which is the great enemy of spiritual perfection.

Domodossola, 14.01.38

17 August

During times of spiritual battles, we must persevere in asking lovingly for God's help, and sooner or later victory shall be definitely ours.

Stresa, 23.12.43

18 August

There is a constant hidden work going on in every soul either for good or evil. He who is not attentively watching this interior work and the gradual transformation it brings about may one day become aware of the fact that he is totally different from what he was before. He may find himself in a

disconsolate state of spiritual malaise or even of mortal infirmity, without being able to account for this fatal result.

Stresa, 08.04.53

19 August

To fear God with that just fear which prompts men to refrain from all sin is the beginning of greater mercies.

CMV, No. 16

20 August

There is nothing better than friendly conversations about God, held with sincerity and simplicity; they warm the hearts, kindling in them the fire of love. The truth is, regrettably, that Christians seldom talk about God and His Son Jesus Christ, yet this should be the most loved and familiar object of their thoughts and dialogues! Sadly, there are people who say that it is uncivilised to talk about religion, whilst spreading the strange view that respect for the Supreme Being requires the banishment of God from Christian societies.

DP, p. 148

21 August

Venial sins do not cause the death of the soul, and do not extinguish the virtue of charity. It could happen, for example, that one of two souls has fewer defects than the other, and yet the other has the virtue of charity to a higher degree than the first.

Stresa, 23.12.53

22 August

The world is in a poor state because many fail to pray, and many others pray badly. If Christians are taught to pray well, the battle is won.

Naples, 03.02.49

23 August

It is very beneficial to love, to contemplate, to pray to God with the least possible attention to oneself, to what is happening within the soul, or to what our soul is doing. All our good is outside ourselves: it is God, in Himself and in our neighbour. So it helps if we think of God and not of ourselves. We must seek him especially in our neighbour, and not in meticulous attempts to measure our progress.

Stresa, 17.11.44

24 August

It is important to observe that the power of our soul by which we directly communicate with God and are united with Him, is different from all those powers by which we act externally. It follows that, when a soul has attained a certain state of contemplation and union, it can, and indeed does, act with the powers which deal with external actions, without at the same time being at all disturbed in that quiet and that repose in God which are enjoyed by its supreme power. So desirable a state is reached only by those faithful and constant souls who in the beginning make great efforts to mortify themselves, and pray with intense fervour and perseverance.

Stresa, 24.09.50

25 August

Many spiritual masters declare that all spiritual profit comes from meditation. Since meditation or interior prayer alone obtains grace, vocal prayer itself if unaccompanied by some interior sentiment can obtain nothing.

TTP, p. 45

26 August

Spiritual reading is to be linked with meditation, some reading either from Holy Scripture or from another holy book which may be useful in preparing the subject of our meditation. Then there is the examination of conscience which is a form of meditation on ourselves. If this is well done, with impartial judgment and the will to advance along the path to God, it is of infinite benefit to all Christians.

Ibid. p. 48

27 August

The person, who is firmly persuaded of his infinite need of the divine grace, never ceases to plead to God from the depth of his heart to have and retain it in every act and every instance of his whole life.

Stresa, 03.12.50

28 August

Once the Spirit of Christ has moved him, and the will of God has been made manifest, then it is that the initiative, courage, endurance of the Christian for the salvation of his brethren and for other splendid works of charity, know no bounds. He knows that he has been sent by God, hence he feels a great power in Christ, in whom he acts; he despises death and all worldly goods since he knows that he has all things in his hands, and he can repeat with the Apostle, *I can do all things in the One who gives me strength*. Difficulties, tribulations, infirmities make him stronger, and he is not afraid of his own weakness, since his trust is in Christ alone.

IVG, p. 148

29 August

It is in the order of divine Providence that we put our trust; and in those indestructible seeds that the gospel has sown in humanity, seeds which in every age bring forth new fruits from an old stock, and flowers of a beauty unknown before, and which must be recognized as sprung from the word of Christ, cultivated with Christian love; but alas for us if, because the fruit and flower are new, we fail to see that they really derive from the ancient and all-powerful plant! That would be to do dishonour to the divine root itself, and treat shamefully that treasure from which the householder *brings forth things new and old*.

Domodossola, 27.03.31

30 August

The mainstay of Christian education is a well-founded and clear knowledge of the Church of Christ, of which we are members. O how little we feel the dignity and true sweetness of our belonging! We Christians are in fact divided and, so to speak, untied one from the other; therefore we do not feel sufficiently the power which binds us together and should make us one through mutual love.

EC, No 95

31 August

The Church's one hope and desire is *holiness*, to which everything else is subordinated. Man's part consists in studying how to amend himself and attain justice and holiness. After that, God will do the rest: he will choose those whom he deigns to use for the good of the Church: he will send them forth; he will guide them, he will help them. Blessed, then, are those who do not go forth of their own accord, but are sent!

Stresa, 16.08.42

SEPTEMBER



“O Infinite One, I ask for the Infinite”

1 September

Anyone who teaches young people must be firmly persuaded that to induce them to be good and to have a useful and effective influence on their souls, there is only one simple means: and that is the *truth* in the fullest sense of the word. I mean truth both in its *natural* and imperfect form, and truth in its *supernatural* and perfect form. This latter is the grace of Christ, which works secretly in them, and from which alone can come the salvation, the interior virtue, and the happiness of man.

Rho, 06.05.36

2 September

To confine oneself to instruction and practice in literature, or grammar, or philosophy, or any other secular knowledge, without arriving at the Gospel, in which salvation stands, is to be like someone who stops on the way in the middle of his journey without going forward to his destination.

Stresa, 04.02.50

3 September

It is important to arrive at the persuasion that *love of truth* is a command, the first of all commands, the greatest, and the source of all others.

TCM, No. 437

4 September

If knowledge has no effect on the human heart, if it is like a useless weight on the mind, not increasing good or reducing evil, if it does not satisfy or console with at least honest hope our ceaseless yearnings, then such knowledge does not, in my opinion, deserve to be called Wisdom. If however Wisdom is that teaching which improves and strengthens us, and raises our spirit to salutary thoughts, then the only way for us to obtain this knowledge is to contemplate the eternal designs visible in the vicissitudes of created things and make ourselves one with those designs.

Theod. No. 4

5 September

Research into matter is an arid thing unless it takes into account the creative mind of God who orders it, keeps it in being, rules over it, and animates it to one sole end. The natural universe is a canticle: the heavens, the earth, the very stones, and man himself — all sing in concert the praises of God. As you say, how wonderful is the structure of the human body, forming a unity out of so many parts, marvellous, too, is the phenomenon of life, the highest manifestation to be found in nature and the most mysterious. The mind of the unbeliever is baffled by it, the faithful Christian is moved, and his mind is filled with light as he adores the Creator. The laws of life are so providential; its gradations amaze us; and its changes are evidence of wisdom.

