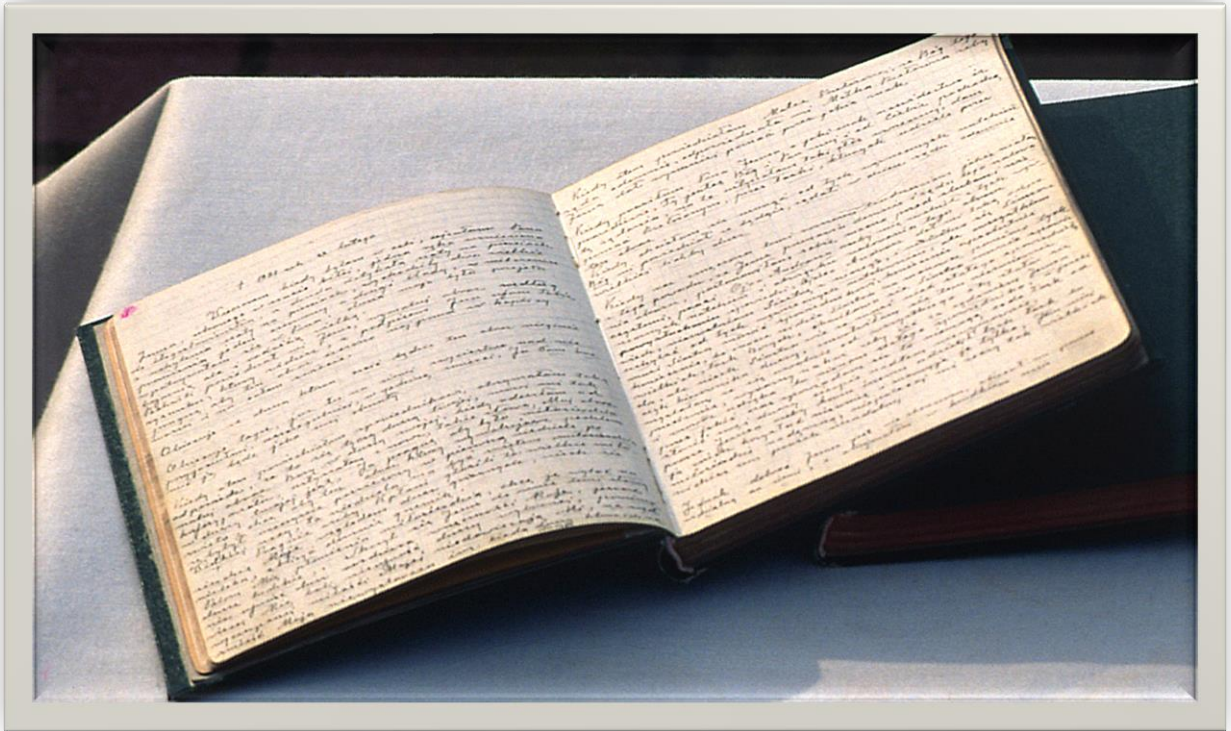


Saints Diaries



- 1. Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska**
- 2. The Diary of Saint Gemma Galgani**
- 3. The Life Miracles and Diary of Saint Veronica Giuliani**

1. Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska

known today the world over as the “Apostle of the Divine Mercy,” is numbered by theologians among the outstanding mystics of the Church. She was the third of ten children born into a poor and pious peasant family in Glogowiec, a village in the heart of Poland. At her baptism in the nearby Parish Church of Swinice Warckie she was given the name “Helena.” From childhood she distinguished herself by her piety, love of prayer, industriousness and obedience as well as by her great sensitivity to human misery. When she was only seven (two years before her First Holy Communion), Helen already sensed in her soul the call to embrace the religious life. She knocked on many a convent door, but nowhere was she accepted. Finally on August 1, 1925, Helen crossed the threshold of the cloister in the convent of the Congregation of Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy on Zytunia Street in Warsaw. In her Diary she declared: “It seemed to me that I had stepped into the life of Paradise. After a few weeks she experienced nonetheless a strong temptation to transfer to a different congregation in which there would be more time for prayer. It was then the Lord Jesus, manifesting to her His wounded and tortured face, said: “It is you who will cause Me 7 this pain if you leave this convent. It is to this place that I called you and nowhere else, and [it is here] I have prepared many graces for you” (Diary, 19). Her entire life was concentrated on constant striving for an even fuller union with God and on self-sacrificing cooperation with Jesus in the work of saving souls. “My Jesus” – she avowed in her Diary - “You know that from my earliest years I have wanted to become a great saint; that is to say, I have wanted to love You with a love so great that there would be no soul who has hitherto loved You so” (Diary, 1372). Our Lord Jesus consigned the great mission to proclaim His message of mercy directed to the whole world: “Today,” He told her, “I am sending you with My mercy to the people of the whole world. I do not want to punish aching mankind, but I desire to heal it, pressing it to My merciful Heart” (Diary, 1588). You are the secretary of My mercy; I have chosen you for that office in this and the next life” (Diary, 1605) “to make known to souls the great mercy that I have for them, and to exhort them to trust in the bottomless depth of My mercy” (Diary, 1567). **a. The Image of the Merciful Jesus.** Its pattern was revealed in the vision St. Faustina had on February 22, 1931, in her convent cell at Plock. “In the evening, when I was in my cell,” she recorded in the Diary, “I saw the Lord Jesus clothed in a white garment. One hand [was] raised in the gesture of blessing, the other was touching the garment at the breast. From beneath the garment, slightly drawn aside from at breast, there were emanating two large rays, one red, the other pale. After a while, Jesus said to me, „Paint an image according to the pattern you see, with the signature: Jesus, I trust in You” (Diary, 47). “I want this image to be solemnly blessed on the first Sunday after Easter; that Sunday is to be the Feast of Mercy” (Diary, 49). The rays of blood and water that flow from the Heart that was pierced by a spear (not visible on the image) and the scars caused by the wounds of crucifixion call to mind the events of Good Friday (Jn 19:17-18; 33-37). The Image of the Merciful Savior, therefore, combines the two Gospel events that best bespeak the fullness of God’s love for mankind. The two rays are a distinctive feature of this image of Christ. The Lord Jesus, when asked about their meaning, explained: “The pale ray stands for the Water which makes souls righteous. The red ray stands for the Blood which is the life of souls. ... Happy is the one who will dwell in their shelter” (Diary, 299). The Sacraments of Baptism and Penance purify the soul, and the Eucharist most abundantly nourishes it. Thus, the two rays signify the Holy Sacraments and all the graces of the Holy Spirit, whose biblical

symbol is water, as well as the New Covenant of God with men in the Blood of Christ. The image of the Merciful Jesus is often called the “Image of The Divine Mercy,” which is appropriate, since it is precisely in Christ’s Paschal Mystery that God’s love for humankind was most explicitly revealed. The image not only represents The Divine Mercy, but also serves as a sign that is to recall the Christian obligation of trust in God and of active love toward neighbor. By Christ’s will the image bears a signature comprised of these words: “Jesus, I trust in You.” “This image,” Jesus also declared, “is to be a reminder of the demands of My mercy, because even the strongest faith is of no avail without works” (Diary, 742). To the veneration of the image understood in this way, as relying upon the Christian attitude of trust and mercy, Our Lord attached special promises, namely, of eternal salvation, of great progress in the way of Christian perfection, of the grace of a happy death, and of all other possible graces which people will ask of Him with trust: “By means of this Image I shall be granting many graces to souls; so let every soul have access to it” (Diary, 570). “I desire that there be a Feast of Mercy. I want this image, which you will paint with a brush, to be solemnly blessed on the first Sunday after Easter; that Sunday is to be the Feast of Mercy” (Diary, 49). This feast is not only a day in particular for worshipping God in His mystery of mercy, but also a time of grace for all people. The Lord Jesus said: “I desire that the Feast of Mercy be a refuge and shelter for all souls, and especially for poor sinners” (Diary, 699). “Souls perish in spite of My bitter Passion. I am giving them the last hope of salvation, that is, recourse to My Mercy. If they will not adore My mercy, they will perish for all eternity” (cf. Diary, 965, 998). The greatness of this feast is measured by the measure of extraordinary promises that the Lord attached to this feast: Jesus said “.... Whoever approached the Fount of Life on this day will be granted complete remission of sins and punishment” (Diary, 300), and also, “On this day the very depths of My tender mercy are open. I pour out a whole ocean of graces upon those souls who approach the fount of My Mercy. Let no soul fear to draw near to Me, even though its sins be as scarlet” (Diary, 699)

“No soul will be justified until it turns with confidence to My mercy; and this is why the first Sunday after Easter is to be the Feast of Mercy, and on that day, priests are to tell everyone about My great and unfathomable mercy” (Diary, 570). c. The Chaplet of The Divine Mercy. This Chaplet was dictated to St. Faustina by the Lord Jesus Himself in Vilnius on September 13-14, 1935, as a prayer of atonement and for the appeasement of God’s wrath (see Diary, 474-476). Those who recite this Chaplet offer to God the Father “the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity,” of Jesus Christ in atonement for their sins, the sins of their loved ones, and those of the entire world. By uniting themselves with the sacrifice of Jesus, they appeal to the great love that our Heavenly Father has for His Son and, in Him, for all humanity. Not only will the people who say the Chaplet receive these graces, but also the dying at whose side others will recite this prayer. The Lord said: “When this chaplet is said by the bedside of a dying person, God’s anger is placated, unfathomable mercy envelops the soul” (Diary, 811). The general promise says: “It pleases Me to grant everything they ask of Me by saying the chaplet” (Diary 1541) “....if what you ask for is compatible with My will” (Diary, 1731). On a different occasion, Jesus said: “ by saying the Chaplet, you are bringing humankind closer to Me” (Diary, 929), and again: “The souls that say this chaplet will be embraced by My mercy during their lifetime and especially at the hour of their death” (Diary, 754). **The hour of Mercy (Third hour)**. In October, 1937, in Cracow, under circumstances that are not fully described by [St.] Faustina, the Lord Jesus recommended that she honor the hour of His

death: "...as often as you hear the clock strike the third hour, immerse yourself completely in My mercy, adoring and glorifying it; invoke its omnipotence for the whole world, and particularly for poor sinners; for at that moment mercy was opened wide for every soul" (Diary, 1572). The Lord Jesus also determined the prayers that are appropriate for this form of the Divine Mercy devotion: "...try your best to make the Stations of the Cross in this hour, provided that your duties permit it; and if you are not able to make the Stations of the Cross, then at least step into the chapel for a moment and adore, in the Blessed Sacrament, My Heart, which is full of mercy; and should you be unable to step into the chapel, immerse yourself in prayer there where you happen to be, if only for a very brief instant" (Diary, 1572).

Prof. Różycki enumerates three conditions for prayers offered in this hour to be granted: 1. They are to be addressed to Jesus. 2. They are to be said at three o'clock in the afternoon. 3. They are to appeal to the value and merits of Christ's Passion. The Lord Jesus promised: "In this hour you can obtain everything for yourself and for others for the asking; it was the hour of grace for the whole world – mercy triumphed over justice" (Diary, 1572) e. Spreading the honor of The Divine Mercy. In discussing the essential elements of the Divine Mercy devotion, Rev. Różycki also mentions the spreading of the honor of The Divine Mercy as one of them since certain promises of Christ are related to this as well: "Souls who spread the honor of My mercy I shield through their entire life as a tender mother her infant, and at the hour of death I will not be a Judge for them, but the Merciful Savior" (Diary, 1075). The essence of The Divine Mercy devotion is found in the Christian attitude of trust in God and of an active love toward neighbor. The Lord Jesus said: "I desire trust from My creatures" (Diary, 1059), and He expects them to exercise mercy through deeds, words, and prayers. And further: "You are to show mercy to your neighbors always and everywhere. You must not shrink from this or try to excuse or absolve yourself from it" (Diary, 742). Christ wants those who worship Him to perform at least one act of love of neighbor in the course of each day. Notebook 5 Be adored, O Most Holy Trinity, now and for all time. Be adored in all Your works and all Your creatures. May the greatness of Your mercy be admired and glorified, O God. 6 I am to write down³ the encounters of my soul with You, O God, at the moments of Your special visitations. I am to write about You, O Incomprehensible in mercy towards my poor soul. Your holy will is the life of my soul. I have received this order through him who is for me Your representative here on earth, who interprets Your holy Will to me. Jesus, You see how difficult it is for me to write, how unable I am to put down clearly what I experience in my soul. O God, can a pen write down that for which many a time there are no words? But You give the order to write, O God; that is enough for me. Warsaw, August 1, 1925 Entrance into the Convent 7 From the age of seven, I experienced the definite call of God, the grace of a vocation to the religious life. It was in the seventh year of my life that, for the first time, I heard God's voice in my soul; that is, an invitation to a more perfect life. But I was not always obedient to the call of grace. I came across no one who would have explained these things to me. 8 The eighteenth year of my life. An earnest appeal to my parents for permission to enter the convent. My parents' flat refusal. After this refusal, I turned myself over to the vain things of life, paying no attention to the call of grace, although my soul found no satisfaction in any of these things. (4) The incessant call of grace caused me much anguish: I tried, however, to stifle it with amusements. Interiorly, I shunned God, turning with all my heart to

creatures. However, God's grace won out in my soul. 9 Once I was at a dance [probably in Lodz] with one of my sisters. While everybody was having a good time, my soul was experiencing deep torments. As I began to dance, I suddenly saw Jesus at my side, Jesus racked with pain, stripped of His clothing, all covered with wounds, who spoke these words to me: How long shall I put up with you and how long will you keep putting Me off? At that moment the charming music stopped, [and] the company I was with vanished from my sight; there remained Jesus and I. I took a seat by my dear sister pretending to have a headache in order to cover up what took place in my soul. After a while I slipped out unnoticed, leaving my sister and all my companions behind and made my way to the Cathedral of Saint Stanislaus Kostka. It was almost twilight; there were only a few people in the cathedral. Paying no attention to what was happening around me, I fell prostrate before the Blessed Sacrament and begged the Lord to be good enough to give me to understand what I should do next. 10 Then I heard these words: Go at once to Warsaw; you will enter a convent there. I rose from prayer, came home, and took care of things that needed to be settled. As best I could, I confided to my sister what took place within my soul. I told her to say good-bye to our parents, and thus, in my one dress, with no other belonging, I arrived in Warsaw. 11 When I got off the train and saw that all were going their separate ways, I was overcome with fear. What am I to do? To whom should I turn, as I know no one? So I said to the Mother of God, "Mary, lead me, guide me." Immediately I heard these words within me telling me to leave the town and go to a certain nearby village where I would find a safe lodging for the night. I did so and found, in fact, that everything was just as the Mother of God told me. 12 Very early the next day, I rode back into the city and entered the first church I saw [St. James Church at Grojecka Street in Ochota, a suburb of Warsaw]. There I began to pray to know further the will of God. Holy Masses were being celebrated one after another. During one of them I heard the words: Go to that priest [Father James Dabrowski, pastor of St. James' Parish] and tell him everything; he will tell you what to do next. After the Mass I went to the sacristy. (5) I told the priest all that had taken place in my soul, and I asked him to advise me where to take the veil, in which religious order. 13 The priest was surprised at first, but told me to have strong confidence that God would provide for my future. "For the time being," he said, "I shall send you to a pious lady [Aldona Lipszycowa⁴] with whom you will stay until you enter a convent." When I called on this lady, she received me very kindly. During the time I stayed with her, I was looking for a convent, but at whatever convent door I knocked, I was turned away. Sorrow gripped my heart, and I said to the Lord Jesus, "Help me; don't leave me alone." At last I knocked on our door.⁵ 14 When Mother Superior, the present Mother General Michael⁶ came out to meet me, she told me, after a short conversation, to go to the Lord of the house and ask whether He would accept me. I understood at once that I was to ask this of the Lord Jesus. With great joy, I went to the chapel and asked Jesus: "Lord of this house, do You accept me? This is how one of these sisters told me to put the question to You." Immediately I heard this voice: I do accept; you are in My Heart. When I returned from the chapel, Mother Superior asked first of all, "Well, has the Lord accepted you?" In answered, "Yes." "If the Lord has accepted, [she said] then I also will accept." 15 This is how I was accepted. However, for many reasons I still had to remain in the world for more than a year with that pious woman [Aldona Lipszycowa], but I did not go back to my own home. At that time I had to struggle with many difficulties, but God was lavish with His graces. An ever greater

longing for God began to take hold of me. The lady, pious as she was, did not understand the happiness of religious life and, in her kindheartedness began to make other plans for my future life. And yet, I sensed that I had a heart so big that nothing would be capable of filling it. And so I turned with all the longing of my soul to God. 28 16 It was during the octave of Corpus Christi [June 25, 1925]. God filled my soul with the interior light of a deeper knowledge of Him as Supreme goodness and Supreme Beauty. I came to know how very much God loves me. Eternal is His love for me. It was at vespers – in simple words, which flowed from the heart, I made to God (6) a vow of perpetual chastity. From that moment I felt a greater intimacy with God, my Spouse. From that moment I set up a little cell in my heart where I always kept company with Jesus. 17 At last the time came when the door of the convent was opened for me – it was the first of August [1925], in the evening, the vigil [of the feast] of Our Lady of the Angels. I felt immensely happy; it seemed to me that I had stepped into the life of Paradise. A single prayer was bursting forth from my heart, one of thanksgiving. 18 However, after three weeks I became aware that there is so very little time here for prayer, and of many other things which spoke to my soul in favor of entering a religious community of a stricter observance. This thought took a firm hold of my soul, but the will of God was not in it. Still, the thought, or rather the temptation, was growing stronger and stronger to the point where I decided one day to announce my departure to Mother Superior and definitely to leave [the convent]. But God arranged the circumstances in such a way that I could not get to the Mother Superior [Michael]. I stepped into the little chapel⁷ before going to bed, and I asked Jesus for light in this matter. But I received nothing in my soul except a strange unrest which I did not understand. But, in spite of everything, I made up my mind to approach Mother Superior the next morning right after Mass and tell her of my decision. 19 I came to my cell. The sisters were already in bed – the lights were out. I entered the cell full of anguish and discontent; I did not know what to do with myself. I threw myself headlong on the ground and began to pray fervently that I might come to know the will of God. There is silence everywhere as in the tabernacle. All the sisters are resting like white hosts enclosed in Jesus' chalice. It is only from my cell that God can hear the moaning of a soul. I did not know that one was not allowed to pray in the cell after nine without permission.⁸ After a while a brightness filled my cell, and on the curtain I saw the very sorrowful Face of Jesus. There were open wounds on His Face, and large tears were falling on my bedspread. Not knowing what all this meant, I asked Jesus, "Jesus, who has hurt You so?" And Jesus said to me, It is you who will cause Me this pain if you leave this convent. It is to this place that I called you and nowhere else; and I have prepared many graces for you. I begged pardon of Jesus and immediately changed my decision. (7) The next day was confession day. I related all that had taken place in my soul, and the confess\or answered that, from this, God's will is clear that I am to remain in this congregation and that I'm not even to think of another religious order. From that moment on, I have always felt happy and content. 20 Shortly after this, I fell ill [general exhaustion]. The dear Mother Superior sent me with two other sisters for a rest to Skolimow, not far from Warsaw. It was at that time that I asked the Lord for whom else should I pray for. Jesus said that on the following night He would let me know for whom I should pray. 29 [The next night] I saw my Guardian Angel, who ordered me to follow him. In a moment I was in a misty place full of fire in which there was a great crowd of suffering souls. They were praying fervently, but to no avail, for themselves; only we can come to their aid. The flames

which were burning them did not touch me at all. My Guardian Angel did not leave me for an instant. I asked these souls what their greatest suffering was. They answered me in one voice that their greatest torment was longing for God. I saw Our Lady visiting the souls in Purgatory. The souls call her "The Star of the Sea." She brings them refreshment. I wanted to talk with them some more, but my Guardian Angel beckoned me to leave. We went out of that prison of suffering. [I heard an interior voice] which said, My mercy does not want this, but justice demands it. Since that time, I am in closer communion with the suffering souls. 21 End of postulancy [April 29, 1926] – My superiors [probably Mother Leonard and Mother Jane⁹] sent me to the novitiate in Cracow. An inconceivable joy reigned in my soul. When we arrived at the novitiate, Sister [Henry¹⁰] was dying. A few days later she came to me [in spirit, after her death] and bid me to go to the Mother Directress of Novices [Sister Margaret¹¹] and tell her to ask her confessor, Father Rospond,¹² to offer one Mass for her and three ejaculatory prayers. At first I agreed, but the next day I decided I would not go to Mother Directress, because I was not sure whether this had happened in a dream or (8) in reality. And so I did not go. The following night the same thing was repeated more clearly; I had no more doubt. Still, in the morning I decided not to tell the Directress about it unless I saw her [Sister Henry] during the day. At once I ran into her in the corridor. She reproached me for not having gone immediately to Mother Directress and told her everything that had happened to me. Mother responded that she would take care of the matter. At once peace reigned in my soul, and on the third day this sister came to me and said, "May God repay you." 22 The day I took the [religious] habit,¹³ God let me understand how much I was to suffer. I clearly saw to what I was committing myself. I experienced a moment of that suffering. But then God filled my soul again with great consolations. 23 Toward the end of the first year of my novitiate, darkness began to cast its shadow over my soul. I felt no consolation in prayer; I had to make a great effort to meditate; fear began to sweep over me. Going deeper into myself, I could find nothing but great misery. I could also clearly see the great holiness of God. I did not dare to raise my eyes to Him, but reduced myself to dust under His feet and begged for mercy. My soul was in this state for almost six months. Our beloved Mother Directress [Mary Joseph¹⁴] encouraged me in these difficult moments. But this suffering continued to grow stronger. The second year of the novitiate was approaching. Whenever I recalled that I was to make my vows, my soul shuddered. I did not understand what I was reading; I could not meditate; it seemed to me that my prayer was displeasing to God. It seemed to me that by approaching the Holy Sacraments I was offending God even more. But despite this, my confessor [Father Theodore¹⁵] did not let me omit one single Holy Communion. God was working very strangely in my soul. I did not understand anything at all of what my confessor was telling me. The simple truths of the faith became incomprehensible to me. My soul was in anguish, unable to find comfort anywhere. 30 (9) At a certain point, there came to me the very powerful impression that I am rejected by God. This terrible thought pierced my soul right through; in the midst of the suffering my soul began to experience the agony of death. I wanted to die but could not. The thought came to me: of what use is it to strive for virtues; why mortify oneself when all this is disagreeable to God? When I made this known to the Directress of Novices, I received this reply, "Know, dear Sister, that God has chosen you for great sanctity. This is a sign that God wants to have you very close to Himself in Heaven. Have great trust in the Lord Jesus." That dreadful thought of being rejected by God is the actual

torture suffered by the damned. I fled to Jesus' Wounds and repeated the words of trust, but these words became for me an even greater torture. I went before the Blessed Sacrament, and I began to speak to Jesus: "Jesus, You said that a mother would sooner forget her infant than God His creature, and that „even if she would forget her infant, I, God, will never forget My creature." O Jesus, do You hear how my soul is moaning? Deign to hear the painful whimpers of Your child. I trust in You, O God, because heaven and earth will pass, but Your word will last forever." Still, I found not a moment of relief.

