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AND THE SUN ROSE

You ask me to speak of my Mother, of what I saw in her this morning, but what can I say?

I remember stirring in my slumber and opening my eyes just long enough to see her filling her lamp. Her cloak was wrapped about her shoulders much like the silence that enfolds her life and Jesus'.

A bit of commotion outside. Some women were shuffling toward the place where Jesus had been laid. They spoke to one another of spices and the hurried burial before the Passover and of how their love of Him prompted them to give His tomb all the ritual possible to them. I thought it strange to see her walking another direction than they, slowly, at peace, erect, only her eyes revealing the drain the past few days had been upon her. Her face was lifted to the stars. Once there had been a special star for her to find among them. Now they were all alike, all special because they are her Son's.

Perhaps I should have followed her to ease her loneliness. I didn't even think of that at the time, simply snuggled into the burrow of covers she'd thrown about me that I be not cold and fell asleep.

The dawn awakened me. Yet now I can't remember if it was a sunbeam or the light in her eyes. All I know is that I looked to find her with me, and in her eyes to find that which would be mutilated by any verbal account. Somehow it rolled away a stone and overcame my heart, and she who was vibrantly alive did not need to tell me my Brother lives.

for the Lambs of God

Pascaltide 1966

MINE TO GIVE

Many the years I've spent

Coming so far.

Now I reach Bethlehem,

Led by a Star.

(Mary's the Star.)

Wise men precede me here.

Great gifts they bring.

What may a poor child give

The little **King**?

(He made all things.)

Maybe a lullabye

I'll write this day.

Then I can sing it as

With Him I play.

(His angels sing.)

I'll read a story then.

Pages unfurled,

We'll travel all the roads

Of this great world.

(He holds the world.)

Mother, please help me, I

Beg her at length.

"Give Him your weakness;

He'll give you His strength!"

(Jesus, I'm Yours.)

For Father Lucien,

MIRROR OF GOD

Our lesson was on Piety that day.
With open arms and loving heart I came
To lean my locks upon my Mother's breast,
Whence issued whispers sweet with Jesus' name.

And then I knelt before Her, hands in Hers,
And gazed upon Her countenance so fair.
Her eyes, those windows of the soul, met mine,
As I beheld all virtue shining there.

Yes, Piety was there, unique yet one
With all the other gems of sanctity
That form Her crown, that reverential love
Of God and all that's His, laid bare to me.

Her filial obedience, Her faith,
Her childlike confidence, and more I felt,
And fleet time passed into eternity,
As before God's own mirror there I knelt.

For Father Keith's

Conference to the Sisters

written April 11, 1962

CONSOLATION

Why do you weep, poor little heart?

You long to ease the lot

Of those who knock upon your door

For help, but you cannot.

These hands you wish to use for Christ

Won't even hold a cup.

You wish to walk among the poor.

These feet won't bear you up.

Do you not hear them at your door

And long to give your best?

But overcome by constant pain,

Apparently you rest.

Now take your rest, poor little heart.

She gives you to another.

His hands, his lips, his heart do serve.

Don't weep. Serve him, for Mother.

10-28-62

12-16-62

"REJOICE"

Words from the Word.

Words that thunder through all centuries.

Th'eternal Thought.

Yes, you angels, you hear.

Little soul, you too.

And today, yesterday, tomorrow,

That Thought is a Word.

"This is My Body!"

But Christ, Your hands, Your lips,

They differ.

And yet they are the same

As those You asked of Mary

in an eternal plan.

And She, supreme creature,

Whispered a word, the echo

of the Thought.

Et Homo Factus est.

Ecce Sacerdos Magnus!

That echo thunders today.

"This is My Body!"

We take, we eat, we are consumed.

Live Jesus!

Eternal Priest and Victim,

We have no life but Yours.

Amen, Alleluia!

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LOVE

PRESENTATION

A mother and her child,
They stand among the crowd,
Dim vision of a brilliant long ago.
A man approaches, composite of all who wait
To see the face of Christ.

And will he find it here?
Will he gaze on her bundle,
Find in my own face eternal Peace?
Will only death free captives of Love's baby eyes?
Baby Jesus, live and love, and laugh and cry
my baby tears.

Live, Jesus, TODAY!

2-2-63

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LOVE

O Woman!

How glorious is your name.

You whose beauty made God wish to leap to earth;

Whose solitary FIAT made almighty God dependent on
creation;

Whose Mother's care bade Jesus change the wine that
one day would become His Precious Blood.

O Woman, now Christ shouts to me, "Behold thy Mother!"

And angels praise a God Who gives to them a Queen.

AVE MARIA!

2-11-63

NOW AND ALWAYS

Today I kneel before our living God

As you, Jerome, or so the story goes.

I bring you gifts, I smile, and God smiles too,

For these gifts are not mine to give, He knows.

These are but His own gifts to me, His child,

This love and warmth and Holy Mass I give.

But at the door of ugly poverty

God knocks and opens - He descends to live.

in celebrating the feast of St. Jerome
with Fr. Lucien, 1963

One little Word
God speaks today.

No more--no less--

I wish to say.

JESUS!

Christmastime, 1963

AFTER LIFTING MY EYES

My Father, when I was a child then You thought as a
And You built me a kite. child

You taught me how to fly it.

My heart soared with it,

In thrilling squeals discovering Your marvels be-
neath me.

But now I've reached the end of my rope.

Delight of playthings has blown to oblivion.

I seem to fall back to the earth.

With nothing left to cling to,

With nothing left to pull me up, away,

I magnify You, Father.

At last all earth is mine.

7-4-66

"WAITING"

All little seeds are tucked away.
In silence 'neath white snow they pray
To see the Sun of God.

His Advent will make brooks to flow,
Will wake the earth, will melt the snow.
Upon this dust He'll trod.

Then little seeds will rise from sleep
And with angelic strength they'll leap
To heights beyond their sod.

But now beneath the dirt I fall
Till with their song the angels call,
"Come, see the Face of God!"

Advent, 1963

"Remember, man, that you are dust."
How oft would I not like to plead, "But, Lord, I'm only human."
Only human!
How wondrously God's Incarnation changed all that.
Workman of Nazareth, I contemplate You,
And ashes shout, "Remember, dust, that you are MAN!"
Ash Wednesday, 1966



LITTLE MARY'S BUSY DAY

Two elderly, God-loving souls made their way to the Temple.
No one noticed the paradox of joy and grief in their faces.
It was a busy day.

A little girl walked in the secure shadows of those who loved her dearly.
A shameless tear sparkled on her cheek for Him Who alone loved her more.
It was a busy day.

What rabbi received this child, man's solitary boast?

Could he have known that the little one, reduced to insignificance,
nearly oblivion, by the splendorous magnificence of the structure,
was God's chosen temple?

It was a busy day.

Mary, lead me to the depths of my very self, to the heart of everyone
I meet,

And remind me to bow in adoration because Our Father continues His
creation there, Jesus is crucified and triumphantly saving the world,
the Spirit of Divine Love sets fire to our little altar of sacrifice,
and we, if we wish, become with you a holocaust.

It IS a busy day; teach us to be about Our Father's business.

10-9-64 at the request of Fr. Lees for "Mary Today"

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 wishes 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 ^{home} and 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 therewith 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 a 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 presense 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 presense 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 requests 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 divine 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, so 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.

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 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.

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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. Of 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 unawares. 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's 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 morning. How grateful was I to feel it lying there.

When we got 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 little 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 Got 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 little 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.

I. 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 God dwells beneath my feet and not yearn to press my face to this cold, dirty floor to be a little 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 me 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.

II.. "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 dear 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. O the joy of it! I am His temple. "All the way to heaven is Heaven." 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.

III. "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, God'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 your hem, your sandals, tears streak your lovely face, fatigue stoops your shoulders. Yet you are majestic as 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 looked 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 - or 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. 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!!!

Now 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

July 12, 1963

Hi! This is a rather difficult assignment, dear one. Write an article for others on how a CP feels about "things?" If you weren't such a great relative of mine I might chicken out. But as things stand, I love ya loads and owe ya lots, so...

There are O so many things we could tell our friends. Lots of times I say thank you till it begins to sound rather artificial from familiarity. O if you only knew what that thank you really means! Like during our recent visit. To come to your lovely home, to be there not so much as a "guest" or the other extreme, a piece of "cumbersome" furniture, but simply one with you, that was quite a privilege. Of course, you know how I felt about it. Feelings are rather hard to control, and it's no wonder I'm tied to this little buggy. Otherwise I might be trying to bum a way home from the moon.

Of course the popular commercial of the day must be selling lots of "charity pills," and to tell the truth I need a couple myself now and then as I suppress a tremendous desire to scream "I'D RATHER DO IT MYSELF." After I've been with others a little while they learn the many, many little things unruly hands, and feet, can perform quite well. I'm sure it's much easier to get it done quickly and easily with your own efficiency than to sit and watch us fumble. So...just don't sit and watch us! Simpler for everyone that way. Right?

It's such fun for me to be on the floor. Maybe because there's less gravity to fight. Think so? Anyhow, most people, in learning that I'm going to take the plunge, run for blankets and pillows and just anything their desperation can think of. And because of the hubbub all the fun disappears for me. Instead I get the feeling of being a bother, disturbing an otherwise enjoyable time by such superfluous attentions. Then you soon learn that I'm not the champion diver my brother is, and I have to laugh to see your faces as I flop at your feet. Laughter, such beautiful music. And then you join me, beautiful harmony. We must fill each others' life with that happy sound. O truly it's worth living.

Surely your super hamburgers have been praised by every word appropriate. But did you realize the special something I liked about them? They're so easy to handle, my favorite meal. Our desserts in nice deep bowls, straws with our drinks, liquids often throughout the day, repeated reminders that I needn't hurry, O such thoughtfulness! Letting me wash up at the side of the tub, permitting me to leave my towels and washcloths there so conveniently near, even your compliment on my daily appearance & care & dress. These are rather inflating to one's ego, to say the least. They sound good now and then. The woman in us is certainly not missing. But rather, I think that each time our body cannot perform a woman's function our heart must expand to meet the challenge.

I love to BE with people, that's all. No handicappers last five minutes in the crowd. Our wiggles are irrelevant; our opinions weighed. We are one with you, and we are happy. It's important to maintain a gay openness. Just to let others know what we can and cannot do, then we reach an understanding that gives us time for fun, a relaxing atmosphere we so appreciate. You made me feel so good there at your home. You didn't fret about constantly entertaining me but left me to my own fancies much of the time. With you I felt like just ME, and we chatted and giggled and LIVED together those few days. Though there is such a debt of gratitude in my heart I can't help feeling that God let me give YOU something too. That's life, and I love it!

"A RIGHT TO BE MARY"

Jesus was visiting His dear friends one day. Martha was fixing His dinner, but Mary sat at His feet. What beautiful love stories He had to tell her. She had no desire but to be there at His feet, to learn of Him Who is meek and humble of heart. But Martha grew quite irritated, and Jesus gently rebuked her. "Martha, Martha, you are ~~an~~xious about many things; yet only one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the better part, and it shall not be taken from her."

Today Jesus remains with us: in our chapels; in the presence of those gathered in His name; and in the poverty of our hearts. And there are some Marys always at His feet, grieving that their sisters know not what it's like to be there. In their uselessness they learn the joyous truth that nothing is impossible to God. They are still called lazy by those who know not Jesus' message. But it matters little what others say; Jesus knows, and it is for Him and only Him they live. He goes to the cloister as He once went to the home of His friends to dine. He loves to be with His friends.