Domodossola, 27.02.28

6 September

We not only have to love the beauty of truth as our intellect reveals it to us (*“to acknowledge the truth”*), but also to show in practice by our conduct the good which it puts before our will (*“to act according to the truth”*).

Stresa, 21.08.41

7 September

I have a great dread of learning, but an immense love for charity. Oh, may knowledge never be a cause of division among us; may charity build us up and make us one in Jesus Christ our Lord. To Him be all honour and glory for ever!

Rovereto, 01.12.35

8 September

Perfection is the primary concern of man, and it is a gift of God which comes of grace, and grace comes of prayer. Everything else is really vanity, leading to a waste of energy and a thoughtlessness which impedes the understanding of that great truth. Someone who has but one aim in the world, one supreme concern, one Master alone — such a one feels both greater strength and greater tranquillity: all his thoughts and all his actions are endowed with order and consistency.

Trento, 10.03.32

9 September

Let us walk forward full of courage, with the written maxim in the soul that if there is anything evil in us, it comes from ourselves, if anything good, it comes from God. We should not be surprised at our weaknesses since we are capable of doing any evil, but we should not be surprised either at any great and holy thing we can do, since it is God who does it in us. Jesus Christ alone deserves all the glory; we deserve the amazement at being treated so generously by Him, without any merit.

Stresa, 24.11.43

10 September

When man is at one with Christ, he knows that it is not he who operates the good: *not I, but the grace of God in me*. He has a profound awareness of the truth that Christ taught us when He said, *without me you can do nothing*; but he feels at the same time that, united to Christ, he can do anything: *I can do all things in the One who gives me strength*.

IVG, p. 134

11 September

From the following two principles: - 1) that man by himself cannot do any supernatural good, but that all good is done by Jesus Christ in him and with him; 2) that Jesus Christ can do anything through him, and that he can bear much fruit united to Jesus Christ - there arise in the Christian two different feelings: - 1) the feeling of one's own nothingness; 2) the feeling of one's own grandeur, dignity, and power. These two feelings contain, for the soul who appreciates their value, the whole of Christian life.

Ibid. p. 135

12 September

Humility consists in not attributing to oneself what belongs to God or to other people, to the point that we think of ourselves as *nothing*, which we

are, and we think of God as the all. It is also right that we should acknowledge that glory does not belong to that which is nothing but to the all and that therefore we should not desire any glory for ourselves but we should want to give God all possible glory. It is right that, knowing these things, we should feel saddened when we are praised by others, because that which is nothing should not wish to be praised unjustly, and that we should feel, on the other hand, a great joy when we see all people glorifying God.

Stresa, 24.09.50

13 September

Although beauty is a trait of all virtues, nonetheless it belongs in a special way to chastity and humility. Chastity ensures that we do not sin against, by diminishing, the excellence of our nature, and humility prevents us from sinning against it by increasing it. Moral beauty belongs, therefore, in the highest degree to these two virtues.

Pred. p. 374

14 September

The feeling of one's own *nothingness* is a light to the Christian, because it makes him aware of his own impotence and nothingness before every good, and of the power of Christ who does and can do all things in him. This feeling, and the light of Christ which shines from it, is the origin, the first and summary cause of Christian humility, which is the foundation and condition of the virtues of the followers and disciples of our Saviour.

IVG, p.135

15 September

We almost invariably commit acts of pride when we make rash judgments and belittle our neighbour without good reason, out of a malicious desire to see him below us and not on a level with us, when we mentally place ourselves on a pedestal and say in our heart, *I am not like the rest of men, like this or that tax-collector.*

TTP, p. 154

16 September

The habit of making rash judgments is a slippery surface that is very dangerous, for the judgment is made in an instant and can take place without being distinctly expressed, without our being aware of it, so that we can also act on that judgment in a proud and infinitely presumptuous

manner. To my mind the man who is free from all rash judgments is almost perfect. We ought to pay scrupulous attention to this point.

TTP, p. 154

17 September

Why do we speak evil? Solely because we have first thought evil, because we have filled our heads with wrong and prejudiced opinions, because we are accustomed to consider things invariably in a manner quite favourable to our own desires and passions and not in an impartial and equitable way. Our judgment is made in favour of what we love and against what we hate, and we do not consider with a tranquil heart and a calm mind whether the matter is really as we judge it to be.

TTP, p. 315

18 September

I know from my own experience, I must confess, that to make things clearer in discussions we may use some expressions which make truth appear livelier, even without indulging in exaggerations. Such expressions, if kept in line with the truth, are natural and beautiful in scientific narratives; but they are rarely useful in conversations, since we may cause offence to others unwittingly, either for the impression we give of possessing too much truth, or for the suspicion that we are too complacent in our truth.

Rovereto, 05.03.43

19 September

St. Francis de Sales used to say: *self-love is a great deceiver*. I would say the same of the imagination, which is closely connected with self-love.

Calvario, 05.07.30

20 September

Intemperance is really something irrational and bestial. It is worse than bestial, for the beasts moderate their feeding, guided by instinct, while man breaks and violates the laws of nature and instinct for the sake of increasing an artificial enjoyment. Hence he has all the unseemliness of the beast coupled with the malice of man.

TTP, p. 137

21 September

St. Paul teaches that man's natural life as evolved from Adam would not have been so corrupt and in such strong conflict with the Spirit of Christ if it were not for the power of evil possessed by the angels of darkness, who entered human nature and the material world when our first parents ate of the forbidden fruit.

IVG, p. 134

22 September

Total obedience is never blind. It may seem blind to human reason; but it is not so when we look at divine reasoning. By it we put aside trivial and limited reasoning, but we are guided by what is great, universal and supernatural. Through obedience we may sometimes fail in some limited aim; but never, never at all, when we take into account our ultimate and absolute aim, our one true end.

Verona, 22.04.47

23 September

A single act of simple obedience is worth more than the entire conversion of England.

Stresa, 30.04.45

24 September

Simplicity consists in loving, and prudence in thinking. Love is simple, the intelligence is prudent. Love prays; the intelligence watches. *Watch and pray* - here is the reconciliation of prudence with simplicity. Love is like the dove which coos; the working intelligence is like the serpent which never falls to the ground, never collides with anything, because it goes along detecting with its head all the irregularities of its path.

Stresa, 01.01.50

25 September

Prudence comes with the years; and someone who is still young does not realize how subtle and deep a virtue prudence is, and too readily believes that he possesses it. An older person can always see further than youth can: you should therefore respect age. Take it as a sure fact that prudence consists more often in refraining than in doing; we are seldom sorry for what we have *not* said or done; but much more often for our actions and words.

Rovereto, 09.07.35

26 September

The work of divine Providence during the centuries of the militant Church on earth is to draw progressively all things, even what belongs to secular society, into subjection to Jesus Christ, and thus bring all things into Christian society and give all their proper place in it. Thus will be realized the good order that completes the entire and perfect organisation of the Church, the seed and root of the plant which must grow and develop in trunk and branches, even to the smallest twig and leaf.

