

LOVE

FROM A LITTLE SISTER

My dear little baby brother Jesus, Father Keith has asked me to put in writing my promises to You this Easter, 1963. This is quite difficult for me, so very vast are the effects these have on a little hobo's life. And yet I fly to the chance Holy Obedience offers me.

Each time I'm permitted to make these promises to You they seem to have a shade of difference that makes them brand new and challenging. Perhaps this is why my spiritual father wished me to write to You. His counsels spring from an eternal Wisdom and I receive them with as much Joy as I receive You, Baby King.

Please accept the weaknesses of Your little bride. That is all she has to offer; but she's O so happy because she knows that in return she will receive Your strength. And she can do all things.

Though one's "rule" can never be written in life, (Charlie's death finally drew up his rule in the flaming ink of martyrdom.) I write what I think You wish of me NOW. The past is gone forever, tomorrow may never come. If I don't love You with all that is in me right NOW I may never get to love You. God save me from such a tragedy!

POVERTY

O to be a good Little Sister, sharing the spiritual and material privations of the poor as others of Charlie's family. Remember, little Jesus, when Your friend Anne-Marie named me Your little sparrow? I am thrilled to be Your pet, to flit around Your cradle, my only delight to hear Your laughter, my only nourishment the bread from Your Mother's oven.

My desires must be poor. Remember how I used to beg to have a home? That must have been before I knew You, Jesus. Cause when asked where You lived You answered, "Come and see." I found You in a poor crib, then stretched upon a Cross. Those are the only beds the Gospels mention for You. And what of a little servant girl? It was security I sought, till three vows nailed me here where I belong. O Cross of Christ, my only hope my entire assurance, all hail! It is through my vow of poverty that I embrace your sacred wood and press it to the marrow of my bones. In poverty I run to accept from Your tiny hands, Baby dear, this greatest of earthly gifts.

But this is not something between just You and me. What of those You give me to love? These must see and understand Your poverty in me. They must find there freedom, gladness, joy, abandonment. And there it is again, that picture which You've used to teach me so often. A father lovingly tossing his baby girl in the air. And she is laughing, for she knows he will catch her. Jesus, teach me this abandonment.

A Little Sister cannot stop here, but she must also learn to endure the poverty of spiritual benefits. If You invite her to visit with You though she is pressed with pain and fatigue, of course she will be quick to accept Your invitation. Maybe her words to You are muffled or she finds the cries of men drowning the softness of Your voice or maybe she falls asleep in her fatigue. You know that very fatigue is gained in Your service. Are You not then pleased just to have her there with You?

Maybe she wishes to spend some time with You, but the cries of men cannot be muffled. There is a friend to speak with her. She must leave Your house. But she knows that You go with her always, and she adores Your Sacred Presence in a friend and an stranger alike. You do accept her adoration, don't You, Jesus?

Please let my life be a silent example of Your poverty. May I always ask just what You'd do, for I never wish to forget that this is Your life I must live if You are to be here on our great earth today. These unruly feet and hands, these wheels, this song, these are the poor instruments You've chosen to accomplish the Father's Will.

There is pain in having my God and my All in the presence of those not able to receive, and there is pain in not having enough to fill the needs of the world. "Sweet Pain, spare not this clod, but fling it up to God!"

Let me always be aware of the supreme happiness of Holy Poverty, always subservient to Love. And let me pour this happiness, "waste" it, at the feet of those You give me to love. Let my presence among all men be a proof of my love for them. Let me just be their little friend as You wish, Jesus.

I've looked well at Your Life during this Lent, trying to discover which phase You wish to live in me. And now I return to adore You, thrilled to see that You wish to share with me ALL of it. As a helpless child we depend on others for Our food and clothing. We must constantly make request of those who have given Us so much already. And even of those from whom we might receive a negative or of those who in their willingness know not our needs and add to our discomfort.

"You can never belong to anybody or any one organization because you must belong to everybody. You are without a home to be 'at home' everywhere. Something like the paradoxes of St. Paul when he speaks of the Apostles': Having nothing, yet possessing all things!" Father Lucien wrote this recently. In this I see You, Jesus, little Hobo Friend of all men. Then comes the hour in which I am glorified in You. We are the Victim of Love. All these roles You live today, Jesus, and You shall live them till Our eternal triumph.

Last August 15th/ Mother gave me a very special assignment. For three and a half years I'd been Hers in the Total Consecration. But that day She gave Her little slave away. She gave her to a figure of You that glorifies the Father today, to Father Keith. She told me that henceforth I might enflame the kingdom of Love through this man become divine in Christ. Thus I offer my life of wretched poverty for him I love, my only consolation that Mother will turn my rags to riches.