24 One day, just as I had awakened, when I was putting myself in the presence of God, I was suddenly overwhelmed by despair. Complete darkness in the soul. I fought as best I could till noon. In the afternoon, truly deadly fears began to seize me; my physical strength began to leave me. I went quickly to my cell, fell on my knees before the Crucifix and began to cry out for mercy. But Jesus did not hear my cries. I felt my physical strength leave me completely. I fell to the ground, despair flooding my whole soul. I suffered terrible tortures in no way different from the torments of hell. I was in this state for three quarters of an hour. I wanted to go and see the Directress, but was too weak. I wanted to shout but I had no voice. Fortunately, one of the sisters [another novice, Sister Placida Putyra] came into my cell. Finding me in such a strange condition, she immediately told the Directress about it. Mother came at once. As soon as she entered the cell she said, "In the name of holy obedience¹⁶ get up from the ground." Immediately some force raised me up from the ground and I stood up, close to the dear Mother Directress. (10) With kindly words she began to explain to me that this was a trial sent to me by God, saying, "Have great confidence; God is always our Father, even when He sends us trials." I returned to my duties as if I had come out from the tomb, my senses saturated with what my soul had experienced. During the evening service, my soul began to agonize again in a terrible darkness. I felt that I was in the power of the Just God, and that I was the object of His indignation. During these terrible moments I said to God, "Jesus, who in the Gospel compare Yourself to a most tender mother,¹⁷ I trust in Your words because You are Truth and Life. In spite of everything, Jesus, I trust in You in the face of every interior sentiment which sets itself against hope. Do what You want with me; I will never leave You, because You are the source of my life." Only one who has lived through similar moments can understand how terrible is this torment of the soul. 25

During the night, the Mother of God visited me, holding the Infant Jesus in Her arms. My soul was filled with joy, and I said, "Mary, my Mother, do You know how terribly I suffer?" And the Mother of God answered me, I know how much you suffer, but do not be afraid. I share with you your suffering, and I shall always do so. She smiled warmly and disappeared. At once, strength and a great courage sprang up anew in my soul; but that ³¹ lasted only one day. It seemed as though hell had conspired against me. A terrible hatred began to break out in my soul, a hatred for all that is holy and divine. It seemed to me that these spiritual torments would be my lot for the rest of my life. I turned to the Blessed Sacrament and said to Jesus, "Jesus, my Spouse, do You not see that my soul is dying because of its longing for You? How can You hide Yourself from a heart that loves You so sincerely? Forgive me, Jesus; may Your holy will be done in me. I will suffer silently like a dove, without complaining. I will not allow my heart even one single cry of sorrowful complaint." 26

End of the novitiate. The suffering does not diminish. Physical weakness dispenses me from all [community] spiritual exercises; that is to say, they are replaced by brief ejaculatory prayers. Good Friday [April 16, 1928] – Jesus catches up my

heart into the very flame of His love. This was during the evening adoration. All of a sudden, the Divine Presence invaded me, and I forgot everything else. Jesus gave me to understand how much He had suffered (11) for me. This lasted a very short time. An intense yearning – a longing to love God. 27 First vows [First profession of temporary vows, April 30, 1928]. An ardent desire to empty myself for God by an active love, but a love that would be imperceptible, even to the sisters closest to me. However, even after the vows, darkness continued to reign in my soul for almost a half year. Once, when I was praying, Jesus pervaded all my soul, darkness melted away, and I heard these words within me: You are My joy; you are My heart's delight. From that moment I felt the Most Holy Trinity in my heart; that is to say, within myself. I felt that I was inundated with Divine light. Since then, my soul has been in intimate communion with God, like a child with its beloved Father. 28 Once Jesus told me, Go to Mother Superior [probably Mother Raphael¹⁸] and ask her to let you wear a hair shirt for seven days, and once each night you are to get up and come to the chapel. I said yes, but I found a certain difficulty in actually going to the Superior. In the evening Jesus asked me, How long will you put it off? I made up my mind to tell Mother Superior the very next time I would see her. The next day before noon I saw Mother Superior going to the refectory and, since the kitchen, refectory and Sister Aloysia's little room are all close to each other, I asked Mother Superior to come into Sister Aloysia's room and told her of the wish of the Lord Jesus. At that, Mother answered, "I will not permit you to wear any hair shirt. Absolutely not! If the Lord Jesus were to give you the strength of a colossus, I would then permit those mortifications." I apologized for taking up Mother's time and left the room. At that very moment I saw Jesus standing at the kitchen door, and I said to Him, "You commanded me to ask for these mortifications, but Mother Superior will not permit them." Jesus said, I was here during your conversation with the Superior and know everything. I don't demand mortification from you, but obedience. By obedience you give great glory to Me and gain merit for yourself. 29 One of the Mothers [probably Mother Jane], when she learned about my close relationship with the Lord Jesus, told me that I must be deluding myself. She told me that 32 the Lord Jesus associates in this way only with the saints and not with sinful souls "like you, Sister!" (12) After that, it was as if I mistrusted Jesus. In one of my morning talks with Him I said, "Jesus, are You not an illusion?" Jesus answered me, My love deceives no one. 30 + On one occasion I was reflecting on the Holy Trinity, on the essence of God. I absolutely wanted to know and fathom who God is.In an instant my spirit was caught up into what seemed to be the next world. I saw an inaccessible light, and in this light what appeared like three sources of light which I could not understand. And out of that light came words in the form of lightning which encircled heaven and earth. Not understanding anything, I was very sad. Suddenly, from this sea of inaccessible light came our dearly beloved Savior, unutterably beautiful with His shining Wounds. And from this light came a voice which said, Who God is in His Essence, no one will fathom, neither the mind of Angels nor or man. Jesus said to me, Get to know God by contemplating His attributes. A moment later, He traced the sign of the cross with his hand and vanished. 31 + Once I saw a big crowd of people in our chapel, in front of the chapel and in the street, because there was no room for them inside¹⁹. The chapel was decorated for a feast. There were a lot of clergy near the altar, and then our sisters and those of many other congregations. They were all waiting for the person who was to take a place on the altar. Suddenly I heard a voice saying that I was to take the place on

the altar. But as soon as I left the corridor to go across the yard and enter the chapel, following the voice that was calling me, all the people began to throw at me whatever they had to hand: mud, stones, sand, brooms, to such an extent that I at first hesitated to go forward. But the voice kept on calling me even more earnestly, so I walked on bravely. When I entered the chapel, the superiors, the sisters, the students,²⁰ and even my parents started to hit me with whatever they could, and so whether I wanted to or not, I quickly took my place on the altar. As soon as I was there, (13) the very same people, the students, the sisters, the superiors and my parents all began to hold their arms out to me asking for graces; and as for me, I did not bear any grudge against them for having thrown all sorts of things at me, and I was surprised that I felt a very special love precisely for those persons who had forced me to go more quickly to my appointed place. At the same time my soul was filled with ineffable happiness, and I heard these words, Do whatever you wish, distribute graces as you will, to whom you will and when you will. Then, instantly, the vision disappeared. ³² Another time I heard these words, Go to the Superior and ask her to allow you to make a daily hour of adoration for nine days. During this adoration try to unite yourself in prayer with My Mother. Pray with all your heart in union with Mary, and try also during this time to make the Way of the Cross. I received the permission, though not for a full hour, but only for whatever time was left me after I had carried out my duties. ³³ I was to make this novena for the intention of my Motherland. On the seventh day of the novena I saw, between heaven and earth, the Mother of God, clothed in a bright robe. She was praying with Her hands folded on Her bosom, Her eyes fixed on Heaven. From Her Heart issued forth fiery rays, some of which were turned toward Heaven while the others were covering our country. ³³ ³⁴ When I told this and certain other things to my confessor²¹, he replied that these might really be coming from God, but that they might also be an illusion. Because of my frequent changes [of assignments], I did not have a permanent confessor and besides, I had great difficulty in speaking of these things. I prayed ardently that the Lord would give me that great grace – that is, a spiritual director. But my prayer was answered only after my perpetual vows, when I went to Vilnius. The priest was Father Sopocko.²² God had allowed me to see him in an interior vision even before I came to Vilnius.²³ ³⁵ Oh, if only I had had a spiritual director from the beginning, then I would not have wasted so many of God's graces. A confessor can help a soul a great deal, but he can also cause it a lot of harm. Oh, how careful confessors should be about the work of God's grace in their penitents' souls! This is a matter of great importance. By the graces given to a soul, one can recognize the degree of its intimacy with God. ³⁶ (14) Once I was summoned to the judgment [seat] of God. I stood alone before the Lord. Jesus appeared such as we know Him during His Passion. After a moment, His wounds disappeared except for five, those in His hands, His feet and His side. Suddenly I saw the complete condition of my soul as God sees it. I could clearly see all that is displeasing to God. I did not know that even the smallest transgressions will have to be accounted for. What a moment! Who can describe it? To stand before the Thrice-Holy God! Jesus asked me, Who are you? I answered, "I am Your servant, Lord." You are guilty of one day of fire in purgatory. I wanted to throw myself immediately into the flames of purgatory, but Jesus stopped me and said, Which do you prefer, suffer now for one day in purgatory or for a short while on earth? I replied, "Jesus, I want to suffer in purgatory, and I want to suffer also the greatest pains on earth, even if it were until the end of the world." Jesus said, One [of the two] is enough; you

will go back to earth, and there you will suffer much, but not for long; you will accomplish My will and My desires, and a faithful servant of Mine will help you to do this. Now, rest your head on My bosom, on My heart, and draw from its strength and power for these sufferings because you will find neither relief nor help nor comfort anywhere else. Know that you will have much, much to suffer, but don't let this frighten you; I am with you. 37 Soon afterwards I became ill²⁴. Physical weakness was for me a school of patience. Only Jesus knows how many efforts of will I had to make to fulfill my duty.²⁵ 38 In order to purify a soul, Jesus uses whatever instruments He likes. My soul underwent a complete abandonment on the part of creatures; often my best intentions were misinterpreted by the sisters,²⁶ a type of suffering which is most painful; but God allows it, and we must accept it because in this way we become more like Jesus. There was one thing which I could not understand for a long time: Jesus ordered me to tell everything to my Superiors, but my Superiors did not believe what I said and treated me with pity as though I were being deluded or were imagining things. Because of this, believing myself to be deluded, I resolved to avoid God interiorly for fear of these illusions. (15) But the grace of God pursued me at every step, and God spoke to me when I least expected it. 34 39 + One day Jesus told me that He would cause a chastisement to fall upon the most beautiful city in our country [probably Warsaw]. This chastisement would be that with which God had punished Sodom and Gomorrah²⁷. I saw the great wrath of God and a shudder pierced my heart. I prayed in silence. After a moment, Jesus said to me, My child, unite yourself closely to Me during the Sacrifice and offer My Blood and My Wounds to My Father in expiation for the sins of that city. Repeat this without interruption throughout the entire Holy Mass. Do this for seven days. On the seventh day I saw Jesus in a bright cloud and began to beg Him to look upon the city and upon our whole country. Jesus looked [down] graciously. When I saw the kindness of Jesus, I began to beg His blessing. Immediately Jesus said, For your sake I bless the entire country. And He made a big sign of the cross over our country. Seeing the goodness of God, a great joy filled my soul. 40 +The year 1929. Once during Holy Mass, I felt in a very special way the closeness of God, although I tried to turn away and escape from Him. On several occasions I have run away from God because I did not want to be a victim of the evil spirit; since others have told me, more than once, that such is the case. And this incertitude lasted for quite some time. During Holy Mass, before Communion, we had the renewal of vows. When we had left our kneelers and had started to recite the formula for the vows, Jesus appeared suddenly at my side clad in a white garment with a golden girdle around His waist, and He said to me, I give you eternal love that your purity may be untarnished and as a sign that you will never be subject to temptations against purity. Jesus took off His golden cincture and tied it around my waist. Since then I have never experienced any attacks against this virtue, either in my heart or in my mind. I later understood that this was one of the greatest graces which the Most Holy Virgin Mary had obtained for me, as for many years I had been asking this grace of Her. Since that time I have experienced an increasing devotion to the Mother of God. She has taught me how to love God interiorly and also how to carry out His holy will in all things, O Mary, You are joy, because through You God descended to earth [and] into my heart. 41 (16) On one occasion I saw a servant of God in the immediate danger of committing a mortal sin. I started to beg God to deign to send down upon me all the torments of hell and all the sufferings He wished if only this priest would be set free and snatched from the occasion

of committing a sin. Jesus heard my prayer and, that very instant, I felt a crown of thorns on my head. The thorns penetrated my head with great force right into my brain. This lasted for three hours; the servant of God was set free from this sin, and his soul was strengthened by a special grace of God. 42 + Once, on Christmas Day [1928], I felt the omnipotence and the presence of God surrounding me. And once more I fled from this interior meeting with the Lord. I asked Mother Superior for permission to go to Jozefinek²⁸ to visit the sisters there. The Superior gave us permission, and we started to get ready right after lunch. The other sisters were already waiting for me at the door of the convent while I ran to my cell to get my cloak. On my way back, as I was passing close to the little chapel, I saw Jesus standing in the doorway. He said to me, Go ahead, but I am taking your heart. Suddenly I felt that I had no heart in my chest. But the sisters were scolding me for lingering behind, saying that it was already getting late, so I quickly went along with them. But a sense of 35 uneasiness troubled me, and a strange longing invaded my soul, through no one knew what was happening except God. After we had been at Jozefinek for only a few minutes, I said to the sisters, "Let's go back home." The sisters asked for at least a moment's rest, but my spirit could find no peace. I explained that we must return before dark; and in as much as we had quite a distance to go, we immediately returned home. When Mother Superior met us in the hallway she asked me, "Haven't the sisters gone yet, or have they already returned?" I said that we had already returned because I did not want to be returning in the evening. I took off my cloak and immediately went to the little chapel. As soon as I entered Jesus said to me, Go to Mother Superior and tell her that you came back, not in order to reach home before dark, but because I had taken your heart. Even though this was very difficult for me, I went (17) to the Superior, and I told her frankly the real reason why I had come back so soon, and I asked pardon of the Lord for everything that had displeased Him. And then Jesus filled me with great joy. I understood that apart from God there is no contentment anywhere. 43 On one occasion I saw two sisters who were about to enter hell. A terrible agony tore my soul; I prayed to God for them, and Jesus said to me, Go to Mother Superior and tell her that those two sisters are in danger of committing a mortal sin. The next day I told this to the Superior. One of them had already repented with great fervor and the other was going through a great struggle. 44 One day Jesus said to me, I am going to leave this house.... Because there are things here which displease Me. And the Host came out of the tabernacle and came to rest in my hands and I, with joy, placed it back in the tabernacle. This was repeated a second time, and I did the same thing. Despite this, it happened a third time, but the Host was transformed into the living Lord Jesus, who said to me, I will stay here no longer! At this, a powerful love for Jesus rose up in my soul, I answered, "And I, I will not let You leave this house, Jesus!" And again Jesus disappeared while the Host remained in my hands. Once again I put it back in the chalice and closed it up in the tabernacle. And Jesus stayed with us. I undertook to make three days of adoration by way of reparation. 45 Once Jesus said to me, Tell Mother General [Michael] that in this house.... Such and such a thing is being committed ... which displeases Me and offends Me greatly. I did not tell this to Mother right away, but the uneasiness which the Lord made me feel did not permit me to wait a minute longer, and I wrote immediately to Mother General, and peace returned to my soul. 46 I often felt the Passion of the Lord Jesus in my body, although this was imperceptible [to others], and I rejoiced in it because Jesus wanted it so. But this lasted for only a short time. These sufferings set my soul afire

with love for God and for immortal souls. Love endures everything, love is stronger than death, love fears nothing..... (18) + February 22, 1931 47 In the evening, when I was in my cell, I saw the Lord Jesus clothed in a white garment. One hand [was] raised in the gesture of blessing, the other was touching the garment at the breast. From beneath the garment, slightly drawn aside at the breast, there were emanating two large rays, one red, the other pale. In silence I kept my gaze fixed on the 36 Lord; my soul was struck with awe, but also with great joy. After a while, Jesus said to me, Paint an image according to the pattern you see, with the signature: Jesus, I trust in You. I desire that this image be venerated, first in your chapel, and [then} throughout the world. 48 I promise that the soul that will venerate this image will not perish. I also promise victory over [its] enemies already here on earth, especially at the hour of death. I Myself will defend it as My own glory. 49 When I told this to my confessor²⁹, I received this for a reply: “That refers to your soul.” He told me, “Certainly, paint God’s image in your soul.” When I came out of the confessional, I again heard words such as these: My image already is in your soul. I desire that there be a Feast of Mercy. I want this image, which you will paint with a brush, to be solemnly blessed on the first Sunday after Easter; that Sunday is to be the Feast of Mercy. 50 + I desire that priests proclaim this great mercy of Mine towards souls of sinners. Let the sinner not be afraid to approach Me. The flames of mercy are burning Me – clamoring to be spent; I want to pour them out upon these souls. Jesus complained to me in these words, Distrust on the part of souls is tearing at My insides. The distrust of a chosen soul causes Me even greater pain; despite My inexhaustible love for them they do not trust Me. Even My death is not enough for them. Woe to the soul that abuses these [gifts]. 51 (19) When I spoke about this to Mother Superior [Rose³⁰, telling her] that God had asked this of me, she answered that Jesus should give some sign so that we could recognize Him more clearly. When I asked the Lord Jesus for a sign as a proof “that You are truly my God and Lord and that this request comes from You,” I heard this interior voice, I will make this all clear to the Superior by means of the graces which I will grant through this image. 52 When I tried to run away from these interior inspirations, God said to me that on the Day of Judgment He would demand of me a great number of souls. Once, exhausted because of these various difficulties that had befallen me because of what Jesus had said to me and what He had demanded of me for the painting of this image, I made up my mind to approach Father Andrasz³¹ before my perpetual vows, and to ask him to dispense me from all these interior inspirations and from the duty of painting this image. After having heard my confession, Father Andrasz gave me this answer: “I will dispense you from nothing, Sister; it is not right for you to turn away from these interior inspirations, but you must absolutely – and I say, absolutely – speak about them to your confessor; otherwise you will go astray despite the great graces you are receiving from God. For the present you are coming to me for confession, but understand, Sister, that you must have a permanent confessor; that is to say, a spiritual director.” 37 53 I was very upset by this. I thought that I would get myself free from everything, and it turned out quite the opposite – an explicit command to follow the requests of Jesus. And now, still another torment, as I had no permanent confessor. Even if I went to the same confessor for a certain period of time, I could not open my soul to him in respect to these graces, and this caused me ineffable pain. So I asked Jesus to give these graces to someone else, because I did not know how to make use of them and was only wasting them. “Jesus, have mercy on me; do not entrust such great things to me, as You see that I

am a bit of dust and completely inept.” But the goodness of Jesus is infinite; He had promised me visible help here on earth, and a little while later I received it (20) in Vilnius, in the person of Father Sopocko. I had already known him before coming to Vilnius, thanks to an interior vision. One day I saw him in our chapel between the altar and the confessional and suddenly heard a voice in my soul say, This is the visible help for you on earth. He will help you carry out My will on earth. 54 +One day, tired out with all these uncertainties, I asked Jesus, “Jesus, are You my God or some kind of phantom? Because my Superiors say that there are all sorts of illusions and phantoms. If You are my Lord, I beg You to bless me.” Then Jesus made a big sign of the cross over me and I, too, signed myself. When I asked pardon of Jesus for this question, He replied that I had in no way displeased Him by this question and that my confidence pleased Him very much. 55

1933 Spiritual Counsel given Me by Father Andrasz, S.J. First: You must not turn away from these interior inspirations, but always tell everything to your confessor. If you recognize that these interior inspirations refer to your own self; that is to say, they are for the good of your soul or for the good of other souls, I urge you to follow them; and you must not neglect them, but always do so in consultation with your confessor. Second: If these inspirations are not in accord with the faith or the spirit of the Church, they must be rejected immediately as coming from the evil spirit. Third: If these inspirations do not refer to souls, in general, nor specifically to their good, you should not take them too seriously, and it would be better to even ignore them. But you should not make this decision by yourself, either one way or the other, as you can easily be led astray despite these great favors from God. Humility, humility, and ever humility, as we can do nothing of ourselves; all is purely and simply God’s grace. You say to me that God demands great trust from souls; well then, you be the first to show this trust. And one more word – accept all this with serenity. (21) Words of one of the confessors: “Sister, God is preparing many special graces for you, but try to make your life as clear as crystal before the Lord, paying no attention to what anyone else thinks about you. Let God suffice you; He alone.” 38