Milan, 15.03.26

27 September

There is nothing more pleasing than to know with the certainty of both reason and faith, and to hold firm, that we have a God who is most good, most wise, most powerful, the director of all human things, the rescuer of all who trust in Him.

Albano, 12.09.49

28 September

Meditating on Providence, I wonder at it; wondering at it, I love it; loving it, I celebrate it; celebrating it, I thank it, and thanking it, I am filled with joy. Could it be otherwise? I know through reason and through faith, and feel in the depths of my spirit, that everything done, or wished or permitted by God, is done by eternal, infinite, essential Love.

Albano, 16.09.49

29 September

The general disposition of the Society of Charity is to promote the closest possible union among good Christians, so that they may participate more and more in the Society which they constitute by being Christians, and may become more aware of their dignity and greatness by means of their close association as one body. Such awareness should encourage them to strengthen their mutual bond and their union with their visible Head, the Roman Pontiff, and with their invisible Head, Jesus Christ.

Milan, 15.03.26

30 September

Let us always think therefore of the Church of Christ, not of this Society, recalling in the joy of our heart the promises concerning the kingdom of Christ and the un-changeableness of the divine plan handed down to us as

our inheritance. Let us also imitate the faith and tenacity of the Patriarchs, as the Apostle encourages us when he says of Abraham, *And thus Abraham, having patiently endured, obtained the promise*. As long as we trust in Christ JESUS, no event, even though it may seem opposed to the kingdom of God, will diminish our joy.

Const. No. 468

OCTOBER



Ave Maria gratia plena

1 October

Let us deem ourselves very fortunate if, by a singular favour of the Blessed Virgin, we should obtain, through the Rosary, only this: the grace to live in a way that will be pleasing to Jesus and Mary; the grace to turn all our worldly successes and prospects to our Lord's glory and our own salvation; the grace to bear our crosses and tribulations with fortitude; the grace to be so united with Christ here below – now on Tabor, now in Gethsemane, now on the Mount of Olives – that, taking our cross on our shoulders, we may go by the road of Calvary to our imperishable crown.

Pred. p. 312

2 October

One of the customs, which spreads goodness from one generation to the next, is the practice of reciting daily within the family the holy Rosary. I would hope that all our missionaries are determined to recommend constantly this practice wherever they go, and during the mission find time to show the people the way of reciting the Rosary, explaining also the meaning of the Lord's Prayer and the *Hail Mary*, as well as the way the Rosary is organised.

Naples, 03.02.49

3 October

The love, which our holy religion inspires in its faithful followers, is the radiant proof of its truth; and this love often convinces even the most obstinate of opponents.

Stresa, 24.11.43

4 October

God made the Angels for the same end that He made man: to know, to love, and to obey God their Creator, and to participate in His nature, His holiness, and His happiness.

COI, No. 57

5 October

St. Paul teaches that the natural life of man, evolved from Adam, would not have been so corrupt and in such strong conflict against the Spirit of Christ if it were not for the power of evil of the angels of darkness, who entered human nature and the material world when our first parents ate of the forbidden fruit.

IVG, p. 134

6 October

You may say you feel a kind of inner fear originating from the knowledge you have of your own weakness; and indeed all fear is justified if we think only about ourselves. O unhappy man, the man left to his own self! However, let us give thanks to the Lord, for when we abandon ourselves in God, He gives us His courage and His strength. I can only beg you to keep always in mind such truth.

Rovereto, 08.09.27

7 October

You have expressed a precious truth in your letter: *Humility controls and strengthens those who have faith*. So indeed it is; and blessed are they who feel it to be so. The inmost consciousness of our nothingness causes us to feel the need we have of the Almighty, and sets us on the road leading to Him who is our strength. The confidence engendered by humility is full of vigour, and the meanest things of this world have, through its means, become the strongest, and the humble have been exalted above the proud.

Domodossola, 25.04.28

8 October

It is a most certain fact, which had its origin at the beginning of the world and will last until the end, that good people will always be hated and persecuted by evil people, although evil people will always be loved and helped by good people. It cannot be otherwise, given that good people are the light shining with the splendour of Christ and His Holy Spirit, and hence full of light in all their actions.

Pred. p. 267

9 October

Is it not true that the righteous, generous, and holy actions performed by men enlightened by Christ are a constant rebuke and a severe condemnation of the evil deeds of bad people? Evil people feel insulted by the good deeds of holy people, and they find something hateful even in the benefits they receive. This is the true cause of the relentless persecutions which evil people stir up against those who live a holy life and walk in the light of Christ.

Ibid.

10 October

The more the people we help out of charity are lacking in external assets and are full of ills, the greater is the virtue which we display by loving and helping them. In such cases our love is greater, more generous, more pure, and not directed by secondary aims but only by the compassion of the heart, which is one with the heart of Jesus Christ.

Ibid. p. 296

11 October

To abandon ourselves wholly to Divine Providence - there is no other Maxim which renders the follower of Jesus Christ dearer to our Heavenly Father: it implies perfect confidence in Him, and in Him alone; it implies a most lively faith, which believes with certainty that all things in the world, both great and small, rest alike in the hand of our Heavenly Father, and that nothing is done by them that is not disposed by Him for the accomplishment of His adorable designs. It implies also a belief in the infinite goodness, mercy, bounty, and generosity, of our Heavenly Father, Who disposes all things for the good of them that trust in Him.

MCP, V, No. 2

12 October

Nothing can harm anyone who loves the Lord, and anyone who practises humility does love God; for any small gain in humility is worth more than a hundred moments of fervour.

Stresa, 03.04.46

13 October

Let us seek comfort in the infinite mercy of God. This word *infinite* should fill our hearts with hope. The ways of the Lord are wonderful and quite beyond our imaginings. We must adore His majesty and never forget the infinite treasures of His goodness. We must remember that nothing is more pleasing to God than our trust in Him.

Stresa, 06.01.51

14 October

God's counsels contain unfathomable secrets about humanity. Our nature is incapable of scrutinising them. It cannot sanely presume to ask the infinite Being who created it why He wanted to do this. His reasons transcend human intelligence; they can be gauged only by divine intelligence. It is sufficient for us to know the will of him who formed us. Nothing more is required: *it is the will of God*. All investigation comes to a halt at these words. This will is itself the final reason for human activity; it is the fulfilment of all human wisdom, the star of human life *which leads straight on...*

SL, p. 28

15 October

No one can really love truth in this world without being rewarded by receiving insults from men; but to a generous-hearted man such abuses are most dear: it is the honour he covets. The red-hot iron is tempered by being immersed in freezing water.

