

More Precious Than Gold

Part 2

Therefore I love your commandments above gold;
yes, above fine gold. Psalms 118:127
When he has tried me, I shall come forth as gold. Job 23:10

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST promised that he would pour out his spirit upon men and women of all conditions (Acts 2:17-18). The wisdom of God can do all things, and remaining itself the same, renews all things, and through nations conveys itself into holy souls, making them friends of God and prophets. (Wisdom 7:27). From 1921 till 1923, Christ revealed himself many times to Josefa Menendez, a sister at the convent of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart, in Poitiers, France.

His Words Are Light and Life

ON Nov. 13, 1923, Our Lord said to Josefa Menendez: "I want the world to be saved, peace and union to prevail everywhere. It is My will to reign, and reign I shall, through reparation made by chosen souls, and through a new realization by all men of My kindness, My mercy and My love.

My words will be light and life for an incalculable number of souls. They will all be printed, read and preached, and I will grant very special grace, that by them souls may be enlightened and transformed." -- WDL 412 (*Way of Divine Love*, page 412)

On June 19, 1923, Our Lord said: "I tell you once more that grace will accompany My words, and those who make them known. Truth will triumph, and peace will reign over souls and the world, and My kingdom will come!" WDL 369

On June 11, 1921, Our Lord said: "Later on, I will reveal to you the burning secrets of My Heart, and they will be for the good of

many souls. I want you to write and to keep all I say to you. It will be read when you are in heaven. It is not for your merits that I use you, but that souls may see how My power makes use of weak and despicable instruments." WDL 98

On Aug. 24, 1922, Our Lord said: "Now I want to use you, little and miserable one. You have but one thing to do: love Me and abandon yourself to My will. I will keep you hidden in My Heart, and none shall discover you. My words will not be read till after you are dead. Throw yourself, therefore, into My Heart and with immense love I will sustain you. Do you not realize, Josefa, My fondness for you? Have I not given you enough proofs already?" WDL 188

On Oct. 7, 1923, Our Lord said: "As for you, Josefa, be very faithful and obedient; gradually I will make all known to you, and soon I shall take you to eternal beatitude. Then My words will be read, and My love known." WDL 399

On Jan. 21, 1923, the Blessed Virgin Mary said: "Jesus wishes His words to remain hidden as long as you live. After your death, they will be known from one end of the earth to the other, and in their light many souls will be saved, through confidence and abandonment to the merciful Heart of Jesus." WDL 231

Grace Will Accompany His Words Truth Will Triumph

IN June 1923, Josefa often asked our Lord in prayer if souls, all souls would respond to His appeals as He hoped. The thought of possible heedlessness was a cruel torment to her loving heart. Jesus should not be subjected to such a disappointment.

For some days she tried to find a solution, but did not dare ask Him. Today, however, she could hide this trouble no longer.

Then in a voice of such grave and majestic dignity that she could not find words to express it, Jesus answered her:

"Have no fear, Josefa. You know what happens when a volcano is in eruption? So great is the force of the flowing lava, that it is capable of removing mountains and destroying them. Do men then need to be told that a devastating power has been unloosed? Such will be My words, accompanied by grace; a strength that will conquer even the most obdurate by love. Society becomes perverted, when those in authority do not act according to truth and justice. But if the ruling power knows how to govern, the majority will see and follow

the light, though no doubt some will still fail to keep straight.

I tell you once more that grace will accompany My words and those who make them known. Truth will triumph, and peace will reign over souls and the world, and My kingdom will come!"

Josefa was struck by the energy with which Our Lord uttered these words, her doubts were dispelled and her trust greatly reinforced. She knew that His promises would be accomplished, and each day she realized better that nothing would be able to hinder Love's work with all its vast implications. No opposition could finally break the impetus of divine mercy, which would soon inundate the whole world.

A few minutes later Our Lord dictated to her the final paragraphs of His appeal to souls:

"Josefa, do you love Me?" He asked earnestly, when He rejoined her in her cell.