Toward the end of my novitiate, a confessor [perhaps Father Theodore] told me: “Go through life doing good, so that I could write on its pages: “She spent her life doing good.” May God bring this about in you.” Another time the confessor said to me, “Comport yourself before God like the widow in the Gospel; although the coin she dropped into the box was of little value, it counted far more before God than all the big offerings of others.” On another occasion the instruction I received was this: “Act in such a way that all those who come in contact with you will go away joyful. Sow happiness about you because you have received much from God; give, then, generously to others. They should take leave of you with their hearts filled with joy, even if they have no more than touched the hem of your garment. Keep well in mind the words I am telling you right now.” Still another time he gave me the following recommendation: “Let God push your boat out into the deep waters, toward the unfathomable depths of the interior life.” Here are a few words from a conversation I had with the Mother Directress [Mary Joseph] toward the end of my novitiate: “Sister, let simplicity and humility be the characteristic traits of your soul. Go through life like a little child, always trusting, always full of simplicity and humility, content with everything, happy in every circumstance. There, where others fear, you will pass calmly along, thanks to this simplicity and humility. Remember this, Sister, for your whole life; as waters flow from the mountains down into the valleys, so, too, do God’s graces flow onto into humble souls.” 55 O my God, I

understand well that You demand this spiritual childhood³² of me, because You are constantly asking it of me through Your representatives. (22) At the beginning of my religious life, suffering and adversities frightened and disheartened me. So I prayed continuously, asking Jesus to strengthen me and to grant me the power of his Holy Spirit that I might carry out His holy will in all things, because from the beginning I have been aware of my weakness. I know very well what I am of myself, because for this purpose Jesus has opened the eyes of my soul; I am an abyss of misery, and hence I understand that whatever good there is in my soul consists solely of His holy grace. The knowledge of my own misery allows me, at the same time, to know the immensity of Your mercy. In my own interior life, I am looking with one eye at the abyss of my misery and baseness, and with the other, at the abyss of Your mercy, O God. 57 O my Jesus, You are the life of my life. You know only too well that I long for nothing but the glory of Your Name and that souls come to know Your goodness. Why do souls avoid You, Jesus? – I don't understand that. Oh, if I could only cut my heart into tiny pieces and in this way offer to You, O Jesus, each piece as a heart whole and entire, to make up in part for the hearts that do not love You! I love You, Jesus, with every drop of my blood, and I would gladly shed my blood for You to give You a proof of the sincerity of my love. O God, the more I know You the less I can comprehend You, but this "noncomprehension" lets me realize how great You are! And it is this impossibility of comprehending You which enflames my heart anew for You, O Lord. From the moment when You let me fix the eyes of my soul on You, O Jesus, I have been at peace and desired nothing else, I found my destiny at the moment when my soul lost itself in You, 39 the only object of my love. In comparison with you, everything is nothing. Sufferings, adversities, humiliations, failures and suspicions that have come my way are splinters that keep alive the fire of my love for You, O Jesus. My desires are mad and unattainable. I wish to conceal from You that I suffer. I want (23) never to be rewarded for my efforts and my good actions, You Yourself, Jesus, are my only reward; You are enough, O Treasure of my heart! I want to share compassionately in the sufferings of my neighbors and to conceal my own sufferings, not only from them, but also from You, Jesus. Suffering is a great grace; through suffering the soul becomes like the Savior; in suffering love becomes crystallized; the greater the suffering, the purer the love. 58 + One night, a sister who had died two months previously came to me. She was a sister of the first choir. I saw her in a terrible condition, all in flames with her face painfully distorted. This lasted only a short time, and then she disappeared. A shudder went through my soul because I did not know whether she was suffering in purgatory or in hell. Nevertheless, I redoubled my prayers for her. The next night she came again, but I saw her in an even more horrible state, in the midst of flames which were even more intense, and despair was written all over her face. I was astonished to see her in a worse condition after the prayers I had offered for her, and I asked, "Haven't my prayers helped you?" She answered that my prayers had not helped her and that nothing would help her. I said to her, "And the prayers which the whole community has offered for you, have they not been any help to you?" She said no, that these prayers had helped some other souls. I replied, "If my prayers are not helping you, Sister, please stop coming to me." She disappeared at once. Despite this, I kept on praying. After some time she came back again to me during the night, but already her appearance had changed. There were no longer any flames, as there had been before, and her face was radiant, her eyes beaming with joy. She told me that I had a true love for my

neighbor and that many other souls had profited from my prayers. She urged me not to cease praying for the souls in purgatory, and she added that she herself would not remain there much longer. How astounding are the decrees of God! 59 (24) 1933. On one occasion I heard these words in my soul. Make a novena for your country. This novena will consist of the recitation of the Litany of the Saints. Ask your confessor for permission {probably Father Sopocko or Father Andrasz}. 60 I received permission at my next confession and began the novena that very evening. Towards the end of the litany I saw a great radiance and, in the midst of it, God the Father. Between this radiance and the earth I saw Jesus, nailed to the Cross in such a way that when God wanted to look at the earth, He had to look through the wounds of Jesus. And I understood that it was for the sake of Jesus that God blesses the earth. 61 O Jesus, I thank you for this great grace; namely, that You Yourself have deigned to choose a confessor for me, and that You had made him known to me in a vision even before I had met him {Father Sopocko}. When I went to confession to father Andrasz, I thought that I would be released from following these interior inspirations. Father replied that he could not dispense me from this, “but pray, Sister, that you be given a spiritual director.” 40 After a short but fervent prayer, I saw Father Sopocko for a second time, in our chapel, between the confessional and the altar. I was in Cracow at that time. These two visions bolstered up my spirit, all the more when I found him to be just as I had seen him in the visions, once at Warsaw during my third probation, and a second time at Cracow. O Jesus, I thank you for this great gift! And now when I hear people sometimes say that they have no confessor; that is to say, a director, fear takes hold of me, because I know very well how much harm I myself experienced when I did not have this help. It is so easy to go astray when one has no guide! 62 O life so dull and monotonous, how many treasures you contain! When I look at everything with the eyes of faith, no two hours are alike, and the dullness and monotony disappear. The grace which is given me in this hour will not be repeated in the next. It may be given me again, but it will not be the same grace. Time goes on, never to return again. Whatever is enclosed in it will never change; it seals with a seal for eternity. 63 (25) + Father Sopocko must be well loved by God. I say this because I myself have experienced how much God defends him at certain moments. When I see this, I rejoice greatly that God has such chosen ones. 1929. The Trip to Calvary.³³ 64 When I came to Vilnius for two months to replace a sister who had gone for her third probation [Sister Peter, who worked in the kitchen], I stayed a little longer than two months. One day, the Mother Superior [Irene³⁴], wanting to give me a bit of pleasure, gave me permission to go, together with another sister, 35 to Calvary to “walk the paths,” as they say. I was delighted. Although it was not very far, it was Mother Superior’s wish that we should go by boat. That evening Jesus said to me, I want you to stay home. I answered, “Jesus, everything is ready for us to leave tomorrow morning; what am I to do now?” The Lord answered, This trip will be harmful to your soul. I replied to Jesus, “You can find a way out. Arrange things in such a way that Your will may be done.” At that moment the bell announced the time for sleep. I gave Jesus a parting glance and went to my cell. Next morning the weather was beautiful, and my companion was filled with joy at the prospect of the great pleasure we would have in getting to see everything. But as for me, I was sure we would not go, even though there were no obstacles for far. We were to receive Holy Communion earlier and leave right after the thanksgiving. But during the time of Communion, all of a sudden, the weather changed. Clouds covered the sky, and the rain

came down in torrents. Everyone was astounded at such a sudden change in the weather. (26) Mother Superior said to me, "I am so sorry you cannot go, Sisters!" I answered, "Dear Mother, it doesn't really matter that we cannot go; it was God's will that we stay home." However, no one knew that it was Jesus' express desire that I stay home. I spent the whole day in recollection and meditation, thanking the Lord for having kept me home. That day, God granted me many heavenly consolations. . 65 One time during the novitiate, when Mother Directress sent me to work in the wards' kitchen, I was very upset because I could not manage the pots, which were very large. The most difficult task for me was draining the potatoes, and sometimes, I spilt half of them with the water. When I told this to Mother Directress, she said that with time I would get used to it and gain the necessary skill. Yet the task was not getting any easier, as I was growing weaker every day. So I would move away when it was time to drain the potatoes. The sisters noticed that I avoided this task and were very much surprised. They did not know that I could not help in spite of all my willingness to do this and not spare myself. At noon, during the examination of conscience, I complained to God about my weakness. Then I heard the following words in my soul. From today on you will do this easily; I shall strengthen you. That evening, when the time came to drain off the water from the potatoes, I hurried to be the first to do it, trusting in the Lord's words. I took up the pot with ease and poured off the water perfectly. But when I took off the cover to let the potatoes steam off, I saw there in the pot, in the place of the potatoes, whole bunches of red roses, beautiful beyond description. I had never seen such roses before. Greatly astonished and unable to understand the meaning of this, I heard a voice within me saying, I change such hard work of yours into bouquets of most beautiful flowers, and their perfume rises up to My throne. From then on I have tried to drain the potatoes myself, not only during my week when it was my turn to cook, (27) but also in replacement of other sisters when it was their turn. And not only do I do this, but I try to be the first to help in any other burdensome task, because I have experienced how much this pleases God. 66 O inexhaustible treasure of purity of intention which makes all our actions perfect and so pleasing to God! O Jesus, You know how weak I am; be then ever with me; guide my actions and my whole being. You who are my very best Teacher! Truly, Jesus, I become frightened when I look at my own misery, but at the same time I am reassured by Your unfathomable mercy, which exceeds my misery by the measure of all eternity. This disposition of soul clothes me in Your power. O joy that flows from the knowledge of one's self! O unchanging Truth. Your constancy is everlasting! 67 When I fell sick [probably the beginning of consumption] after my first vows and when, despite the kind and solicitous care of my Superiors and the efforts of the doctor, I felt neither better nor worse, remarks began to reach my ears which inferred that I was making believe. With that, my suffering was doubled, and this lasted for quite a long time. One day I complained to Jesus that I was being a burden to the sisters. Jesus answered me. You are not living for yourself but for souls, and other souls will profit from your sufferings. Your prolonged suffering will give them the light and strength to accept My will. 68 The heaviest suffering for me was that it seemed to me that neither my prayers nor my good works were pleasing to God. I did not dare lift up my eyes to heaven. This caused me such great suffering during the community exercises in the chapel that one day Mother Superior [Raphael] called me aside after the exercises and said to me, "Sister, ask God for grace and consolation, because I can see for myself (28) and the sisters keep

telling me that the very sight of you evokes pity. I really do not know what to do with you, Sister. I command you to stop tormenting yourself for no reason.” 42 But all these conferences with Mother Superior brought me no relief, nor did they clarify anything for me. Rather, even greater darkness hid God from me. I looked for help in the confessional but not even there did I find it. A saintly priest wanted to help me, but I was so miserable that I couldn’t even define my trouble, and that vexed me even more. A deathly sadness penetrated me soul to such an extent that I was unable to hide it, and it was apparent to those around me. I lost hope. The night was growing darker and darker. The priest to whom I went to confession said to me, “I see very special graces in you, Sister, and I am not worried about you at all; why are you torturing yourself in this way?” But at that time I did not understand at all what he was saying and was extremely surprised when, by way of penance, I was ordered to say the Te Deum or the Magnificat, or to run fast around the garden in the evening, or else to laugh out loud ten times a day. These penances were very surprising to me; but even with that the priest was not able to give me much help. Evidently, God wanted me to give Him glory through suffering. That priest consoled me, saying that in my present situation I was more pleasing to God than if I were filled with the greatest consolations. “It is a very great grace, Sister,” he told, “that in your present condition, with all the torments of soul you are experiencing, you not only do not offend God, but you even try to practice virtues. I am looking into your soul, and I see God’s great plans and special graces there; and seeing this, I give thanks to the Lord.” But despite all that, my soul was in a state of torture; and in the midst of unspeakable torments, I imitated the blind man who entrusts himself to his guide, holding his hand firmly, not giving up obedience for a single moment, and this was my only safety in this fiery trial. 69 (29) + O Jesus, eternal Truth, strengthen my feeble forces; You can do all things, Lord. I know that without You all my efforts are in vain. O Jesus, do not hide from me, for I cannot live without You. Listen to the cry of my soul, Your mercy has not been exhausted, Lord, so have pity on my misery. Your mercy surpasses the understanding of all Angels and people put together; and so, although it seems to me that You do not hear me, I put my trust in the ocean of Your mercy, and I know that my hope will not be deceived. 70 Only Jesus knows how burdensome and difficult it is to accomplish one’s duties when the soul is so interiorly tortured, the physical powers so weakened and the mind darkened. In the silence of my heart I kept saying to myself, “O Christ, may delights, honor and glory be Yours, and suffering be mine. I will not lag one step behind as I follow You, though thorns wound my feet.” 71 I was sent for treatment to our house in Plock, and there I had the privilege of decorating the chapel with flowers. That was at Biala.³⁶ Sister Thecla did not always have time for this, so I often decorated the chapel by myself. One day, I had picked the prettiest roses to decorate the room of a certain person. When I was approaching the porch, I saw Jesus standing there. In a kindly way He asked me, **My daughter, to whom are you taking these flowers?** My silence was my reply to the Lord, because I recognized immediately that I had a very subtle attachment to this person,³⁷ which I had not noticed before. Suddenly Jesus disappeared. At the same moment I threw the flowers on the ground and went before the Blessed Sacrament, my heart filled with gratitude for the grace of knowing myself.

O Divine Sun, in Your rays the soul sees the tiniest specks of dust which displease You. 72 (30) O Jesus, eternal Truth, our Life, I call upon You and I beg Your mercy for poor sinners. O sweetest Heart of my Lord, full of pity and unfathomable mercy, I plead with

You for poor sinners. O Most Sacred Heart, Fount of Mercy from which gush forth rays of inconceivable graces upon the entire human race, I beg of You light for poor sinners. O Jesus, be mindful of Your own bitter Passion and do not permit the loss of souls redeemed at so dear a price of Your most precious Blood. O Jesus, when I consider the great price of Your Blood, I rejoice at its immensity, for one drop alone would have been enough for the salvation of all sinners. Although sin is an abyss of wickedness and ingratitude, the price paid for us can never be equalled. Therefore, let every soul trust in the Passion of the Lord, and place its hope in His mercy. God will not deny His mercy to anyone. Heaven and earth may change, but God's mercy will never be exhausted. Oh, what immense joy burns in my heart when I contemplate Your incomprehensible goodness, O Jesus! I desire to bring all sinners to Your feet that they may glorify Your mercy throughout endless ages. 73 O my Jesus, despite the deep night that is all around me and the dark clouds which hide the horizon, I know that the sun never goes out. O Lord, though I cannot comprehend You and do not understand Your ways, I nonetheless trust in Your mercy. If it is Your will, Lord, that I live always in such darkness, may You be blessed. I ask You only one thing, Jesus: do not allow me to offend You in any way. O my Jesus, You alone know the longings and the sufferings of my heart. I am glad I can suffer for You, however little. When I feel that the suffering is more than I can bear, I take refuge in the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and I speak to Him with profound silence. (31) The Confession of One of Our Wards. 74 One day I felt driven to take steps to see to it that the Feast of Mercy be instituted and the image of the Merciful Jesus be painted, and I could find no peace. Something was pervading my whole being, and yet I feared being deluded. However, these doubts always came from outside, because in the depths of my soul I felt it was the Lord who was penetrating my being. The priest to whom I was going to confession at that time told me that one can often have illusions, and I felt that he was somewhat afraid to hear my confession. This was a torture for me. Seeing that I was getting very little help from people, I turned all the more to Jesus, the best of all teachers. At one time, when I was filled with doubts as to whether the voice I heard came from the Lord or not, I began to speak to Jesus interiorly without forming any words. Suddenly an inner force took hold of me and I said, "If You who commune with me and talk to me are truly my God, I beg You, O Lord, to make this ward go this very day to confession; this sign will give me reassurance." At that very moment, the girl asked to go to confession. 75 But these doubts always come from without, a fact which inclined me to close myself up more and more within myself. When, during confession, I sense uncertainty on the part of the priest, I do not open my soul to its depths, but only accuse myself of my sins. A priest who is not at peace with himself will not be able to inspire peace in another soul. O priests, you bright candles enlightening human souls, let your brightness never be dimmed. I understood that at that time it was not God's will that I uncover my soul completely. Later on, God did give me this grace. 44 76 (32) O my Jesus, direct my mind, take possession of my whole being, enclose me in the depths of Your Heart, and protect me against the assaults of the enemy. My only hope is in You. Speak through my mouth when I, wretchedness itself, find myself with the mighty and wise, so that they will know that this undertaking is Yours and comes from You. Darkness and Temptations 77 My mind became dimmed in a strange way; no truth seemed clear to me. When people spoke to me about God, my heart was like a rock. I could not draw from it a single sentiment of love for Him. When I tried, by an act of the

will, to remain close to Him, I experienced great torments, and it seemed to me that I was only provoking God to an even greater anger. It was absolutely impossible for me to meditate as I had been accustomed to do in the past. I felt in my soul a great void, and there was nothing with which I could fill it. I began to suffer from a great hunger and yearning for God, but I saw my utter powerlessness. I tried to read slowly, sentence by sentence, and to meditate in this way, but this also was of no avail. I understood nothing of what I had read. The abyss of my misery was constantly before my eyes. Every time I entered the chapel for some spiritual exercise, I experienced even worse torments and temptations. More than once, all through Holy Mass, I had to struggle against blasphemous thoughts which were forcing themselves to my lips. I felt an aversion for the Holy Sacraments, and it seemed to me that I was not profiting from them in any way. It was only out of obedience to my confessor that I frequented them, and this blind obedience was for me the only path I could follow and my very last hope of survival. The priest explained to me that these were trials sent by God and that, in the situation I was in, not only was I not offending God, but I was most pleasing to Him. (33) "This is a sign," he told me, "that God loves you very much and that He has great confidence in you, since He is sending you such trials." But these words brought me no comfort; it seemed to me that they did not apply to me at all. One thing did surprise me: it often happened that, at the time when I was suffering greatly, these terrible torments would disappear suddenly just as I was approaching the confessional; but as soon as I had left the confessional, all these torments would again seize me with even great ferocity. I would then fall on my face before the Blessed Sacrament repeating these words: "Even if You kill me, still will I trust in You!" [cf. Job 13:15] It seemed to me that I would die in these agonies. But the most terrible thought for me was the conviction that I had been rejected by God. Then other thoughts came to me: why strive to acquire virtues and do good works? Why mortify and annihilate yourself? What good is it to take vows? To pray? To sacrifice and immolate yourself? Why sacrifice myself all the time? What good is it – if I am already rejected by God? Why all these efforts? And here, God alone knew what was going on in my heart. 78 Once when I was being crushed by these dreadful sufferings, I went into the chapel and said from the bottom of my soul, "Do what You will with me, O Jesus, I will adore You in everything. May Your will be done in me, O my Lord and my God, and I will praise Your infinite mercy." Through this act of submission, these terrible torments left me. Suddenly I saw Jesus, who said to me, I am always in your heart. An inconceivable 45 joy entered my soul, and a great love of God set my heart aflame. I see that God never tries us beyond what we are able to suffer. Oh, I fear nothing; if God sends such great suffering to a soul. He upholds it with an even greater grace, although we are not aware of it. One act of trust at such moments give greater glory to God than whole hours passed in prayer filled with consolations. Now I see that if God wants to keep a soul in darkness, no book, no confessor can bring it light. 79 (34) O Mary, my Mother and my Lady, I offer You my soul, my body, my life and my death, and all that will follow it. I place everything in Your hands. O my Mother, cover my soul with Your virginal mantle and grant me the grace of purity of heart, soul and body. Defend me with Your power against all enemies, and especially against those who hide their malice behind the mask of virtue. O lovely lily! You are for me a mirror, O my Mother! 80 O Jesus, Divine Prisoner of Love, when I consider Your love and how You emptied Yourself for me, my senses fail me. You hide Your inconceivable majesty and lower Yourself to miserable me. O

King of Glory, through You hide Your beauty, yet the eye of my soul rends the veil. I see the angelic choirs giving You honor without cease, and all the heavenly Powers praising You without cease, and without cease they are saying: Holy, Holy, Holy. Oh, who will comprehend Your love and Your unfathomable mercy toward us! O Prisoner of Love, I lock up my poor heart in this tabernacle, that it may adore You without cease night and day. I know of no obstacle in this adoration, and even though I be physically distant, my heart is always with You. Nothing can put a stop to my love for You. No obstacles exist for me. O my Jesus, I will console You for all the ingratitude, the blasphemies, the coldness, the hatred of the wicked, the sacrileges. O Jesus, I want to burn as a pure offering and to be consumed before the throne of Your hiddenness. I plead with You unceasingly for poor dying sinners. 81 O Holy Trinity, One and Indivisible God, may You be blessed for this great gift and testament of mercy. My Jesus, to atone for blasphemers I will keep silent when unjustly reprimanded and in this way make partial amends to You. I am singing within my soul an unending hymn to You, and no one will suspect or understand this. The song of my soul is known to You alone, O my Creator and Lord! 82 (35) I will not allow myself to be so absorbed in the whirlwind of work as to forget about God. I will spend all my free moments at the feet of the Master hidden in the Blessed Sacrament. He has been tutoring me from my most tender years. 83 Write this: before I come as the Just Judge, I am coming first as the King of Mercy. Before the day of justice arrives, there will be given to people a sign in the heavens of this sort: All light in the heavens will be extinguished, and there will be great darkness over the whole earth. Then the sign of the cross will be seen in the sky, and from the openings where the hands and the feet of the Savior were nailed will come forth great lights which will light up the earth for a period of time. This will take place shortly before the last day. 46 84 O Blood and Water, which gushed forth from the Heart of Jesus as a fount of mercy for us, I trust in You! Vilnius, August 2, 1934. 85 On Friday, after Holy Communion, I was carried in spirit before the throne of God. There I saw the heavenly Powers which incessantly praise God. Beyond the throne I saw a brightness inaccessible to creatures, and there only the Incarnate Word enters as Mediator. When Jesus entered this light, I heard these words, Write down at once what you hear: I am the Lord in My essence and am immune to orders or needs. If I call creatures into being – that is the abyss of My mercy. And at that very moment I found myself, as before, in our chapel at my kneeler, just as Mass had ended. I already had these words written. 86 + [Once] when I saw how much my confessor [probably Father Sopocko] was to suffer because of this work which God was going to carry out through him, fear seized me for the moment, and I said to the Lord, “Jesus, this is Your affair, so why are You acting this way (36) toward him? It seems to me that you are making difficulties for him while at the same time ordering him to act.” Vilnius, October 26, 1934 87 On Friday at ten minutes to six, when I and some of our wards³⁸ were coming in from the garden to supper, I saw the Lord Jesus above our chapel, looking just as He did the first time I saw Him and just as He is painted in the image. The two rays which emanated from the Heart of Jesus covered our chapel and the infirmary, and then the whole city, and spread out over the whole world. This lasted about four minutes and disappeared. One of the girls, who was walking with me a little behind the others, also saw these rays, but she did not see Jesus, and she did not know from where these rays were emanating. She was overwhelmed and told the other girls. They began to laugh at her, suggesting that she was imagining things or that perhaps it was