Stresa, 08.03.43

16 October

If God in his mercy makes us speak or write important truths which are useful in His cause, we must be grateful to Him for this, trust fully in Him, and not cease to sow the good seed which the Lord of the harvest gives us, even if we see that others after us, rather than we ourselves, will reap the fruit. Indeed this always was and still is the great law of all-wise Providence: one man sows, another reaps. This thought greatly comforts me.

Stresa, December 45

17 October

If we wish to rectify our faults, there is no better way, when we receive correction, than to see things through the eyes of whoever gives the correction, and to look hard so as to see our defects in all their deformity. God then gives us the grace to see them as they are, and so to be in a position to put them right.

Trento, 20.07.31

18 October

I tremble before the judgments of God. He does not need any of us, and at times it looks as though He allows some people who, according to human reasoning could do much good for the Church, to go to their spiritual ruin! Let us tremble before the Lord and pray without ceasing, because His mercy is as great as His justice.

Rome, 10.02.29

19 October

We must concern ourselves only with the present, and particularly with *our* present moral state, in order to know and correct our defects. Only then shall we go forward by a sure road, free from diabolical deception. We must acquire a great horror of, and sorrow for, our sins. A single sin, one single offence against God, deserves to be wept over for a thousand years – or rather merits an eternity of torment. Anyone who attains such an understanding of sin and such a horror of offending God will be well forearmed against pride. For one sole sin, when a man realizes how ugly a thing it is, is enough to make him feel humble, lower than any other creature, and see himself as a monster, the dregs of nature, fit only for the fires of hell.

Stresa, 03.02.44

20 October

Once a decision is taken in a matter which is good in itself and leading to perfection, and God's will has been sought, one should persevere in the decision and not be easily diverted from it unless there be grave and obvious contrary reasons. I believe also that it is a subtle trick of the enemy to encourage vacillation in fulfilling this resolution, often in the guise of doing something better. This is my firm view, and not only in relation to the call to one or other religious institute, but in other matters

also. I believe the teachings and example of the Saints and indeed, common experience, shows clearly that those who are easily turned aside, even with good intentions, gather little fruit.

Stresa, 25.09.50

21 October

Whoever practises in all simplicity and rectitude the virtues taught by Jesus Christ and by the example of the Saints is a person endowed with a sublime sense of goodness.

Stresa, 29.07.52

22 October

Faith opens man to infinity, because it makes him aware of the limitations of his perceptions and of the fact that there are other natures, other beings, and an infinite Being, who are completely beyond his sensations. Thus, he is led by faith into an immense new world, unknown to him, but for the fact that he knows that it exists; and he is barred from miserably confining all things to his own self, closed in his small world, since he possesses a nature which has been created to be without any boundary whatsoever.

AS, I, p. 64

23 October

Let everything go – life, possessions, our wishes, our particular judgments; but never let true virtue go: the gospel virtue, the apostolic virtue which forms the essence of our Christian vocation.

Stresa, 08.01.40

24 October

The hypocrite is gloomy and depressed, as Jesus Christ told us he would be. He covers up the darkness of his guilty heart with rigidity and sadness in order to create for himself a reputation of austerity and virtue. There is nothing, therefore, which speaks louder about the sincerity of the Saints than their joy, which contains in itself the proof of their truthfulness.

Apol. p. 104

25 October

Every act and sentiment of pride presupposes infinite ignorance and extreme stupidity.

26 October

There are certain people who imagine themselves to be humble, because they have not any consciousness of explicit acts of pride; on the contrary, they are aware of performing partial and explicit acts of self-abasement, which seem to them humility, because they are such considered in themselves and have the appearance of being such; whereas in fact these persons are full of pride, by reason of a constant and habitual spirit of self-importance which is full of arrogance and pride.

Stresa, 06.01.54

27 October

In every kind of pride man makes himself or his own excellence his end, and this is close to placing himself on equality with or even preferring himself to God, whereas God alone is the end of all things and ought to be recognised by us as such in every way, in our thoughts, in our affections, in our words, in our actions. This truth is so obvious, that no man who has the use of reason can say that he is incapable of understanding it, and if anyone refuses to acknowledge it, it is only because he has wilfully blinded himself, by allowing himself to be deluded by the glare of his own excellence, an excellence which is not true, but created by his proud imagination.

Ibid.

28 October

The remedy for the dangers of sinful proud thoughts consists in an intense and dominant love of truth and virtue, in a habitual reflection on the absolute greatness of God and our nothingness; and moreover, in a sincere acknowledgment of our own deficiencies and imperfections. In doing all this we must be directed, enlightened and strengthened by the grace of God.

Ibid.

29 October

When we are humiliated, let us humble ourselves more, and we shall be exalted. We have the word of Jesus Christ for this.

Albano, 25.09.49

30 October

We have to be convinced that whatever we do, we shall never be entirely free from the ills of our present life, whether these come to us from things or from people. Things at times torment us by the disposition of that Divine Providence which wishes to urge us to love the greater blessings and to give to these all our affection. The people who surround us are, unfortunately, defective; and we would have to leave this world to find perfect people.

Naples, 13.02.49

31 October

What man can say that he is without sin? Thus Holy Scripture tells us that perfection consists in supporting each other despite faults and defects. So a big-hearted and generous tolerance for the faults of our neighbour is both a duty and also the title we have for the right to be sympathetically regarded by others. Finally it is the indispensable means of preserving tranquillity and peace within our hearts.

Ibid.

NOVEMBER



I AM the Resurrection and the Life

1 November

The life of the Saints, that is, of great lovers, is interwoven with acts of adoration and contemplation which maintain them continually above all other created things. At the same time, all the powers of nature weigh these lovers down and tend to draw them away from the sublime height. They are like people torn apart by two powers, as opposite as pleasure and pain, and stronger than themselves: on the one hand, the power of supreme love which lifts them up and, on the other, the power of all those attractions, sufferings and even necessities of nature which throws them down to earth.

SL, p. 94

2 November

The Church shows forth in her Saints a supremely high wisdom, wisdom which the world does not understand, and even takes to be foolishness. For she flees from material goods, she lives a life of abstinence, of mortification, of voluntary poverty; and she takes as her motto, *Beati pauperes!* [Blessed are the poor]. These are the ones whom Christ came

to evangelise; the ones with whom He, who had nowhere to lay His head, came to share His treasures.

Calvario, 17.10.32

3 November

The smallest scrap of extra holiness which a man can acquire has an infinite value.

Stresa, 7.07.46

4 November

The Saints recognise and adore their Creator in His creatures with great ease, and their spirit is lifted up to God by anything which falls under their senses. They cannot grasp the fact that other people seem to ignore the Supreme Being, since His glory shines everywhere brighter than the sun, and His voice resounds in the world more melodiously than any other musical instrument.

AS, II, p. 30

5 November

It is true that Jesus is so perfect that no perfection can come to Him from His members; on the contrary, He alone bestows perfection on to them. However, as He willed to unite to Himself other people, He communicated to them His own holiness, extending it to them. It is always the same divine holiness, but it is now shared by many and shining in many. Christ, therefore, receives from the Saints that complement which He had planned and willed, and not because He is not the most perfect Being, but because of the love which brought Him to suffer for the redemption of many.