"Lord, this is my only desire."

Then, with ineffable tenderness, He replied: "I, too, love you, because your lowliness is wholly Mine."

Then: "Write:

Come, My sons, and hear what your Father asks of you as proof of your love:

You know that in a well-regulated army discipline must be maintained, just as in a household there must be established customs. So in the great family of Jesus Christ there must be law, although a law of love.

In the order of nature sons are not recognized as such, unless they bear their father's name; so My sons bear the name of Christian given them at their birth in Baptism. All you who bear this name are My sons, and as such have a right to your Father's estate.

I realize that you do not know Me or love Me, but rather detest and persecute Me. On My part, I love you with an infinite tenderness, and I want you to know this heritage which is yours by right, and know also the means to acquire it:

Believe in My love and My mercy.

You have sinned against Me; I forgive you.

You have persecuted Me; I love you.

You have wounded Me both by word and deed; still I wish to do you good, and to let you share all My treasures.

Do not imagine that I am ignorant of your state of soul. I know that you have despised my grace, perhaps even profaned My sacraments. Yet you have from me a full pardon.

If then you would be happy in this world and at the same time

secure your eternal salvation, do as I tell you:

If you are poor, do the work that necessity forces on you with submission, and remember that I, too, lived for thirty years in subjection to the self-same law, for I was needy and poor.

Do not consider your masters as tyrants. Banish all hatred from your hearts. Never wish them ill, but further their interests and be faithful to them.

If, however, you possess this world's goods and employ workers and servants, be fair to them in all your dealings; pay them a just wage, and show them both gentleness and kindness. If you have an immortal soul, so too have they, and if you abound in wealth, it is not for your sole comfort and enjoyment, but that you may administer it wisely and practice charity to your neighbor. Both employer and employed must accept the law of labor with submission, acknowledging a Supreme Being over all created things, who is both your God and your Father.

As God, He demands of you the accomplishment of His divine law.

As your Father, He asks you to accept His commandments in a spirit of filial piety.

Thus, when you have spent a week in the pursuit of work, business or sport, He claims but one half-hour, that you may fulfill your Sunday duty. Is this excessive?

Go then to your Father's House, where day and night he awaits your coming, and as Sundays and Holidays recur, give Him the homage of this half hour by assisting at the Mystery of Love and Mercy, that is, Holy Mass.

Tell him about everything: about your families, your children, your business, your desires. Lay at His feet your sorrows, difficulties and sufferings. Believe in the interest and love with which He listens to your prayer.

You may perhaps say to Me: I have not entered a church for so many years that I have forgotten how to hear Mass. Do not be afraid on that account. Come, spend this half-hour with Me; your conscience will tell you what to do, and be docile to its voice. Open your soul wide to grace, and it will inspire you. Gradually it will teach you how to act in a given circumstance, how to treat with your family, what to do in regard to your business, how to bring up your children, love those who depend on you, and honor those in authority over you. It may make you feel that such and such a concern must be given up, such a friendship relinquished, or such a meeting avoided. Again, it may tell you that you are hating a certain person quite unreasonably; or it may put it into your mind to sever your connection with some

person you feel drawn to and whose advice is doing you harm. Only give grace a chance, and gradually its power will grow stronger in you, for just as evil increases insensibly, once it is given in to, so will each new grace prepare your soul for a still greater one. If to-day you listen to My voice and let grace act, to-morrow its influence will be stronger and so steadily increase as time goes on; light will grow in your soul, peace envelop you, and the reward will be eternal bliss.

Man was not created to live for ever here below. He was made for eternity. If then he is immortal, he should live, not for the passing things of time, but for that which will never die.

Youth, wealth, wisdom, human glory, all that is nothing, it will all end with this life; God only will endure for ever.

The world is full of hate, races are in perpetual conflict with one another, so are nations, and even individuals, and all this is due to the decay of faith. Only let faith reign once more over the world, and peace and charity will return to it.