CHASTITY

To fall in Love is to fall into the bottomless chasm of God. And here there are only beginnings.

To love as Jesus loves, this is what every Little Sister must do. During Your Last Discourse You told me this again and again. O how You longed to know that I understood. But I couldn't comprehend till I saw You on a Friday men call good, the happiest day of Your Life because Your Hour had come. This is why You had come to impress Your sacred footprints on our earth. They led to a small hill called Golgotha. And an echo over twenty centuries touches my poor heart today. "Come follow me."

Mother was not sheltered; nor shall I be. She followed to the Cross, each day bringing her closer to the hill that would raise You and Her to the height of almighty Glory. She shows me daily Her example of a real Charlie heart. She not only shows me a cross firmly grounded in Her Immaculate Heart; She gives me that very heart with which to love You. For a little slave has nothing of her own to offer her Jesus. And Mother understands.

O to be devoured as You were, my Jesus. To understand others' sufferings because they have been and are mine, this is the compassion You wish to give through me, is it not? How far can I go? Love cannot calculate. We shall travel to the ends of the earth and suffer till the end of time if You wish.

To suffer at the hands of a friend. Let me look at Your Passion and realize the diving purification of such great torture. Let me see the executioner nailing me to the Cross and love him infinitely more because he binds me to You and all that is Yours. Jesus, Son of Man, let me be Your friend.

To learn to love is to learn all things. Let me have no other purpose. To give and to receive must be one for me, for You wish just to be a Friend. My only desire must be to love You Jesus. Love is identification. My heart isn't big enough to love one, but Your most Sacred Heart embraces all. Will I not let You love today? Live, Jesus!

Charlie asks that I be a universal Little Sister,. . . Let me stop at nothing short. Let men find in my friendship the simplicity that is God. Teach me to respect my friends as You divinely respect me. Let my imagination be sensitive, so as to guess others' sufferings. Let me perceive their weariness and enter into their joys.

Let me never be possessive; they are Yours forever as I am. Never let my love be lukewarm; I must give all or nothing. Let my friendships be personal, at that I may share with those You give me to love Your suffering, and triumph. Please help this little Simon. I reach for their sufferings only because I know that seeing my terrible weakness You lovingly give me Your strength.

I know, Jesus, that You've given me something sacred in my Father Keith. Please ask Mother to help me to keep it spotless. I see You as I've never seen You before, in him. His words, his Love, I know that they are divine. Accipio. Please take my helpless life that they may remain so.

The Charlies, my poor family, my sisters here at Good Sam, the stinky's in my life, every soul I meet, every soul I wait to meet at Home, love these, little Jesus, please love these. May I never be guilty of Divine Abortion.

LOVE

OBEDIENCE

Little Jesus of Nazareth, make my life one with Yours. Most of Your life You spent showing me how to be obedient. "I come to do the Will of Him Who sent me." I shall not rest until that Will has been accomplished, until Love reigns in the hearts of all men.

I want this poor life of mine to belong to You, but only Holy Obedience can make it so. I find Your wishes for me in the Gospel and through Holy Mother Church. Never shall I tire of reading the story of Your Love. How else might I know what You'd do? A Little Sister must always know that. Also You choose to know and love me today through my own Father Keith. May I treasure his every word, because he says what You wish me to know.

Let me run to accomplish Your every desire, as Your dear Mother and St. Joseph did. It was not the visions Your Father sent them that made their obedience great. It was their selfless response. It will be that response in me that will please You. Please Jesus, help me never to give you the terrible disappointment of not finding it there.

Obedience is not always pleasant. Superiors may not understand. Remember last December, Jesus, when I was ORDERED TO SLEEP in a position I knew would increase the pain in my back? I did try, and I know that the results were "good for me." For after my having tried to explain my reasons for sleeping as I do, they used even physical force to keep me from it. I wouldn't have had so much to offer for them had the Aides and Sisters not done this to me. It was Holy Obedience that made it so good.

My co-operation must be frank, open and confident, for I know that it is Your Will present in my superiors. I must become an "obedient." For obedience is simply an expression of love. I must learn to go to meet it, to give You an active an active obedience, a purposeful submission of my will. Wonderful opportunity to give You, Christ, A proof of my love. I must be honest in giving my opinion when it is asked.