But I am in no cloister; and only God knows the gulf between me and a contemplative. Yet this right to be Mary shan't be taken from me. Not I, but our heavenly Father has chosen this better part for me. He takes from me the dishes and the laundry and the scrubbing and gives me HIMSELF. "More than Himself He could not give; less than Himself He would not give."

Sometimes it's hard to appreciate the vocation of BEING. Our entire education has been geared from it. We're taught what to DO, we're praised for DOING, and soon we begin to measure our worth by what we've DONE. Yet only one thing is necessary, to belong to Jesus, to know that He loves US. And all else shall be added.

Not long ago I wrote a bit of what the handicapper in me felt. But that paper is so shallow and incomplete. For who among us is not a "handicapper" somehow? Yet the more we live the life of Christ the more we are made whole. Apart from Him I am worse than nothing. I am misery and sinfulness; but He is the Love of my heart. His Spirit gives life to my flesh and joy to my soul. "He must increase;" my own selfishness must be annihilated. All my life I may shout the good news of great joy to all. For the Word of God is mine, and yours. We are all syllables in the angels' song. God forbid that I forge t to sing!

There was once a little Maiden named Mary who pleased God above all His creatures. And she humbly consented to bring Him to this lovely earth which He'd made. "She who was lowest in her own eyes saw without tremor that she was highest in God's eyes; and she was glad because He was glad and for no other reason." O how I long to please Him thus. Yet I see this Mother, so silent and graceful, the depth of Womanhood, and I shrink back in shame. But just for a second. For what can cerebral palsy do to a woman's heart? It's easy to tell God what great gifts I would like to give Him, yet it's heroic to give the wee things He asks. His little one I must remain, completely abandoned to His Holy Will, my only happiness. Like a baby whose Father lovingly tosses her into the air. And she laughs in her delight, for she has the wonderful confidence that His strong arms will catch her.

We don't find our Mother Mary preaching sermons on the mount, healing the sick, raising the dead. We find her jostled in the crowds that followed her Jesus, sometimes too far behind to see His face or hear His words. Yet He knew she was there. That was enough. A woman wrapped in silence, giving her all that Jesus might reign in all hearts., And mine is the right to be Mary?

"A saint preaches sermons by the way he walks and the way he talks and the way he picks things up and holds them in his hands," Merton tells us. But who is there to comprehend the things we hold within our hearts. There LOVE reigns.

A LITTLE ONE

Maryly in L O V E

August 17, 1963

THE WORD TO A NOISEY LITTLE SISTER

#1 God eternally thinks a Thought. With joy He utters that Thought Which is His Word, His Son. And with that Word, anxious to share the joy Its utterance brought Him, He fashioned our world. It was Good, for it was inseparable from that Thought, and that Thought was God. And of that Word we are syllables. O God, who is like unto You!

In Him is Life; apart from Him eternal death. He IS the Life, and the Way and the Truth. Yet human frailty, blindness, cannot begin to comprehend Him. Still the world knows that I am called a Christian, a witness of Christ. "I must shout the Gospel with my whole life," for others seek to believe through me. O unbearable responsibility, how I would wish to beg freedom from you. But I remember that He told us His grace is sufficient, and peace and grace descend together on my parched soul.

The Light I am not, and no one must notice me but find rest only when they have found the source of this Flame within my heart.

He dwells here within my heart; He has made that heart, yet it knows Him not. He has come a beggar at my door and though I've ministered to Him, I've given Him my food but not the only thing He asked, my heart. Yet He keeps hoping that some day I shall be a good little sister. He waits.

His Name is sung within my heart. He tells me to believe in His Holy Name, to love it, to whisper it in each thought and word, to sing it, to bow in adoration at the sound or thought of it. JESUS! To love it as Mother loves it, to make it mine. Little Virginia of Jesus. Often I wonder just where I find the audacity to use His Name with mine. It is surely good, for it reminds me of my sinfulness and in its light my ugliness is illuminated. Only because His Holy Name is there can Our Father love my name. His Name and His Mother's.

"And the Word was made flesh." Tremendous Lover of sinful man, it seems that You cannot bear to think of us apart from You! He comes to dwell in our midst, to become the lowliest of all men so that He may belong to everyone. Lovers always seem to be gazing upwards to their loved ones. So He permitted us to raise Him up at last that we might gaze upon Him Whom we've pierced and desire to be one with Him. Our flesh must become His, that He may reign today, full of grace and truth.

"Of His fullness we have all received." We need but recognize our nothingness to be filled with the Allness of God. Mother poured out self and was filled with grace. She shines forever, our Moon, fostering divine romance in reflections of her Son.

"Grace for grace." God begs us to accept His Love, His Life. He is so eager to give us His happiness our mere reception of His grace prompts Him to immediately offer us more.

Grace and Truth come to us through Jesus; apart from Him we cannot receive them. Jesus shows us His Father; He takes us to Him. Our love of Mother and of Jesus is imperfect until it leads us to God the Father, to rest eternally in the bosom of His Love. Any other end is false.

HEAVEN
AND EARTH
SHALL
PASS
AWAY

"I am not the Christ...I am the voice of one crying in the desert." I am dryness, barrenness, emptiness. Please don't try to find Him here. Look further, little ones. He is in your midst, in your very own hearts. But you do not know Him! I am not worthy to serve you, to tell you of Him. But I belong to another. He will tell you. He knows Jesus. Let us listen together, and perhaps in our fused hearts we shall hear His Voice.

"Behold the Lamb of God!" Here He is in your midst, He for Whom you've waited for centuries, He so little you didn't even know He stood among you, He so silent standing there among you, so abandoned your numbers have jostled Him and yet He stayed. Alone in your noisy crowds. And I did not know Him. Yet in revealing to you the Son of God have I found Him.

"Master, where do You live...Come and see." O but such poverty, hiddenness in your Nazareth. So silent. So much labor. Such obedience for a God. We love You; we stay.

O such joy. Run to tell our dear ones. "Come, come quick, we've found the Messiah!" Now Jesus looks upon us and calls us by His Name, calls us Christians. O but God, what do You expect of one so weak? "Do miracles for Me and I shall do them for thee."

"Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Can I form from my tear-filled, bitter, lonely past-Love? I conquer all, no, not I, but Christ.

Your heart bursts into song at the trees, the sunrise, the brook, the flowers, the beauty of souls in Love. "Greater things than these shalt thou see." Never, never underestimate the power of Christ. Only believe, and All is yours.

#2 With what joy must the newly-weds have welcomed Mother to their marriage feast. St. John tells us, "Jesus too was invited." Perhaps simply because He was her Son. So little, so unknown, that only etiquette demanded His Presence. O Jesus, You are the Least of the little ones. True You've taken the very last place to be Your own forever. Yet with Charlie must I dare try to take it from You!

You brought Your friends. Often there are more than we've anticipated. So happy to be with You, they carelessly deplete my supplies. And it takes the constant concern of a Mother to whisper to You, "They have no wine." She states a simple truth, that's all. It seems a Mother could request. But this Mother knows she stands before Omniscience. Then she whispers something to us. What is it? I am too far away to hear. But the word is passed from one friend to another, and in their awe I hear it just as she said it. "Do whatever He tells you." This is a Mother's last message to her little ones. This is what she wishes most of us. This is what will make her most happy. What more of joy is there for a little child than that of pleasing his Mother?

He had told her that His hour had not yet come, and yet her confidence was so great she knew He would hasten that hour. She was asking that He hasten His immolation, hasten to plunge into the depths of her heart the sword that already was endlessly stabbing. It took a woman's love to begin His Passion. And in that love her suffering was intensified. Before that death she silently tells His murderers how to love Him. No more will we hear her voice, until we hear Christ.

"Fill the jars with water." And they filled them to the brim. Total, joyous, eager Obedience. Unquestioning, simple, childlike. And they took it to the chief steward. Jesus had told them to. That was enough. In silence. They did not hasten to explain. It was theirs, this secret joy. Perhaps in watching Mother they had learned to ponder God's words and deeds in their hearts. They remained alone and happy with Him.

Thus Jesus had first manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him. Little ones wait for Him today. It is for us to manifest His glory to them. They look to us who call ourselves Christians. O God! Must they look upon this poverty for YOU? O now I remember that Charlie passed to us what You told him. "Do miracles for Me, and I'll do them for thee."

"The zeal for Thy house has eaten Me up." O Jesus, do I truly understand that You are here? I love to be with You. Yet You know that such majesty as dwells within our tabernacles would frighten a child. And You become so small, a tiny piece of bread that our eyes may gaze upon You. It's alright that I am forgotten. It is good. But never do I wish to forget that You are there, waiting, long hours of waiting. O Love unrequited. And You wait in all souls. My Jesus, I adore.

"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." For years we toil. Such long years. Yet all our accomplishments are destroyed. And when we stand back to admire our edifice, it is a heap of ugliness. Only in Christ shall we rise in eternal beauty.

"Jesus did not trust Himself to them...He had no need that anyone should bear witness concerning Him." Only God knows my inmost desires. Only He need know me, for I belong to Him alone, and to all in Him. It is He Who will reveal Himself through me. A reed through which God will pipe His song. But first I must be whittled. And silent.

#3. Many times we must go to Jesus "by night", for the world will always scorn a man become childlike, docile, confident. It ridicules what it cannot understand. But it can never find us hidden in the depths of our hearts, waiting for Him, rejoicing at the sound of His Voice.

It seems Nicodemus' first words to Jesus are a protestation of faith in Him. And Jesus immediately tests that faith by telling him he must be born again. Of course, this was confusing. If we but listen further Jesus will explain. So it is with all He tells us. We must listen. When we try to learn in one day the lessons God will teach with a lifetime, we grow discouraged. Without the grade of God we remain ignorant. Yet today's grace is sufficient only for today's lessons. It's a bit unfair to expect more, and here is our ingratitude.

We must be born again of water and the Spirit, the cleansing waters of Baptism and the Spirit of God's Love that comes to dwell and grow within us. Jesus tells us not to be disturbed that we don't understand His words. We do not understand the earth from which we've been fashioned so it is foolish to wish to understand God Himself. He only asks that we accept the wonderful gift of Faith He offers.

"The Son of Man must be lifted up." He must be crucified, that those who believe may look upon the lifeless body of their God and feel eternal Life pulsing in their hearts.

"God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son." More than Himself God could not give; less than Himself He would not give. Such a tremendous Lover. So anxious that we return but the poverty of our self for His unrequited Love. He came begging for our hearts. O who can refuse His plea? Who can continue to live in darkness when eternal Light and Truth beg our claim?

Spiritual jealousies spring from ignorance. God is the Giver of all gifts, and the End of all gifts. He gives Himself to all. John had come to herald the Bridegroom. But now He has come, and John is happy to slip unnoticed into the crowd and listen. "He must increase, but I must decrease," until Christ has become my very Self.

"He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for not by measure does God give the Spirit." Listen carefully, O my soul to the superiors God sends to you. Jesus tells you thus the way to everlasting life.

#4 Jesus was tired. How kind of St. John to tell us this. He was TIRED. When it is evening and we have worked hard and our muscles ache and our brain has grown dull, how gentle the memory that Jesus was tired. And He sat down to rest.

It was noon. He sat there alone and smiled His benediction upon a little town taking its midday siesta. Perhaps we can sense that He does not sit idly gazing into the well. He glances toward the town often. He seems to be waiting for someone. Divine Patience had waited an eternity for the woman now bringing her jar to the well. Strange that she should come at this hour. The hour of rest. But no, she wished to go alone, to avoid the scorn and gossip of those who knew about her. And there she met One Who knew her heart better than she. But she didn't know Him.