Faith in no way impedes civilization and progress. The more it is rooted in individuals and peoples, the more wisdom and learning increase, for God is infinite in wisdom and knowledge. But whenever faith is completely lacking, peace, civilization and true progress likewise vanish, for God is not in war, and in their place come enmities, clash of opinions, class wars, and within man himself, rebellion of passions against duty. All that is noble in humanity is exchanged for revolt, insubordination and warfare.

Let yourselves be convinced by faith, and you will be great. Let yourselves be ruled by faith, and you will be free; live by faith, and you will escape eternal death."

Such were the last words of Christ's Message to the world.

Then He looked down at Josefa and said: "Adieu. You know that I expect reparation and love from you all. Love is proved by deeds, so let all your works prove your love. Be messengers of love in things great and small. Do all for love. Live by love."

He vanished. (WDL 370-372)

God Has Chosen the Weak

"The weak things of the world has God chosen, to confound the strong." 1 Corinthians 1:27 ♦♦♦ "He has put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree." Luke 1:52

On August 6, 1922, Josefa was already asleep when she heard the voice of Jesus:

"Josefa, My bride!"

He stood there, so surpassingly beautiful, bearing his Cross, and all encircled with light. She arose at once.

"I come to bring you My Cross."

And he unburdened himself of it, laying it across her shoulder. She told him what a joy it was to relieve him of it in spite of her weakness.

"I bring it to you at night, for during the day I give it to other religious."

Then Josefa spoke to him at once about souls and especially those of sinners, for this was a preoccupation that never left her.

"Yes, there are many who offend Me and many who are lost," He answered sadly, "but those who wound My Heart most are the much-loved ones who always keep something back, and do not give themselves wholly to Me. Yet, do I not show them clearly enough how dearly I love them? Do I not give them My whole Heart?"

She begged His forgiveness for them and for herself, and begged Him to accept as reparation the acts and the love of those who want to console Him. He answered gently: "That is My intention, to repair the faults of some by the acts of others."

That night spent under the Cross was a fitting and immediate preparation for Sunday, 6th August 1922, a memorable date in Josefa's history. She wrote:

After communion Our Lord came in all His beauty; His Heart was wounded and open wide, and He began by looking at me; then with great compassion He said: "Misery! Nothingness! Such you are. Little still implies some being, but, Josefa, you are less than that, you are nothingness personified."

He said this so lovingly that my heart was unlocked, and I simply poured it out: "Yes, my Master, how true. I am nothing and would like to be less than nothing, for nothingness never resists or offends You, since it does not exist, while I *do* resist and *do* offend You."

He came back during the second Mass and drawing me close to His Heart, He said: "Are you, then, quite convinced of your nothingness? From now on, none of the words I say to you will ever be blotted out."

I told Him that the thought of His putting His work of love into my unworthy hands causes me great alarm, for in spite of my good will, I have a tremendous capacity for evil.

From his Heart there sprang a flame that burnt me.

"Begin My work, but holding on tight to My Mother's hand the while. Will not that give you courage?"

Josefa's heart bounded at these words, for nothing gave her

greater security than to be in the hands of Mary whom she so loved. "Yes, Lord," she answered spontaneously, "great courage and great confidence. Tell me what I can do to obtain from this dear Mother that she should never let me fail you in your work but keep me always faithful to your plans, and protect me, and that your heart should sustain me: I desire nothing else."

There was a moment of impressive silence, after which Jesus spoke slowly and reflectingly words of extreme importance.

"As My Heart wishes to use abject instruments to carry out this work, the greatest of My Love, that is what you must do as a beginning during the days that precede My Mother's Assumption. You must ponder on and realize the nothingness of the instruments used. Trust wholly to the mercy of My Heart, and promise most solemnly never to resist or refuse Me what I ask of you, however crucifying it may seem.