To become a true "obedient" I beg You for Faith, a solid, immovable Faith in Your eternal Wisdom and my own foolishness. After having given the necessary facts, teach me to subordinate even my practical judgement. Since when Can God be limited to the practicality of worldly minds? Remind me of my youth, my poor judgement. Give me, Jesus, an open mind, the docility that is required for admittance to Your Kingdom. Only children can go Home.

"Love, unless accompanied by obedience, is powerless." And when has Love, eternal, almighty Love, been weak? Only when I have not let it become strong. O foolish child I am, little Jesus, so very foolish. So long have I told You how I'd like to serve You, what I'd like to do for YOU. Now I must begin to love You; to ask what YOU want. Please ask Mother to help me.

Exerpts from Letters to Mother

August 16, 1963

"I'll remember you during Mass. Will you remember me?"

Early yesterday morning I rushed to your tomb. O course I knew you wouldn't be there. But there was such a sweet smell, sparkly dew, and through the clouds a glow I hadn't seen before. My feet wished to dance in following, but they knew they couldn't follow, not yet, to where all feet skip lightly and children dance for joy. I lay upon the earth that cradled your beautiful body and squinted at the sky. Somewhere up there you were watching. All your life had only one desire compelled you, to be with Jesus. And at last He takes you to Himself, to crown you Queen of His Heart and to keep you with Him always, where all dreams come true. And here I sit, on the earth from which God fashioned such a Mother, and here I wait for only One, a tremendous Lover who waits to draw me to Himself with His Mother's arms.

All the way to town my heart, and my lips, sang of my Mother, of God's earth, of sunshine, tall corn, lovely breezes, little houses, little children, our family, our universe and God's infinite heaven. How can so much joy be in one tiny spot? Jesus is so little.

You returned with me to Calvary. You must always show me the way there. I wander off on little paths that smell of sweet flowers and sing with little birds and sparkle with rainbows. And then I get lost. I can't find Jesus, for this wasn't His way, nor yours. Then your voice calls. And I look up to see a Cross. It's not beautiful. I wish to run the other way. But you call gently, patiently, passionately. Jesus is the Way. And He hangs on the Cross. O please keep calling. And tell Him I'm coming, so slowly; He's waiting so patiently. O if only I might run!

It was time to make my promises to Him. It seemed it would never come, yet that minute, as so many others, caught me unaware. A little white host was offered to God. Thoughts of Poverty, Chastity, Obedience fled. Those thoughts with which I'd nourished my soul all this month. And only one desire possessed me. Only to be like you for Jesus. To be. A little co-missionary for today's little Christ. To be the least in the crowd, to be the furthest from the sight of the Master, to be jostled by the anxious, the curious, the hostile, to be content with whispers of him that reached your listening heart. To be happy because somehow, somewhere, you hear the Word of God, and keep it always as your own. That is enough, for that is my everything. It's yours.

December 8, 1963

Last night I hardly wished to sleep. My longing for today was so intense. Yes, even in my yearning do I discover possession of the Desired of all.

O joyous sunbeam that played upon my cheek this mornign. How grateful was I to feel it lying there.

When we got to church there was my missionary in the pulpit. By what miracle of grace did you arrange this, Mother dear? That he should offer THAT Mass, that Msgr. should permit him to mount the pulpit that he could speak of YOU, that he should speak of women and whisper of co-missionaries, that he should speak of a face veiled in white while I sat before him in our Lourdes veil? That pains should stab my heart, cushioned in yet greater joys? Accipio.

Upon a golden paten he offered a staggering load of weakness, sinfulness, to Almighty God, yet with the strength of Christ coursing through his arms it seemed he lifted wittle more than a tiny white wafer. "This is my body." As the Consecration bell sweetly announced Jesus' arrival a little boy toward the back of church sang "Jingle Bells" and adults hushed him because they understood not that it was a time of carols because God had just become Man. Then your Jesus fed His poor; with you I received the Bread of Life---

I've just returned from chapel. I waited till everyone had gone. O to be alone with Jesus, how blessed. Alone with Him-and the world. To weep there at His feet. I'm sorry, so sorry. I'm nothing. I'm Yours. O painful joy.

March 20, 1964

It is the feast of your sorrows. Intoxicated by the Spirit of Jesus' Love, I am plunged through your womanhood into Our Father's arms.

Mother! Please don't shrink back if the hobo who comes to be claimed by you is so little like Jesus. Stoop to love her and find once more your Child suffering. I don't want to be the eighth sword to pierce your Immaculate Heart, yet God Himself inflicted seven wounds to claim, beyond a doubt, you are His own. I am but one more manifestation of that claim.