EC, No. 171

6 November

Simply to know, through the faith which can never deceive us, because it is founded on the word of God, that our dead friends who believed in Christ, who hoped in Christ, are not really dead, but through their passage from this world have attained a better life, so that they would not wish to leave the peace they now enjoy to return to the labours and dangers of the present life - I say that this thought alone is more than sufficient to wipe away our tears, and change the sorrow which our human nature feels into heavenly consolation.

Rovereto, 30.07.47

7 November

Faith assures us that what is lost by our dear ones is little, a mere nothing in comparison to what they have kept. Our loved ones are very much alive, having only shed the old, tired, broken garment no longer worthy to be worn. The affections and memories of the person, who can no longer be seen by our mortal eyes, have not perished; on the contrary, he is still thinking about us, he loves us with a purer love, and he is grateful for all the benefits received while in this world; and being nearer to the throne of grace and mercy, he has more power to intercede in our favour.

Stresa, 25.03.45

8 November

The hope we have that our dead in the Lord have already obtained the reward for their good works, or that they have at least secured for ever their own salvation, is such a powerful belief that it should not allow us to weep over them, who, although no longer visible to our eyes, are not dead but have a greater and immortal life.

Stresa, 03.11.44

9 November

Prayers said for the souls of good people are never wasted, since if they cannot be applied to them, they will be applied to other suffering souls in Purgatory.

Stresa, 03.07.51

10 November

Even when we have a sure hope of salvation for persons who, rich in virtues, have gone from this world, we cannot presume, nonetheless, that their wretched human condition has not come before the holiest Being without some slight sin which requires purification; hence we must offer prayers, in case they are needed.

Stresa, 25.03.45

11 November

The doctrine of Purgatory is a most consoling doctrine! There must be many sins which to human eyes seem mortal but which in God's estimation, since He allows for the subjective dispositions of each person,

count perhaps as venial, either from lack of full knowledge, or lack of realization of the evil they contain!

Stresa, 04.06.48

12 November

The holy souls of Purgatory suffer so willingly that they would never agree to come back here on earth, and are truly happy in their hope, being given honour by the Angels on account of their holiness, and full of dignity on account of being the brides of God. Since their glorious destination is definitely assured, it is only a matter of a short delay to the longed-for moment when the divine Bridegroom will come to lead them in all their beauty and splendour into His chamber of love.

Stresa, 01.08.42

13 November

If we have a living faith in the infinite goodness of our God, we should not consider the sudden death of a sister a disastrous event, but we should see in it the loving hand of the divine Providence of the Creator, who called His creature to Himself with the least suffering for her, and with greater security for her soul, already so rich in merits and so well prepared for the great step, without the danger of losing perhaps some of her merits by being placed in some serious temptation.

Stresa, 30.06.44

14 November

God is our Father, and He acts only for the good of His children. He takes us to Himself, or He lets us continue to live, according to His knowledge of whether the one or the other is the more beneficial for the eternal salvation of our souls.

Turin, 6.02.37

15 November

In His great goodness, our Lord JESUS Christ has left us powerful means whereby we can accelerate, through the application of His merits, the process of purification of the people who have died, so that they may be made worthy of appearing before His presence. This divine institution, or, as faith teaches, this power which prayers, suffrages, and good works have for the benefit of the dead, is a most precious thing for those who have passed away, and most comforting for the living, who can hasten the moment of blessedness for their dead.

Stresa, 24.04.46

16 November

Those who in this life have not loved their Creator have reason to fear what will happen to them after death; but those who loved God, those who lived upright lives, those who lived by faith and with a lively hope in the divine mercy – for those as fortunate as this, to what does death amount? It is a moment of merit, a precious sigh, and then all suffering is ended for ever, salvation is assured, and eternal joy begins.

Stresa, 21.08.42

17 November

I cannot possibly convey to you how deep is my sorrow at the loss, of which I have just heard, of the dearest, oldest, and most faithful friend I have had in this world. You can gauge the greatness of my grief by what you feel yourself. This unexpected happening warns us that we must be resolute in detaching ourselves from everything, and that it is only God whom we never lose. We must draw profit from this experience by holding dear only that life which never fails, because it is eternal.

Calvario, 26.07.37

18 November

The fact that we have a body leads us to feel that we have lost entirely our loved ones the moment they are snatched away from our senses, being unable to see them, to hear them speak, or to speak to them; but, how much more sublime is the perception of the faith! Faith reassures us that the affections and the memories of the person who is no longer visible to our eyes have not perished; and that such a person is still thinking about us, loves us with a purer love, and is grateful for all the benefits received while in this world; and being nearer to the throne of grace and mercy, has more power to intercede in our favour.

Stresa, 25.03.45

19 November

We must have a strong belief that God is good and is a most loving Father to His children. If what St. Paul says is true, that God directs all things to the good of those who love Him, will He not choose with infinite wisdom and goodness the moment, the most favourable moment for salvation, when to call to Himself from this world His loved ones? How much more will He not choose and allocate for all persons that type of death which He

knows to be the most appropriate and suited to their strength and dispositions so that their salvation may not be put in danger but, aided by His grace, may grow as a result of their virtues?

Stresa, 30.06.44

20 November

I have always held as a most certain truth that, as the paternal love of God fills us with good things all through our life, so it will bestow great favours on to us especially at the hour of our death. God will bless us both by deciding for us the way and the circumstances of our death so that they may be the most convenient to our salvation, and by pouring abundant graces on to us, just like a father who is much more anxious to provide for his children at times when he knows they are most in need of his paternal cares.

Ibid.

21 November

What a great treasure it is to be able to conform to the divine Will our own will, even in the most painful situations. We can offer to God a more acceptable sacrifice during times of distress, and this will count as the greatest merit before God, which cannot be gained during times when all goes well.

Stresa, 08.11.46

22 November

One day, when we shall be in the beatitude of heaven, as it is my hope, trusting in the mercy of God, it will be seen that all our fears, for ourselves and our loved ones, about the passing from the wretchedness of this world to the eternal peace and joy of heaven, were a great mistake; but we must seek to belong utterly to the Lord, while we have the time.

Calvario, 06.08.30

23 November

If we consider, with the help of a living faith, what the beatific vision is, we soon feel a holy envy for the souls who are enjoying it already! We feel indignant too at our weak nature, which urges us to weep for their death, which was instead a necessary event for the attainment of their happiness! How much we can learn from such harsh events, that we should become more detached and free from the slavery of visible things in order to be united to God, and that we should consider our present life

as a time given to us by Providence to do the greatest possible good to our neighbour and to obtain for ourselves eternal happiness!