Jesus spoke to her gently, kindly. Perhaps she had never been spoken to thus. Jesus ASKED something of her. Little Virginia, listen carefully to St. John. He tells us your Jesus asked. And there was no one but a stranger, a harlot, to fulfill His request. How joyfully surprised she must have been. He asked her, a woman, a samaritan, a harlot. Please, Jesus, let me never withhold the joy of giving from those who wait but to be asked. Perhaps it will be the first time they may grant another's request.

Jesus says if I but knew the Giver and the Gift He longs to give me I would never hesitate to make requests. If I can but truly recognize the Christ that dwells within the soul of every man I would run pleading for Love, and Life, For He truly dwells among us today, and begs us to believe He's there.

Though the divine secrets Jesus tells her are beyond her comprehension she yet believes, for she simply wonders how Jesus could give her this living water. But it seems we cannot receive this divine Life alone, for Jesus asks her first to bring her Husband.

But she told Him she had none. Jesus knew better, yet He didn't call her a liar. In fact, He remarked that it was merely a half truth. The woman then recognized that He was a prophet and posed THE question of her heart. Where are we to worship God? On the mountain where they spoke or in Jerusalem where the Jews flocked to the temple? Jesus replied that the Jews were God's chosen people, and that God had given them the laws of true worship. But all men are to worship God in spirit and in truth, with love in their hearts to sanctify the external requirements of the Law.

The woman expressed her hopes in the Messias Who would tell her all God wished her to know. And as she hoped so did she receive, for Jesus said to her, "I am He."

It was then that His disciples returned, a bit disturbed to find Him speaking with her. Had they perhaps heard rumors of her while they were buying the supplies in town? They silently looked at her, and wondered. And little could they dream that she had just encountered eternal Truth, and fallen in love with God.

But they watched her run back to town, joyfully, skipping almost as a child. Perhaps they called to her that she had forgotten her water-jar, but she didn't hear them. She ran to tell her people of Jesus. Strange that those who had scorned her now followed her. Perhaps they saw in her entire being a radiance that glows only in those who speak to God. A child's freedom that let her run to tell them of Him.

Meanwhile the disciples were trying to get Jesus to share the food they had bought in town. But Jesus seemed preoccupied with deeper thoughts. There is but one thing that will nourish Him, that will strengthen Him. "My food is to do the Will of Him Who sent me." You are always anxious for the harvest. Open your eyes, little ones, for the fields are already white.

"The sower and the reaper may rejoice together." Yes, Jesus, a little co-missionary buries so many desires, waters them with her tears. But to see another come to pluck the flowers, another who looks so much like you, would be happiness enough, it seems. And yet in the prodigality of Divine Providence, this reaper stops now and then and stoops to place a flower in my hands so they remain not empty. O truly "Others have labored," yet we but open our hands to abundance. See Jesus, they wish always to be opened to You.

The people had flocked from the town, placing all their hopes in the words of the woman. And once they had heard His word they too knew Him, and the woman seems to disappear. She had led them to Him; that was enough. And she became lost in His Love.

How Jesus wished to be loved, instead of His miracles. So few loved Him. Thus He put the official's faith to a test. But perseverance in prayer won the Heart of Christ, and such faith taught an entire family to love Him.

#5 Jesus went to Jerusalem to keep the feasts with His people. It is good to see Him here, a God seeking not to exempt Himself from the celebrations of His creatures. The eternal Law-giver in humble subjection, every second of His Life forming the pattern into which our own lives must fall that they become divine, and human.

O to ponder the compassion of His Sacred Heart as He saw the mass of sick, blind, lame and cripples at the pool. They were waiting. They formed a composite of all mankind, waiting till the Word of God reverberates through our hearts. And we rush in to find Christ in silence.

Jesus went first to the poorest of these little ones. Only He could know what misery the years had thrown upon this tired soul. And yet it remained so patient, so abandoned. Jesus understood its suffering; He Who wished to always make the last place His own gently cured first this little one He loved most, who most bore the image of God in his heart.

Often others wonder at our actions. Do we try to excuse ourselves, blame our youth, our ignorance? Do we blush to tell them Jesus wishes this of us? Are we ashamed of Him, ashamed of following such a "useless vagabond?" Or, God forbid, are we ignorant of Him Who bestows upon us the riches of Divine Life?

Jesus' kindness is so quiet. But somehow if we but look for our Savior He will whisper, "It is I," that we may know and love Him. But we are too anxious to tell others of our Lover. We forget that they wait only to condemn. We wish to share our dreams, and in the sharing we hasten their death.

"The Son can do nothing of Himself." The humility of the Son begged that the people's love and admiration be not lavished upon His Human Nature. He is always pointing to Another, to the Father, to Whose bosom it is His ardent desire to lead us. I do His work; I call Him Father. And I am about My Father's business. You are too little to go to His Divine Majesty alone. So I have become least that I may lead you there. Come, follow Me; only believe what I tell you, please.

Only listen. Be silent. I will tell you of Him that you may believe, My little children, and in believing possess the eternal Life of God. Listen and live. I alone judge you, I Who know all things, I Who have borne your every infirmity. "Of Myself I can do nothing...I seek not my will." O Humility of Christ, permeate me!

Listen to your brothers and sisters today. They speak to you of Me. You love to hear your Fr. Keith speak to you of Love. You read joyously of this Love. Why do you not believe how much I love you?

I do not need your love, weak, human, faithless as it is. But still I long to fill you with My Love, with true Love. You seek others' love, but you so easily forget Mine. I do not condemn you; you condemn yourselves. Listen to your loved ones. For if you do not trust them you cannot trust Me Who live and love in their hearts.

#6 "There followed Him a great crowd, because they witnessed the signs He worked on those who were sick." His poor little sheep. Our Shepherd must often be saddened because we spend so much time admiring His gifts and forget to look into His beautiful eyes. But He simply asks His friends to sit with Him on the Mountain. Only He knows how many mountains we will climb, and the last one He will climb alone because we remain fearful of such heights.

So many little ones were with Him that day, tired, hungry, yet anxious to stay with Him. Jesus turned to Philip, and we almost detect a glimmer in His eyes as Omiscience asks a finite mind how to care for them. And Philip humbly admits human helplessness.

But how why does Andrew speak? Does he know the solution? Why does he tell Jesus of five barley loaves and two fishes, a meal one little boy had brought for himself, and maybe his mother? Is this a confident request acknowledging the power of Christ? And in return for such faith, Jesus, kindly gazing upon His flock, tells them to rest. Divine Providence had anticipated this hour and had spread a blanket of soft grass there, for Jesus' little ones.

Jesus first gave thanks. God walked among us and was grateful to be here! O truly Jesus, you have desired to be the least of little ones. For then you distributed your gifts to us; in the abundance with which we would receive you gave. O God, grant me the humility to receive all this, the same humility that you portrayed in taking the role of our servant. It takes great littleness to give much, and to receive much. Great as our desires are our gifts.

O prodigality of divine goodness, you beg that we waste not this abundance you give, but remember the poor you love so. When the people had witnessed your power, they wished to force you to be their king. But alone you hid from them, saddened that they couldn't understand how you loved them.

That night you went to your disciples, who were struggling in their boat against the storm. You know they are so helpless and cannot bear to leave them alone. They are surprised and fearful to see you walking upon the turbulent waters, but your voice brings peace and joy. "It is I; do not be afraid." They throw open their arms and hearts to welcome you. And in that embrace they find they have reached their destination. For you are their love, their God, their All.

When the people had found Jesus they desired an explanation of His presence. They had found their God, yet they were still seeking. O God, grant us the simplicity that is Thyself! Our hearts are set so upon your gifts we fail to find you, the gift you long to give.

We asked that we might do God's will; you told us only to believe. But we are so little. We don't understand, and in our foolishness we ask a sign. We've seen all this, yet we desire more! O God, forgive us.

"My Father gives you the true Bread from heaven... Lord, give us always this bread." My Jesus, we beg this of you, and your words drop as refreshing dew upon our parched hearts. "I am the Bread of Life. Come to Me; believe in Me. I am pleading for your love. You see and yet believe not. Come to Me, I beg you, little ones. I long for you. I come to do the will of Him who sent Me. He longs for you to be Mine, that I may raise you to see His face. Only believe that I come to take you to Him."

But we murmur that this cannot be, that He is but the Son of a poor carpenter. We ponder; we try to understand but we cannot comprehend what He is trying to tell us. But Jesus begs us to be silent just a minute, to let divine grace accomplish within the depths of our souls what we ourselves cannot begin. Only to believe in Jesus is to possess the everlasting Life of grace. He is the Bread of Life, and nourished in Christ our souls can never know death. And now Jesus tells us that the bread that He will give is His Flesh for the life of the world.

Poor little ones, this is so difficult to learn. But must you always ask God "HOW?" Listen well. Jesus speaks with majestic force. "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you shall not have life in you." Live in Me, and I shall live in you. Live because of Me, and desire to have no life without Me. Live eternally sharing this Sacred Banquet.

"Jesus, this is a hard saying," we complain. But He doesn't modify it. There is no altaring truth; He is Truth. He asks that we merely accept His word in utter simplicity. Our minds are whirling with such thoughts? JESUS speaks to our SOULS.

Jesus knew some did not believe. But He spoke these words to all. O how grievously His Sacred Heart called to all men, begging that they believe. Yet His lips were silent. And He watched His disciples leave Him. O unrequited Love, so silent, so eternal!

He turns to us. The sun kisses a tear on His cheek. "Do you also wish to go away?" Tremendous Love, and yet so tender. And Peter answers for us in the complete darkness of faith, "Lord, to whom shall we go?" And from the depths of Jesus' soul we hear a shisper, as He sighs that even one of His chosen Twelve is a traitor. O Jesus, would that I could console You. But I am a traitor who loves You.

#7. Almighty God walked the face of the earth He had created and loved, and yet He had to avoid His creatures because they sought to kill Him! Of all on His earth, He loved these most, these He had made in His own Image. But the Love He wished to light in their hearts had been smoldered, and they knew Him not. Not even His own believed in Him. He walked among His sheep - alone.

His disciples, ignorant of the hearts of the rulers, begged Him to manifest His power that all might marvel. Jesus sent them ahead, saying, "Your time is always at hand." NOW is your mission. They know you. Go to them that they may know Me, that they may find Truth in your hearts. Then will they know Me. And He secretly followed, to attend the Jewish feast of Tabernacles.

The crowd was whispering of Him, wondering where He was, if He'd come. Finally He arrived and began to share with them secrets of His Heart. He waited not for their faith in Him. Faith was God's gift. Divine grace stirred their hearts to unrest that He might come to bring them peace and His Love. It seems their hearts were still so very complicated they could not bear to listen long without wondering where Jesus had obtained His knowledge. They who held littleness in such contempt could not know the Simplicity of God.

Jesus answered, "My teaching is not My own." O truly, Jesus, You've kept nothing for Your own, but You've brought us the Allness of God. You ask that we desire only to do the Will of the Father and promise that thus we shall know Your teaching. "He who seeks the glory of the one who sent Him is truthful."

A Lover's wounded Heart asks softly, "Why do you seek to put Me to death?" And His murderers mock and say He's imagining things. He begs them, "Judge not by appearances," but enter into the depths of your very selves to find Me there.

Some are surprised that He should be speaking of truth to those who plan to kill Him. He, the son of a carpenter, now tells them they do not know His Father. And He tells them they must learn of Him, that time is so short to tell them eternal Truth. They do not know who it is who is speaking to them.

And now He stands and cries out, "If anyone thirst, let him come to Me and drink." Are you tired, little ones? Come, please come, to endless refreshment.