On Thursday you will make a Holy Hour to comfort Me, for the resistance I meet with from souls consecrated to Me.

On Friday, I ask of you an act of reparation for the offenses and sorrows inflicted on Me by these same souls."

That night Our Lord deigned to appear and dictate to her what follows:

"When you write I will tell you what you have to say. None of my words will be lost. Nothing that I tell you will ever be blotted out. It signifies little that you are so worthless and wretched, for it is I who will do all.

I will make it known that My work rests on nothingness and misery --such is the first link in the chain of love that I have prepared for souls from all eternity. I will use you to show that I love misery, littleness and absolute nothingness.

I will reveal to souls the excess of My love and how far I will go in forgiveness, and how even their faults will be used by Me with blind indulgence, yes, write, with *blind indulgence*. I see the very depths of souls, I see how they would please, console and glorify Me, and the act of humility they are obliged to make when they see themselves so feeble, is solace and glory to My heart. What does their helplessness matter? Cannot I supply all their deficiencies? I will show how My Heart uses their very weakness to give life to many souls that have lost it.

I will make known that the measure of My love and mercy for fallen souls is limitless. I want to forgive them. It rests Me to forgive. I am ever there, waiting, with boundless love till souls come to Me. Let them come, nor be discouraged. Let them fearlessly throw themselves into My arms! I am their Father.

Many of My religious do not understand all they can do to draw those steeped in ignorance to My Heart. They do not know how I yearn to draw them to Myself and give them life, true life.

Yes, Josefa, I will teach you the secrets of My love, and you will be a living example of My mercy, for if I have such love and predilection for you who are of no account whatever, what am I not ready to do for others more generous than you?"

He allowed me to kiss His feet, and then He went away.

On Monday, August 7, Our Lord appeared to her again and said: "I will act through you, speak through you, and make Myself known through you. How many will find life in My words! How many will take new courage as they understand the fruit to be drawn from their efforts! A little act of generosity, of patience, of poverty, may become treasure that will win a great number of souls to My Heart. You, Josefa, will soon pass out of sight, but My words will remain."

Then she ventured to tell Him how faint-hearted she felt, for she was afraid of not being faithful. He looked at her with eyes of unimaginable beauty and clemency, and said: "Fear not! I will mold and use you as seems best for My glory and for the profit of souls. Give yourself over to love, let yourself be guided by love, and live lost in love." (WDL 174-176)

A Manifestation of His Love

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| <p>◆ I have loved you with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn you. Jeremiah 31:3</p> <p>◆ We love him, because he first loved us. 1 John 4:19</p> |
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ON Aug. 19 Our Lord continued giving his message: "None of you know how dear this house is to Me. I have cast on it a look of predilection. Here I have found misery that I can use as an instrument of My love. I have placed My Cross in the keeping of this group of souls. They do not carry it alone, for I am with them, and I help them. Love is proved by deeds. I have suffered because I love them; it is now their turn to suffer because they love Me."

On Aug. 21 He continued: "I Myself direct all that happens, and I will never allow you to be led by any path but the one I have chosen. Have confidence, and look only at Me, at My hand that is guiding you, and at My tenderness that surrounds you with the love of a Father and Bridegroom."

After a long pause, Our Lord spoke very solemnly: "Write now how

My consecrated ones are to make My fatherly Heart known to sinners."

Then kneeling at her small writing-table, she wrote under His dictation: "I know the very depths of souls, their passions, their attraction for the world and its pleasures; I have known from all eternity how many of them will fill My Heart with bitterness, and that for a great number both My sufferings and My Blood will be in vain. But having loved them, I love them still. My Heart is not so much wounded by sin, as torn with grief that they will not take refuge with Me after it.

I want to forgive, I want the world to know through My chosen ones that My Heart is overflowing with love and mercy and is waiting for sinners."

"Here," Josefa said, "I told him that they know it already, and that He must not forget how wretched I am, and quite capable of obstructing all His plans."