Stresa, 24.04.46

24 November

As far as the body and other earthly things are concerned, we must not hesitate to detach ourselves from them, making it a daily effort. We should not feel too sad, therefore, about the fact that our loved ones, by going ahead of us, have reached the end for which they have been created, placing in safety that treasure which they carried in vases of clay while in this life and which they had to defend with great efforts from their enemies.

Stresa, 30.06.44

25 November

This is what St. Paul wrote: *“Now if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep (1 Cor. 15, 12).* In this passage, St. Paul argues for the resurrection of the dead from the resurrection of Christ, because we could not rise from the dead if Christ had not won the power to raise from the dead those who participate in His own human nature, being with Christ one body and hence having the same life. Therefore, if the Head is risen from the dead, it necessarily follows that the members will rise as well.

IVG, p. 181

26 November

If we lose the people we dearly love in this world, we have a greater claim to call God our protector, father, or spouse; and if we are free from human ties, even the most dear to us, we become more available to dedicate ourselves to God and to works of charity and mercy. This is why St. Paul wrote of the woman who has lost her husband that, *she can think about the things that belong to the Lord, and about being holy in body and soul.*

Stresa, 25.03.45

27 November

As the Christian ought always to bear in mind the glory of heaven, so also, in all his actions, he should remember that all other things decay, that they pass away quickly, and that death is the means of reaching his last rest in heaven.

MCP, III, No. 8

28 November

Before the believer recovers his body at the final resurrection, he first loses his earthly life, but at the very moment this happens, his soul is drawn into communication with the most sacred humanity of JESUS Christ who comes to take him on his deathbed, according to the words of the Gospel. Christ who unites the soul of the dead person to Himself is also at this moment its *resurrection*, because He restores to the soul the *operative life* it otherwise would have lost, and He continues to be true *life* for it, as He never detaches Himself from it throughout eternity. This explains why St. Paul speaks of a dwelling that the soul receives after the present life in place of the dwelling that its body previously gave “*For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*”.

Theod. No. 848

29 November

I am persuaded that in this present life, man (and society even more) will not garner all the good which Providence places before him unless he has his eternal destiny as his objective in all his actions. I know of no firm and immovable base from which one is enabled to rise to virtue in any circumstance except that which is beyond this life: eternal good.

Stresa, 10.06.50

30 November

Man wants an assured, immutable, eternal good, and nothing can make him totally happy but an object furnished with such qualities.

Apol. p. 41

DECEMBER



Rosmini Centre - Photo by Rob Wild, www.newberrywild.com

1 December

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drawn into communication with the most sacred humanity of Jesus Christ who comes to take him on his deathbed, according to the words of the Gospel. Christ who unites the soul of the dead person to Himself is also at this moment its *resurrection*, because He restores to the soul the *operative life* it otherwise would have lost, and He continues to be true *life* for it, as He never detaches Himself from it throughout eternity. This explains why St. Paul speaks of a dwelling that the soul receives after the present life in place of the dwelling that its body previously gave: "*For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*". This "*house*" does the work of the body.

Theod. No. 848

2 December

According to St. Paul, one of the most distinctive effects of charity is not to have bad thoughts about our neighbour. A beautiful soul full of love harbours only pure and kind thoughts, flees from acrimonious thoughts and feelings, and thinks more willingly about virtue than about vice.

Pred. p. 300

3 December

Jesus is our Physician. He fully knows our souls, and in His love He will cure them with His powerful healing art, provided that we make use of the medicine which He prescribes for us, namely prayer, efforts on our part, and unlimited trust.

Stresa, 25.12.44

4 December

In the infinite goodness of Jesus Christ there is a remedy for all ills. It is when we think that we cannot find a remedy that we discover a most powerful one, which is that the very same ills which we cannot or do not know how to avoid, are permitted by Him in order to draw a far greater good than the ills which have been permitted.

Stresa, 21.09.50

5 December

My heart is full of affection for you, and I often remember you before the Lord. It is my hope that what you yourself would like best is that we should meet in our Lord in perfect unity of heart. This is the true centre of the

greatest love, of the greatest union of hearts; indeed, this is the only centre, a very ocean of love.

Milan, 14.04.27

6 December

Certainly virtue is an essential need for human beings. Without moral dignity they are despicable in their own eyes and consequently unhappy.

FW, No. 8

7 December

Truly the grace of God does wonderful things if it transforms into good a thing as repugnant to our nature as suffering. How the word of Jesus Christ puts to shame our sensitive nature and all the elements of this world! He has taught us that if we would find happiness and greatness, we must follow a path which, to all appearance and according to the foolish judgment of flesh and blood, can lead only to insignificance and misery.

Rome, 15.08.29

8 December

In the sin and contamination of the whole human race, God reserved for Himself a daughter, guaranteeing and protecting her from all original contamination. From her blood, without human intervention, a human being would be generated, who was also God. This God-Man was to restore humanity abundantly, and thus conquer and confound the devil.

Theod. No. 754

9 December

At this time when we prepare to celebrate the feast of Christmas, and the birth of that divine Person who, to do the will of his Father, came down from heaven to earth to die so as to redeem us, at this time when friends customarily exchange good wishes and prayers, I can certainly find nothing better to wish you than that God's will and yours, or rather ours, and that of all men, be one will alone, so that we may come to perfect unity.

Stresa, 13.12.46

10 December

The Lord wishes us to find in our suffering a greater good than that of health, for it can draw us closer to Himself. It is an unfortunate fact that

when we are well, our desires tend to stop short at natural goods; but when these are removed from us, when we no longer experience them and there is no other good within us but God Himself, then our heart, which can do no other than love, no longer taken up with other things, casts itself interiorly and entirely on that good which formerly it neglected, since it was invisible, yet which is our highest and unique good.

Calvario, 10.08.32

11 December

No one can prevail against us if we put all our trust in our heavenly Father alone! For He, as Christ says, *is greater than all*. So we must distrust ourselves and trust in the Father. He will see in us His divine Son, whom we have put on in Baptism, and through the dedication we have made of ourselves to His glory; and when He sees His Son, He can do no less than give His love. Doubtless, if He did not see in us the image of His Son, He would not see anything that was lovable.

Trent, 13.04.32

12 December

"Cast all your anxiety upon the Lord, and He will look after you". Oh, if only we kept our eyes fixed on Him; if we never took away from His face that gaze of our mind which is so apt to wander and be taken up with earthly things. If we did so He would, by the beauty of His countenance, make Himself our Master, and from Him we should learn more than anything which mere men can teach us. What should we learn? Humility, meekness, obedience, poverty of heart! Men will never teach us these things, for this knowledge is hidden. There is nothing haughty or proud about it, but it is the science of holiness, the science of salvation.

Trent, 13.04.32

13 December

In order that you may attain a desirable steadfastness, accustom yourself to consider good in itself and to love it for its own sake. Then nothing will have the power to divert you from your good resolutions, since good is always such, whatever its external surroundings. We have only to love it with all our heart, with unbounded affection.