The poor, lost sheep were confused. They knew not who He was. Only to go to Him and ask is to know. And those who had come to seize Him returned murmuring, "Never has man spoken as this man." They were ridiculed by the "wise" for associating with the crowd of little fellows. Nicodemus begs them to listen to Jesus. And those faltering leaders referred him to the Scriptures. There they knew not were Truth and Christ.

#8 The others had gone home but Jesus went alone to the Mount of Olives. The world was His, yet there was no room.

At daybreak He arose. It had been good to spend hours alone in Love. Now He returned to the people that He might bring those hours to fruition. In the majestic splendor of the sunrise He went to them.

They waited for Him. They seemed so confident that morning, so sure of tripping Him up. When they stood aside there was their bait. A tired, pitiable woman was shoved to the fore. Would He punish her and thus forget His merciful gentleness, or would He free her, ignoring the Law God had given Moses? Calmly, almost apparently indifferently, Jesus stoops to draw little figures in the dirt.

They thought He was ignoring them. He lifted His majestic form and said, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to cast a stone at her." What did He continue to write? Truths eternal, truths beyond their endurance? But one by one the group diminished. Interesting that the eldest went first. And there the sinless one remained with the adulteress. He did not condemn. He loved her. And He lifted her from the ground where they had thrown her, saying, "Go thy way, and from now on sin no more." He didn't send her by a different way. He loved HER. There was one change since she had met God. She would sin no more.

There in that beautiful morning all earthly splendor seemed to vanish, as Jesus said, "I am the light of the world."

But we wondered that someone could speak thus of himself. We didn't know the humble man would be the first to recognize his humility, his greatness, because he came face to face with eternal Truth.

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"You judge; I judge no one." Yet only I am capable of judging justly. You keep inquiring so suspiciously of My Father. Yet, "You know neither Me nor My Father. If you knew Me, you would then know My Father also."

"If you do not believe that I am He, you will die." Christ in His Love was pleading with these little ones, begging them to accept the life of divine grace. But still they knew Him not.

Our poor Jesus, weary of questions, of suspicious, of doubts, sighs, "Why do I speak to you at all?" Not until we've crucified Him and have taken even His Life from Him will we know and love the Son of Man, and recognize the Father. His conviction of His Father's Love for Him let Him rise above the taunts of men, men whom He loved infinitely.

In His rejection Jesus turned to those who yet followed. What a consolation it must have been to see these few there with Him. The gentle Master spoke. "If you abide in My word, you shall be My disciples indeed, and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." But even they did not understand. Loving Heart of my Jesus, would that the poverty of my life might somehow console You!

Sin is slavery. We don't yet love Christ because we yet fail to understand what He is trying to tell us. We fail to understand that God is Our Father. We SAY that He is, but our hearts have not learned these words. "If God were your Father, you would surely love Me...Why do you not understand what I say?" O Jesus, You are Simplicity, yet we have not learned to listen.

"He who is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear is that you are not of God...I do not seek My own glory; there is One Who seeks and Who judges...If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing...Before Abraham came to be, I am." O my Jesus, we hated truth and prepared to stone Truth. Now You have hid Yourself and sadly left our hearts.

#9 Jesus saw a blind man. He always seems to take special notice of the poor, the blind, the lame, the sinner. His disciples noticed these special attentions. Somehow those little ones knew He loved them most. His eyes spoke volumes.

Day after day His disciples had watched Him walk through suffering humanity. They had witnessed the misery that flocked to His feet. WHY, they had wondered; HOW could a God of goodness be so cruel? Surely the evil of sin had merited this. That was the only possible answer. And they asked Jesus if this man was suffering for his own crimes or those of his parents. And Jesus gave the world's most beautiful excuse for handicappers. The works of God are to be made manifest in us! Then the sweet urgency that must fill all our hearts escaped His lips. NOW is the time to accomplish Our Father's business. Night comes so quickly. In the glorious light of His Presence we can do all things.

With dirt and spit Jesus caked the man's eyes in mud. And the man stood before Him in humble submission, the joy of blind faith coursing through his veins. With what prompt obedience did he stumble to the pool. And he jubilantly returned to gaze upon the face of Christ.

Those who once knew Him, some who had given him alms, others who had scoffed at him, now were alarmed at the change in him, even doubting his identity. He smiled, "I am he." What a beautiful smile it must have been. He didn't mind their questions; he understood their confusion. His explanation was filled with beautiful simplicity. "And I see"

There was nothing to hide. He patiently repeated his story for the Pharisees to whom he was taken. This beautiful story jarred them. Some were angered, others amazed. They asked the man his opinion of Jesus. He answered, "He is a prophet," for he knew Christ manifested the power of God.

Even yet these poor doubters searched. All they had seen and heard wasn't sufficient. So the man's parents were called and questioned. They were good, faithful Jews, and they were afraid. They must have longed to express their gratitude to Jesus and their love of Him. But to do this would be to cast oneself from the temple, from all that had ever given meaning to their life. So they referred these plotters to their son. He would tell them of the beautiful face he had seen.

The man was clever in his responses. By this time he must have grown tired of their interrogations. So he expressed concern at their interest and asked, "Would you also become His disciples?" The Pharisees were shocked that he should mention it and boasted, "We are disciples of Moses." They knew that God had spoken to Moses, but they knew not that He walked in their very own midst. And simply the man said, "If this man were not from God, He could do nothing." He spoke of mankind and the "wise men" of God's chosen people thought themselves too great to listen to one THEY considered a sinner. Poor, stupid wise men. They drove a saint from the house of God.

The man was lost and confused and alone. And Jesus searched until He found him. He but asked an act of faith. And the man spoke an eternally beautiful prayer. "Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him?" Jesus placed His slender hand upon His breast. The man spoke with every power that was in him, "I believe, Lord," and he fell to his face and adored His God.

But soon Jesus' soul wept over the Pharisees before Him. He had shown them Divine Love, yet they had not noticed. They were blind, and God was helpless. He had torn the scales from their eyes, but they would not look upon His beauty.

#10 Only Christ can lead us to eternal bliss. We must learn to recognize and ignore, those thieves who flaunt their own miserable glory, who boast of having found another more beautiful path to which they would lead us. Holy Mother Church, to whom Christ has given the keys of His Kingdom, joyously opens the gates of Heaven that Christ may come to us. Through Her we hear His voice. His intimate love thrills each heart, as He aimably calls each of us by name. And He leads us forward, and upward, to the summit of glory, and glory. He leads us. He blazes the trail, that little ones may climb more safely. Sometimes we lose sight of Him. But we continue to follow, for we know His voice. That is enough.

Once more we do not understand. Our minds are too filled with vain knowledge to comprehend Truth itself. But again, slowly, patiently, gently, Jesus speaks.

"The thief comes only to steal, and slay, and destroy. I come that they may have life, and have it more abundantly."

"I am the good Shepherd. The good Shepherd lays down His life for His sheep...I know Mine and Mine know Me...Other sheep I have that are not of this fold. These also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd." Surely when we hear these words of Christ spoken to us today, we may smile because we have seen this Shepherd. For we lived during the reign of Pope John XXIII.

"I lay down my life, that I may take it up again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself." So joyously eager is our Shepherd. He lays His life at our feet and seems to plead that we accept it. Our Creator has become a divine Beggar. But we do not understand His blessed request.

Jesus had gone to the Temple to celebrate the feast of the Dedication. The Jews surrounded Him and demanded that He reveal His identity. And Jesus, so weary yet so anxious to make them understand, answered, "I tell you and you do not believe." We have seen His words; these were more than sufficient proof. But His greatest treasure, His Divinity, we can't see. We can but beg for faith that we may rejoice in this also. "I and the Father are one." And we prepare to stone Him.

He pleads with us. WHY are we so filled with hatred? All He does is good. Which of these kindnesses do we consider worthy of death? But we shout that He has blasphemed, that He, a mere man, has called Himself God. He urges us. If we cannot turn our hardened hearts to Him, we can at least love the goodness of His creatures. But our angry cries let us not even hear Love begging for love. And our tremendous Lover silently leaves us to our angry babble.

He wanders to the spot where John once baptized. Perhaps His unrequited Love wishes to remember that His Father was "well pleased." It is soothing to hear the echo of those words. Many little ones find Him here, and they remember all the wonderful things John said of Him. Now He has come, and they believe in Him. Perhaps He smiles a benediction upon this, His flock.

#11 Martha and Mary send to TELL Jesus of Lazarus' illness. That is enough. To believe in His Love is to be completely confident, and to believe that even in such heartaches "The Son of God may be glorified." Love does not require continuous explanations.

Jesus waits two days. What must this delay cost Him. How He must long to immediately release those He loves so from this suffering. Yet He suffers Himself, bearing all with and in His friends.

When at last the Divine Plan indicates it, He anxiously urges His disciples to accompany Him once more into Judea. But we forget that He is our good Master. We dare to caution Him, overcautious followers that we are. If we have hurt Him by our hesitation, He doesn't exploit His pain. He simply invites, urges, pleads with us to follow Him that He may brighten the path that leads us Home.

He tells us that Lazarus is sleeping. We go to wake him that he may be delighted by his beloved Jesus' Presence. But we, pretending to be considerate yet only cringing in cowardice, wish to let him sleep on.

Then because we do not listen well enough to hear beyond words the utterance of His Heart, Jesus tells us plainly that Lazarus is dead. And He rejoices! Though His dear one is gone, and the exquisite tenderness of His human Heart is plunged into loneliness, yet He seems to be rather "hard" as He moulds from the depths of His sorrow a gift for us. He never forgets us, is never too preoccupied to remember those to whom He has spoken His eternal, "Come, follow Me." Let's go, that He may not die alone.

Lazarus has been in the tomb four days already. Many are gathered here in Bethany to comfort his two sisters. When word comes that Jesus is approaching, Martha rushes out to meet Him, to find in His Presence strengthening consolation.

"If you had been here, Jesus, he wouldn't have died. I know. But still all my hopes remain firmly established in You." Jesus assures this dear one, "He shall rise." "I know," she replies. Then to ease the pain in Martha's heart, Jesus tells her of the joyous promise He makes to all His loved ones. "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he who believes in Me, even if he dies, shall live; and whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Dost thou believe this?" And the immediate response, "Yes, Lord, I believe."

Then so silently Martha goes to tell her sister Jesus is calling for her. She remembers that He is her life and smiles to whisper to herself, "No, not I but Christ." Mary accepts the invitation immediately and goes to meet Him who alone will bring rest to her beleaved soul. This tender Heart understands. Jesus knows of human grief, experiences it far beyond the degree the hardness of our hearts will permit. "And Jesus wept." O thank you, beloved disciple, for showing us Almighty God and Man with tear-stained cheeks, weeping with us. Surely He has made all that is ours His in becoming ours Himself.

He rises, His erect figure so filled with majesty, and commands that the stone at the door of the tomb be removed. Martha, perhaps thinking Him mad with grief, reminds Him that her brother has already decayed. But Jesus simply asks for her faith and proceeds. He prays aloud that all may understand the omnipotence of His Father.

"LAZARUS, COME FORTH!" calls the Voice that commands all. And there stands His friend before Him in adoration. Many witnesses believe, because of this miracle. Yet many hearts are so hardened they rush to Jerusalem to plot His death, and the High Priest, in his rage, shouts a prophecy he cannot understand. "It is expedient for us that one man die for the people, instead of the whole nation perishing." Jesus waits in a desert place till the hour for this prophecy to be accomplished. Here among the bare realities, He is consumed with longing for His Hour, and mine.

#12 The Passover is quickly approaching. Who can know the rendezvous the entire Being of our Master at once longs for and fears? He has tried to prepare us, His wandering flock, but we've been too busy grazing in selfish indifference to compassionate with the Lover who cries for someone to care.