"I know well that souls do know it," He answered energetically and kindly, "but from time to time I must make them hear a fresh call.

And now I want to use you, little and miserable one. You have but one thing to do: love Me and abandon yourself to My will. I will keep you hidden in My Heart, and none shall discover you. My words will not be read till after you are dead. Throw yourself, therefore, into My Heart and with immense love I will sustain you. Do you not realize, Josefa, My fondness for you? Have I not given you enough proofs already?" And as Josefa again humbly put forward her many relapses. "I have foreseen them from all eternity, and that is why I love you," was all His reply.

Two days later he said: "I want you to write, Josefa. I want to speak to you of the souls I so love. I want them always to be able to find in My words a remedy for their infirmities."

On Sept. 3 Our Lord said: "I am enthroned in hearts that I have Myself prepared. My consecrated ones cannot possibly realize how greatly they relieve the sorrow of My Heart by giving Me entry into theirs. No doubt they are small and miserable, but they belong to no one but Me. Their wretchedness I condone, for all I want is their love. Weakness and worthlessness are of small account; what I want is their trust. These are the souls who draw down on the world mercy and peace; were it not for them, divine justice could hardly be restrained. There is so much sin."

"Then," said Josefa, "His Heart seemed oppressed, and appeared as one great wound. I tried to comfort Him. He looked at me sadly and continued: "Innumerable are the sins committed, and innumerable the souls that are damned. (Mt. 7:13) But what wounds My Heart above

measure is the sinfulness of those that are consecrated to me. That soul sins, I love him, and he despises Me. (Ps. 41:9). I have to submit even so far as to descend onto the altar at his command, to allow his polluted hands to touch Me, and to enter his heart, the hideous home of sin. Let Me hide Myself in your heart, Josefa. Poor, poor soul! if he but realized the agony he is preparing for himself for all eternity."

"I begged him to take pity on that soul, and reminded Him how he loves to forgive. I offered him all the affection of his Blessed Mother, of the saints, and of all good men on earth, and then the sufferings of this house, which are considerable at this moment. He answered: "My justice will be restrained, as long as I find victims who will make reparation."

On Sept. 6 Our Lord continued after Communion: "You whom I love as the apple of My eye, (Ps. 17:8) hide and shelter Me in your heart."

"I answered Him with all the affection of which I am capable. I begged Him to hide me in its very depths. Would that my heart were not so small, and that it might afford Him repose.

"It does not matter that it is small! I will expand it, but let it be all Mine." (Prov. 23:26)

Then slowly and with long pauses, to sink her deep in each longing of His Sacred Heart, Jesus helped her to make her thanksgiving.

"Console me. Love Me. Glorify Me through My Heart. Make reparation and satisfy divine justice by It. Offer It to God the Father as a victim of love for souls. And in a special way for those vowed and consecrated to me. Live with Me, and I will live with you. Hide in me, and I will sink deep into your heart."

Then He recalled to her mind the union of reparation He wished to realize in her soul:

"We shall comfort one another, for My pain will be yours, and your suffering Mine."

Every night the Master brought Josefa His Cross, that He asked her to carry for the sinner who was causing Him such sorrow.

"Will you carry My Cross?" He asked her.

And instantly she offered herself to take it from His sacred shoulders.

On Sept. 8 towards evening He came as a poor man hungry and begging. "O slake My thirst to be loved by souls."

Then, wrote Josefa, "I begged Him to accept all the little acts done here, the sufferings of the house, and above all the very real desire we all have to comfort and please Him. I asked Him to purify and trans-

form these very little things, and give them some value in His sight.

"I do not look at the act itself, I look at the intention," He replied. "The smallest act, if done out of love, acquires such merit, that it gives Me immense consolation. I want only love, I ask for nothing else."