light reflected by a passing airplane. But she persisted in her conviction, saying that never had she seen such rays before. When the others suggested that it might have been a searchlight, she replied that she knew very well what a searchlight was like, but never had she seen rays such as these. After supper the girl approached me and told me she had been so moved by these rays that she could not keep silent, but wanted to tell everyone about them. Yet she had not seen Jesus. She kept telling me about these rays, and this put me in an awkward situation, as I could not tell her that I had seen the Lord Jesus. I prayed for her, asking the Lord to give her those graces of which she had such need. My heart rejoiced in the fact that Jesus takes the initiative to make Himself known, even though the occasion of such action on His part causes me annoyance. For Jesus, one car bear anything. 88 (37) + During adoration I felt God close to me. A moment later I saw Jesus and Mary. At the sight of them I was filled with joy, and asked the Lord, "What is Your will, Jesus, concerning the matter about which my confessor told me to ask You?" Jesus replied, It is My will that he should remain here and that he should not take the initiative of dispensing himself. I asked Jesus whether the inscription could be: "Christ, King of Mercy." He answered, I am King of Mercy, but He did not say "Christ." I desire that this image be displayed in public on the first Sunday after Easter. That Sunday is 47 the Feast of Mercy. Through the Word Incarnate, I make known the bottomless depth of My mercy. 89 + Strangely, all things came about just as the Lord had requested. In fact, it was on the first Sunday after Easter [April, 1935] that the image was publicly honored by crowds of people for the first time. For three days it was exposed and received public veneration. Since it was placed at the very top of a window at Ostra Brama [Shrine of Our Lady, above the "Eastern Gate" to the city of Vilnius], it could be seen from a great distance. At Ostra Brama, during these three days, the closing of the Jubilee of the Redemption of the world was being celebrated, marking the nineteen hundred years that have passed since the Passion of our Savior. I see now that the work of Redemption is bound up with the work of mercy requested by the Lord. 90 One day, I saw interiorly how much my confessor would have to suffer: friends will desert you while everyone will rise up against you and your physical strength will diminish. I saw you as a bunch of grapes chosen by the Lord and thrown into the press of suffering. Your soul, Father, will at times be filled with doubts about this work and about me. I saw that God himself seemed to be opposing [him], and I asked the Lord why He was acting in this way toward him, as though He were placing obstacles in the way of his doing what He himself had asked him to do. And the Lord said, I am acting thus with him to give testimony that this work is Mine. Tell him (38) not to fear anything; My gaze is on him day and night. There will be as many crowns to form his crown as there will be souls saved by this work. It is not for the success of a work, but for the suffering that I give reward. 91 O my Jesus, You alone know what persecutions I suffer, and this only because I am being faithful to You and following Your orders. You are my strength; sustain me that I may always carry out what You ask of me. Of myself I can do nothing, but when You sustain me, all difficulties are nothing for me. O my Lord, I can see very well that from the time when my soul first received the capacity to know You, my life has been a continual struggle which has become increasingly intense. Every morning during meditation, I prepare myself for the whole day's struggle. Holy Communion assures me that I will win the victory; and so it is. I fear the day when I do not receive Holy Communion. This Bread of the Strong gives me all the strength I need to carry on my mission and the courage to do whatever the Lord

asks of me. The courage and strength that are in me are not of me, but of Him who lives in me – it is the Eucharist. O my Jesus, the misunderstandings are so great; sometimes, were it not for the Eucharist, I would not have the courage to go any further along the way You have marked out for me. 92 Humiliation is my daily food. I understand that the bride must herself share in everything that is the groom's; and so His cloak of mockery must cover me, too. At those times when I suffer much, I try to remain silent, as I do not trust my tongue which, at such moments, is inclined to talk for itself, while its duty is to help me praise God for all the blessings and gifts which He has given me. When I receive Jesus in Holy Communion, I ask Him fervently to deign to heal my tongue so that I would offend neither God nor neighbor by it. I want my tongue to praise God without cease. Great are the faults committed by the tongue. The soul will not attain sanctity if it does not keep watch over its tongue. This evening, I saw the Lord Jesus just as He was during His Passion. His eyes were raised up to His Father, and He was praying for us. 737 + Although I was ill, I made up my mind to make a Holy Hour today as usual. During that hour, I saw the Lord Jesus being scourged at the pillar. In the midst of this frightful torture, Jesus was praying. After a while, He said to me, There are few souls who contemplate My Passion with true feeling; I give great graces to souls who meditate devoutly on My Passion. 738 + Without special help from Me, you are not even capable of accepting My graces. You know who you are. 739 (159) After Holy Communion today, I spoke at length to the Lord Jesus about people who are special to me. Then I heard these words: **My daughter, don't be exerting yourself so much with words. Those whom you love in a special way, I too love in a special way, and for your sake, I shower My graces upon them. I am pleased when you tell Me about them, but don't be doing so with such excessive effort.** 740 + O Savior of the world. I unite myself with Your mercy. My Jesus, I join all my sufferings to Yours and deposit them in the treasury of the Church for the benefit of souls. 741 Today, I was led by an Angel to the chasms of hell. It is a place of great torture; how awesomely large and extensive it is! The kinds of tortures I saw: the first torture that constitutes hell is the loss of God; the second is perpetual remorse of conscience; the third is that one's condition will never change; (160) the fourth is the fire that will penetrate the soul without destroying it – a terrible suffering, since it is purely spiritual fire, lit by God's anger; the fifth torture is continual darkness and a terrible suffocating smell, and despite the darkness, the devils and the souls of the damned see each other and all the evil, both of others and their own; the sixth torture is the constant company of Satan; the seventh torture is horrible despair, hatred of God, vile words, curses and blasphemies. These are the tortures suffered by all the damned together, but that is not the end of the sufferings. There are special tortures destined for particular souls. These are the torments of the senses. Each soul undergoes terrible and indescribable sufferings, related to the manner in which it has sinned. There are caverns and pits of torture where one form of agony differs from another. I would have died at the very sight of these tortures if the omnipotence of God had not supported me. Let the sinner know that he will be tortured throughout all eternity, in those senses which he made use of to sin. (161) I am writing this at the command of God, so that no soul may find an excuse by saying there is no hell, or that nobody has ever been there, and so no one can say what it is like. I, Sister Faustina, by the order of God, have visited the abysses of hell so that I might tell souls about it and testify to its existence. I cannot speak about it now; but I have received a command from God to leave it in writing. The

devils were full of hatred for me, but they had to obey me at the command of God. What I have written is but a 194 pale shadow of the things I saw. But I noticed one thing: that most of the souls there are those who disbelieved that there is a hell. When I came to, I could hardly recover from the fright. How terribly souls suffer there! Consequently, I pray even more fervently for the conversion of sinners. I incessantly plead God's mercy upon them. O my Jesus, I would rather be in agony until the end of the world, amidst the greatest sufferings, than offend You by the least sin. + (162) 742 **My daughter, if I demand through you that people revere My mercy, you should be the first to distinguish yourself by this confidence in My mercy. I demand from you deeds of mercy, which are to arise out of love for Me. You are to show mercy to your neighbors always and everywhere. You must not shrink from this or try to excuse or absolve yourself from it. I am giving you three ways of exercising mercy toward your neighbor: the first by deed, the second – by word, the third – by prayer. In these three degrees is contained the fullness of mercy, and it is an unquestionable proof of love for Me. By this means a soul glorifies and pays reverence to My mercy. Yes, the first Sunday after Easter is the Feast of Mercy, but there must also be acts of mercy, and I demand the worship of My mercy through the solemn celebration of the Feast and through the veneration of the image which is painted. By means of this image I shall grant many graces to souls. It is to be a reminder of the demands of My mercy, because even the strongest (163) faith is of no avail without works.** O my Jesus, You Yourself must help me in everything, because You see how very little I am, and so I depend solely on Your goodness, O God.

The Lord's Promise: The souls that say this chaplet will be embraced by My mercy during their lifetime and especially at the hour of their death. 755 O my Jesus, teach me to open the bosom of mercy and love to everyone who asks for it. Jesus, my Commander, teach me so that all my prayers and deeds may bear the seal of Your mercy.

The Lord visited my cell today and said to me, **My daughter, I will not leave you in this community for much longer. I am telling you this so that you will be more diligent in taking advantage of the graces which I grant you.** 777 (187) November 27, [1936].

Today I was in heaven, in spirit, and I saw its inconceivable beauties and the happiness that awaits us after death. I saw how all creatures give ceaseless praise and glory to God. I saw how great is happiness in God, which spreads to all creatures, making them happy; and then all the glory and praise which springs from this happiness returns to its source; and they enter into the depths of God, contemplating the inner life of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, whom they will never comprehend or fathom. This source of happiness is unchanging in its essence, but it is always new, gushing forth happiness for all creatures. Now I understand Saint Paul, who said, "Eye has not seen, nor has ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man what God has prepared for those who love Him." And God has given me to understand that there is but one thing that is of infinite value in His eyes, and that is love of God; love, love and once again, love; and nothing can compare with a single act of pure (188) love of God. Oh, with what inconceivable favors God gifts a soul that loves Him sincerely! Oh, how happy is the soul who already here on earth enjoys His special favors! And of such are the little and humble souls. 779 The sight of this great majesty of God, which I came to understand more profoundly and which is worshiped by the heavenly spirits according to their degree of grace and the

hierarchies into which they are divided, did not cause my soul to be stricken with terror or fear; no, no, not at all! My soul was filled with peace and love, and the more I come to know the greatness of God, the more joyful I become that He is as He is. And I rejoice immensely in His greatness and am delighted that I am so little because, since I am little He carries me in His arms and holds me close to His Heart.

November 29, [1936]. The Mother of God has taught me how to prepare for the Feast of Christmas. I saw Her today, without the Infant Jesus. She said to me: **My daughter, strive after silence and humility, so that Jesus, who dwells in your heart continuously, may be able to rest. Adore Him in your heart; do not go out from your inmost being. My daughter, I shall obtain for you the grace of an interior life which will be such that, without ever leaving that interior life, you will be able to carry out all your external duties with even greater care. Dwell with Him continuously in your heart. He will be your strength. Communicate with creatures only in so far as is necessary (191) and is required by your duties. You are a dwelling place pleasing to the living God; in you He dwells continuously with love and delight. And the living presence of God, which you experience in a more vivid and distinct way, will confirm you, my daughter, in the things I have told you. Try to act in this way until Christmas Day, and then He Himself will make known to you in what way you will be communing and uniting yourself with Him. (197) The Lord told me to say this chaplet for nine days before the Feast of Mercy.** It is to begin on Good Friday. By this novena, I will grant every possible grace to souls. 797 When I was somewhat overcome by the fear that I was to be outside the community for so long a time alone, Jesus said to me, You will not be alone, because I am with you always and everywhere. Near to My Heart, fear nothing. I Myself am the cause of your departure. Know that My eyes follow every move of your heart with great attention. I am bringing you into seclusion so that I Myself may form your heart according to My future plans. What are you afraid of? If you are with Me, who will dare touch you? Nevertheless, I am very pleased that you confide your fears to Me, **My daughter. Speak to Me about everything in a completely simple and human way; by this you will give Me great joy. I understand you because I am God-Man. (198) This simple language of your heart is more pleasing to Me than the hymns composed in My honor. Know, My daughter, that the simpler your speech is, the more you attract Me to yourself. And now, be at peace close to My Heart. Lay your pen aside and get ready to leave.** December 9, 1936. This morning, I left for Pradnik. Sister Chrysostom drove me here. I have a private room to myself; I am very much like a Carmelite. When Sister Chrysostom had left and I was alone, I steeped myself in prayer, entrusting myself to the special protection of the Mother of God. She alone is always with me. She, like a good Mother, watches over all my trials and efforts. 799 Suddenly, I saw the Lord Jesus, who said to me, Be at peace, My child. See, you are not alone. My Heart watches over you. Jesus filled me with strength concerning a certain person. I feel strength within my soul.

Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God. 805 From early morning, I felt the nearness of the Blessed Mother. During Holy Mass, I saw Her, so lovely and so beautiful that I have no words to express even a small part of this beauty. She was all [in] white, with a blue sash around Her waist. Her cloak was also blue, and there was a crown on Her head. Marvelous light streamed forth from Her whole figure. I am the Queen of heaven

and earth, but especially the Mother of your [Congregation]. She pressed me to Her heart and said, I feel constant compassion for you. I felt (202) the force of Her Immaculate Heart which was communicated to my soul. Now I understand why I have been preparing for this feast for two months and have been looking forward to it with such yearning. From today onwards, I am going to strive for the greatest purity of soul, that the rays of God's grace may be reflected in all their brilliance. I long to be a crystal in order to find favor in His eyes. During the night, I was suddenly awakened and knew that some soul was asking me for prayer, and that it was in much need of prayer. Briefly, but with all my soul, I asked the Lord for grace for her. 810 The following afternoon, when I entered the ward, I saw someone dying, and learned that the agony had started during the night. When I verified it – it had been at the time when (204) I had been asked for prayer. And just then, I heard a voice in my soul: Say the chaplet which I taught you. I ran to fetch my rosary and knelt down by the dying person and, with all the ardor of my soul, I began to say the chaplet. Suddenly the dying person opened her eyes and looked at me; I had not managed to finish the entire chaplet when she died, with extraordinary peace. I fervently asked the Lord to fulfill the promise He had given me for the recitation of the chaplet. The Lord gave me to know that the soul had been granted the grace. He had promised me. That was the first soul to receive the benefit of the Lord's promise. I could feel the power of mercy envelop that soul. 811 When I entered my solitude, I heard these words: At the hour of their death, I defend as My own glory every soul that will say this chaplet; or when others say it for a dying person, the indulgence is the same. When (205) this chaplet is said by the bedside of a dying person, God's anger is placated, unfathomable mercy envelops the soul, and the very depths of My tender mercy are moved for the sake of the sorrowful Passion of My Son. Oh, if only everyone realized how great the Lord's mercy is and how much we all need that mercy, especially at that crucial hour!.

During Holy Mass, the little Infant Jesus brings joy to my soul. Often, distance does not exist – I see a certain priest who brings Him down. I am awaiting Christmas with great yearning; I am living in expectation together with the Most Holy Mother. 830 O Light Eternal who come to this earth, enlighten my mind and strengthen my will that I may not give up in times of great affliction. May Your light dissipate all the shadows of doubts. May Your omnipotence act through me. I trust in You, O uncreated Light! You, O Infant Jesus, are a model for me in accomplishing Your Father's will, You, who said, "Behold, I come to do Your will." Grant that I also (216) may do God's will faithfully in all things. O Divine Infant, grant me this grace! 831 O my Jesus, my soul was yearning for the days of trial, but do not leave me alone in the darkness of my soul. Rather, do You hold me firmly, close to Yourself. Set a guard over my lips, so that the fragrance of my sufferings may be known and pleasing to You alone. 832 O merciful Jesus, how longingly You hurried to the Upper Room to consecrate the Host that I am to receive in my life. Jesus, You desired to dwell in my heart. Your living Blood unites with mine. Who can understand this close union? My heart encloses within itself the Almighty, the Infinite One. O Jesus, continue to grant me Your divine life. Let Your pure and noble Blood throb with all its might in my heart. I give You my whole (217) being. Transform me into Yourself and make me capable of doing Your holy will in all things and of returning Your love. O my sweet Spouse, You know that my heart knows no one but You. You have

opened up in my heart an insatiable depth of love for You. From the very first moment it knew You, my heart has loved You and has lost itself in You as its one and only object. May Your pure and omnipotent love be the driving force of all my actions,. Who will ever conceive and understand the depth of mercy that has gushed forth from Your Heart? 833 I have experienced how much envy there is, even in religious life. I see that there are few truly great souls, ready to trample on everything that is not God. O soul, you will find no beauty outside of God. Oh, how fragile is the foundation of those who elevate themselves at the expenses of others! What a loss!

December 25, [1936]. Midnight Mass. During Mass, God's presence pierced me through and through. A moment before the Elevation I saw the Mother of God and the Infant Jesus and the good Old Man [St. Joseph]. **The Most Holy Mother spoke these words to me: My daughter, Faustina, take this most precious Treasure, and she gave me the Infant Jesus. When I took Jesus in my arms, my soul felt such unspeakable joy that I am unable to describe it. But, strange thing, after a short while Jesus became awful, horrible-looking, grown up and suffering; and then the vision vanished,** and soon it was time to go to Holy Communion. When I received the Lord Jesus in Holy Communion, my soul trembled under the influence of God's presence. The next day, (229) I saw the Divine Infant for a brief moment during the Elevation. 847 On the second day of the Feast, Father Andrasz came to celebrate Mass for us, and during Mass I again saw the little Jesus. In the afternoon, I went to confession. Father did not give an answer to some of my questions that concerned this work. He said, "When you recover, we shall talk about it in concrete terms; and now, try to recover completely. As for the rest, you know what guidance to follow and what direction to take in these matters." As penance, Father told me to say the chaplet that Jesus had taught me. 848 While I was saying the chaplet, I heard a voice which said, Oh, what great graces I will grant to souls who say this chaplet; the very depths of My tender mercy are stirred for the sake of those who say the chaplet. **Write down these words, My daughter. Speak to the world about My mercy; let all mankind recognize My unfathomable mercy. It is a sign for the end times; after it will come (230) the day of justice. While there is still time, let them have recourse to the fount of My mercy; let them profit from the Blood and Water which gushed forth for them. O human souls, where are you going to hide on the day of God's anger: Take refuge now in the fount of God's mercy. O what a great multitude of souls I see! They worshiped the Divine Mercy and will be singing the hymn of praise for all eternity**

December 28, [1936]. Today I have started a novena to The Divine Mercy. That is, I place myself in spirit before the image and recite the chaplet which the Lord has taught me. On the second day of the novena, I saw the image, as it were, come alive, adorned with numberless votive lamps, and I saw great crowds of people coming there, and many of them were filled with happiness. O Jesus, with what great joy did my heart beat! I am making the novena for the intention of two people; namely, the Archbishop [Jalbrzykowski] and Father Sopocho. I am earnestly asking the Lord to inspire the Archbishop to approve the chaplet, which is so pleasing to God, and also the image, and that he may not put off or delay this work..... 852 (232) Today the Lord's gaze shot through me suddenly, like lightning. At once, I came to know the tiniest specks in my soul, and knowing the depths of my misery, I fell to my knees and begged the Lord's

pardon, and with great trust I immersed myself in His infinite mercy. Such knowledge does not depress me nor keep me away from the Lord, but rather it arouses in my soul greater love and boundless trust. The repentance of my heart is linked to love. These extraordinary flashes from the Lord educate my soul. O sweet rays of God, enlighten me to the most secret depth, for I want to arrive at the greatest possible purity of heart and soul. 853 In the evening, a great longing took possession of my soul. I took the pamphlet with the Image of the Merciful Jesus on it and pressed it to my heart, and the following words burst forth from my soul: "Jesus, Eternal Love, I live for You, I die for You, and I want to become united with You." Suddenly, I saw the Lord in His inexpressible beauty. He looked at me graciously and said, (233) **My daughter, I too came down from heaven out of love for you; I lived for you, I died for you, and I created the heavens for you. And Jesus pressed me to His Heart and said to me, Very soon now; be at peace, My daughter.** When I was alone, my soul was set afire with the desire to suffer until the moment when the Lord would say, "Enough." And even if I were to live for thousands of years, I see in the light of God that that is but one moment. (236) + In the evening, I prayed for a few hours, first for my parents and relatives, for Mother General and for the whole Congregation, for our students, and for three priests [probably Archbishop Jalbrzykowski, Father Sopocko, and Father Andrasz] to whom I owe very much. I ran the length and breadth of the whole world and thanked the unfathomable mercy of God for all the graces granted to people, and I begged pardon for everything by which they have offended Him. 858 During Vespers, I saw the Lord Jesus, who looked sweetly and profoundly into my soul. My daughter, have patience; it won't be long now. That profound look and those words filled my soul with strength and power, courage and extraordinary trust that I would carry out everything He was demanding of me, despite such tremendous difficulties, and [filled me with] a special conviction that the Lord is with me and that with Him I can do all things. All the powers on earth and in hell are as nothing to me. Everything must fall before the power of His Name. I entrust everything into Your hands, O my Lord and God. Sole Commander of my soul, direct me according to Your eternal desires.

Today, at midnight, I bid good-bye to the old year 1936, and welcomed the year 1937. It was with fear and trembling that, in this first hour of the year, I faced this new period of time. Merciful Jesus, with You I go boldly and courageously into conflicts and battles. In 216 your Name, I will accomplish everything and overcome everything. My God, Infinite Goodness, I beg of You, let Your infinite mercy accompany me always and in all things. As I enter this year, fear of life overwhelms me, but Jesus brings me out of this fear and lets me know what great glory this work of mercy will bring Him.

January 7. During the Holy Hour, the Lord allowed me to taste His Passion. I shared in the bitterness of the suffering that filled His soul to overflowing. Jesus gave me to understand how a soul should be faithful to prayer despite torments, dryness, and temptations; because oftentimes the realization of God's great plans depends mainly on such prayer. If we do not persevere in such prayer, we frustrate what the Lord wanted to do through us or within us. Let every soul remember these words: "And being in anguish, He prayed longer." I always prolong such prayer as much as is in my power and in conformity with my duty. 873

(246) January 8. On Friday morning, as I was going to the chapel to attend Holy Mass, I suddenly saw a huge juniper tree on the pavement and in it a horrible cat who, looking angrily at me, blocked my way to the chapel. One whisper of the name of Jesus dissipated all that. I offered the whole day for dying sinners. During Holy Mass, I felt the closeness of the Lord in a special way. After Holy Communion, I turned my gaze with trust toward the Lord and told him, "Jesus, I so much desire to tell You something." And the Lord looked at me with love and said, And what is it that you desire to tell Me? "Jesus, I beg You, by the inconceivable power of Your mercy, that all the souls who will die today escape the fire of hell, even if they have been the greatest sinners. Today is Friday, the memorial of Your bitter agony on the Cross; because Your mercy is inconceivable, the Angels will not be surprised at this." Jesus pressed me to His Heart and said, My beloved (247) daughter, you have come to know well the depths of My Mercy. I will do what you ask, but unite yourself continually with My agonizing Heart and make reparation to My justice. Know that you have asked Me for a great thing, but I see that this was dictated by your pure love for Me; that is why I am complying with your requests. 874 Mary, Immaculate Virgin, take me under Your special protection and guard the purity of my soul, heart and body. You are the model and star of my life.

(252) January 14, 1937. Today, Jesus entered my room wearing a bright robe and girded with a golden belt. His whole figure resplendent with great majesty. **He said, My daughter, why are you giving in to thoughts of fear? I answered, "O Lord, You know why." And He said, Why? "This work frightens me. You know that I am incapable of carrying it out." And He said, Why? "You see very well that I am not in good health, that I have no education, that I have no money, that I am an abyss of misery, that I fear contacts with people. Jesus, I desire only You. You can release me from this." And the Lord said to me, My daughter, what you have said is true. You are very miserable, and it pleased Me to carry out this work of mercy precisely through you who are nothing but misery itself. Do not fear; I will not leave you alone. Do whatever you can in this matter; I will accomplish everything that is lacking in you.** You know what is within your power to do; do that. The Lord looked into the depth of my being with great kindness; I thought I would die for joy under that gaze. The Lord disappeared, and joy, (253) strength and power to act remained in my soul. But I was surprised that the Lord did not want to release me and that he is not changing anything. He has once said. And despite all these joys, there is always a shadow of sorrow. I see that love and sorrow go hand in hand.