Fr. Raymond has been telling me of "God, a Woman and the Way" during this sacred lenten season, timely preparation for my Easter consecration. But, Mother, how can I truly say I am Christ's? What formula can render even hidden gifts? I am your little slave in Total Consecration, so I need but remember you, my Mother, my life, my sweetness, my dearest hope, my very heart and soul, and hurl myself exultantly into God, singing, "This is my body" and hearing His Spirit echo, "It is Mine too."

In but a few days I shall be alone with Jesus, and His world, in private retreat at St. Meinrad's. O to be very tiny, unseen in the midst of His very dear ones, to be as you in the upper room, unnoticed, unmentioned, yet with your very presence accomplishing your Jesus' plea that all be one. I shall listen to the Master till He stoops to serve me, to call me friend, to crucify me and to return for my littel promises the certainty of His Resurrection.

Mother, Queenly Martyr, please don't forget a little girl who wants the crown of Womanhood someday, knowing fully that it too is woven of thorns for those who live beneath the Cross. Jesus contemplated His Mass in anguished zeal. Please let me somehow help to fill up what is lacking, that all men may take and drink and never thirst again because THEY ARE CHRIST. The hour has come. The heart that boldly states, "I believe in God" must lie no more. Please show me Truth.

1. You carry All to be offered to the Father. He is well pleased, for you offer His beloved Son, and all little nothings who wish to hide in Him. Only one who is searching recognizes this tiny God. If I do not bow in adoration before each soul I meet I too have let my Creator pass unnoticed. If others see Him not when I pass, it's because, thoughtless that I am, I've forgotten that with one little petition my arms might have been filled with your Little One. How long can my soul remain unconscious of Him? Can it know that Dad dwells beneath my feet and not yearn to press my face to this cold, dirty floor to be a littel nearer Him? Can it hear the screams of loneliness around me and not ache with longing to hush God Crying? Can it watch His virgins in feuds, refusing even that Bread which is Life, and not wonder that His Presence in me has not spoken to them because it is yet so camouflaged in selfishness? Please teach me to adore Him, to love Him, to glorify Him. You know the Way. Existence is obedience. Christ lives; Baptism has consecrated the tabernacles of our bodies. You love me so much to let my carry your Son! You see me stumble and fall with Him yet do not rush to take Him from me. You fill my longing, and herein is your own hunger satisfied. He's beautiful! Having held Him, only adoration and martyrdom can satisfy, His desire be my joy. You've given me the Way, and He is too tiny to be feared.

11. "His own received Him not." Was there never any room for Him, His only throne your lap? He loved it there. God forbid that I, His little ~~hobo~~, who boldly ask that what was His be mine, should strive for more than my Master. I offer the pain of being a "millionaire vagabond" in reparation. There is always room and welcome and nourishment and warmth. Please help me to be a gracious receiver. It's so hard for a handicapper to master that. We're praised for our obstinacy, no matter what the cost to our dearr ones; we're rebuked if we receive without argument. But I am little and helpless and perhaps of no other good than to receive kindnesses for Jesus. If I should be smothered with kindness, it will be for Another's pleasure. His Passion is my only glory. "Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit---Glorify God in your body," we are reminded. Exile is lonely because I am forgetful. "O Virgin Mother, let me share your consciousness of Christ, that, like you, I be lovingly aware of Him." Through earthly veils little ones must recognize their daily Bread, silently longing to be consumed by them. "I shout the Gospel with my whole life, "and will someone hear Its glad tidings? I don't know. It's enough to let myself become Jesus. The silences of the Gospel are filled with the Word, made Flesh.

111. "Having Him we care for naught besides." It was His Father's business to break your heart, Mother? Yes, most beautiful one, full of grace, you too know the aching, screaming loneliness of sin. Mercy made it so, Dad's kind cruelty, that man may approach his Mother in complete confidence. "Pray for us sinners." Your voice, "Son, why have you done this to us?" The road's dust clings to you hem, your sandals, tears streak your lovely face, fatigue stoops your shoulders. Yet you are majestic as your parched heart waits to drink of His Voice. "Didn't you know?" No apology, no gentleness to make you any less Queen of Martyrs. Just another memory to store in a Heart so vast all grace is kept there. No more does the Holy Spirit wish us to know but that your little family returned to Nazareth, Strong, wonderful Faith locked upon a comely young man, anxious to please, and found that the Law never supercedes the ordinary, that it merely confirms a holy family's instinct goodness.