Every morning at Mass she saw Christ as a poor man worn out by fatigue and grief. "Keep Me deep in your heart, and share with Me My bitter sorrow," He said, on Sept. 12, after Holy Communion, "I can bear the insults I receive from that soul no longer, yet I still love him," He added with pity. "I am waiting for him. I want to forgive him. With what affection would I greet him if he returned to Me!

As for you, Josefa, comfort Me, draw near My Heart and share My grief." There was silence for a space: "I am in pain," He said at last, "share that pain, for it is also yours."

On the evening of this 12 Sept. as we were rising from our meal in the refectory, I suddenly caught sight of Our Lord. He was standing at the end of the refectory, resplendent in beauty, His white raiment shining in the dusk of evening. His right hand was uplifted in blessing, and as He passed in front of me I heard Him say: "Here I am in the midst of My beloved ones, for in them I find comfort and rest."

She followed Him up to her cell, and there He repeated the same words, adding:

"Courage, a few more efforts, and that soul will return to Me."

Others besides Josefa had a share in this ransom: there was at that time in the convent at Poitiers several nuns who by their acceptance of illness or infirmity were closely united to Our Lord crucified. Speaking of them, Our Lord said on Sept. 13:

"Many are willing to entertain Me when I visit them with consolation. Many receive Me with joy in Holy Communion, but few welcome Me when I visit them with My Cross. When a soul is stretched on the cross, and is surrendered to My will, that soul glorifies Me, and consoles Me, and is very close to Me."

Days and nights passed during which Josefa had no relief from her sufferings of soul or body. "Be not dismayed," Our Lord said on Sept. 21, "for that soul will not be lost. He will soon be returning to My Heart, but when a soul is to be saved, much suffering is needed."

On Oct. 20 Jesus confirmed this conversion so dearly bought: "He is now deep in My Heart, and his own retains only the painful but meritorious remembrance of his fall."

On Oct. 6 she wrote in a moment of acute suffering: "I was weary of suffering and reflected on the uselessness of my descents into hell, when suddenly I saw before me a brilliant light. It

resembled the sun and dazzled the eyes, and I heard the voice of Jesus: "God's Holiness is offended and His Justice demands satisfaction. No, nothing is useless. Every time I allow you to undergo the pains of hell, sin is atoned for and the divine wrath appeased. What would become of the world, if reparation were not made for offenses committed? There are too few victims, too few."

"How can I make reparation when my own infidelities are so great? I am full of miseries and faults," answered Josefa.

"No matter, the sun of love purifies you and makes your suffering worthy to be used in reparation for the sins of the world." This assurance strengthened her, but without diminishing the weight of Divine Justice that she bore.

On Friday, Oct. 20, at seven o'clock in the evening, she was just finishing the adoration before the Blessed Sacrament when Jesus appeared bearing His Cross.

"Josefa," he said, "share with Me the flames that are consuming My Heart: I thirst for the salvation of souls. O! if only they would come to Me! If only they had no fear of Me, if they but had confidence in Me.

I am all love," He continued, "and how then could I treat severely those I so love? All indeed are dear to Me, but I have a great many whom I very specially favor. I have chosen them that I may find comfort in them and overwhelm them with favors. I will condone all their miseries. What I want them to realize is that I love them more tenderly still, if after their weakness and falls they throw themselves humbly into My heart; then I pardon them, and I love them still."

Josefa was encouraged by such great leniency.

"I asked him if that is the reason why He loves me so much, for when I ask His forgiveness immediately after, I see quite clearly that He has granted it, for I receive immediately fresh proofs of affection.

"Do you not know Josefa, that the more wretched souls are, the more I love them! If among all others, *you* have won My Heart, it is on account of your littleness and misery."

Then I asked Him for His Cross, and why He bore it on His shoulder to-day. Was there some soul specially wounding Him?