Love is a mystery that transforms everything it touches into things beautiful and pleasing to God. The love of God makes a soul free. She is like a queen; she knows no slavish compulsion; she sets about everything with great freedom of soul, because the love which dwells in her incites her to action. Everything that surrounds her makes her know that only God Himself is worthy of her love. A soul in love with God and immersed in Him approaches her duties with the same dispositions as she does Holy Communion and carries out the simplest tasks with great care, under the loving gaze of God. She is not troubled if, after some time, something turns out to be less successful. She remains 222 calm, because at the time of the action she had done what was in her power. When it happens that the living presence of God, which she enjoys almost constantly, leaves her,

she then tries to continue living in lively faith. Her soul understands that there are periods of rest and periods of battle. Through her will, she is always with God. Her soul, like a knight, is well trained in battle; from afar it sees where the foe is hiding and is ready (258) for battle. She knows she is not alone – God is her strength.

Today the doctor decided that I am not to go to Mass, but only to Holy Communion. I wanted very much to assist at Mass, but my confessor,¹⁶² in agreement with the doctor, told me to obey. “It is God’s will, Sister, that you should get (260) well, and you must not undertake mortifications of any kind. Be obedient, Sister, and God will reward you for it.” I felt that the confessor’s words were Jesus’ words, and although it made me sad to miss Holy Mass, during which God had been granting me the grace of seeing the Infant Jesus; nevertheless, I placed obedience above everything else. I became absorbed in prayer and said my penance. Then I suddenly saw the Lord, who said to me, **My daughter, know that you give Me greater glory by a single act of obedience than by long prayers and mortifications.** Oh, how good it is to live under obedience, to live conscious of the fact that everything I do is pleasing to God!

January 23, [1937]. I did not feel like writing today. Then I heard a voice in my soul: **My daughter, you do not live for yourself but for souls; write for their benefit. You know that My will as to your writing has been (261) confirmed many times by your confessors. You know what is pleasing to Me, and if you have any doubts about what I am saying, you also know whom you are to ask. I grant him light to 223 pronounce judgment on my case. My eye watches over him. My daughter, you are to be like a child towards him, full of simplicity and candor. Put his judgment above all My demands. He will guide you according to My will. If he doesn’t allow you to carry out My demands, be at peace; I will not judge you, but the matter will remain between Me and him. You are to be obedient.**

January 27, 1937. I feel considerable improvement in my health. Jesus is bringing me from the gates of death to life, because there was so little left but for me to die, and lo, the Lord grants me the fullness of life. Although I am still to remain in the sanatorium, I am almost completely well. I see that the will of God has not yet been fulfilled in me, and that is why I must live, for I know that if I fulfill everything the Lord has planned for me in this world, He will not leave me in exile any longer, for heaven is my home. But before we go to our Homeland, we must fulfill the will of God on earth; that is, trials and struggles must run their full course in us. 898 O my Jesus, You are giving me back my health and life; give me also strength for battle, because I am unable to do anything without You. Give me strength, for You can do all things. You see that I am a frail child, and what can I do.

January 30, 1937. One-day retreat. 903 I am coming to know God’s greatness more and more and to rejoice in Him. I remain unceasingly with Him in the depths of my heart. It is

in my own soul that I most easily find God. 904 During my meditation, I heard these words: **My daughter, you give Me most glory by patiently submitting to My will, and you win for yourself greater merit than that which any fast or mortification could ever gain for you. Know, My daughter, that if you submit your will to Mine, you draw upon yourself My special delight. This sacrifice is pleasing to Me and full of sweetness. I take great pleasure in it; there is power in it.**

Today, when I warned a certain young lady that she should not be standing for hours in the corridor with the men, because it was unbecoming for a well-bred young lady to do so, she apologized and promised to correct herself. She began to cry when she became aware of her thoughtlessness. As I was saying these few things to her concerning moral behavior, all the men from the ward came over and listened to my words of advice. The Jewish people even heard a few things about themselves. A certain person told me afterwards that they put their ears against the wall and listened attentively. I somehow felt they were listening, but I said what I had to say. The walls are so thin here that one can be heard, even when speaking in a low voice. 920 + There is a woman here¹⁶⁵ who was once one of our students. Naturally, she puts my patience to the test. She comes to see me several times a day. After each of these visits I am tired out, but I see that the Lord Jesus has sent that soul to me. Let everything glorify You, O Lord. Patience gives glory to God. O how poor the souls are! 921 (276) February 6, [1937]. Today, the Lord said to me, **My daughter, I am told that there is much simplicity in you, so why do you not tell Me about everything that concerns you, even the smallest details? Tell Me about everything, and know that this will give Me great joy.** I answered, “But You know about everything, Lord.” And Jesus replied to me, Yes, I do know; but you should not excuse yourself with the fact that I know, but with childlike simplicity talk to Me about everything, for My ears and heart are inclined towards you, and your words are dear to Me. 922 + When I began this big novena for three intentions, I saw a tiny insect on the ground and thought: how did it get here in the middle of winter: Then I heard the following words in my soul: You see, I am thinking of it and sustaining it, and what is it compared to you? Why was your soul fearful for a moment? I apologized to the Lord for that moment. Jesus wants me to always be a child and to leave all care to Him, and to submit blindly to His holy will. He took everything upon Himself. 923 (277) February 7, [1937]. Today, the Lord said to me, I demand of you a perfect and whole-burnt offering; and offering of the will. No other sacrifice can compare with this one. I Myself am directing your life and arranging things in such a way that you will be for Me a continual sacrifice and will always do My will. And for the accomplishment of this offering, you will unite yourself with Me on the Cross. I know what you can do. I Myself will give you many orders directly, but I will delay the possibility of their being carried out and make it depend on others. But what the superiors will not manage to do, I Myself will accomplish directly in your soul. And in the most hidden depths of your soul, a perfect holocaust will be carried out, not just for a while, but know, My daughter, that this offering will last until your death. But there is time, so that I the Lord will fulfill all your wishes. I delight in you as in a living host; let nothing terrify you; I am with you.

February 9, [1937]. Shrove Tuesday. During the last two days of the carnival, I experienced the overwhelming flood of chastisements and sins. In one instant the Lord gave me a knowledge of the sins committed throughout the whole world during these

days. I fainted from fright, and even though I know the depth of God's mercy, I was surprised that God allows humanity to exist. And the Lord gave me to know who it is that upholds the existence of mankind: it is the chosen souls. When the number of the chosen ones is complete, the world will cease to exist.

Then suddenly, I saw the Lord, who clasped to me to His Heart and said to me, **My daughter, do not weep, for I cannot bear your tears. I will grant you everything you ask for, but stop crying.** And I was filled with great (280) joy, and my spirit, as usual, was drowned in Him as in its only treasure. Today, encouraged by His kindness, I conversed with Jesus at greater length.

February 11, [1937]. Today is Friday. During Mass, I suffered pain in my body: in my hands, my feet and my side. Jesus is sending me this kind of suffering that I may make reparation for sinners. The pain is brief, but very severe. I do not suffer for more than a couple of minutes, but the impression remains for a long time and is very vivid.

Today after Holy Communion, the Lord told me, **My daughter, My delight is to unite myself with you. It is when you submit yourself to My will that you give Me the greatest glory and draw upon yourself a sea of blessings. I would not take such special delight in you if you were not living by my will.** O my sweet Guest, I am prepared for all sacrifices for Your sake, but You know (300) that I am weakness itself. Nevertheless, with You I can do all things. O my Jesus, I beseech You, be with me at each instant. 955 February 15, 1937. Today, I heard these words in my soul: Host pleasing to My Father, know, **My daughter, that the entire Holy Trinity finds Its special delight in you, because you live exclusively by the will of God. No sacrifice can compare with this.**

Some days ago, a certain person came to me and asked me to pray for her intention, as she had some urgent and important business. All of a sudden, I felt in my soul that this matter was not pleasing to God, and I replied that I would not pray for this intention, "but I will pray for you, in general" [I added]. A few days later, this lady came back to me and thanked me for not having prayed for her intention, but rather for her, because she had been motivated by a spirit of revenge toward a certain person to whom she owed respect and veneration in virtue (302) of the fourth commandment. The Lord Jesus had changed her interior [dispositions], and she herself acknowledged her guilt; but was, however, surprised that I had penetrated her secret.

February 17, 1937. This morning during Holy Mass, I saw the Suffering Jesus. His Passion was imprinted on my body in an invisible manner, but no less painfully. 965 Jesus looked at me and said, Souls perish in spite of My bitter Passion. I am giving them the last hope of salvation; that is, the Feast of My Mercy²⁵⁵. If they will not adore My mercy, they will perish for all eternity. Secretary of My mercy, write, tell souls about this great mercy of Mine, because the awful day, the day of My justice, is near. 966 + Today, I heard in my soul these words: **My daughter, it is time for you take action; I am with you. Great persecutions and sufferings are in store for you, but be comforted by the thought that many souls will be saved and sanctified by this work.**

Today, I went to meditate before the Blessed Sacrament [in the sanatorium chapel]. When I approached the altar, God's presence pervaded my soul, I was plunged into the ocean of His divinity, and Jesus said to me, My daughter, all that exists is yours. I answered the Lord, „My heart wants nothing but You alone. O Treasure of my heart. For 237 all the gifts You give me, thank you, O Lord, but I desire only Your Heart. Though the heavens are immense, they are nothing to me without You. You know very well, O Jesus, that I am constantly swooning because of my longing for You.” Know this, My daughter, that you are already tasting now what other souls will obtain only in eternity.

Today at Benediction, I saw Jesus, and He spoke these words to me: Be obedient to your director in everything; his word is My will. Be certain in the depths of your 238 soul that it is I who am speaking through his lips, and I desire that you reveal the state of your soul to him with the same simplicity (311) and candor as you have with Me. I say it again, my daughter: know that his word is My will for you. 980 Today, I saw the Lord in great beauty, and he said to me, My loving host, pray for priests, especially during this time of harvest. My Heart is pleased with you, and for your sake I am blessing the earth.

Today, I took part in a one-day retreat. When I was at the last conference, 177 the priest was speaking of how much the world needs God's mercy, and that this seems to be a special time when people have great need of prayer and God's mercy. Then I heard a voice in my soul: These words are for you. Do all you possibly can for this work of My mercy. I desire that My mercy be worshiped, and I am giving mankind the last hope of salvation; that is, recourse to My mercy. My Heart rejoices in this feast. After these words, I understood that nothing can dispense me from the obligation which the Lord demands from me.

March 1, 1937. The Lord gave me to know how displeased He is with a talkative soul. I find no rest in such a soul. The constant din tires Me, and in the midst of it the soul cannot discern My voice.

The Lord said to me, I want to give Myself to souls and to fill them with My love, but few there are who want to accept all the graces My love has intended for them. My grace is not lost; if the soul for whom it was intended does not accept it, another soul takes it.

Today, I received some oranges. When the sister had left, I thought to myself, “Should I eat the oranges instead of doing penance and mortifying myself during Holy Lent? After all, I am feeling a bit better.” Then I heard a voice in my soul: My daughter, you please Me more by eating the oranges out of obedience and love of Me than by fasting and mortifying yourself of your own will. A soul that loves Me very much must, ought to live by My will. I know your heart, and I know that it will not be satisfied by anything but My love alone.

I would not know how to live without the Lord. Jesus often visits me in this seclusion, teaches me, reassures me, rebukes me, and admonished me. He Himself forms my heart according to His divine wishes and likings, but always with much goodness and mercy. Our hearts are fused as one.

The doctor did not allow me to go to the chapel to attend the Passion Service, although I had a great desire for it; however, I prayed in my own room. Suddenly I heard the bell in 247 the next room, and I went in and rendered a service to a seriously sick person. (8) When I returned to my room, I suddenly saw the Lord Jesus, who said, **My daughter, you gave Me greater pleasure by rendering Me that service than if you had prayed for a long time. I answered, “But it was not to You, Jesus, but to that patient that I rendered this service.” And the Lord answered me, Yes, My daughter, but whatever you do for your neighbor, you do for Me.**

In the evening, over the radio, I heard hymns; that is, psalms, sung by priests. 185 I burst into tears, and all of the pain was renewed in my soul, and I wept sorrowfully, unable to find appeasement in this pain. Then I heard a voice in my soul: Do not cry; I am not suffering any more. And for the faithfulness with which you accompanied Me in My sufferings and death, your own death will be a solemn one, and I will accompany you in that last hour. Beloved pearl of My Heart, I see your love so pure, purer than that of the angels, and all the more so because you keep fighting. For your sake I bless the world. I see your efforts to please Me, and they delight My Heart. After these words, I wept no more, but thanked the heavenly Father for having sent us His Son and for the work of the Redemption of mankind.

Jesus: Child, speak no more of your misery; it is already forgotten. Listen, My child, to what I desire to tell you. Come close to My wounds and draw from the Fountain of Life whatever your heart desires. Drink copiously from the Fountain of Life and you will not weary on your journey. Look at the splendors of My Mercy and do not fear the enemies of your salvation. Glorify My mercy. (82) Conversation of the Merciful God With a Despairing Soul. 1486 Jesus: O soul steeped in darkness, do not despair. All is not yet lost. Come and confide in your God, who is love and mercy.

The Goodness of God. 1485 The mercy of God, hidden in the Blessed Sacrament, the voice of the Lord who speaks to us from the throne of mercy: Come to Me, all of you. Jesus: Be not afraid of your Savior; O sinful soul. I make the first move to come to you, for I know that by yourself you are unable to lift yourself to me. Child, do not run away from your Father; be willing to talk openly with your God of mercy who wants to speak words of pardon and lavish his graces on you. How dear your soul is to Me! I have inscribed your name upon My hand; you are engraved as a deep wound in My Heart. Soul: Lord, I hear your voice calling me to turn back from the path of sin, but I have neither the strength nor the courage to do so. Jesus: I am your strength, I will help you in the struggle. Soul: Lord, I recognize your holiness, and I fear You. Jesus: My child, do you fear the God of mercy? My holiness (80) does not prevent Me from being merciful. Behold, for you I have established a throne of mercy on earth – the tabernacle – and from this throne I desire to enter into your heart. I am not surrounded by a retinue or guards. You can come to me at any moment, at any time; I want to speak to you and desire to grant you grace. 326 Soul: Lord, I doubt that You will pardon my numerous sins; my misery fills me with fright. Jesus: My mercy is greater than your sins and those of the entire world. Who can measure the extent of my goodness? For you I descended from

heaven to earth; for you I allowed myself to be nailed to the cross; for you I let my Sacred Heart be pierced with a lance, thus opening wide the source of mercy for you. Come, then, with trust to draw graces from this fountain. I never reject a contrite heart. Your misery has disappeared in the depths of My mercy. Do not argue with Me about your wretchedness. You will give me pleasure if you hand over to me all your troubles and griefs. I shall heap upon you the treasures of My grace. (81) Soul: You have conquered, O Lord, my stony heart with Your goodness. In trust and humility I approach the tribunal of Your mercy, where You Yourself absolve me by the hand of your representative. O Lord, I feel Your grace and Your peace filling my poor soul. I feel overwhelmed by Your mercy, O lord. You forgive me, which is more than I dared to hope for or could imagine. Your goodness surpasses all my desires. And now, filled with gratitude for so many graces, I invite You to my heart. I wandered, like a prodigal child gone astray; but you did not cease to be my Father. Increase Your mercy toward me, for You see how weak I am. Jesus: Child, speak no more of your misery; it is already forgotten. Listen, My child, to what I desire to tell you. Come close to My wounds and draw from the Fountain of Life whatever your heart desires. Drink copiously from the Fountain of Life and you will not weary on your journey. Look at the splendors of My Mercy and do not fear the enemies of your salvation. Glorify My mercy. (82) Conversation of the Merciful God With a Despairing Soul. 1486 Jesus: O soul steeped in darkness, do not despair. All is not yet lost. Come and confide in your God, who is love and mercy. -- But the soul, deaf even to this appeal, wraps itself in darkness. Jesus calls out again: My child, listen to the voice of your merciful Father. -- In the soul arises this reply: "For me there is no mercy," and it falls into greater darkness, a despair which is a foretaste of hell and makes it unable to draw near God. Jesus calls to the soul a third time, but the soul remains deaf and blind, hardened and despairing. Then the mercy of God begins to exert itself, and, without any co-operation from the soul, God grants it final grace. If this too is spurned, God will leave the soul in this self-chosen disposition for eternity. This grace emerges from the merciful Heart of Jesus and gives the soul a special light by means of which the soul begins to understand (83) God's effort; but conversion depends on its own will. The soul knows that this, for her, is final grace and, should it show even a flicker of good will, the mercy of God will accomplish the rest. 327 My omnipotent mercy is active here. Happy the soul that takes advantage of this grace. Jesus: What joy fills My Heart when you return to me. Because you are weak, I take you in My arms and carry you to the home of My Father. Soul (as if awaking, asks fearfully): Is it possible that there yet is mercy for me? Jesus: There is, My child. You have a special claim on My mercy. Let it act in your poor soul; let the rays of grace enter your soul; they bring with them light, warmth, and life. Soul: But fear fills me at the thought of my sins, and this terrible fear moves me to doubt Your goodness. Jesus: My child, all your sins have not wounded My Heart as painfully as your present lack of trust does – that after so many efforts of My (84) love and mercy, you should still doubt My goodness. Soul: O Lord, save me Yourself, for I perish. Be my Savior. O Lord, I am unable to say anything more; my pitiful heart is torn asunder; but You, O Lord.... Jesus does not let the soul finish but, raising it from the ground, from the depths of its misery, he leads it into the recesses of His Heart where all its sins disappear instantly, consumed by the flames of love. Jesus: Here, soul, are all the treasures of My Heart. Take everything you need from it. Soul: O Lord, I am inundated with Your grace. I sense that a new life has entered into me and, above all, I feel Your love in my heart. That

is enough for me. O Lord, I will glorify the omnipotence of Your mercy for all eternity. Encouraged by Your goodness, I will confide to You all the sorrows of my heart. Jesus: Tell me all, My child, hide nothing from Me, because My loving Heart, the Heart of your Best Friend, is listening to you. Soul: O Lord, now I see all my ingratitude and Your goodness. You were pursuing me with Your grace, while I was frustrating Your benevolence. I see that I deserve (85) the depths of hell for spurning Your graces. Jesus (interrupting): Do not be absorbed in your misery – you are still too weak to speak of it – but, rather; gaze on My Heart filled with goodness, and be imbued with My sentiments. Strive for meekness and humility; be merciful to others, as I am to you; and, when you feel your strength failing, if you come to the fountain of mercy to fortify your soul, you will not grow weary on your journey. Soul: Now I understand Your mercy, which protects me, and like a brilliant star, leads me into the home of my Father, protecting me from the horrors of hell that I have deserved, not once, but a thousand times. O Lord, eternity will hardly suffice for me to give due praise to Your unfathomable mercy and Your compassion for me. 328 + Conversation of the Merciful God with a Suffering Soul 1487 Jesus: Poor soul, I see that you suffer much and that you do not have even the strength to converse with me. So I will speak to you. Even though your sufferings were (86) very great, do not lose heart or give in to despondency. But tell Me, my child, who has dared to wound your heart? Tell me about everything, be sincere in dealing with Me, reveal all the wounds of your heart. I will heal them, and your suffering will become a source of your sanctification. Soul: Lord, my sufferings are so great and numerous and have lasted so long that I become discouraged. Jesus: My child, do not be discouraged. I know your boundless trust in Me; I know you are aware of My goodness and mercy. Let us talk in detail about everything that weighs so heavily upon your heart. Soul: There are so many different things that I do not know what to speak about first, nor how to express it. Jesus: Talk to Me simply, as a friend to a friend. Tell Me now, My child, what hinders you from advancing in holiness? Soul: Poor health detains me on the way to holiness. I cannot fulfill my duties. I am as useless as an extra wheel on a wagon. I cannot mortify myself or fast to any extent, as the saints did. (87) Furthermore, nobody believes I am sick, so that mental pain is added to those of the body, and I am often humiliated. Jesus, how can anyone become holy in such circumstances? Jesus: True, my child, all that is painful. But there is no way to heaven except the way of the cross. I followed it first. You must learn that it is the shortest and surest way. Soul: Lord, there is another obstacle on the road to holiness. Because I am faithful to You, I am persecuted and suffer much. Jesus: It is because you are not of this world that the world hates you. First it persecuted Me. Persecution is a sign that you are following in My footsteps faithfully. Soul: My Lord, I am also discouraged because neither my superiors nor my confessor understand my interior trials. A darkness clouds my mind. How can I advance? All this discourages me from striving for the heights of sanctity. Jesus: Well, My child, this time you have told Me a good deal. I realize how painful it is not to be (88) understood, and especially by those whom one loves and with whom one has been very open. But suffice it to know that I understand all your troubles and misery. I am pleased by the deep faith you have, despite everything, in My representatives. Learn from this that no one will understand a soul entirely – that is beyond human ability. Therefore, I have remained on earth 329 to comfort your aching heart and to fortify your soul, so that you will not falter on the way. You say that a dense darkness is obscuring your mind. But why, at such times, do you not

come to Me, the light who can in an instant pour into your soul more understanding about holiness than can be found in any books? No confessor is capable of teaching and enlightening a soul in this way. Know, too, that the darkness about which you complain I first endured in the Garden of Olives when My Soul was crushed in mortal anguish. I am giving you a share in those sufferings because of My special love for you and in view of the high degree of holiness I am (89) intending for you in heaven. A suffering soul is closest to My Heart. Soul: One more thing, Lord. What should I do when I am ignored and rejected by people, especially by those on whom I had a right to count in times of greatest need? Jesus: My child, make the resolution never to rely on people. Entrust yourself completely to My will saying, "Not as I want, but according to Your will, O God, let it be done unto me." These words, spoken from the depths of one's heart, can raise a soul to the summit of sanctity in a short time. In such a soul I delight. Such a soul gives Me glory. Such a soul fills heaven with the fragrance of her virtue. But understand that the strength by which you bear sufferings comes from frequent Communion. So approach this fountain of mercy often, to draw with the vessel of trust whatever you need. Soul: Thank You, Lord, for Your goodness in remaining with us in this exile as the God of mercy (90) and blessing us with the radiance of Your compassion and goodness. It is through the light of Your mercy that I have come to understand how much You love me. 1488 Conversation of the Merciful God with a Soul Striving after Perfection. Jesus: I am pleased with your efforts, O soul aspiring for perfection, but why do I see you so often sad and depressed? Tell Me, My child, what is the meaning of this sadness, and what is its cause? Soul: Lord, the reason for my sadness is that, in spite of my sincere resolutions, I fall again into the same faults. I make resolutions in the morning, but in the evenings I see how much I have departed from them. Jesus: You see, My child, what you are of yourself. The cause of your falls is that you rely too much upon yourself and too little on Me. But let this not sadden you so much. You are dealing with the God of mercy, which your misery cannot exhaust. Remember, I did not allot only a certain number of pardons. Soul: Yes, I know all that, (91) but great temptations assail me, and various doubts awaken within me and, moreover, everything irritates and discourages me. Jesus: My child, know that the greatest obstacles to holiness are discouragement and an exaggerated anxiety. These will deprive you of the ability to practice virtue. All temptations united together ought not disturb your interior peace, not 330 even momentarily. Sensitiveness and discouragement are the fruits of self-love. You should not become discouraged, but strive to make My love reign in place of your self-love. Have confidence, My child. Do not lose heart in coming for pardon, for I am always ready to forgive you. As often as you beg for it, you glorify My mercy. Soul: I understand what is the better thing to do, what pleases You more, but I encounter great obstacles in acting on this understanding. Jesus: My child, life on earth is a struggle indeed; a great struggle for My kingdom. But fear not, because you are not alone. I am always supporting you, (92) so lean on Me as you struggle, fearing nothing. Take the vessel of trust and draw from the fountain of life – for yourself, but also for other souls, especially such as are distrustful of My goodness. Soul: O Lord, I feel my heart being filled with Your love and the rays of Your mercy and love piercing my soul. I go, Lord, at Your command. I go to conquer souls. Sustained by Your grace, I am ready to follow You, Lord, not only to Tabor, but also to Calvary. I desire to lead souls to the fount of Your mercy so that the splendor of Your mercy may be reflected in all souls, and the home of our Father be filled to overflowing. And when the enemy

begins to attach me, I shall take refuge behind the shield of Your mercy. 1489
Conversation of the Merciful God with a Perfect Soul. Soul: My Lord and Master, I desire to converse with You. Jesus: Speak, My beloved (93) child, for I am always listening. I wait for you. What do you desire to say? Soul: Lord, first let me pour out my heart at Your feet in a fragrant anointing of gratitude for the many blessings which You lavish upon me; even if I wanted to, I could not count them. I only recall that there has never been a moment in my life in which I have not experienced Your protection and goodness. Jesus: Your words please Me, and your thanksgiving opens up new treasures of graces. But, My child, we should talk in more detail about the things that lie in your heart. Let us talk confidentially and frankly, as two hearts that love one another do.