Stresa, 03.02.46

14 December

All is comprised in this: the law of God. We ought to have but this one desire, to be faithful in keeping God's law. We shall be blessed if we do this! All the rest will profit us nothing if we lose our souls; but if we are just, if we keep the word of God with all reverence, then we have gained all, then shall we reign in glory for all eternity. On this point certainly we need to be resolute. Let us ask this grace of God, humbling ourselves; let us ask it for ourselves, for our brethren who are in the same perils and difficulties as we are, for the grace of Jesus Christ is powerful enough to deliver and save us all.

Rome, 21.03.30

15 December

This Congregation of Priests must not favour *itself* in any way, but only *the universal good of the Church*, without the least partiality, in case of conflict of interest, towards any of its members or even towards itself.

Milan, 15.03.28

16 December

How marvellous are the consolations of our divine religion! How rich it is in noble thoughts, ardent affections and supernatural means of strengthening our feeble hearts, of transforming us wretched men almost into Angels, who know not what it is to suffer! The more deeply I study the subject the more fully I am convinced of this.

Milan, 16.07.26

17 December

In the divine ordering of events there is always a hidden good which, if only we could know it, would persuade us to accept them all without distinction. We would see all events as the effects of an infinite love, and the result for us would be great joy and a feeling of infinite gratitude.

Stresa, November 51

18 December

Let us remember that we are placed in this world for a brief space in order that we may procure for ourselves an eternal abode where we shall rest after toil and trouble, and where nothing will ever cause us annoyance or weariness. If our thoughts are occupied with the great work God has placed us here to accomplish, then that which in itself is troublesome and grievous will appear most precious. Keeping before our eyes the infinite treasure of merit lying concealed in affliction and suffering, we shall

experience consolation and joy such as a miser cannot find in his heaps of gold.

Stresa, 12.04.50

19 December

The first means to obtain the spirit of prayer is undoubtedly to pray and to ask God for this grace in particular.

TTP, p. 34

20 December

Christian doctrine holds the following treasures for the righteous, in this present life: truth, justice, God and His inner gifts, and Providence for all external happenings. If it is true that a man is happy when he is fully satisfied and gratified, who can then be happier than the good Christian who, even in the midst of troubles and suffering, cannot thank God enough, acknowledging Him all the time in joyful admiration as benevolent, generous, and rich in tenderness and compassion? It was the will of God that the joy of the virtuous man, even in this life full of all kinds of ills, should be complete, in accordance with the promise of Christ. This takes place in the secret of the heart where perfect joy and constant peace, "*that peace scorned by the world, but which it cannot take away*", truly dwell.

PSM, p. 456

21 December

It is so improbable that the blessed Virgin Mary experienced pain when she gave birth to the Sun of justice, that I believe, on the contrary, that when the time came for her to deliver our Redeemer, she was filled with ineffable joy, with heavenly happiness, with raptures, and with so sublime an ecstasy of love that it cannot be imagined by any man, and which anticipated the eternal happiness of heaven.

Varallo, 02.08.45

22 December

After the sin of Adam, two were the alternatives: either the abandonment of any hope of communion between man and God, or the conception of a new plan which, without violating any of the attributes of God, and indeed by satisfying and glorifying them all, would allow man to become once more friend of the Creator. This splendid, amazing plan was the plan of our

redemption, which is the most divine, so to speak, of all the works produced by the divine Wisdom.

CAT, p. 383

23 December

God has appeared once again on this earth in a visible manner! God has come to dwell once more among men as His brothers and family members! Behold God made Man, Jesus Christ, full of love, full of desire of dwelling for ever among us on this earth!

Ibid.

24 December

Charity cannot be perfect if it be not preceded by mutual esteem and accompanied by prudence. Prudence teaches us to avoid the least word that may offend, whether it is of complaint or boast, of ambition or reproach, of rudeness in speech or excessive familiarity. I beseech the Child JESUS Himself to imprint these thoughts on your minds, for it is His teaching. He has taught these truths, He only can give them virtue and efficacy.

Stresa, 24.12.52

25 December

Let us be one in faith with the holy shepherds, and let us by favour of Mary, the Virgin Mother, and St. Joseph, enter into the Grotto which became the royal palace of the King of Kings and the Lord of glory. Let us approach with humble reverence, but without fear, so as to offer our homage to the Son of God, the eternal Word made flesh for us and born in a stable, placed in a manger for cattle. What a mystery of love! What a miracle of mercy!

Stresa, 24.12.46

26 December

Be born anew with Christ, and henceforth think, love, and will like Him, in the same full and perfect manner. Let your life be one with His life... It is in JESUS that you shall find the splendour of the light which enlightens the intellect, setting it free from the way of thinking of the world; and you shall also find that divine fire which penetrates the innermost part of the soul, doing away with all earthly habits. It is in His life that you shall find virtue, joy, peace, and all the fruits of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit.

Trent, 25.12.31

27 December

On the occasion of the Birth of JESUS, a thousand loving emotions must spring up in our hearts, whilst the Angels' words are ringing in our ears, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will*". Let us all seek with one accord the greater glory of God, like the Angels, in the highest heavens, that is in our souls rendered pure and spiritual, where canticles of praise, thanksgiving and oblation should never cease; and we should preserve among us perfect peace, the peace of Jesus Christ, which is the fruit of charity.

Stresa, 24.12.52

28 December

What better occasion than the day of our Saviour's Birth? Let us watch the Divine Infant lying on the bed of straw for love of us, let us gaze upon Him with the eyes of faith, and then let us refuse, if we can, to let our heart expand in tender affections, and to accept the gift of peace which He offers to all who have hearts to love.

Ibid.

29 December

Not a single fragment of creation is lost in the eternal centuries, not one little event is lost to memory; they are all engraved in divine being. No accident which has occurred in the flow of time is useless or superfluous to the beatitude of those who enjoy the beatific vision.

Theod. No. 674

30 December

God grants us the time and the means to collect treasures which endure for ever, but we make no account of them. We prefer to waste all the precious time of life. We know that the present life is the season of mercy; we know that the future is reserved for justice, and yet how heedlessly we allow the years of life, the time for working out our salvation, to pass away! Thus we draw nearer and nearer to the hour of reckoning. What folly and madness! It would be incredible if experience did not prove it to be a fact.

Milan, 16.07.26

31 December

Time stands still for those who do works that last, which, although carried within the boundaries of time, last for eternity and constitute the good which time gathers in its passing.