He answered: "I am bearing the Cross because among My chosen ones, there are many that resist Me in little ways, and the sum total of these resistances makes this Cross. Do you know why they resist Me? It is because they do not love Me; yes, they are wanting in love for My Heart; their self-love is excessive. When a soul is generous enough to give Me all I ask, she gathers up treasure for herself and others, and snatches great numbers of souls from perdition. It is by

their sacrifices and their love that My chosen souls are deputed by My Heart to dispense My graces to mankind."

He continued, as if speaking to Himself: "The world is full of perils. How many poor souls are dragged towards sin and constantly need a visible or invisible help! Ah! let Me say it again, do My chosen souls know of what treasures they deprive themselves and others, when they are ungenerous? I do not say that by the fact of My choice, a soul is freed from her faults and wretchedness. That soul may and will fall often again, but if she humbles herself, if she recognizes her nothingness, if she tries to repair her faults by little acts of generosity and love, if she confides and surrenders herself once more to My Heart, she gives Me more glory and can do more good to other souls, than if she had never fallen. Miseries and weaknesses are of no consequence, what I do ask of them is love."

Many a time Our Lord will come back to this great lesson, that seems to be the keynote of His Message of Mercy.

"Yes," He continued, "in spite of its miseries, a soul can love Me to folly. But Josefa, you must realize that I am speaking only of faults of frailty and inadvertence, not of willed sin or voluntary infidelity."

She begged Him to bestow on them this love. He replied, "Yes, keep in your heart this desire to see Me loved. Offer your life, imperfect as it is, that all My chosen souls may realize the beautiful mission that they can carry out through their ordinary actions and in their daily struggles. Let them never forget that I have preferred them to so many others, not because of their goodness, but because of their wretchedness. I am all love, and that flame in Me consumes all their weakness."

Then addressing Josefa, who had expressed her own fears in the face of so many graces and responsibilities: "Do not fear," He said, "If I have chosen you who are poor and miserable, it is that all may realize once more that I want neither greatness nor holiness, but only love. I Myself will do all the rest. And I will again tell you the secrets of My Heart, Josefa. But the desire which consumes Me is ever the same: it is that souls may know My Heart better and better."

So on this 20th day of October 1922, the first lines of the Message of Love were written. From now on these heavenly dictations alternated with direct lessons to herself. They appeared as the combined theory and practice of His teaching.

"Shall I give you My Cross?" said Our Lord next day.

"Dear Lord, You know that in reality I want only what You want. Then I talked to Him about souls, of the many that are lost."

He answered sorrowfully, "Poor souls! Many do not know Me,

but a great number do, yet leave Me for a life of enjoyment. There are so many sensual people in the world, and even among My chosen ones, there are so many who seek for pleasure! They go astray, for My way is one of suffering and crosses. Only love can give them the strength to follow Me in it, that is why I want love."

He then gave her His Cross, saying: "Comfort Me, you whom I love! It is because you are so little that you are able to creep so deeply into My heart."

Speaking of those who wounded Him, He said, "When two people love one another, a very small lack of consideration in one of them is sufficient to wound the other. And so it is with My Heart. That is why I want those who aspire to intimacy with Me to train themselves well, so that later on they refuse Me nothing."

Many days of intense suffering followed, which Josefa offered up for these unfaithful souls.

Those Who Accepted the Cross

THE devil tried to delude Josefa, and multiplied his snares and threats, and her nights were spent in the torments of the damned. She hesitated to tell all she saw and heard in that abode of sorrow, for her soul was dismayed by its horrors. However, she tried to speak, and Our Lady appeared to her on Oct. 25, telling her that by so doing she was carrying out God's plan: "My child, I come to tell you in the name of Jesus how much glory you gave His Heart to-day. You must understand that all He allows you to see and suffer in hell is meant not only to purify you, but also that you should pass on the knowledge of it to the Mothers. Do not think about yourself, but only of the glory given to the Heart of Jesus, and the salvation of souls."

Night after night she spent almost wholly in these torments. She wrote in great sorrow: "I saw souls fall into hell in dense groups, and at times it was impossible to calculate their number." (Mt. 7:13)

This left her terror-stricken and exhausted.