) January 28, 1938. Today the Lord said to me, My daughter, write down these words: All those souls who will glorify My mercy and spread its worship, encouraging others to trust in My mercy, will not experience terror at the hour of death. My mercy will shield them in that final battle..... 1541 **My daughter, encourage souls to say the chaplet which I have given to you. It pleases Me to grant everything they ask of Me by saying the chaplet. When hardened sinners say it, I will fill their souls with peace, and the hour of their death will be a happy one. Write this for the benefit of distressed souls; when a soul sees and realized the gravity of its sins, when the whole abyss of the misery into which it immersed itself is displayed before its eyes, let it not despair, but with trust let it throw itself into the arms of My mercy, as a child into the arms of its beloved mother. These 340 souls (125) have a right of priority to My compassionate Heart, they have first access to My mercy. Tell them that no soul that has called upon My mercy has been disappointed or brought to shame. I delight particularly in a soul which has placed its trust in My goodness. Write that when they say this chaplet in the presence of the dying, I will stand between My Father and the dying person, not as the just Judge but as the merciful Savior.** 1542 At that moment, the Lord gave me to know how jealous He is of my heart. Even among the sisters you will feel lonely. Know then that I want you to unite yourself more closely to Me. I am concerned about every beat of your heart. Every stirring of your love is reflected in My Heart. I thirst for your love. "Yes, O Jesus, but my heart would not be able to live without You, either; for even if the hearts of all creatures were offered to me, they would not satisfy the depths of my heart." 1543 (126) Today toward evening, the Lord said to me, Entrust yourself completely to Me at the hour of death, and I will present you to My Father as My bride. And now I recommend that you unite, in a special way, even your smallest deeds to My merits, and then My Father will look upon them with love as if they were My own. 1544 Do not change your particular examen which I have given you through Father Andrasz; namely, that you united yourself with Me continually. That is what I am clearly asking of you today. Be a child toward My representatives, because I borrow their lips to speak to you, so that you will have no doubts about anything.

When I entered the chapel for a moment, the Lord said to me, My daughter, help Me to save a certain dying sinner. Say the chaplet that I have taught you for him. When I began to say the chaplet, I saw the man dying in the midst of terrible torment and struggle. His Guardian Angel was defending him, but he was, as it were, powerless against the enormity of the soul's misery. A multitude of devils was waiting for the soul. But while I was saying the chaplet, I saw Jesus just as He is depicted in the image. The rays which

issued from Jesus“ Heart enveloped the sick man, and the powers of darkness fled in panic. The sick man peacefully breathed his last. When I came to myself, I understood how very important the chaplet was for the dying. It appeases the anger of God. 1566 When I was apologizing to the Lord Jesus for a certain action of mine which, a little later, turned out to be imperfect, Jesus put me at ease with these words: **My daughter, I reward you for the purity of your intention which you had (141) at the time when you acted. My Heart rejoiced that you had My love under consideration at the time you acted, and that in so distinct a way; and even now you still derive benefit from this; that is, from the humiliation. Yes, My child, I want you to always have such great purity of intention in the very least things you undertake.** 1567 As I took the pen in hand, I addressed a short prayer to the Holy Spirit and said, “Jesus, bless this pen so that everything You order me to write may be for the glory of God.” Then I heard a voice: Yes, I bless [it], because this writing bears the seal of obedience to your superior and confessor, and by that very fact I am already given glory, and many souls will be drawing profit from it. My daughter, I demand 345 that you devote all your free moments to writing about My goodness and mercy. It is your office and your assignment throughout your life to continue to make known to souls the great mercy I have for them and to exhort them to trust in My bottomless mercy.

A vision of the Mother of God. In the midst of a great brilliance, I saw the Mother of God clothed in a white gown, girt about with a golden cincture; and there were tiny stars, also of gold, over the whole garment, and chevron-shaped sleeves lined with gold,. Her cloak was sky-blue, lightly thrown over the shoulders. A transparent veil was delicately drawn over her head, while her flowing hair was set off beautifully by a golden crown which terminated in little crosses. On Her left arm She held the Child Jesus. A Blessed Mother of this type I had not yet seen. Then She looked at me kindly and said: I am the Mother of God of Priests. 235 At that, She lowered Jesus from her arm to the ground, raised Her right hand heavenward and said: O God, bless Poland, bless priests. Then She addressed me once again: Tell the priests what you have seen. (154) I resolved that at the first opportunity [I would have] of seeing Father [Andrasz] I would tell;

Today I heard the words: In the Old Covenant I sent prophets wielding thunderbolts to My People. Today I am sending you with My mercy to the people of the whole world. I do not want to punish aching mankind, but I desire to heal it, pressing it to My Merciful Heart. I use punishment when they themselves force Me to do so; My hand is reluctant to take hold of the sword of justice. Before the Day of Justice I am sending the Day of Mercy. I replied, “O my Jesus, speak to souls Yourself, because my words are insignificant.”

The Lord has given me to know how much He desires the perfection of chosen souls. Chosen souls are, in My hand, lights which I cast into the darkness of the world and with which I illumine it. As stars illumine the night, so chosen souls (6) illumine the earth. And the more perfect a soul is, the stronger and the more far-reaching is the light shed by it. It can be hidden and unknown, even to those closest to it, and yet its holiness is reflected in souls even to the most distant extremities of the world. 1602 Today the Lord said to me, Daughter, when you go to confession, to this fountain of My mercy, the Blood and Water which came forth from My Heart always flows down upon 353 your soul and ennoble it. Every time you go to confession, immerse yourself entirely in My mercy,

with great trust, so that I may pour the bounty of My grace upon your soul. When you approach the confessional, know this, that I Myself am waiting there for you. I am only hidden by the priest, but I Myself act in your soul. Here the misery of the soul meets the God of mercy. Tell souls that from this fount of mercy (7) souls draw graces solely with the vessel of trust. If their trust is great, there is no limit to My generosity. The torrents of grace inundate humble souls. The proud remain always in poverty and misery, because My grace turns away from them to humble souls.

When, during adoration, I repeated the prayer, “Holy God” several times, a vivid presence of God suddenly swept over me, and I was caught up in spirit before the majesty of God. I saw how the Angels and the Saints of the Lord give glory to God. The glory of God is so great that I dare not try to describe it, because I would not be able to do so, and souls might think that what I have written (8) is all there is. Saint Paul, I understand now why you did not want to describe heaven, but only said that eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man what God has prepared for those who love Him [cf. I Cor. 2:9; 2 Cor. 12:1-7]. Yes, that is indeed so. And all that has come forth from God returns to Him in the same way and gives Him perfect glory. Now I have seen the way in which I adore God; oh, how miserable it is! And what a tiny drop it is in comparison to that perfect heavenly glory. O my God, how good You are to accept my praise as well, and to turn Your Face to me with kindness and let us know that our prayer is pleasing to You. 1605 Write down everything that occurs to you regarding My goodness. I answered, “What do You mean, Lord, what if I write too much?” And the Lord replied, My daughter, even if you were to speak at one and the same time in all human and angelic tongues, even then you would not have said very much, but on the contrary, you would have sung in only a small measure the praises (9) of My goodness – of My unfathomable mercy. O my Jesus, You Yourself must put words into my mouth, that I may praise You worthily. My daughter, be at peace; do as I tell you. Your thoughts are united to My thoughts, so write whatever comes to your mind. You are the secretary of My mercy. I have chosen you for that office in this life and the next life. That is how I want it to be in spite of all the opposition they will give you. Know that My choice will not change. At that moment I steeped myself in profound humility before God’s majesty. But the more I humbled myself, the more God’s presence penetrated me..... 1606 O Jesus, my only solace! How frightful is this exile! How terrible this wilderness I have to cross! My soul is struggling through a terrible thicket of all kinds of difficulties. If You Yourself did not support me, Lord, there would be no thought of my moving forward. 1607 (10) 16 [February] 1938. As I was praying to the living Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament for the intention of a certain priest, Jesus suddenly gave me knowledge of His goodness and said to me, I will give him nothing that is beyond his strength.

when I learned of some sufferings and troubles that a certain person²³⁶ was going through in connection with this whole work of God, I asked the Lord Jesus before Holy Communion that He might make known to me whether by any chance these sufferings were not caused by me: “My sweetest Jesus, I implore You by Your infinite goodness and mercy, make known to me whether anything in this matter displeases You or whether there is some fault of mine in this.

If there is, I ask You, when You enter my heart, fill it with unrest and make known to me Your displeasure. And if I am not guilty in this matter, confirm me in peace.” When I received the Lord, my soul was filled with great peace, and the Lord gave me to know that the work was undergoing a trial, but (11) was no less pleasing to God because of this. I felt great joy at this but I redoubled my prayers so that this work might come through the ordeal unharmed.

When I asked the Lord to be so good as to cast a glance upon a certain soul [probably Father Sopocko] who was struggling alone against many difficulties, the Lord gave me to know, in an instant, that all people are as dust under His feet. So do not worry; you see that they cannot do a thing of themselves. And if I allow them to seem to triumph, I do this for the sake of My (12) impenetrable decrees. I experienced great peace in seeing how all things are determined by the Lord.

February 27, [1938]. Today, I went to confession to Father An. [Andrasz] I did as Jesus wanted. After confession, a surge of light filled my soul. Then I heard a voice: Because you are a child, you shall remain close to My Heart. Your simplicity is more pleasing to Me than your mortifications.

March 1, 1938. One-day Retreat. In meditation, I learned that I should hide myself as deeply as possible in the Heart of Jesus, meditate upon His Sorrowful Passion, and penetrate into the sentiments of His Divine Heart, 356 which is full of mercy for sinners. In order to obtain mercy for them, I will empty myself at every moment, living by the will of God.

At adoration during the Forty-Hours“ Devotion, the Lord said to me, My daughter, write that involuntary offenses of souls do not hinder My love for them or prevent Me from uniting Myself with them. But voluntary offenses, even the smallest, obstruct My graces, and I cannot lavish My gifts on such souls. 1642 + Jesus gave me to know of how everything is dependent on His will, thus giving me profound peace as regards the security of His work. 1643 Listen, My daughter, although all the works that come into being by My will are exposed to great sufferings, consider whether any of them has been subject to greater difficulties than that work which is directly Mine – the work of Redemption. You should not worry too much about adversities. The world is not as powerful as it seems to be; its strength is strictly limited. (33) Know, **My daughter, that if your soul is filled with the fire of My pure love, then all difficulties dissipate like fog before the sun“s rays and dare not touch the soul. All adversaries are afraid to start a quarrel with such a soul, because they sense that it is stronger than the whole world.**

May 1, [1938]. This evening, Jesus said to me, **My daughter, do you need anything? I answered, “O my Love, when I have You I have everything.” And the Lord answered, If souls would put themselves completely in My care, I myself would undertake the task of sanctifying them, and I would lavish even greater graces on them.** There are souls who thwart My efforts, but I have not given up on them; as often as they turn to Me, I hurry to their aid, shielding them with My Mercy, and I give them the first place in My compassionate Heart. 1683 Write for the benefit of religious souls that it delights Me to come to their hearts in Holy Communion. But if there is anyone else in such a heart, I cannot bear it and quickly leave that heart, taking with Me all the gifts and graces I have prepared for the soul. And the

soul does not even notice My going. After some time, inner emptiness and dissatisfaction will come to her attention. Oh, if only she would turn to Me then, (60) I would help her to cleanse her heart, and I would fulfill everything in her soul; but without her knowledge and consent, I cannot be the Master of her heart.

During Holy Hour today, I asked the Lord Jesus if He would deign to teach me about the spiritual life, Jesus answered me, **My daughter, faithfully live up to the words which I speak to you. Do not value any external thing too highly, even if it were to seem very 369 precious to you. Let go of yourself, and abide with Me continually. Entrust everything to Me and do nothing on your own, and you will always have great freedom of spirit. No circumstances or events will ever be able to upset you. Set little store on what people say. Let everyone judge you as they like. Do not make excuses for yourself, it will do you no harm. Give away everything at the first sign of a demand, even if they were the most necessary things. Do not ask for anything without consulting Me. Allow them to take away even what is due you – respect, your good name – let your spirit rise above all that. And so, set free from everything, rest close to My Heart, not allowing your peace to be disturbed by anything. My pupil, consider (62) the words which I have spoken to you.**

Today, the Lord said to me, **My daughter, look into My Merciful Heart and reflect its compassion in your own heart and in your deeds, so that you, who proclaim My mercy to the world, may yourself be aflame with it.**

As I was writing I saw the Lord Jesus leaning over me, and He asked, My daughter, what are you writing? I answered, “I am writing about You, Jesus, about Your being hidden in the Blessed Sacrament, about Your inconceivable love and mercy for people.” And Jesus said, Secretary of My most profound mystery, know that yours is an exclusive intimacy with Me. Your task is to write down everything that I make known to you about My mercy, for the benefit of those who by (67) reading these things will be comforted in their souls and will have the courage to approach Me. I therefore want you to devote all your free moments to writing. “But, O Lord, shall I always have a moment, at least a brief one, in which to write?” And Jesus answered. It is not for you to think about that. Only do as much as you can, and I will always arrange things so that you will easily be able to do what I ask of you.

Today, I was visited by a certain lay person [probably Stanislava Kwietniewska] who has caused me a lot of sorrow and who has abused my goodness, telling many lies. At the first moment I saw her, the blood froze in my veins, because there stood before my eyes all that I had to suffer because of her, although with one word I could have freed myself of them all. And the thought came to me to tell her the truth, firmly and immediately. But at the same moment, the mercy (68) of God came before my eyes, and I resolved to act toward her as Jesus would have acted in my place. I started to talk to her gently, and when she expressed the wish to talk to me alone, I then, in a very delicate manner, made known to her clearly the sad condition of her soul. I saw that she was deeply moved, though she was trying to hide this from me. At that point, a third person came in, and so our heart-to-heart talk came to an end.

She asked me for a glass of water and for two other things which I did willingly. However, had it not been for the grace of God, I would not have been able to act in such a way toward her. When they left, I thanked God for the grace which had supported me during that time. 371 1695 Then I heard the words, I am glad you behaved like My true daughter. Be always merciful as I am merciful. Love everyone out of love for Me, even your greatest enemies, so that My mercy may be fully reflected (69) in your heart.

I asked the Lord today that He might deign to teach me about the interior life, because of myself I can neither understand nor conceive anything perfectly. The Lord answered me, I was your Teacher, I am and I will be; strive to make your heart like unto My humble and gentle Heart. Never claim your rights. Bear with great calm and patience everything that befalls you. Do not defend yourself when you are put to shame, though innocent. Let others triumph. Do not stop (73) being good when you notice that your goodness is being abused. I Myself will speak up for you when it is necessary. Be grateful for the smallest of My graces, because your gratitude compels Me to grant you new graces.

Towards the end of the Way of the Cross which I was making, the Lord Jesus began to complain about the souls of religious and priests, about the lack of love in chosen souls. I will allow convents and churches to be destroyed. I answered, "Jesus, but there are so many souls praising You in convents." The Lord answered, That praise wounds My Heart, because love has been banished from convents. Souls without love and without devotion, souls full of egoism and self-love, souls full of pride and arrogance, souls full of deceit and hypocrisy, lukewarm souls who have just enough warmth to keep them alive: My Heart cannot bear this. (74) All the graces that I pour out upon them flow off them as off the face of a rock. I cannot stand them, because they are neither good or bad. I called convents into being to sanctify the world through them. It is from them that a powerful flame of love and sacrifice should burst forth. And if they do not repent and become enkindled by their first love, I will deliver them over to the fate of this world..... How can they sit on the promised throne of judgment to judge the world, when their guilt is greater than the guilt of the world? There is neither penance nor atonement. O heart, which received Me in the morning and at noon are all ablaze with hatred against Me, hatred of all sorts! O heart especially chosen by Me, were you chosen for this, to give Me more pain? The great sins of the world are superficial wounds on My Heart, but the sins of a chosen soul pierce My Heart through and through..... 1703 When I tried to intercede for them, I could find nothing with which (75) to excuse them and, being at the time unable to think of anything in their defense, my heart was seized with pain, and I wept bitterly. Then the Lord looked at me kindly and comforted me with these words: Do not cry. There are still a great number of souls who love Me very much, but My Heart desires to be loved by all and, because My love is great, that is why I warn and chastise them.

struggle with a certain temptation. There was a person who kept accosting me with flattering words, and since he knew when I went out to go to the chapel or to the veranda, he would bar my way. Since he did not dare approach me by himself, he found another person like himself, but neither of them dared approach. As I was on my way to the May devotions, they were already standing there where I had to pass. I hadn't yet reached them when I heard enticing words, (76) directed at me. And the Lord permitted me to know the intentions 373 of their

hearts, which were not good. I felt they would block my way after the service, and that I would have to talk to them, for up to that time I hadn't said a word. When I left the chapel, they were there, armed and waiting for me to pass. This time, I was overcome with fear. Then Jesus stood by me and said, Do not fear. I am with you. Then I felt an extraordinary strength in my soul, which I cannot describe and, being a few steps from them, I said boldly and loudly, "Praised be Jesus Christ." And they, stepping aside, responded, "For ever and ever, Amen." As if struck by lightning, they bowed their heads, not even daring to look at me. After I had passed, I could hear some malicious comments. Ever since that time, when this person sees me, he runs away in order not to meet me and I, thanks to the Lord, have been left in peace.

During Vespers today, the Lord gave me to know how very pleased He is with a pure and free heart. I felt that it is God's delight to look into such a heart.... But such hearts are knightly hearts; their life is a constant battle

When I was left alone with the Blessed Virgin, She instructed me concerning the interior life. She said, The soul's true greatness is in loving God and in humbling oneself in His presence, completely forgetting oneself and believing oneself to be nothing, because the Lord is great, but He is well-pleased only with the humble, He always opposes the proud. 1712 (81) A certain person whom I have mentioned before visited me again. When I saw that she was beginning to get entangled in her own lies, I let her know that I knew she was lying. She became very embarrassed and stopped speaking. Then I spoke to her about the great judgments of God, and I also remarked that she was leading innocent souls astray and along dangerous roads. I uncovered before her everything that was in her heart. Since I had to overcome my own feelings in order to talk to her, to prove to Jesus that I love my enemies, I gave her my afternoon snack. She went away enlightened in soul, but action is still far away..... 1713 There are times when the Lord Jesus fulfills my smallest wishes. Today I remarked that I would like to see some ears of grain, but that they cannot be seen from our sanatorium. However, one of the patients heard this remark and, on the following day, he went out into the field and brought me several beautiful (82) ears of grain. My room is always adorned with fresh flowers, but my spirit finds satisfaction in nothing. More and more, I year for God.

Today, I was talking with the Lord, and He said to me, There are souls with whom I can do nothing. They are souls that are continuously observing others, but know nothing of what is going on within their own selves. They talk about others continually, even during times of grand silence, which is reserved for speaking only with Me. Poor souls, they do not hear My words; their interior remains empty. They do not look for Me within their own hearts, but in idle talk, where I am never to be found. They sense their emptiness, but they do not recognize their own guilt, while souls in whom I reign completely are a constant source of remorse to them. Instead of correcting themselves, their hearts swell with envy, and if they do not come to their senses, they plunge in even deeper. A heart, which thus far is envious, now begins to be filled with hate. And they are already at the edge of the precipice. They are jealous of my gifts in other souls, but they themselves are unable and unwilling to accept them.

When the soul of a certain young lady came to me one night, she made me aware of her presence, and made known to me that she needed my prayer. I prayed for a while, but her spirit did not leave me. Then I thought to myself, "If you are a good spirit, leave me in peace,

and the indulgences I will gain tomorrow will be for you.” At that moment, the spirit left my room, and I recognized that she was in purgatory.