Stresa, 19.12.45

Blessed Antonio Rosmini (1797 - 1855)

Antonio Rosmini was born at Rovereto, a small town in Trentino, on March 24th 1797, and was baptised the following morning, on the feast day of the Annunciation. He enjoyed a happy childhood open to warm and lasting affections. He manifested an immense love for learning, spending hours in the family library reading ancient and modern classics, with a keen eye for the great works of philosophy and theology, and acquiring an immense erudition. It was his closest friend Manzoni, the greatest Italian writer at the time and himself a voracious reader, who said, *"There seems to be no book that Rosmini has not read!"*

In 1813, when he was 16, Rosmini wrote in his diary, *"This year was for me a year of grace. God opened my eyes over many things and I knew that there was no true wisdom but in God"*. It was the year of his decision to become priest, shattering the dreams of his aristocratic, and deeply religious, parents who had made other plans for him.

Rosmini was ordained priest in 1821. He wrote in his diary, *"From this hour I must be a new man, live in heaven with heart and mind, converse always with Christ, despise and flee from the things of earth. I must return*

from the altar a saint, an apostle, a man of God". St. John Bosco said of him, "I have never seen a priest say Mass with more devotion than Fr. Rosmini".

It was St. Magdalene of Canossa who indicated to Rosmini his vocation as Founder of a religious Order. He followed the signs of Divine Providence, and finally on 20th February 1828 he withdrew to Sacro Monte Calvario, in Domodossola, to begin his mission in the harsh conditions of a dilapidated building, besides the Shrine of the Crucified Christ, in prayer and fasting. It was there that he wrote the Constitutions of the Institute of Charity.

The following year he went to Rome to seek confirmation from the Pope, Pius VIII:

"I still remember - wrote Rosmini - his loving and authoritative words: "It is the will of God that you write books, this is your vocation. The Church has a great need of writers, I mean, solid writers so extremely few in number. In order to influence people usefully there is no other means today but to take them by means of reason, and by this means to lead them to religion". And with regard to the Institute of Charity, the Pope reassured him: "Start in a simple way and let the Lord do the work. It is necessary to start with humility and prudence. You are on the right track, continue what you are doing".

Rosmini never wavered in his total commitment to the tasks imposed on him by Providence through the Holy Father. In 1833, he gave the Congregation of the Rosminian Sisters of Providence their own Constitutions, and he guided the rapid expansion of both branches of the Rosminian Family in works of temporal, intellectual, and spiritual charity in Italy, United Kingdom, Ireland, and France.

Rosmini was the great lover of the Church, dedicating to her all his extraordinary talents and working with great energy to increase holiness and charity in the "immaculate Bride of Jesus". Obedient to the call of Pius VII, Leo XII, and especially Pius VIII and Gregory XVI to serve the Church by "writing books in order to take people by means of reason and by this means to lead them to religion", he wrote over 100 large volumes of philosophy and theology, that constitutes a most formidable system of Christian philosophy and theology, not inferior to the great systems produced by St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, both revered by him as his teachers and guides.

However, he soon became the target of a small but very influential section within the Church that opposed by all means, including slanderous accusations and secret circulation of books containing libel against him,

his openness to dialogue with the culture of the time, his willingness to step out of stereotyped, arid, mechanical formulas in order to present Christian philosophy and theology in a language which made sense to the modern world.

Instead of the traditional way of starting from God to arrive at man, he decided that it would be more beneficial to all honest seekers to meet them at their level, starting from man and leading them progressively to God, in line with the "Itinerarium mentis in Deum" of St. Bonaventure (the journey of the mind to God), or St. Augustine's prayer, "*Lord, you have made us for yourself, and our heart is restless until it finds rest in you*".

In 1848, Pope Pius IX welcomed Rosmini in Rome with the words, "*You did not want to come to Rome to be near the Pope. Now that God has sent you here we shall keep you in prison and never let you go*". The "prison" the Pope had in mind for Rosmini was the position of Cardinal, and towards the end of August Rosmini was asked officially to prepare to be made a Cardinal in December. There were reliable rumours that on that occasion he would also be appointed Secretary of State.

Within a very short period of time, however, things began to change dramatically. There was an insurrection in Rome which caused the hurried escape of the Pope to the kingdom of Naples. Rosmini was asked by the Pope to follow him in exile, finding his advice and his presence very reassuring. Rosmini's opponents, however, took advantage of the confused political situation to launch fierce attacks on Rosmini, concentrating on his books, "The Five Wounds of the Church", and "The Constitution according to Social Justice", which were eventually condemned and placed on the Index of forbidden books. No reason was ever given, but Rosmini submitted humbly and fully, leaving no one in doubt about his immense love for the Church and for the Holy See, which he called the "essential" rock on which Christ had built His Church. This is what he wrote to a friend during those dramatic days:

"Thank you for sharing in the strange and almost incredible events through which I am being led by Providence whose unchanging design never fails. Meditating on Providence, I wonder at it; wondering at it, I love it; loving it, I celebrate it; celebrating it, I thank it, and thanking it, I am filled with joy. Could it be otherwise? I know through reason and through faith, and feel in the depths of my spirit, that everything done, or wished or permitted by God, is done by eternal, infinite, essential Love. And who could be sad before love?"

Pope John Paul II, in recent times, has acknowledged the "extraordinary trials" that afflicted Fr. Rosmini, adding, "*It was through such trials that*

his holiness was made perfect and he became a witness of how to love the Church, work for the Church, and suffer for the good of the Church” .

For most of his life Rosmini had been weak in health, and the stress of the years when his orthodoxy was under suspicion undermined his frail constitution. From the beginning of May 1855 his condition deteriorated considerably and he was forced to bed. As the news of his grave illness spread, there was a continuous flux of friends who came to pay homage and to hear once more his wise words. He welcomed everyone with a smile and words of comfort, raising their mind immediately to the goodness and love of God. He left to Manzoni his spiritual will, *“Adore, Be Silent, Rejoice”*.

Strengthened by the last Sacraments and the special blessing of Pope Pius IX, Antonio Rosmini died in the early hours of 1st July, the feast of the Precious Blood, which was his favourite devotion. His body is buried in the chapel of the College at Stresa, and over his tomb is inscribed the eulogy that Pope Gregory XVI addressed to the whole Church in the Apostolic Letters approving the Institute in 1839: *“Our beloved son, the priest Antonio Rosmini, founder of the Institute, is a man of eminent intellect, adorned with noble qualities of soul, exceedingly famous for his knowledge of things human and divine, outstanding for his remarkable piety, religion, virtue, probity, prudence and integrity, conspicuous for his wonderful love and loyalty to the Catholic religion and to this Apostolic See”*.

The beatification of Antonio Rosmini by Pope Benedict XVI on 18 November 2007 dispelled once and for all the dark clouds that had kept for so long *“under a bushel”* a bright and warm light of purest holiness and of splendid philosophical and theological discoveries, of extreme relevance in today’s world. The Church today has put on its stand the lamp that is Blessed Rosmini, so that he may give light to everyone in the Church and the world. We thank God for the holiness of his life and the splendour of his teaching, and we too rejoice in his light.



Rosmini Centre - Photo by Rob Wild, www.newberrywild.com

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