



The Reality of Charity

Father Kentenich, OME #1, 187, 1956.

In the homily on the morning of the 18th,¹ there were especially two things which brought the Blessed Mother humanly closer to us. They showed us the Blessed Mother, who is different from the way we usually see her. Many old books give the impression that everything in her life was wonderful. For instance, on her way over the hill country to Elizabeth, dancing angels surrounded her, as if she did not have to meet the harsh weather, wind and rain. No, reality was quite different.

Writers give us a similar impression when they write about saints as if they had been saints already in the cradle, as if they did not have to fight faults and weaknesses as we do.

In our last talk I showed you that the Blessed Mother lived very differently from the way many of us picture her. She knew exactly the difficulties of everyday life. What I told you is exactly what we read in Holy Scripture. Modern people want to hear the truth as honestly and realistically as it was in reality. This is also what you want to hear: the reality of things concerning everyday life.

I was told that you liked my interpretation of the life of our dear Blessed Mother. We cannot emphasize often enough that the Blessed Mother was an everyday saint, and that she did not live constantly in visions, far removed from reality. We may not imagine her in the clouds, far away from us, also not like a lifeless porcelain statue.

Sister M. Emilie² said that she wanted to become interiorly great but remain small and insignificant exteriorly. Genuine holiness does not speak of self. When we suffer, our cross should, as it were, remain hidden under a veil, should not be visible exteriorly. There is no striving person without a cross.

It is said of the Indians that they grit their teeth when they are in pain; they want to stand there as strong men. *We* should not do that. Then we would choke our heart.

Every cross is an expression of divine love. If we consider it like this, then it will become a blessing.

Think again of the life of the dear Blessed Mother. Was there cross and suffering? For instance, the misunderstanding between her and Saint Joseph when he did not know what had happened.

Are there sometimes misunderstandings in our lives? Differences of opinion, or when we mutually suffer under the weaknesses and moods of the other. Many people do not know their real cross. It may consist of little things.

Question:

- ❖ Summarize in three words the ways in which this excerpt echoes how we should practice “charity to all.”
- ❖ What do we need to remain sensible and truthful, open to the needs of others and clearly aware of reality?

¹ The talk was given on February 20, 1956.

² Venerable Emilie Engel (1893-1955), Schoenstatt

Sisters of Mary. She was among the first women to come to Schoenstatt in 1920.