Write: I am Thrice Holy, and detest the smallest sin. I cannot love a soul which is stained with sin; but when it repents, there is no limit to My generosity toward it. My mercy embraces and justifies it. With My mercy, I pursue sinners along all their paths, and My Heart rejoices when they return to Me. I forget the bitterness with which they fed My Heart and rejoice at their return. Tell sinners that no one shall escape My Hand; if they run away from My merciful Heart, they will fall into My Just Hands. Tell sinners that I am always waiting for them, that I listen intently to the beating of their heart.... When will it beat for Me? Write, that I am speaking to them through their remorse of conscience, through their failures and sufferings, through thunderstorms, through the voice of the Church. And if they bring all My graces to naught, I begin to be angry (91) with them, leaving them alone and giving them what they want.

Today I was awakened by a great storm. The wind was raging, and it was raining in torrents, thunderbolts striking again and again. I began to pray that the storm would do no harm, when I heard the words: Say the chaplet I have taught you, and the storm will cease. I began immediately to say the chaplet and hadn't even finished it when the storm suddenly ceased, and I heard the words: Through the chaplet you will obtain everything, if what you ask for is compatible with My will. 1732 As I was praying for Poland, I heard the words: I bear a special love for Poland, and if she will be obedient to My will, I will exalt her in might and holiness. From her will come forth the spark that will prepare the world for My final coming. The Lord said to me, Enter into purgatory often, because they need you there. O my Jesus, I understand the meaning of these words which You are speaking to me, but first let me enter the treasury (98) of Your mercy. 379 1739 Write, **My daughter, that I am mercy itself for the contrite soul. A soul's greatest wretchedness does not enkindle Me with wrath; but rather, My Heart is moved towards it with great mercy.**

My daughter, I want to teach you about spiritual warfare. Never trust in yourself, but abandon yourself totally to My will. In desolation, darkness and various doubts, have recourse to Me and to your spiritual director. He will always answer you in My name. Do not bargain with any temptation; lock yourself immediately in My Heart and, at the first opportunity, reveal the temptation to the confessor. Put your self-love in the last place, so that it does not taint your deeds. Bear with yourself with great patience. Do not neglect interior mortifications. Always justify to yourself the opinions of your superiors and of your confessor. Shun murmurers like a plague. (120) Let all act as they like; you are to act as I want you to. Observe the rule as faithfully as you can. If someone causes you trouble, think what good you can do for the person who caused you to suffer. Do not pour out your feelings. Be silent when you are rebuked. Do not ask everyone's opinion, but only the opinion of your confessor; be as frank and simple as a child with him. Do not become discouraged by ingratitude. Do not examine with curiosity the roads down which I lead you. When boredom and discouragement beat against your heart, run away from yourself and hide in My heart. Do not fear struggle; courage itself often intimidates temptations, and they dare not attack us. Always fight with the deep conviction that I am with you. Do not be guided by feeling, because it is not always under your control; but all merit lies in the will. Always depend upon your superiors, even in the smallest things. I will not delude you with prospects of peace (121) and consolations; on the contrary, prepare for great battles. Know that you are now on a great stage where all heaven and earth are watching you. Fight like a knight, so that I can reward you. Do not be unduly fearful, because you are not alone.

When I went out to the garden today, the Lord said to me, Return to your room, for I will be waiting for you there. As soon as I returned, I saw the Lord Jesus, sitting at the table and waiting for me. He looked at me kindly and said, My daughter, I want you to write now, because that walk would not have been in conformity with My will. I remained alone and immediately got down to writing. 1783 + When I immersed myself in prayer and united myself with all the Masses that were being celebrated all over the world at that time, I implored God, for the sake of all these Holy Masses, to have mercy on the world and especially on poor sinners who were dying at that moment. At the same instant, I received an interior answer from God that a thousand souls (132) had received grace through the prayerful mediation I had offered to God. We do not know the number of souls that is ours to save through our prayers and sacrifices; therefore, let us always pray for sinners. Today, in the course of a long conversation, the Lord said to me, How very much I desire the salvation of souls! My dearest secretary, write that I want to pour out My divine life into human souls and sanctify them, if only they were willing to accept My grace. The greatest sinners would achieve great sanctity, if only they would trust in My mercy. The very inner depths of My being are filled to overflowing with mercy, and it is being poured out upon all I have created. My delight is to act in a human soul and to fill it with My mercy (133) and to justify it. My kingdom on earth is My life in the human soul. Write, My secretary, that I Myself am the spiritual guide of souls – and I guide them indirectly through the priest, and lead each one to sanctity by a road known to Me alone.

When I met with the Lord, I said to Him, (135) “You are fooling me, Jesus; You show me the open gate of heaven, and again You leave me on earth.” The Lord said to me, When, in heaven, you see these present days, you will rejoice and will want to see as many of them as possible. I am not surprised, **My daughter, that you cannot understand this now, because your heart is overflowing with pain and longing for Me. Your vigilance pleases Me. Let My word be enough for you; it will not be long now.** And my soul found itself once again in exile. I lovingly united myself to the will of God, submitting myself to His gracious decrees.

Today²⁵³ I saw the glory of God which flows from the image. Many souls are receiving graces, although they do not speak of it openly. Even though it has met up with all sorts of vicissitudes, God is receiving glory because of it; and the efforts of Satan and of evil men are shattered and come to naught. In spite of Satan’s anger, The Divine Mercy will triumph over the whole world and will be worshipped by all souls. 1790 I have come to know that, in order for God to act in a soul, it must give up acting on its own; otherwise, God will not carry out his will in it. 1791 When a great storm was approaching, I began to say the chaplet. Suddenly I heard the voice of an angel: “I cannot approach in (137) this storm, because the light which comes from her mouth drives back both me and the storm.” Such was the angel’s complaint to God. I then recognized how much havoc he was to have made through this storm; but I also recognized that this prayer was pleasing to God, and that this chaplet was most powerful.

2. The Diary of Saint Gemma Galgani

St. Gemma Galgani, “the Flower of Lucca”, was an Italian mystic often referred to as the "Daughter of Passion," due to her intense replication of the Passion of Christ. She was born March 12, 1878, in a small town near Lucca which is a city on the Serchio river in Italy's Tuscany region. On June 8, 1899, Gemma felt pain and blood coming from her hands, feet and heart. These were the marks of the stigmata. Each Thursday evening, Gemma would fall into rapture and the marks would appear. The marks of the passion, the stigmata, would remain until Friday evening or Saturday morning. Gemma's stigmata would continue to appear until her confessor, Reverend Germanus Ruoppolo, advised her to pray for their disappearance due to her declining health. Through her prayers, the phenomenon ceased, but the white marks remained on her skin until her death. In January of 1903, Gemma was diagnosed with tuberculosis. At the start of Holy Week in 1903, Gemma began suffering greatly. She died at age 25 on Holy Saturday, April 11.



The Parish Priest in her company said, "She died with a smile which remained upon her lips, so that I could not convince myself that she was really dead." St. Gemma Galgani was beatified on May 14, 1933 by Pope Pius XI and canonized on May 2, 1940, only 37 years after her death, by Pope Pius XII. She is the patron saint against temptations, against the death of parents, against tuberculosis, of students and of pharmacists. Her feast day is celebrated on April 11

July 19th to 23rd 1900

Thursday, July 19

This evening at last, after six days of absence of Jesus, since it was Thursday, I began my hour of prayer^[1], thinking of Jesus on the Cross. Then it happened. I found myself with Him suffering and I felt a great desire to suffer and asked Jesus to give me this grace. He granted it; He approached me, took from His head the crown of thorns and placed it upon mine, and then went aside. I looked at Him silently for I was thinking; Perhaps He did not love me anymore, because He had not pressed the crown down hard upon my head as He had done at other times. Jesus understood and pressed it upon my temples. They were painful but happy moments. I then spent an hour with Jesus. I should have liked to continue with Him thus all night, but Jesus loves obedience very much; He Himself always submits to obedience, so when the hour was up He left me. Generally Jesus took the crown off when He was leaving; this time, however, He left it until about four o'clock the following afternoon.

Friday, July 20

By four o'clock today I was tired of suffering. I presently found myself with Jesus, Who came beside me and was not sad as on the previous night; He caressed me and lifted the crown from my head. I then felt less pain; but when He put it upon His own head I felt no pain at all. My strength returned and I felt even better than before I began to suffer. We talked of many things and during our conversation I asked Him not to make me confess to Father Vallini, because I did not like to. Jesus seemed disappointed, and told me that I should go at once. I promised I would. He showed His heart to me and said "I love you greatly because you are like me." "In what way, Jesus?" I asked, "because I seem so unlike you." "In accepting humiliations," He replied. Then there returned to me a vision of my past life. I saw my pride. It was always one of my greatest defects. When I was little, wherever I went I always heard it said that I was very proud. But what means Jesus has used to humiliate me, especially during this past year! At last I understand what God was doing with me. May Jesus be always thanked. Then my God added that with time He would make a saint of me. Of this last I will say no more for that is impossible to happen to me. He told me of something to say to the confessor and blessed me. I knew Jesus would be away from me for some days. But how good He is! Scarcely had He gone when my Angel Guardian appeared, who with his continual charity, vigilance, and patience assists me. Oh Jesus, I have promised always to obey you. I affirm it anew.

Saturday, July 21

My dearest Mother of Sorrows came to pay me a little visit as she is accustomed to on Saturday.

She seemed very unhappy and looked as if she had been weeping. Then she smiled, saying to me:

"Gemma, do you wish to repose on my breast?" I approached her and knelt; she raised me, kissed me on the forehead and disappeared.

This evening, after confessing to Father Vallini, I felt suddenly agitated and disturbed; it was a sign that the devil was near. Later, internally and also externally, I was all in a tempest; I should have preferred to go to bed and sleep rather than to pray, but no, I began to say three invocations, which I usually say every evening to the Sacred Heart of Mary. The enemy, who had been hidden for some hours, appeared in the form of a very small man, but so horrible that I was almost overcome with fear.

Continuing to pray, all at once I began to feel many blows on the shoulder which continued for about half an hour. Then my Angel Guardian came and asked me what the matter was; I begged him to stay with me all night, and he said to me, "But I must sleep." "No," I replied, "Angels of Jesus do not sleep." "Nevertheless," he replied, smiling, "I ought to rest. Where shall you put me?" I begged him to remain near me.

I went to bed; after that he seemed to spread his wings and come over my head. In the morning he was still there.

Sunday, July 22

The devil, in the form of a great black dog, put his paws upon my shoulders, making every bone in my body ache. At times I believed that he would mangle me; then one time, when I was taking holy water, he twisted my arm so cruelly that I fell to the earth in great pain.

After a while I remembered that I had around my neck the relic of the Holy Cross. Making the Sign of the Cross, I became calm. Jesus let me see Himself, but only for a short time, and He strengthened me anew to suffer and struggle.

At dinner time, there had come to me an evil thought which my Angel understood and he said to me; "Daughter, do you wish me to go away?" I was ashamed. These words I heard very distinctly and I did not know whether or not others also heard him.

While in church yesterday, he reprimanded me, saying: “The glory of Jesus and the place where you are, merit another kind of conduct,” because at that time I had raised my eyes to look at two children, to see how they were dressed.

Last night, while in bed, He reproved me again, saying, that instead of progressing in his teachings I was becoming constantly worse and continually slackening in well-doing.

I am always conscious when these things happen to me. It seems to me that no matter what I do, I do not succeed in preparing myself for the visit of the Mother of Sorrows or Brother Gabriel.

Monday, July 23

I went to bed, I slept, and slept well; after a quarter of an hour, for my sleep is always brief, I saw at the foot of my bed, on the ground, that usual ominous black creature, very black, very small. I knew who it was and said, “Have you begun again the business of not letting me sleep?” “What, sleep, why don’t you pray?” he replied.

“I shall pray later,” I said. “Now it is time to sleep.”

“For two days you have not been able to be recollected; well, let’s do what I want.” He began to give me blows, until he jumped up suddenly and rolled on the ground. I do not know what happened but I smiled for I did not have any fear of him today; he said, “Today I can do nothing to you but I’ll take care of you another time.”

I asked him: “Why can’t you? If you can do it other times, why can’t you now? I know—I am the same, but I have Jesus (the relic) on my neck.”

Then he said to me: “What have you in this room? Take off the belt^[3] (Saint Gabriel’s) you wear and then we shall see.”

I insisted that I had nothing but I knew what he meant. After this, I smiled at him as he stood there devoured with rage. He told me that if I prayed I would suffer all the more.

“It doesn’t matter,” I said, “I suffer for Jesus.”

In short, today I was much entertained by him. I saw him very angry; he has sworn to make me pay for it.

He waited until this evening, but by the grace of God he was not able to remain very long; he gave me three violent blows so that afterward going to bed took much time. At certain times he ran off and with such fear that I did not know what the matter was.

I myself, was scarcely able to move.

How often I called Jesus! But he did not come; I prayed that my Angel Guardian should lead me to Jesus, but everything was in vain. He said to me: “Tonight Jesus will not come to bless you nor will I.”

I was frightened then because if Jesus did not bless me I could not get up. . . . He saw that I was about to weep and said: “But you know, Jesus will send someone. And if you knew who it was, how happy you would be.”

My mind flew at once to Brother Gabriel. I asked him, but he made no reply, he kept me in suspense for some time. At last he said to me: “But if Jesus does send Brother Gabriel to bless you, what will you do? Do not speak to him if you do not want to disobey the Confessor.” “No, I will not speak,” I replied impatiently, “but how can Brother Gabriel bless me?” “It is Jesus who sends him; he has sent him other times to bless you. But will you manage to be silent and obey?” “Yes, yes, I will obey; let him come.”

After a little while Brother Gabriel came. What a frenzy seized me then! I wanted to speak to him, but I was good and checked myself^[4]. He blessed me with certain Latin words which I have remembered well, and then he suddenly departed. Oh, then I could not help saying:

“Brother Gabriel, ask our Mother to bring you to me Saturday.” He turned to me smiling and said:

“You are to be good,” and saying this took from his waist his black belt and said “Do you want it again?” I wanted it very much indeed: “That helps me so much when you let me wear it; please give it to me now.” He shook his head to indicate that he would give it to me Saturday and left me. He told me that the belt was the one which had liberated me from the devil the night before.

It happened today as usual. I had gone to bed, in fact I was asleep, but the devil did not wish this. He presented himself in a disgusting manner; he tempted me but I was strong. I commended myself to Jesus asking that He take my life rather than have me offend Him. What horrible temptations those were! All displease me but those against Holy Purity make me most wretched. Afterward he left me in peace and the Angel Guardian came and assured me that I had not done anything wrong. I complained somewhat, because I wished his help at such times, and he said that whether I saw him or not, he would be always above my head. Also, yesterday he promised that in the evening Jesus would come to see me.

Yesterday evening I waited with impatience for the moment to go to my room; I took the crucifix and went to bed. My Angel was willing to have me go to bed because of the order of the Confessor. I felt myself becoming recollected. Jesus came and stood by my side. What beautiful moments those were!

I asked Him if He would love me always, and He replied with these words: **“My daughter, I have enriched you with so many beautiful things without any merit on your part and you ask me if I love you? I fear so much for you.”** “Why?” I asked. **“Oh daughter, on the days when you enjoy My presence you are all fervor, it costs you no fatigue to pray. Now instead you are wearied by prayer and negligence in your duties seeks to insinuate itself in your heart. Oh daughter, why do you speak thus? Tell me, in the past, did prayer seem long as it does now? Some little penance you do, but how long you wait before resolving upon it.”**

Finally I commended His poor sinner to Him. He blessed me and in going away said to me: “Remember that I have created you for Heaven; you have nothing to do with the earth.”

PART II

July 25th to August 4th 1900

Wednesday, July 25

And what about today? What shall I say today? I find no peace; pride predominates over me more than in earlier times. I suffered much to complete even a small act of humiliation. About what happened to me yesterday I shall speak very little; I do not control my tongue and for this reason I cause other people to suffer.

For obedience to my confessor I must speak very little and never with people who know about my experiences. A few days ago when Father Norberto came, I hid instantly; another time he came and I did the same; I was ready, truth be said, to be obedient, but then what happened to me? After a few days I chanced to be speaking to another friar about this and I invented a big lie, saying that it was Mrs. Cecilia who had made me hide; but that was not true, it was I who did it on my own.

I don't know how Father Norberto came to learn of this, but instantly he referred the matter to Mrs. Cecilia, who was very hurt. But I was no less hurt. She interrogated me about whether I had really spoken and I answered no, because I had completely forgotten about it; but there's always the one who makes me remember everything; my guardian Angel came and reproached me, saying: “Gemma, what's this, even lying? Don't you remember a few days

ago, when as punishment for telling Brother Famiano about your experiences, I made you stay half an hour ?”

I then recalled everything well (I must say that my guardian angel, every time I do a bad thing, punishes me; not an evening passes that I do not have some punishment) and he commanded me to go to Mrs. Cecilia and tell everything and beg her in his name to forgive me.

I promised to do this, sure! The day passed, then came the evening and I never made that little act of humility. My angel reminded me again, saying that if I didn't go to her and tell her everything, that night the devil would come.

Well, that threat I could not ignore, and so I went to her room. She was in bed and the lamp was out; I couldn't believe it: this way she would not see me. As well as I could I told her everything, but in a forced way; it was a great shame, my being unable to humiliate myself. Finally, after she said all would be forgotten, I went to my room. Yes, of course! She said all was forgotten but it was impossible. I asked Jesus many times for forgiveness and also my beloved Angel, and I went to bed. What a horrible night! My Angel, because of the great resistance I had put up before accepting my humiliation left me alone, and with a few visits by the enemy. I could not sleep because my conscience was ill at ease; how I was troubled!

Thursday, July 26

In the morning my guardian Angel finally came and he reproached me harshly, very harshly and left me once again alone and afflicted. I received Communion but, my God, in what a state! Jesus did not make himself felt. When after all this I was able to be alone, then I let out my feelings freely; I was at fault, I realize that; but if I can say one thing, I did not wish to cause certain displeasures to certain persons, but my evil inclinations are so bad that I often fall into these things. For more than an hour Jesus made me stay in that state; I cried and I was afflicted. Then Jesus had pity on me and he came; He caressed me and made me promise not to do these things again, and He blessed me.

I have to say that in what happened yesterday I told three lies, I had angry thoughts, and I had the idea of avenging myself against whoever had tattled on me, but Jesus prohibited me from speaking with Brother Famiano and with others. I quickly became calm, and to be even more so, I ran to confession.

Then in the evening, after saying my prayers, I set out to do the usual Holy Hour prayer. Jesus stayed with me throughout; I was in bed^[5], as usual, because otherwise I would not have been able to remain with my beloved Jesus and suffer with him. I suffered a lot; He proved anew his love toward me by giving me His crown of thorns until the following day; Jesus loves me most on Friday. That evening He took back the crown, saying He was happy with me and as He caressed me He said: “Daughter, if I add other crosses, do not be afflicted.” I promised, and He left me.

Friday, July 27

This Friday I suffered even more, because I had to do some chores and at every moment I thought I would die. Indeed, my aunt had commanded me to fetch water: I felt so exhausted I thought the thorns went into my brain (but this was all my imagination), and a drop of blood began to appear at my temple. I hurriedly cleaned up so she barely noticed it. She asked me if maybe I had fallen and cut my head; I told her that I had scratched myself with the chain from the well. Then I went to the nuns, it was 10:00am and I stayed with them until about 5:00pm. Then I returned home, but Jesus already had removed the crown.

Saturday, July 28

The night passed very well; in the morning my guardian angel came: he was happy and he told me to take a piece of paper and write what he would dictate:

Here it is:

“Remember, my daughter, that whoever truly loves Jesus speaks little and bears everything. I order you, on behalf of Jesus, not to give your opinion unless you are asked; never to hold to your own wishes, but to submit immediately. Obey promptly your confessor and others he designates, without answering back; when it is necessary, make only one reply, and be sincere with your confessor and with others. When you have committed some fault of omission, accuse yourself instantly, without waiting to be asked.

Finally, remember to guard your eyes, and think, eyes that have been mortified will see the beauty of Heaven.”

After saying these things he blessed me and said I should go to communion. I went right away; it was the first time in nearly a month that Jesus had made himself felt.

I told him all of what was happening and he kept me with him a long while, because I received communion at 8:30am and when I returned to my senses it was much later. I ran home and on the way the clock struck 10:15am. I was good and found myself in the same position that I had been in during communion, and as I got up I saw that my guardian angel was above my head with his wings spread. He accompanied me home himself and warned me not to pray during the day, not until nightfall, because I could not be safe. In fact I realized that I was safe from the others in the household, but not from my sister, because she had stuffed the keyhole and it was impossible to lock myself in; then my aunts intervened and in the evening I could close the door.

Toward evening, I went to the Fifteen Saturdays at St. Maria Bianca;[6] the Blessed Virgin told me She would not be paying me her usual little visit because in the past few days I had disgusted Jesus. I said to Her that Jesus had forgiven me, but She said: “I don’t forgive my daughters so easily; I absolutely want you to become perfect: we’ll see if Saturday I can come and bring Brother Gabriel.” Nevertheless, She blessed me and I resigned myself.

But I do not lack for temptation; one, a strong one, was Saturday evening: the devil came and said to me: “Good, good girl! Sure, go and write everything: don’t you know that everything you write is my work and if you are discovered, think about the scandal! Where will you go to hide? I pass you off as a saint, but you are deluded.”

I felt so badly that out of desperation I swore that when Mrs. Cecilia returned I would destroy what I had written. In the meantime I tried to tear this writing up but I couldn’t; I didn’t have the strength, or else I just don’t know what happened.

Sunday, July 29

I remained in this state until yesterday morning, Sunday, without being able to collect myself; my guardian Angel, however, does not leave me: he gives me strength, and I must say that Sunday I had no appetite but he himself ordered me to eat, as he did today also. Every evening he did not fail to bless me, but also to punish me and yell at me.

Today, Sunday, I feel a great need for Jesus but it is already late and I no longer have any hope; I expect to spend the night free and alone.

But Jesus came, you know! How He reproached me because I had not gone to Communion. This is how Jesus reproached me: “Why, oh daughter, am I so often deprived of your visits? You know how much I yearn for you to come to me when you are good.”

I fell on my knees in front of Jesus and in tears I said: “But how can this be, my Jesus, aren’t you tired of putting up with me and all my coldness?”

“Daughter,” he answered, “see to it that from now on not a day goes by without your coming to me, try to keep your heart pure and adorned with every possible care. Drive all self-love

away from your heart and anything else that is not entirely mine, and then come to me without fear.”