We wander with Him to His dear ones' home at Bethany. How dear to Him must be this humble little home with its door always open wide to receive Him, to feed and shelter Him after others more lovely have displayed too much dignity to accomodate a useless Hobo. Martha happily prepares a meal for Him and Lazarus, Who sit chatting together. What happy songs she must sing as she listens to the two of them. It seems that now she goes about all her little tasks just as before, yet in her memory is Jesus and in her heart a prayer such as Mary might have whispered at His feet.

Mary - where is she at this happy scene? Here she comes, carrying a pound of precious ointment. She kneels before Christ. All eyes are upon her, yet she sees only His loving gaze. She stoops to pour her treasure upon His calloused feet, and with her flowing hair she wipes them dry. She need not look at Him now to hear His sweet Voice whispering in the depths of her soul. Silently she rises and leaves the room, unconscious of all who try to stop her, completely wrapped in memories of Him eye has not seen.

The house is filled with sweet odor. Yet they who live not in the eternal Present of God experience nothing but anger. "This could have been sold and much given to the poor," we cry, mocking that charity Jesus has been trying to teach us, we thieves who would take the honor paid to Christ for ourselves. But Jesus quietly urges us to respect this woman who served Him for us who in our cowardice will run fearfully, leaving Him in His hour of loneliness, forgetting even the poor, so wrapped in the ugly little shell of self-love.

Upon learning that he is there, great numbers gather to catch a glimpse of Him and of the man He has raised from the dead. This miracle has had such overwhelming effects among the people the chief preists plot to kill Lazarus also, trying desperately to escape the realities they refuse to accept.

Word is circulated that Jesus is coming. O joyous excitement! Little ones, with their parents, run to gather palm branches and hurry to greet Him. They sing a song of greeting to their King, Who in His triumph comes to them seated upon a little donkey, the Least of these little ones. Only children can sing to such a little King. And the "wise men" mumble in their agitation, "The entire world has gone after Him!"

His Hour has come. Jesus' troubled Heart cries aloud, yearning that we comprehend Its anguish. O lonely Heart, so ignorant are we who yet follow. You speak of Death, and Eternal Life. You invite us once more to follow. You beg to be saved from this Hour, yet in the same breath, and from greater depths of Your Heart, You thank Our Father for this Hour that He may be glorified. Then the thunder of the Voice of God vibrates within our hearts, an assurance to His little flock.

"I, if I be lifted up, will draw all things to Myself." Listen well, little handicapper. Do you hear what your Jesus says? He lives within the poverty of your heart. And they who must lift you lift Him also. Be a joyous burden, that you may draw all to His Sacred Heart.

Now Jesus goes into His last retreat, His one desire to take me for His own. All that He must endure becomes secondary to my Beloved. O when will all but He flee from my desires? But I who love this worldly nothingness treat my Love as something of shame and hide Him lest I be ridiculed. O God forgive!

ALL my days may I shout His words of joyous hope with my life. "I have come a light into the world... I have come to save the world..." May His words fall upon the happy freedom of our hearts that His promises may grow there.

#13 Jesus! Hour has come! Soon He will return to His Father. He has loved us, His own little flock, and He will pursue us to the end, yearning to tell us of a tremendous love far beyond our comprehension, a love that our unsuspecting hearts have named GOD.

We've come to a supper man calls the Last, forgetting a table spread this very minute and the Christ who bends over it. What is our good Master doing? He's risen from the table and carries a basin in which He gently washes the feet of those with Him at table. But, but this all seems so backward, so embarrassing.

Ah, there's Peter to voice the protest while I remain speechless. "Thou shalt never wash my feet!" Now, that's what should have been said. But Jesus doesn't seem pleased. His tremendous love longs to serve, yet we merely flout our independence, deny its expression. How can we claim His friendship with such actions? Then Peter, in his sweet eagerness, adds, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands, and my head!" Jesus smiles at such extravagance. "This is sufficient." His sad eyes find each of our faces. "Not all of you are clean, He murmurs, but we have returned to our idle chat and notice not His tear. Already He's alone, and we too, though we know it not.

Now He's returned to His place at the table and He asks, "Do you know what I have done to you?" No, Jesus, we've failed to understand. Please explain. How I long for the day when I will truly know you, experience you, follow you. How patiently you once more explain what I've failed to comprehend. Again and again you tell me. "I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you also should do..." No servant is greater than his master." Our Master has become the least among us. What then are we who wish to follow? O God, we are your little nothings! In this realization, happy shall we be.

Such anguish fills the heart of Jesus, and we barely hear Him sigh. "He who eats bread with Me has lifted his heel against Me."

He seems to be searching for our attention. He looks at each of us gathered here. "He who receives anyone I send receives Me." O my sweet Jesus, how refreshing to your little hobo. Thank you. Though you suffer such anguish this evening, yet you pause to lighten my wee load.

Pain seizes your facial features as you say aloud what we would not listen to in silence. "One of you will betray Me." O God forgive us for looking at one another!

We become so confused, so saddened. Then it is that we beckon to him whom Jesus loves. It is he who is not ashamed of his love for Jesus, who shouts the good news of Jesus! Presence with his whole life, who in love, freedom leans his head on Jesus' bosom and rests there in the silent murmurings of the Sacred Heart. And he is our comrade, so easy to approach, so simply ~~with~~ will he approach Jesus with us. He whispers of our concern, "Lord, is it I?"

Without ostentation, quickly, silently, Jesus dismisses His betrayer, letting us believe he is going on an errand of mercy for our Master.

Now is the Hour God's eternal yearning has sought. Jesus calls us His "little children." He has much to tell us before He finishes this meal with us, yet only if we possess the childlike docility He's shown us can we understand. So anxiously He begins, "A new commandment I give you." Only one. Long ago there were ten, then two, but now only one, that little children may remember well. "Love one another, as I have loved you!" The tremendous Lover has spoken. How can we know what He said? How can we begin to fathom? Wait but a few more hours. He will SHOW us this Love, and this very Love that consumes Him He will give to be ours, to be the standard His followers will bear that all men may know we are His.

We beg to follow, and He replies, "You shall follow Me later." Then once more our impetuosity argues, "Why can I not follow Thee now? I will lay down my life for Thee." Jesus smiles sadly at us. "Will you? My poor little weak child, this night your confidence will turn to cowardice at the first sight of danger and you will deny that you've ever known Me."

#14 O soul of such a noisy little sister, hush your restless murmurings that you may keep each of these words to ponder in your heart that what is now so shallow may expand and deepen and become ever more like the throb-bings you hear when you lean on your Mother's breast. Jesus is speaking, so anxious to impart these sweet consolations before He Himself endures an agony such as we shall never know. It is ours by right, yet quietly and so willingly He takes it from us for His very own, and for those who love Him so they beg to make it theirs, in becoming one with their Jesus.

"Don't worry." His Voice is soothing, quiet, strong. "Just believe in Me. Heaven is waiting for you, and I am going to make all in readiness for your arrival. I'll return for you, and then the sorrows of parting will never wound Us again. You know the way. Follow Me."

"But Lord, we have no idea where heaven is, so how can we know how to get there?" O how He desires to make us understand. "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. But give Me your Fiat, and I am your Everything. I bring all that are Mine to My Father, that He may be yours. And I bring Him to you.

"Peace! Not that of the world, in which your hearts remain troubled and afraid. I shall be your Peace; I shall remain with you. I give you Myself, My Body, My Blood, My soul, My Divinity, that you may never fear again.

"I will no longer speak much with you. Your ears will strain to hear My Voice as before, and you will find not a sound but that which your own nothingness makes in its confusion. Arise, poor little soul. Let Us go from here. It is dark, and the way is steep, but what can keep Us from Our rendezvous!"

#15 The beloved disciple of Jesus seems so reluctant to close this scene of the first Holy Mass, that blessed event that will rock all Christendom and at the same time stabilize it. He seems to retrace the entire scene in his memory and longs to share with us each precious word he can remember coming from Jesus' Bloodstained lips.

"I am the Vine." Once more Jesus searches for an object, one His little ones may find in their exile and remember their Home. Here on the table is the wine which we've been sipping throughout our meal, the purple blood spilled by the grapes that man may be comforted through their sacrifice. "My Father is the Vine-dresser, removing the fruitless branches and cleansing the others that their fruit may be even more abundant. His tool is My word, and by it has He cleansed you. Live in Me; let Me be your life; let Me make your heart My abode, that I may be always among the children of men, pursuing them to the very end. Alone you bear nothing. You are dead. You shivered into ugliness. You are My branches, and in the divine life that courses through Me flourishes your fruit. Without Me you are completely dead, yet in My love your life flourishes in bursts of nourishment for all who pass your way. O please do not refuse this divine life I bring you. For you will be severed from Me to be burned. O painful separation!

"Strong with My life, My words reflected in the purity of your fruits, may you approach My Father, and so pleased will He be to grant your desires. This is the joy, the glory, the coming of His Kingdom, the blessed fruit of My friends. With the love wherewith He embraces Me eternally do I embrace you. Please stay within My embrace, you whom My Heart desires for its own. But do as I have asked. That is all. I've told you these longings of My soul that My joy may fill the yearning of your soul.

This is what I ask of you: LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU. There is no greater love than this, giving one's all, one's life. Do as I ask, that our friendship may be established forever. No longer do I call you servants. They are as puppets, never free to speak with their Master, to share His joy in the growth of His Kingdom. You are MY FRIENDS, sharing all that is mine. I have chosen you. From all eternity I've longed that you should be My friends that in My love your fruits may flourish forever. How can I refuse the request of one I love so? But ask for all things in My name and they are yours. All is yours because I am yours, your all. Only remember My commandment to love one another in the dignity My tremendous love has brought to each heart with My coming.

"Many will hate you. Remember that they have hated Me. If you bend to worldly standards you will be respected by those of the world. But I have raised you to Myself, and these stand gazing upward and desiring what they cannot touch because they cling to vanities below. Don't be disturbed, nor even surprised, that you've lost their respect. See how they have treated Me and know that you certainly deserve no more respect. Rejoice, for they treat you thus because they know that you are mine.

"If I had not told them of My love, had let it remain a secret, then surely their ignorance would have excused them. But I've come, I've told them, I've shown them, I've begged them to believe in Me. And they've returned hatred. O God, forgive them!

"Still I long to manifest My love in them. Never shall I end My pursuit till time be no more. I'll send the Spirit of Truth, that He may enkindle in their hearts the fires of divine love. And I'll send you too, to sing of My love among you, within you, to bring it within their souls."

#18 Now we follow Jesus to the Garden of Gethsemane, in little groups, our chatting subdued as we walk along trying to understand all that He has told us this immortal evening, our minds a maze in which His Voice rings clear over those words, that have created a darkness only the promised Paraclete can dispel.

Often have we come here with Him, to listen, then to fall asleep as He kept vigil, His mortal Body prostrate in adoration, His immortal Soul flying to the bosom of His Father while He yet remained in exile, awaiting the Hour for which He has come, that NOW that in the same heartbeat shakes His entire Being with anguish and with joy.

John is kind to spare us the account of the Agony in this garden. Perhaps the anguish in his own heart at the mere mention of this scene he witnessed will not permit him to write of it. But as in all Scripture, his silence is eloquent, the scene is darkened from our eyes and only if we keep watch with Him, conquering our drowsiness, can we enter into the mysterious Agony here, can we understand a bloodstained rock, an already scarlet robe and eyes in which one finds Innocence darkened in terror - and submission and joyous anticipation.