"Unless I am given special help from on high, I shall no longer be able either to work or apply myself to anything."

After one of these terrible nights of expiation Our Lord came to her. She was in dire desolation of spirit, and spoke to Him of the innumerable souls lost for ever. (Mt. 25:46). Jesus listened and His face betrayed immense sadness. After a few moments of silence, he said: "You have seen the fallen, Josefa, but you have not yet seen those who are saved and go up into heaven!"

"Then I saw an innumerable crowd of souls, rank upon rank, and they entered into an illimitable space which was filled with resplendent light, and were lost in its immensity."

The Heart of Jesus was as if on fire and He said: "All those are they who have accepted the Cross of My love, and accomplished My will with submission."

After a few moments, He came back to the subjects of expiation and reparation which He wanted Josefa to undertake, and He explained their value to her:

"As to the time during which I allow you to undergo the pains of hell, do not for a moment consider it as lost and useless. Sin is an offense against God's infinite Majesty, which therefore calls for infinite reparation. When you go down into the abyss, your sufferings prevent the loss of many souls, the Divine Majesty accepts them in satisfaction for the outrages received from these souls, and they repair for the punishment their sins have merited. Never lose sight of the fact that it is only My great love for you and for souls that permits it."

The Redemptive Value of Daily Life

ON Nov. 22 Our Lord continued and said: "You say you do not know what My work is? Josefa, it is one of love. I want to use you who are of so little account to disclose to the world the mercy and love of My Heart. That is why I am glorified when left free to do with you and in you what I choose. Already your littleness and sufferings have saved many souls."

With inexpressible kindness He placed the Crown of Thorns on her head, saying: "Take My Crown, and may it remind you of your littleness. I love you, nor will My tender pity for you ever let Me forsake you. Love Me, console Me and abandon yourself to Me."

That evening, while she was making the Stations of the Cross, she saw Our Lord at the eleventh Station, and showing her His Cross, He said: "Josefa, My bride, I bore the Cross for love of you. Tell Me once more that for love of Me you are willing to bear the Cross that My will offers you."

The next day He told her what was the Cross he offered to her, saying: "It is in My Heart that souls who know how to deny themselves find true peace." Then He added: "Ask the Mothers to grant you a few minutes every day in which to write down what I tell you. I want you to make an offering of entire submission to Me. I must be free and find no obstacle in your will to Mine. So now, write:

I will begin by speaking to My chosen souls, and to all who are consecrated to Me. They must know Me, so as to be able to teach those I shall confide to their care all the kindness and tenderness of My Heart, and to tell all that if I am an infinitely just God, I am none the less an infinitely merciful Father. I will go on talking to you, and you will pass on My words with burning zeal. Leave Me absolutely free, for in this am I glorified, and souls will be saved. Remember that I wish to be served in joy of heart, and do not forget the nothingness of the instrument. Only love like Mine could close its eyes to your weakness. Love Me ardently, so as to correspond to My goodness to you."

When night fell, Our Lord brought her back His Cross. "How many sins will be committed to-night," He said, "and how many will fall into hell. You, at least, Josefa, comfort Me and make reparation for so much ingratitude. How much I suffer when I consider that all I have done will be useless for so many souls. Take My Cross, and remain closely united to Me, for you are not alone."

He vanished, leaving her His Cross. The hours of the night were passed under its weight, besides that of the many torments of soul and body to which she had now been for so long accustomed.

Towards morning Jesus returned. His countenance was still stamped with the impressive sorrow and beauty that Josefa was powerless to describe:

"Poor souls," He said, "how many are eternally lost, but how many, too, will regain life. You cannot conceive how great is the reparatory value of suffering. If you consent, I will often make you share with Me the grievous sorrow of My heart, and thus you will comfort Me and save many souls. Adieu, think of Me, of souls and of My love." (WDL 209)

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