IV. Nazareth is gone, forever. Time is so irrelevant, thirty years, three months. Home is a house again, exile, empty of all but memories and promises. But these are enough. When Jesus turned His back to you to be about His Father's business, never again did you hear His Voice call you MOTHER. And if He turned His Heart to memories of your vigilant love as He washed the dirt of the roads from his feet and felt relief that the night and sweet communion with His Father had come again, He never told you so. He had, to all appearances, no need of you any more. And though your soul lived beyond the obvious, your woman's heart burned painfully. Stripped of motherhood's duties, you remained His, a little nothing, until the time for all nothings to be counted. His Passion, Death, His Glory, these He was saving so specially for you. He needed you, and you were there, urging Him to Calvary and Resurrection and to His Father. He didn't need to call you. Your FIAT still echoed over all, you His "little gospel." "Our mere presence gives testimony to Truth-evidence of our untruth," Fr. Raymond says. Mother, if you show me not the Way, my entire life will be an empty lie, a waste of His Precious Blood, sacrilege. But you are kind, and all my joyous hope lies in your Immaculate Heart.

V. "There stood by the Cross of Jesus His Mother." Never has motherhood been so exalted; anything less is beneath woman's dignity. You stood. Forgive me if I never realized your physical suffering until Fr. Lucien reminded me. YOU STOOD. Your legs, your back, your head, motionless, taut for those Three Hours, aching with exhaustion, begging for relief. And you remained there, a Woman, tall as the tree before you, royal as its wood, for to you as to no creature God was crucified. This is the Life; this is the Baptism for which Jesus' Heart had longed. For this was He born. This is testimony, the truth of His tremendous Love, so tremendous we called it a crime! Yes, and the blasphemies hurled at Him are two-edged. Man either climbs or ridicules those approaching these heights. I've heard their sneers, and also their encouragement. Woman's heart stores all; mankind echoes there. With Jesus and through Him and in Him is Transubstantiation. Please remember us whose weakness can endure but "the white heartbreak of a Host," as you, majestic Mother, show the world this Criminal is your Son and His beautiful crime your own.

VI. Exhaustion and welcome calm. I kneel here vibrant with a new Life, almost another mockery to your anguish. But no, your love is fathomless, and alone. What of His Body? Each member and each wafer of that glorious Being for Whom you've been in excruciating labor? You, His Mother, love US, are concerned for us murderers, call us your children, you the powerful Mother of Helplessness. What an exchange! ~~I'm bitterly sorry, yet filled with hope.~~ I am yours, He said, O do forgive my selfish thoughts, please. How to console you, my Mother? I, more helpless than this corpse. What is the name you whisper over my desolation? You look at this heap of misery before you and call it "Jesus" O Mother! Your voice again, "I cannot promise you happiness in this world." Yes, momentarily forgetting all around you, you've returned to a brighter day and are rocking your Child, -er-His-Mother. You promise me all that is His. It isn't easy to be this Child, or His Mother. You guide Him always to this Holy Sacrifice. See you here mine, I know Christianity is joy, is everything, is the eternal, living God. And you the cradle of Christianity.

VII. Sin is conquered and entombed. This night is so silent, and you too Mother. How long, O God, how long? your heart mutters. It is one tremendous act of faith. You are the Church this Saturday. This day we now call Good because we remember that somewhere you remain vigilant, waiting for Christ. The prayer that has always been powerful your heart repeats. FIAT. It made the world; it made you Jesus' Mother and mine; it redeemed us sinners, it sanctifies us. Only a fool wouldn't repeat it after you. "My Heart will triumph," you softly promise. Without you, Mother, my poor heart would be condemned to life without Jesus, to hell. You've always been here to tell me of Him. To go to JESUS THROUGH MARY is my happy little way. Led to another, I would surely be lost and die. "I came that they may have life." How often did your heart die that I might be yours and have ALL, abundantly? Blessed Mother, in labor until You behold in us who plead your glorious Child, O that somehow I might ease your pain, that you could see me here and rest because He is risen and speaks again your name. MOTHER!!!

No please stay with us, praying that soon the Holy Spirit come to teach your little ones of Jesus. Because you, His beautiful Spouse, remain in our midst, He will come swiftly. With you we remain in prayer. Away from you, lovely one, I could never claim to pray. Jesus will be in agony until the end of the world--WE MUST NOT SLEEP THE WHILE!" Mother, let me not sleep in ignorance of the hundred million miracles that burst everywhere. Let me watch in peace, in complete confidence because I love the living reality of GOD, A WOMAN AND THE WAY