Awake, my sleepy soul. Jesus is gently beckoning. Already, His friends yet here, He is lonely. Already we've forgotten Him. What's that noise? The clatter of lanterns, torches and weapons, the subdued voices of the cohort, friends of the chief priests and Pharisees, surround Us. He Who silently dismissed His betrayer at supper now stoops to receive from his twisted lips the kiss of one anticipating thirty pieces of silver, so wrapped in the profit he cannot see the Creator of all things begging to give him All, forever.

Jesus steps closer, His Face and theirs, the brightness of God and the dark of Satan, flickering in the lights they carry. "Whom do you seek?" "Jesus of Nazareth." Strange they don't look for the Babe of Bethlehem, of Egypt, the Wonder-worker of Capharnaum, for Him Who cured the sick, raised the dead, fed the people, spoke of a new Kingdom. Instead, they search a poor carpenter Who is building a Kingdom in the hearts of the people, where their swords can't destroy. His answer is that which we make each time the world goes in search of Goodness to destroy It and in the end finds itself destroyed. "I am He." Our words confuse them, floor them, and as they stare we tell them again, remembering St. Paul's "For me to live is Christ." "I AM HE." And we beg that we be taken, if only our little ones be not harmed.

Here's Peter again, so anxious to DO SOMETHING. His impulsive love grabs his sword to destroy with a puny human gesture the mighty forces of hell. Jesus asks him to replace it. Will he take from his Master that which He has come to accomplish? Will he who only a little while ago argued that Jesus should not wash his feet now prevent his own Redemption? No, when one knows God one no longer boasts of his own independence.

Now our Jesus is seized and bound. He Whom legions of angels might assist chooses to remain alone, man's selfmade chains jingling as He is shoved on by the mob to the home of Annas.

John and Peter trail him. John is acquainted with the high priest, so he enters the courtyard, speaks a few words to the portress and obtains entrance for Peter also. But the maid, squinting in the night lights, asks Peter if he's not one of Jesus' disciples, and he answers, "I am not." What do the flames of the coal fire reveal in the face of this man as he stands there with the servants and attendants? Anxiety? Fear? Confusion? Look well into your own heart, your own details, my soul, and you will know.

The high priest is questioning Jesus, but he who has spoken to them, pleaded with them, in their symphonies has answered their questions again and again. Surely they know his doctrine. But his answer displeases a nearby attendant who slaps him, and the Lamb of God asks, "Why dost thou strike me?" He will ask another one day, "Why persecutest thou me?" and centuries later his heart will say to a world yet mad, "Why dost thou throw me in prison, brainwash me, even try to kill my soul?" and the same answer will be given. Mute, because hearts have become too hard to hear the bleat of a Lamb.

Here's Peter yet bending over the coals, confusedly watching the mob lead his Master out to Calphas. Do those around the fire with him notice his disturbance? Once more he's asked and ~~more~~ more denies that he is one of Jesus' disciples. But now a relative of Malchus says, "Did I not see thee in the garden with him?" Again denial, and the grow of a cock and exit and bitter tears from a broken heart.

By now it is early morning, and Jesus has been led to the praetorium, his feet dragging from fatigue and the taunts his captors have heaped upon him all night. Pilate doesn't seem anxious to get involved, yet the crowd insists, holding unspoken threats against him.

Pilate flees to the comfort of his room and sends for Jesus. He is filled with questions. Strange that Jesus should condescend to answer them. This poor, bewildered man mumbles, "What is truth?" and here stands Truth before him. Surely God's mercy cries for this groping soul. He returns to our crowd to announce Jesus' innocence. The custom of releasing a prisoner during the Passover brightens his hopes and he offers to give us back our King. But we refuse him and scream for the release of a robber, a killer, in exchange for him who has come to give us life, abundantly. O God, here I am shouting for another, running, always running from you. Pursue, tremendous Lover, even yet pursue me!

#19 Why is Pilate having Jesus scourged? Is it that he thinks he can pacify the blood-thirsty mob with this lesser violence, lesser sacrilege? Does he know of the soldiers' games, that they will play them to the hilt with a little Lamb standing silently in their midst, taking whatever he is offered? There is no one here to pity him. No one to call a halt to their tortures, to beg these abuses averted from Jesus to himself, not one. All his friends have been hidden, and here he is alone with those who hate because I myself have set boundaries to my love.

Minds have been satiated with worldly pleasures that we might not notice the tinkling of human pity that yet remains our distinction among the beasts. This, the precious Body He has given into our keeping, we tear apart, bit by bit, and we watch the Precious Blood He gave us to drink trickle upon the ground. We watch. If we but knew what we were about we would lick the dust!

Is this not enough? Does our indifference not mock Him enough? Must we take unkindnesses, plait them into a crown of thorns to be set upon His Sacred Head? And why O why must we howl, shouting praises our hardness turns to mockeries, with each cruelty, almost unconscious of what we are about, pounding this crown further into His throbbing skull to make Him more and more a King? And we slap His Face. Well might we wander the rest of our lives mumbling, "Out, out damn spot!" till we learn that it will be erased only by our complete immersion in His Precious Blood.

Pilate brings Him once again before our rabble to announce that no guilt can be found in Him. Jesus is dragged before us, shaking with pain, weak, His mutilated Body cloaked in a regal robe, and upon His Head the crown from which scarlet jewels dangle and fall to bed themselves in His hair. Here He is, the composite of all that evil can effect upon a living being, and Pilate, standing in the presence of Truth, almost as another Baptist, prophesies, "Behold the Man!" NOT the God, the King, the Prophet, but the Man, imprisoned by those less than He. Who would not weep, strike his breast, fall upon his face and beg worthiness to gaze upon this sight? But instead a bunch of cowards calls, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

Our shouts send the cringing Procurator back to the security inside the Praetorium, with his Prisoner of Love. Again he questions Jesus, but the Prophet needs say no more. Pilate wonders at His silence, reminding Him that He stands before the man with power to either crucify or release Him. Now a few brief words as Jesus reminds him he can do nothing without permission from the God from Whom all power proceeds. It almost seems that Pilate has become Jesus' prisoner, and frantically he battles to release Jesus and himself. But we throw him yet deeper into his confusion by reminding him that should he release Jesus, to continue gathering the little ones into His Kingdom, he will be acting directly against the interests of the mighty Caesar, whose benefits he rather enjoys. Our threats bring him before us once more, and Jesus.

Pilate mounts the judgement seat above the Lithostrotos on which the Prisoner stands. He looks down upon the bowed Head of Jesus. He wants to love Him, if only it didn't cost so much. "After all, I've got to protect my name," he mumbles. Once more he attempts to do something for this lovable Stranger. He motions, "Behold your King!" But we close our eyes and cry, "Away with Him! Away with Him! Crucify Him!" Then a bit of sarcasm, "Shall I crucify your King?" But the chief priests suddenly find politics most advantageous. They who have continually denounced Roman rule shout, "We have no King but Caesar!" And with this Pilate quits, surrenders, hands this poor little Lamb to the roaring crowd and returns to comforts he couldn't enjoy in the gaze of a bleeding God.

At last Jesus has been surrendered to our mob. Now His eyes, His arms, rise to receive joyfully the altar on which He will be sacrificed. He embraces it, letting its ruggedness find a pillow in His raw shoulder. The bared nerves in His wound scream for mercy, as all the forces of evil come into contact with Goodness Itself. Who can guess this burden? But He draws it yet closer, yearning to feel its entire weight, and as we follow He bears all. He asks but that we follow Him.

Once more John spares us the length of this journey, the falls and the struggles to rise again, and he says, "They crucified Him." He's told us many names, Judas, Malchus, Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate, but now he says THEY crucified Him, and here we are lost in the multitude, a hammer in our hand.

Pilate wrote the inscription to be placed above His Head. Because of the feast there are many passers-by to read and wonder at this "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." The chief priests went to Pilate to request that he change this inscription, but he who had let them use him all through this crime finally made an attempt to halt his retreat. With authority and finally he signed, "What I have written I have written.... He's a King, but I've yet to discover the subjects of His Love."

The soldiers have divided the clothing of our Master among themselves, and cast lots for His tunic. Here hangs Almighty God, Creator of all things, naked, in agony, dying a criminal, His only crime that He loves us so.

How could I continue reading this narrative did the next sentence not appear? I've run transfixedly through this wild mob, looking for her. Only to see her, to stand near her is all I want. Mother! I shout, trying to raise my cry above the jeers of the rabble. I'm afraid. But now John tells us, "There was standing by the cross of Jesus His Mother." How could I have thought to look elsewhere? Since Jesus left Nazareth she has followed, silently, mixed in with the others. Often she was shoved so far back she could not see Him, could receive His Gospel only on the whispers of the crowd. It almost seems that He's forgotten her, but she followed always and He knew she was there for Him and drew strength in this knowledge. She was content that He knew. But now is His hour, and hers, and all have stepped aside to let her stand there with Him. To STAND there, motionless, for three hours. Not only her immaculate heart, but her entire body had endured martyrdom, His martyrdom, with Him.

Jesus speaks! He who all this time has been whispering the Psalms that poured the depths of His Love before the throne of God now has something to say to us. Listen well, my heart. His is weak, His voice so soft, yet it is the voice of a King that whispers, "Behold thy Mother!" O God, she is looking upon me and extends her hand that I might take it. Now He is stripped of everything, and she has heard Him on whom her entire life has been centered now give her way. NOW is the martyrdom of her heart as she looks down upon me standing here holding her limp hand. But she is strong, and I feel her hand strengthen and lift me and clasp me to her heart; I've become as a sword!

All prophets having been accomplished, Jesus' parched lips are yet begging for our love. "I thirst." He who has endured to Love's infinite excess knows that His work has been accomplished and whispers, "It is finished." Bowing His Head, He is on His way to burst through Heaven's gates in triumph with those who await Him there. . . .

Those who have come to Jerusalem for the feast are indignant at the prospect of the crucified bodies' defiling their Sabbath. Here is all they've demanded; He is crucified, yet they would have one more sacrilege?

But Jesus has expired. Why O why then pierce His Heart? Mother stands here yet. Is this wound another in the martyrdom of this Woman, the one in which she too sobs, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" because this is her very own wound? He isn't here. O Jesus, please send Your Spirit to take possession of my heart, that when she looks down to find me here and remembers I am hers, she may recognize Another and receive consolation in her bitter loneliness. Please forgive me that I must be the one after the only One has gone. Let my smile become as a sanctuary lamp for her, that she may remember Your promise to be with us always.

Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate to request permission to bury this precious Body. No longer will He hide his love for Jesus. The Commandment of Love here demonstrated has ushered in the Life of Christ in the New Testament. Through His friends Jesus lives on. Silently, hurriedly, that Body is taken from Its altar and tenderly wrapped. She who once, long ago, wrapped Him in swaddling clothes now watches Him take a stone slab for His resting place. Silently she retraces His Way back to the city to find there rest, quiet. She is tired.

#20 All is hushed. Once in the quiet of night God's almighty Word leapt forth, and now Jesus' glorious splendour brings yet more of darkness to our human night, as with Him we leap forth into the blinding glory of GOD.

It is before dawn this Sunday morning. With Mary Magdalene we tiptoe to the Holy Sepulchre to adore, to rest, in loneliness leaning upon a stone, longing, confused, weeping. But what is this? The stone has been removed from the entrance! O Jesus, they have stolen You from us.

Such a forgetful Little Sister am I to run with Mary to tell Jesus' loved ones, "They've stolen our Master!" Here we announce yet another sorrow, not comprehending that the only sadness is that because our eyes saw not the joyous significance of Calvary we're not capable of rejoicing today.

Immediately Peter and John hurry off to the tomb. Young John, more swift of foot, arrives first, and stooping sees the linens lying there. O how he must desire to gather these cloths stained in his Beloved's Precious Blood to carress them to his heart, these scarlet reminders of his Jesus. But he waits at the door for Peter. What must this hesitation have cost him? He doesn't tell us. He watches Peter enter and kneel before these precious relics, especially the one folded and lying aside from the others, that which cradled the jewels of His crown. Now, silently, we enter with John and kneel. Though we don't understand, Faith's light dazzles us, and we return to the life outside, wondering.

Here's poor Mary, weeping by the tomb. It's hard to believe. She stoops to look again, and there, one at either end of the slab where her Jesus was laid, sit two angels in flowing, radiant white garments. They who are filled with such rejoicing are amazed at a creature so desolate and ask, "Woman, why art thou weeping?" Someone has taken her Jesus, she explains. She now feels someone's presence behind her and turns round to find a young man who kindly asks her again why she is crying. She thinks he might be the gardener and begs that if he's moved her beloved Master he tell her where he has laid him that she may give his sacred remains a worthy burial. But the young man speaks only her name. "Mary."

It is he! That voice, the same that held her and an entire multitude in rapt stillness atop a mount one day, it lives again and calls her to follow. "Master!" she cries in joyous surprise, throwing herself upon the ground to kiss the wounds in his feet, now gloriously beautiful wounds. But he asks her to be content with the vision of him and the sound of his voice. Soon, so soon, she shall possess him entirely. But now she is sent to his dear ones to spread the glad tidings. Jesus ascends to his Father and our Father, to his God and our God, for he has broken all walls that distinguish divinity and humanity. He has become human, he has conquered evil, and now what is human shall be made divine. She runs to the disciples, still gathered in fearful remembrance of the Master's terrible end, and of the suspicion that must follow all who are his. And she almost sings, "I have seen the Lord!" In her smile is strength to convince all who will but look.

Now it is late. Once more the sun has sought its rest, and darkness blankets the city. The disciples have secured all the doors of the little room that shelters them and they speak in hushed tones. One raises his eyes, then tries to focus them upon the figure that stands here turning little candle flickers to nothingness. Silently, unannounced, Jesus has come to us. We stare. We mutter something to ourselves. We really don't know what to do. But Jesus quiet us, "Peace be to you." We've forgotten to welcome him. It is he, returned to us as he promised. Should we be so surprised? He told us he'd come, our faithful friend. He extends his hands, like he is offering us something. And when he opens them, there before our eyes the indelible marks of our Redemption. And in his side our secure shelter. Rejoice, for it is he! Joy, and peace. Now feel the warmth of his breath on our foreheads and receive the Holy Spirit of his love to fill our hearts. And O listen to the gift he promises now. To his Apostles, to his priests forever, to Fr. Keith, he gives that which belongs to God alone. One in him, they may absolve the sins of man, to make that which is dead in sin alive with the life of God, to call the soul to live the glorious mysteries with him. Jesus, thank you! Never forget a missionary to whom you've given the powers of your Holy Priesthood, and remember his wee little sister when he puts a drop of water into his wine. Let that drop not make it less your blood, but let the wine completely consume a little nothing. Only let me be there, to love, to shout the Gospel with his whole life. to offer Holy Mass, to die, with him, in Jesus.

Poor Thomas was out at the time of Jesus' visit. How anxiously we rush to inform him of the blessed event. He demands proof! So zealous for truth, yet so incredulous of fairy tales. Truth has lived among us, the greatest of all the world's fairy tales, Jesus Christ. O yes, he'll finally see, and believe. But who would wait eight days if he might have a peek at Heaven NOW, through the eyes of Faith?

Jesus returns, gives us His peaceful greeting and turns to Thomas. Is he astonished? Jesus beckons him closer, invites him to place his finger where a nail once bedded and to feel His side, the gate through which was born His Church. But Thomas falls upon his face before Jesus and confesses, "My Lord and my God!" The Good Shepherd rejoices that His little black sheep is with Him once more, and, remembering all those who will follow, He tosses over His shoulder this promise, "Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed."

St. John reminds us that he hasn't written all that Jesus did, but enough that we may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing we may have life in His Name. *Moi, une toute petite soeur de Jesus, je crous!* Or, as the little girl in "The Miracle of 34th Street" put it, "I believe, I believe. It's silly, but I believe." Thank God for fairy tales!!!

#21 Here gather Peter and others of the Disciples, confused, restless, at the shore of the sea of Tiberias. In his idleness Peter's thoughts grow more uncertain, frightful, and suddenly he decides, "I'm going fishing." We follow our leader into his boat. All night we wait, yet there is nothing to satisfy our hunger.

We're so tired as we turn our little craft to shore. There is a flame dancing on the beach. What is it? A torch? Are we being sought? Slowly we approached, cautiously, but all is well, for instead of soldiers we find a beautiful young man who asks, "Have you any fish?" O how we long to give this gentle vagabond something. But our nets are empty; our poverty makes itself keenly felt.

He gently bids us cast the net to the right of the boat, where we're to find some fish. All night we've brought up empty nets, yet here by the shore, in the shallowest of the waters, we're told to gather fish? It's foolish. He knows nothing about fishing. We're baffled, yet in Holy Obedience we cast the net. Look! All the fatigue from our vigil has fled as we struggle together to bring this miraculous catch ashore. The beloved Disciple, a peaceful joy radiating from him as he recognizes his precious Master, whispers to Peter, "It is the Lord." O how consoling to hear from the lips of those most dear to Jesus this consolation, "It is He."

Dear, dear Peter, you're still so like your noisey, ambitious little sister, yet I know, I'm so sure, that Jesus smiles as we toss ourselves into the water, scampering to embrace Him, all wet and bedraggled, while in no time the others reach Him calmly, and much more presentable than we, their nets full. Yet I believe that His is pleased to see all of us, our kind Master.

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But look, a warm fire and already a fish and bread prepared for us. But He was waiting for us, and He bids us bring some of the fish WE've caught. O what God is this that makes Himself dependent upon man that He may give His gifts? Who knows that to love Him and yet have nothing to give your Beloved would frustrate His poor little ones? So He places beautiful gifts in our hands that we may raise them to Him. Our Creator accepts a piece of His creation and fills the void with Himself. Now the Servant, always a Servant, offers breakfast to us. Does anyone's heart object, "Thou shalt never serve me!"? No, in the presence of the risen Christ our accipio, our nothingness, is made manifest, and His Allness fills us.

Our meal is completed, and we sit around the warmth of the fire, unaware of the early morning's damp chill. Jesus turns to Peter. "Do you love Me more than these others?" He asks. Peter is pierced. It's obvious, and he softly answers, "You know I love You, Lord." Jesus says, "Feed My lambs." Let My Love live and grow within you that they not die of malnutrition without the Bread of Life .

Again, He asks, "Do you love Me?" O little tears that fill Peter's eyes that Jesus should have to ask, that his actions alone do not express that which he wishes to do for his Master. "You know I love You, Lord." Again Jesus! "Please feed them."

But now a third time, "Do you love Me?" Peter turns away. He thinks he sees, through these tears, the suffering Christ, and in the distance there is the crow of a cock. "Lord, You know all things. You know that I love You." Yes, He knows, and He commands us to feed His sheep, to bring His tremendous Love to all men, that they may love Him Who loves them, to death, and resurrection.

Listen well, little one. How specifically He speaks to you. "When you were quite young you clothed yourself and walked wherever you desired. But now another must take your hand, and care for you, and you must go where he wishes. Be abandoned; be Mine, and I shall take you to Myself, My own little martyr each day. For Mine will be the hands that serve you. Please let Me serve."

Here stands the beloved Disciple of Jesus, and we ask, "Lord, what about this man?" What shall become of him who loves You so much more than the rest of us? I've seen his amicitia manifest again and again, and I know what a joy he must be to Your Heart. You are his Joy. What about this man? You see, Lord, I live for him. Your Mother asked that I be his. Yet what I give is too poor to be a gift for any man. Why O why must it be for him? It's painful to live for another, painful because he already possesses the Allness of God, he is aflame with divine Love, and I fear that I might dampen that Flame. But Our Mother has asked, and I accept this martyrdom because he too accepts. O how I long for the day when there will no longer be an I nor he but JESUS. And in this longing He lives, the risen Christ, and we adore. Now I end this pecking. It's been foolish, I know. But I tried to do as Jesus wished. It is time for rest. I lay in the cradle of my Mother's arms and hear in her heartbeat words no book has contained. I love to be here. And when all is consummated may I yet be found here, learning of Jesus.

Dec. 1, 1963

A LITTLE WAY

Hello, Jesus. It's nice to come to Your house and chat with You

and hear so many secrets You tell me when we're alone. Your house is

lovely. So quiet. I know You listen through that little gold door.

Mummy told me. She tells me so many wonderful things about You. I love

to listen, to cuddle so close so I can learn everything she kindly tells

me about You. She says You listened like that when You were a little

Boy. And here You are, the greatest of all story-tellers. And here I

am alone with You. Please, Jesus, never too tired or busy for little

children, tell me a story.

My dear little one, thank you for coming. All day and night I wait.

Everybody seems to forget. But now and then a child remembers and to-

gether we may smile because it is good for us to be here. I know you

like My house. I like yours too, your mummy, daddy, your brothers and

sisters. And I love you, my child. Shall I tell you of that Love? Let's

walk along the walls so that the pictures will help you understand the way

of the cross. It is a little way. It is steep, yes, but very little

children don't mind. They run joyfully. They forget all else, for I

wait at the summit with outstretched arms to embrace them to My throbbing

Heart. Please, O please come follow me. I long to give you the most

precious gift fashioned from My good earth. Behold My cross. O please

don't shrink back in fear. Take, eat, here is your strength. Now come.

I. Such a jostling, screaming crowd. Yet you stand and gaze gently

into the fury. Why do you remain silent in the face of these lies? You

are Truth. Can't you explain? Must you endure the crown of thorns, the

spittle that yet streaks Your face? Can't you perform one dazzling proof

before their eyes?

My child, I've been with them all these years. I've showed them the miracle of Love. I AM Love. And My all - My Life - is now theirs. I have nothing left. I am theirs. O please do not you condemn Me to death again by not loving Me in these poor, lost sheep. Cannot you look into their hungry eyes and shout JESUS that I may be loosed of these chains?

Yes, Jesus, JESUS, I know You are here. I love You, for I love them. Perhaps one day they will know.

II. But no, it's so heavy. Must You carry the weight of all evil?

My child, is this a truly worthy concern for Me? Your sense of values is so far from My Wisdom. This is why I became one with you. Look upon My infirmity. Love it. This is your strength. Fear not. Only follow Me. I bear it all.

Thank You, Jesus, for letting me come. I follow. I watch You and follow. O to be like You in every step. O that I may be but a shadow that the world may watch and wonder, "What then must the Master be?" And they will search yet a little furthur and find an empty Cross, and an empty tomb, and a full heart.

III. O Jesus! It is too heavy. You are too weak to go furthur.

No, My child, it is YOU who are not strong enough. Do you not believe in My Love? O please do not doubt.

Yes, Jesus, I believe. Please strengthen my insufficient Faith.

IV. Jesus, surely You love her most, this beautiful Mother of Yours. Yet no mother's heart has endured the anguish I see here. She but stands here, erect, strong, silent. O when will her tears betray the bitter pain in her Immaculate Heart?

No, child, do not await her sobs. You shan't hear. For her sorrow, as her joy, is in a depth beyond the realm of tears or laughter. She is here for Me. And she is strong.

V. They are forgetting Your cross, great though it is, upon the frailty

of my shoulders. O no! I can endure no more. Often have I sunk to the

ground, my face soiled with mud. Dare I attempt bearing the weight of

the world's evil who can't bear my own selfishness?

Fear not, and please don't refuse the treasure I want to give you on

this way. But give me a gift, the only gift I desire of you, the only

gift that is YOURS to give. Give me your weakness. That is all. You

can do all things, for I am with you and it is My cross which you carry.

My Love is STRONG, and it is yours. Let's continue our journey, little

one. Only remember that I am here to bear all.

VI. Here comes a woman, Jesus. Though she is jostled by the crowd, her

step is swift and sure. With what dignity does she ignore the torts of

the soldiers. With what reverence does she kneel before Your true beauty.

And she offers her veil that Your shame may be hers.

Her heart is pure, and she beholds God. Through blood and sweat and

bruises she recognizes Divinity. And I, your Jesus, contemplate the

beauty of My Love in the purity of her heart.

VII. O my Jesus! It seems You cannot go on. Nor I. All around us is

dust and pushing, crowds and stifling heat. This exhaustion! This pain-

ful nothingness.

Have confidence, my poor little one. For lying here, trampled upon,

We are conquering the world. Come now, let us rise and be about our

Father's business. My hour is approaching. Let us rise joyously to meet

It.

VIII. Now dear Jesus, at last there are a few women who do not fear.

Perhaps they have seen Your Mother. Perhaps they have heard the anguished

cry raised from the depths of her heart and Yours. And here its echo re-

turns to bring You yet more pain.

Little one, have I been so long with you and you still don't understand? You weep that I ascend My throne? I love your tears. They are precious jewels you may offer that your brothers and sisters may someday find this Way, and Happiness. Learn to spend these jewels well.

IX. O Almighty Lover, truly when You are weak, then You are strong. For here I behold You, sprawled upon the ground, the dust mingled with Your Most Precious Blood. O what man could arise from such mire? My Jesus! My Jesus!

I am here; I hear you, little one. Sh. Please don't cry so. True no man could rise from these depths. But Love can do all things. Let us go to Love's rendezvous.

X. Those to whom You've promised eternal Life now in their greed tear Your garment from You. With what dignity You stand here naked. You seem almost to be handing them these precious, scarlet robes. And they seem as beggars. Jesus, they are tearing at my heart!

I know your pain. Yes, little one, I know, for it isn't yours but Mine. It is this utter nothingness You experience which consoles Me and lets Me be your Everything. I your Jesus.

XI. I love to see my dear ones' hands, Daddy's strong, calloused hands, Mommy's lovely, dishwater hands, Baby's little, chubby fist that grips my finger. And this one, Jesus, Your hand, whose fingers seem to reach upward to hasten the nail's blow.

Yes, My child, this hand has healed the sick, raised the dead, fed the poor. But nowhere has it been this powerful. For now it is capable of nothing - less than saving the world.

XII. Jesus! Jesus!... Truly Love does such things. Words, thoughts, all is insufficient save death. Here I stand beneath Your Cross.

XIII. He is dead. His Mother reaches for all that remains of His

Immolation. And she adores. In her face I see peace, maybe joy. It is

finished. And she sits to rest in adoration of the living soul of Christ.

He gave her to be mine. I heard. "Behold thy Mother," He said, and I

am hers. God forgive me that I am yet so unlike her Beloved Son. O that

I may never be the dead soul that stabs her Immaculate Heart again. May

she see her Jesus once more in me and rejoice.

XIV. So many stand woefully murmuring here at the tomb where Jesus!

sacred Body lies. Please forgive my faint smile. But I remember a

beautiful promise Our Mother spoke of. Now I must hurry along to spend

the evening with her in silent expectation.

Soon we shall see Jesus! We wait. And somehow He is already in our

midst. But soon Face to Face!

10-25-63

o'clock Mass, and I went home with Pat for the day. And it was a truly wonderful visit that Pat and I had together. Now I love her, Mother, and how much she must be like you. If only I might learn this secret of success in sanctity. To be like you in all things, so much so that they might say how beautiful you are when they meet your little daughter. Here I kneel at your feet, begging you to teach me the many lessons I'm so slow to learn.

Although I was having a grand time talking with Pat, there was something else gnawing at my heart all day. All day long I've thought of Velma and missed her so. I don't think I've ever realized I loved her so. And funny thing, she had the same feeling and expressed it to me this evening. Mother, I feel afraid when I think of returning to Tipton, so far from Velma and the Charlies I love so much. These are a part of me, something that will take pruning to separate me from, and something that will hurt very much. Oh, that I might have strength to bear this!

Julie came to ask if I would go to Mary Joan's tomorrow, so that was my obedience. I kept wondering about the Chicago trip, but then the Holy Spirit told me precisely what I must do. God is so kind in directing His children. Please give me strength to go wherever He leads His little one. Teach me the abandonment I so lack.

Wednesday, July 4

This has been a really gone day. And please, Mother, forgive me for all the childish pranks I've pulled.

Velma and I were just going out the door to Holy Mass this morning when the phone rang. And it kept ringing till, lo and behold, Velma found out that she was going to Chicago after all. This whole trip has been so

July 6, 1958

First of all, you speak very much of your faults, failures, shortcomings, etc. However, I should like to point out your virtues, the good which is in you. Because sometimes if we dwell too much on the negative, on our faults, we can be overwhelmed and perhaps reach a state of mind where we unconsciously stifle our energy or ambition to continue the struggle toward perfection. We are tempted to see it as "a hopeless task". Continue your love and your humility, two wonderful qualities which you possess. Continue to "rejoice with those who rejoice and to weep with those who weep." Continue to be compassionate etc. (You possess these virtues and that is good, but virtues always admit and are capable of increase. They can always be made more perfect. So rather than try to eliminate your faults, try to increase your virtues and the faults will take care of themselves.

"Jesus chooses for each the type of suffering which He sees is the most suited to sanctify that person, and often the cross which He imposes is the one which, accepting all others, one would have refused if one had dared. The one He gives is that which one understands the least." "Each one of us is more crucified than he knows. If you search each man for the cross which is part of his destiny, you will always end by finding it. In each of us, a cross grows as we grow, and to be stretched on it before our last breath, either voluntarily or by force, means our salvation."

It is a basic desire of man to love and to want to be loved. You are by nature very sensitive to this. And because of this you can better appreciate the desire of Christ to be loved. The great miracle is that He first loved us with an infinite, unimaginable love. So realize in your desire to be loved that you are personally loved infinitely by Mary and her Son; their love for you knows no bounds. Because of this, and because of your own experience, be sensitive to how much they want to be loved in return; Realize how wonderful was the sensitivity (the love) of Mary and John for Christ under the cross, their wonderful and consistent return of love to Christ's (Yet remember that St. Peter who fled and was not there to return Christ's love as perfectly as Mary or John, later gave his life in return for Christ's love--

Always remember that you are the object of much affection on the part of Mary and her Son--and of one of their priests.

July 14, 1958

"I will give all my love and motherly compassion to those who seek my aid." I thank you for allowing me to share your cross. "Bear one another's burdens and thus you shall fulfill the law of Christ." Thank you for giving me the opportunity to "fulfill the law of Christ." If all controversies (dark moods, problems, etc.) are resolved with charity, patience and prudence, they actually cause us to grow more deeply, more spiritually mature.

August 5, 1958

You should go to communion daily. You need it. You need to receive daily the source of your strength, and don't feel unworthy, but be assured by reason that you are not unworthy. (We all are unworthy but it has been Christ's decision to come to us--we can only admit our basic unworthiness and yet say ~~that~~ to receive Christ whom we need so much) Especially since He has given you a particular participation in His Cross should you receive Him in Communion. His Mother is the

Oct. 1959

Shakespeare in his poem "Venus and Adonis" wrote of Venus, the goddess of Love, "She's Love, she loves, and yet she ~~is~~ not loved." Can we not perhaps change one letter and improve the statement. "HE'S LOVE, HE LOVES, and yet HE IS NOT LOVED." It's ironical but just by a little ~~of~~ change all things can turn to the Creator.

"What flees me I chase. What chases me, I flee!"

November, 1959

Poets constantly amaze me. They are able to say so much in such a few words and always with just the right words. John Donne wrote:

"O how feeble is mans' power
That if good fortune fall,
Cannot add another hour
Nor a lost hour recall!"

In that one sentence he expresses man's limitations and shows how dependent he is upon God. We can neither add nor subtract time. All we can do is live in it with the permission of God.

"In small proportion, we must beauties see;
And in short measures, life may perfect be."

It is only by small steps or short measures that we can finally attain to perfection. Man doesn't become perfect in one day. Quite the contrary, it takes a life time of hard work for most of us.

"I hate and I love; perhaps you ask me why I do this. I don't know but I feel it and I am tortured."

"That if gold rust, what shall iron do?
For if a priest be foul in whom we trust,
No wonder that a sinful man will rust;
And shameful it is, let priests take notice,
A befouled shepherd and a clean sheep.
Well ought a priest set the example,
By his cleanness, how his sheep should live."

It expresses rather exactly how important it is for the priest to be gold, and untarnished at that.

"A better priest, I believe, does not exist.
He yearned after no pomp or reverence,
Nor considered himself above reproach.
By Christ's lore, and that of His apostles twelve
He taught, and first he followed it himself.

The Canterbury Tales

"Love conquers All." "Hard work conquers All." if the two were joined what could be accomplished!!!!

The one thought of God being like a child is unique. Like the child who sees someone do something he likes and immediately says "Do it again" over and over, so God says the same to us when with his grace we perform a good action. Divine Providence works in strange ways. A card from my retreat notes fell on the floor and on the back was written the following; "Law of the Spiritual Life: You must go down in order to go up!" "O God, that I may live in faith, and die in faith, that I may then see Christ."

December, 1959

December, 1959

"Poverty very often, when a man is brought low, brings him to know his God, and himself as well." Poverty then is not a curse but more of a blessing---chancier--

To strive to please God is a path to perfection. There is a great difference between a perfectionist and striving for perfection. The first can often be not so good while the second is always good. And, as regards saints, they are not born but made. And in that "creation", like in the production of a child, both men and God have their parts to play. For a child, the parents produce the body but the soul is given by God. For a saint, the person is required to do so much but God too must have his part.

"In old age is both knowledge and experience; men may outrun the old but not outwit them."

TRUTH IS THE DAUGHTER OF TIME

Milton--a good Puttman--in Paradise Lost wrote some very interesting-things about the subject. Raphael in speaking to Adam said: "In loving thou dost well, in passion not, wherein true love consists not; love refines the thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath his seat in reason, and is judicious, is the scale by which to heavenly love thou maist ascend." Later he says, "Let it suffice thee that thou knowest us happy, and without love no happiness." "Be strong, live happy, and love, but first of all, Him whom to love is to obey, and keep His great command." The love of God is a strange and wonderful thing, without which there is no happiness.

January, 1959

"Patience is truly a lofty virtue for it vanquishes things that violence could never manage."

"Love is a spirit all compact of fire, Not gross to sink, but light and will aspire."

Time is such a strange thing. In moments of sadness or during some crisis in our lives time doesn't go fast enough. In moments of happiness one is tempted to try to reach out and stop time so that those moments can be enjoyed more. Yet, unmindful of men for whom it was created, time sees its way. Time, pain, and death, three great things which men constantly flee, are inescapable. "What flees me, I chase; what chases me, I flee."

"We have our beginning from God. God did not have to make me. Now that He did, he has to take care of me. This He will do IF I let Him." "Hell is full of disappointed lovers. They sought love where Love was not."

February 1959

Because a person is allowed to carry a tremendous burden, he or she can become a tremendous lover in imitation of the greatest Tremendous Lover.