He blessed me, along with all the members of the Sacro Collegio; and went away; indeed, in the end he advised me to have a little more strength in combating the enemy, telling me to take no account of those words because the devil is always a liar who seeks every means to make me fall, especially about obedience. **“Obey, my daughter,” he repeated, “obey instantly and cheerfully, and to achieve victory in this beautiful virtue, pray to my Mother who loves you so much.”** I would have wanted to tell him that yesterday his Mother didn’t wish to come, but He disappeared.

Monday, July 30

This morning I went to communion. I did not want to: I was not at peace with my conscience; I lingered until 9:00am, thinking if I should go or not; then Jesus won and I went to Communion, but how? With what coldness! I was completely unable to feel Jesus. Today I was not able to collect myself at all; I was bad, I got angry, but only by myself, no one else saw me: I cried so, so much, because my sister Angelina did not want to leave my room. Yesterday evening, Sunday, for spite, she stayed in my room until 11:00pm, making fun of me, saying that she wanted to see me go in ecstasy; today again the same thing. She wrote a letter yesterday to Bagni di S. Giuliano and spoke a lot about me and my experiences. These things, which I should be accepting happily and with thanks to Jesus, instead upset me, and I almost have moments of despair.

While I was in that state, my guardian angel who was watching me, said:

“Why are you so upset, my daughter? You have to suffer something, you know, for Jesus.” (In truth, what displeased me most were certain words that my sister had said out loud to me), and to this my angel responded: “You are worthy only to be scorned because you have offended Jesus.”

Then he calmed me, sat at my side, and said gently, very gently: “Oh daughter, don’t you know that you must conform in every way to the life of Jesus? He suffered so much for you, don’t you know that you must on every occasion suffer for him? Furthermore, why do you give this displeasure to Jesus, of neglecting to meditate on his Passion every day?” It was true: I recalled that I did a meditation on the Passion only on Fridays and Thursdays. “You must do it every day, remember that.” Finally he said to me: “Be brave, be brave! This world is not a place for rest: rest will come after death; for now you must suffer, and suffer all things, to save some soul from eternal death.” I begged him urgently to ask my Mother to come to me a little, because I had so many things to tell Her, and he said yes. But this evening She did not come.

Tuesday, July 31

We are at Tuesday; I run to Communion but in what a state! I promised Jesus to be good and to change my life; I said it, but He didn’t answer anything; I also asked that He send his Mother, and also mine, and he responded: “Are you worthy?” I was ashamed, and I said nothing more. Then he added: “Be good and soon She will come with Brother Gabriel.” It’s been since Sunday that I have been unable to collect myself; nonetheless I thanked Jesus. When my guardian angel comes, I am awake, and my head does not take off; Jesus, my Mom and sometimes Brother Gabriel make my head take off; but I always stay where I am; I always find myself in the same place, it’s just that my head departs. What a great need I have for my Mother! If Jesus would grant me this, afterward I would be better. How am I supposed to go so long without Mom?

Wednesday and Thursday, August 1 and 2

Wednesday, I could not collect myself at all. Nor Thursday; from time to time my guardian angel would say something to me, but I was always awake; in fact, Wednesday evening, interiorly I thought I might be deceived by the devil; my guardian angel calmed me by saying: "Obedience."

Now coming to Thursday. As usual out of obedience I went to bed; I began my prayers and immediately collected myself. For a while I had been feeling ill. I stayed all alone; when I was suffering Jesus wasn't there and I suffered only in my head. My confessor asked me this morning if I had had the signs, and I said no. They hurt a lot but not compared to my head. Poor Jesus! He made me stay alone for about an hour but then He came and showed up like this, all bloodied, saying: "I am the Jesus of Father Germano." I did not believe him, and you know why.[7] I am always fearful, always. I pronounced these words: "Long live Jesus and Mary" and then I understood. He gave me a bit of strength but internally I was still afraid, and he said: "Do not fear: I am the Jesus of Father Germano." [8] He urged me of His own free will, without my even suggesting it, to pray for Mother Maria Teresa of the Infant Jesus because she is in Purgatory and suffering greatly. Jesus wants her quickly with him, I think.

Friday, August 3

Today I slept a little, then I felt completely collected; after becoming collected I felt my head take off: I was with Jesus. How happy I was! Yes, I suffered so much in my head; I complained a little because He is leaving me alone. I begged Him also to tell me when Mother Maria Teresa would be in Heaven. He said: "Not yet; she's still suffering." I commended my poor sinner to Him and He blessed me and all the members of the Sacro Collegio and He left me in a happy state.

This evening I felt I could not collect myself; I said a few evening prayers and went to bed. To tell the truth, I foresaw a bit of a storm because Jesus had warned me a few days ago, saying: "The enemy will try you with one final battle, but it will be the last because now that is enough." I could not help but thank Him for the strength He had always given me, and I prayed that He would want to give me strength for this final test as well, that is to say last night.

I went to bed, as you know well, with the intention of sleeping; slumber was not long in coming when almost instantly a tiny, tiny man appeared, all covered in black hair. What a fright! He put his hands on my bed and I thought he wanted to hit me: "No, no," he said, "I am not able to hit you, don't be afraid," and as he said this he lay down on the bed.

I called Jesus to help me but he did not come, but this doesn't mean he abandoned me. As soon as I called his name I felt liberated, but it was sudden.

Other times I had called Jesus but He had never been ready like last night.

You should have seen the demon afterward, how angry! He rolled around on the floor, cursing; he made one last effort to take away the cross I had with me but then he instantly fell backward.

How good Jesus was with me last night. The devil, after that last effort, turned toward me and said that since he had not been able to do anything, he wished to torment me the rest of the night. "No," I told him; I called my guardian angel, who opened his wings and alighted next to me; he blessed me and the bad devil ran away. Jesus be thanked.

This morning I learned that at the very moment the devil was rising in fury, the scapular of Our Lady of Sorrows had been placed on me [9] and I realized that when the devil was trying to take something off of me, it could be nothing but that. My Mother, Our Lady of Sorrows, also be thanked.

Saturday, August 4

Here I am at Saturday: it's the day destined for me to see my Mom, but should I hope for it? Finally evening has arrived. I set out to recite the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary; at first I abandoned myself, that is to say, I placed myself in God's will, to spend that Saturday also without seeing Our Lady of Sorrows; but for Jesus this offering was enough of a sacrifice and he fulfilled my wishes. At some point, I'm not sure where in the rosary, I felt completely collected and with this collection, as usual, quickly my head took off, and without realizing it, I found myself (it seemed to me) in front of Our Lady of Sorrows.

Upon first seeing her, I was a little afraid; I did all I could to assure myself that it was truly Jesus' Mother and She gave me every sign to assure me. After a few moments I felt entirely happy but I was so moved by seeing myself, so little compared to her, and so content, that I could not say a word except to repeat the name "Mom."

She stared, really stared, at me, laughing, and approached to caress me, and She said I should calm down. Yes, of course, happiness and emotion grew in me, and She, maybe fearing that it would be bad for me (as happened other times, indeed one time, which I did not tell about, when for the great consolation I felt in seeing Jesus again, my heart started beating with such force that I was obliged, on the orders of my confessor, to tie a tight, tight bandage around that point) left me, saying that I should go and rest. I obeyed promptly, and in one second I was in bed and She did not delay her coming; then I was calm.

I also must say that upon first seeing these things, these figures (that certainly could have been deceptions), I am initially taken with fear; then fear is followed quickly by joy.

However that may be, this is what happens to me. I spoke with Her about some of my desires, the most important one being that she should bring me with her to Heaven; this I said to her several times. She answered: "Daughter, you must suffer still more."

"I will suffer up there," I wanted to say, "in Heaven."

"Oh no," was her reply, "in Heaven there is no more suffering; but I will bring you there very soon," She said.

She was near my bed, so beautiful, I contemplated her and could not get enough. I commended my sinner to her; She smiled: that was a good sign . . . I further commended to her various persons who were dear to me, in particular those to whom I have a big debt of gratitude. And this I had to do also on the order of my confessor, who last time beseeched me to commend them fervently to Our Lady of Sorrows, saying that I could do nothing for them but that the Blessed Virgin may ask on my behalf and bestow on them every grace.

I feared that She would leave me at any moment and so I called her repeatedly and said She should take me with her. Her presence made me forget about my protector, Brother Gabriel. I asked about him, why hadn't She brought him along, and She said: "Because Brother Gabriel demands more exact obedience from you." She had something to tell me for Father Germano; to these last words She did not answer.

While we were talking together She constantly held my hand, and then She let go; I did not want her to go and I was about to cry; then She said:

"My daughter, that's enough; Jesus wants this sacrifice from you, now it's time for Me to leave you." Her words calmed me and I answered with tranquility: "So be it, the sacrifice is done." She left. Who could describe precisely how beautiful, how beloved is the Heavenly Mother? No, for certain there is no comparison. When will I have the good fortune of seeing Her again?

PART III

August 5th to 19th 1900

Sunday, August 5

Today, Sunday, I prayed to my guardian Angel to grant me the favor of going to tell Jesus that I would not be able to do a meditation because I did not feel well; I would do it that evening. But that evening I had no desire; I went to bed and made preparations for meditation but collected myself only internally. My head did not take off; I stayed this way for an hour. Indeed, I should add that the Sunday meditation is always on the Resurrection, actually on Heaven; but Jesus makes it clearly known to me that he does not wish me to do that meditation just yet, because my mind immediately rushes to some principal point in his Passion. Let his will be done.

Monday, August 6

Here I am at August 6th. The days pass and here I am always in the same worldly abyss. This evening my guardian Angel, while I was saying evening prayers, approached me and tapping me on the shoulder he said: "Gemma, why such disinclination for prayer? This distresses Jesus." "No," I answered, "it's not disinclination: but for two days I have not been feeling well." He responded:

"Do your duty with diligence and you shall see that Jesus will love you even more." For a moment he was silent and then he asked: "And Brother Gabriel?" "I don't know." "How long is it that you haven't seen him?,"^[10] "A long, long, long while." "Then tonight Jesus will send him." "Really? Tonight no, I would be disobeying: at night my confessor is opposed." Oh with how much desire I would have wanted him! but I also wanted to obey. I prayed to send him in the daytime and soon, so that I could write that letter to Father Germano. I urged my guardian angel to go to Jesus and ask permission to spend the night together with me. He immediately disappeared.

I had finished prayers: I went to bed. When he had gotten permission from Jesus to come, he returned; he asked me: "How long has it been since you last prayed for the souls in Purgatory? Oh my daughter, you think of them so little! Mother Maria Teresa is still suffering, you know?" It was since morning that I had not prayed for them. He said he would like me to dedicate every little pain I suffered to the souls in Purgatory. "Every little penance gives them relief; even yesterday and today, if you had offered a little for them." I answered with a bit of astonishment: "My body was hurting; and do bodily pains relieve the souls in Purgatory?" "Yes," he said, "yes, daughter: even the smallest suffering gives relief." So I promised that from that moment onward I would offer everything for them. He added: "How much those souls suffer! Would you like to do something for them tonight? Do you want to suffer?" "Doing what?" I said. "Is it the same suffering Jesus did on Good Friday?" "No," he answered, "these are not Jesus' pains, yours will be bodily pains." I said no, because except for Thursday and Friday Jesus does not want this; the other nights He wants me to sleep. But since the souls in Purgatory, and in particular Mother Maria Teresa, are so dear to my heart, I told him I would gladly suffer for an hour.

These words satisfied him, but he saw clearly that in doing so I would have been disobedient, so he let me sleep.

This morning, when I awoke, he was still beside me; he blessed me and went away.

Tuesday, August 7

During the day yesterday my guardian Angel promised me that in the evening I would be able to speak with Brother Gabriel. The long-awaited evening arrived; in the beginning I was sleepy, then an agitation came over me, enough to frighten me. But since Jesus was about to grant me this consolation, either before or after the consolation, He gives me some suffering. Jesus be always blessed.

Still, in undergoing this agitation I saw no one, I mean the devil; it's just that I felt very ill, but it lasted only a short while. Quickly I calmed down; suddenly I felt completely collected and then almost immediately it happened like usual; my head took off and I found myself with Brother Gabriel. What a consolation that was! For obedience I was not allowed to kiss his vestment and I restrained myself.[11] The first thing I did was ask him why he had stayed so long without visiting me. He answered that it was my fault. Of this I was sure because I am very bad.

How many beautiful things he told me about the convent and he said them with such force that it seemed to me his eyes sparkled. On his own, without my asking: "Daughter, within a few months, amidst the exultation of almost all Catholics, the new convent will be founded." "What do you mean, in a few months?" I said, "if there are still 13 months to go." "That's a few," he responded. Then, smiling, he turned to one side and knelt, clasped his hands and said: "Blessed Virgin, look: here on earth is the competition for propagating the new institute; come on, I beg you, make the abundance of celestial gifts and favors shower on all those who take part. Increase their strength, increase their zeal. It will be entirely your gift, oh Blessed Virgin."

He talked as if Our Lady of Sorrows were next to him; I could see nothing, but with such force, with such expression did he say those words that I remained amazed; it seemed like his head also had taken off.

Now I should speak about Father Germano, but my confessor said no, because .

I also spoke of my poor sinner; he smiled, always a good sign. Finally he left me, filled with consolation.

Wednesday, August 8

Now we come to this morning. A little while after leaving the confessional, a thought came to me; thinking to myself that my confessor made too little of my sins, I was disturbed. To calm me down, my guardian Angel approached; I was in church and he pronounced these words out loud: "But tell me, who do you want to believe, your confessor or your head? Your confessor, who has continuous light and assistance, who is highly capable, or else yourself, who has nothing, nothing, nothing of all this? Oh what pride!" he said, "you want to become the teacher, guide, and director of your confessor!" I did not think further; I made an Act of Contrition and then went to Holy Communion.

Thursday, August 9

Today also, after having sustained with the help of God a battle with the enemy, a very strong one, my guardian Angel came reproaching me, and with great severity said: "Daughter, remember that in failing in any obedience, you always commit a sin. Why are you so reluctant in obeying your confessor? Remember also, there is no shorter or truer path than the one of obedience."

So why all this today? It was my fault. I would deserve even worse, but Jesus always shows me mercy.

Alas, what disgust I experience this evening! Since early morning I have felt so tired, but it's all laziness, bad will; still I want to overcome it, with the help of God.

It is Thursday and therefore I feel very strange; on Thursday evenings I always feel this way. Yes, suffer, suffer for sinners, and particularly for the poor souls in Purgatory, and in particular for . . . And I know well why this laziness so early in the day. The other evenings it came upon me a few hours later. It was because today my guardian Angel told me that tonight Jesus wanted me to suffer a few extra hours, precisely two hours: at 9:00pm it would begin, for the souls in Purgatory, and without my confessor's permission; but usually he does not yell at me, indeed he wishes it, and I am free to do it.

Last night, around 9:00pm, I began to feel a little ill; I was quick to bed but I had been suffering already for a while: my head ached beyond measure and any movement I made caused me terrible distress. I suffered for two hours, as Jesus wished, for Mother Maria Teresa; then with great pain I undressed and got into bed and began to pray. It was very painful but in Jesus' company one would do anything!

Friday, August 10

My guardian Angel said the previous evening that I was allowed to keep the thorns in my head until 5 : 00 in the afternoon on Friday; it was true, because around that time I began to collect myself completely; I hid myself in the Franciscan church and there Jesus came to me again to remove them; I was alone the whole time. How he showed me that he loved me! He encouraged me anew to suffer and he left me in a sea of consolation.

But I must say that many times, in particular on Thursday evenings, I am overcome with such sadness at the thought of having committed so many sins, they all come back to me: I am ashamed of myself, and I feel afflicted, so afflicted. Even last night, a few hours earlier, this shame came over me, this grief, and I find a little peace only in that bit of suffering Jesus sends me, offering it first for sinners, and in particular for me, and then for the souls in Purgatory.

How many consolations Jesus gives me! In how many ways he shows me his love! They are all things of my head; but if I obey, Jesus will not permit me to be deceived. Thursday evening He promised that in these days when Mrs. Cecilia was away, He would not leave me without my guardian Angel. He gave me the Angel last night and from then on he has not left me for even a moment.

This I have observed many times, and I have not spoken of it even with my confessor, but today I tell all. When I am with other people, my guardian Angel never leaves me; however, when I am with her^[13], the angel immediately leaves me (I mean to say that he does not show himself anymore, except to give me some warnings); the same thing happened today: he never left my side for a minute; if I have to speak, to pray, to do something, he lets me know. May Jesus not allow me to be deceived.

This thing so astounds me that it obliged me to ask of him: "How is it that when Mrs. Cecilia is with me, you never stay around?" He answered like this: "No person, other than she, knows how to take my place. Poor girl," he added, "you are so little that you always need a guide! Fear not, for now I shall do it, but obey, you know, because I could easily . . ."

I went to confession; I told this to my confessor (I had also written to him about it); so he explained what I did not understand, so now I understand everything.

Saturday, August 11

It's Saturday; I'm going to Holy Communion. What shall I do? Whatever, I shall obey. If only I could obtain a little visit from my Mom.^[14] But no, I remember the sin I committed

last night. It's true that this morning I confessed myself immediately, but alas, the Blessed Virgin does not forgive so easily, especially with me. She wants me to be perfect. It's Saturday evening, my God! What punishment! It's the biggest punishment you can give me, depriving me of a visit from Most Holy Mary, and it's precisely around Saturday that I always fall into many omissions.

Sunday, August 12

Sunday has arrived. What indifference, what dryness! Still, I do not want to abandon my usual prayers.

Wednesday, August 15

Feast OF the Assumption Of Mary into Heaven

I remained in this state of dryness and the absence of Jesus until today, Wednesday. Since Friday I've heard nothing. My confessor assures me this is a punishment for my sins or to see if I can stay without Jesus, and to stimulate me to love him more. I have been alone throughout, I mean without Jesus. My guardian Angel has not left me for even a second; yet, how many omissions, how many faults even in his presence! My God, have mercy on me! I always went to Communion but Jesus was like He wasn't there anymore. But would Jesus wish to leave me alone even today on such a great holy day? I received communion with much more consolation, but without feeling Jesus. I prayed a lot these days, because I want a grace from Jesus.

Today Mother Maria Teresa should go to Heaven; I hope so. But how will I know? I can't collect myself unless I am in a safe place. Today my guardian Angel will stand guard at my door.

Here I am at 9:15 of this great day. I feel the usual internal collection; I prayed to my guardian Angel to stand guard so that no one should see me; I hid in a room for the nuns. Oh, not much time passed before collection was followed by rapture. (Whoever reads this should not believe anything, because I could very well be deceived; may Jesus never permit such a thing! I do so for obedience, and I oblige myself to write with great disgust.) It was around 9:30 and I was reading; all of a sudden I am shaken by a hand resting gently on my left shoulder. I turn in fright; I was afraid and tried to call, but I was held back. I turned and saw a person dressed in white; I recognized it was a woman; I looked and her expression assured me I had nothing to fear: "Gemma," she said after some moments, "do you know me?" I said no, because that was the truth; she responded: "I am Mother Maria Teresa of the Infant Jesus: I thank you so, so much for the great concern you have shown me because soon I shall be able to attain my eternal happiness."

All this happened while I was awake and fully aware of myself.

Then she added: "Continue still, because I still have a few days of suffering." And in so saying she caressed me and then went away.

Her countenance, I must say, inspired much confidence in me. From that hour I redoubled my prayers for her soul, so that soon she should reach her objective; but my prayers are too weak; how I wish that for the souls in Purgatory my prayers should have the strength of the saints.' From that moment I suffered constantly because until about 11:00pm I could not be alone. I felt inside me a certain sense of collection, a desire to go and pray, but how to do it? I couldn't. How many times I had to insist! Finally I had the longed-for permission, and I went to my Mom; although they were only a few moments, they were precious moments! Because of my bad behavior, Jesus did not permit the Blessed Virgin to come as She always did, smiling, but instead very sad (and I was the cause). She reproached me a little but cheered up about one thing (that I think here it would be better not to say), and this thing also

gave great consolation to Jesus! And in fact it was to reward me for this thing that She came, but as I said, in a serious mood; She said a few words, among them: “Daughter, when I go to Heaven this morning, I shall take your heart with me.”

In that moment I felt as if She approached . . . removed it from me, took it with Her, in Her hands, and said to me: “Fear nothing, be good; I shall keep your heart forever up there with me, always in my hands.” She blessed me hurriedly and in going away She pronounced these words as well: “To Me you have given your heart, but Jesus wants something else as well.” “What does he want?” I asked. “Your will,” She answered, and vanished.

I found myself on the ground but I know exactly when that happened; it was when She began to approach me and remove my heart.

Although these things frighten me upon first appearance, still at the finish I always end up being in infinite consolations.

Thursday, August 16

Here I am at Thursday. The usual disgust descends upon me; fear of losing my soul comes over me; the number of my sins and their enormity, all open up before me. What agitation! In these moments my guardian Angel suggested in my ear: “But God’s mercy is infinite.” I calmed down.

Early in the day the pain in my head began; it must have been around 10:00. When I was alone I threw myself on the bed; I suffered some but Jesus was not long in appearing, showing me that He also suffered greatly. I reminded him of the sinners for whom He Himself urged me to offer all my little aches to the Eternal Father on their behalf.

While I was with Jesus and suffering, and He suffered also, a strong desire came upon me, almost impossible to resist. Jesus realized this, and asked me: “What do you want me to do?” And I immediately: “Jesus, have pity, lighten Mother Maria Teresa’s torments.” And Jesus: “I have already done so. Do you wish anything else?” He asked. That gave me courage and I said: “Jesus, save her, save her.” And Jesus answered like this: “On the third day after the Assumption of my Blessed Mother, she will be released from Purgatory and I will take her with me to Heaven.”

Those words filled me with a joy such that I do not know how to express it. Jesus said a number of other things; I also asked why after Holy Communion He did not allow me to taste the sweetness of Heaven. He answered promptly: “You are not worthy, oh daughter,” but He promised that the next morning he would do it.

How could I pass the time until morning? It’s true, only a few hours remained but for me they were years; I didn’t close my eyes in sleep; I was consumed, I wanted morning to come immediately: in a word, that night seemed like forever to me, but finally morning has come.

Friday, August 17

Jesus, as soon as he arrived on my tongue (the cause so often of so many sins), made Himself felt immediately. I was no longer in myself but Jesus was in me; He descended to my breast. (I say breast, because I no longer have a heart; I gave it to Jesus’ Mom.) What happy moments I spent with Jesus! How could I return His affections? With what words could I express His love, and for this poor creature? Yet He did deign to come. It’s truly impossible, yes, it is impossible not to love Jesus. How many times He asked me if I love Him and if I truly love Him. And do you still doubt it, my Jesus? So, He unites ever more closely with me, talks to me, says He wants me to be perfect, that He too loves me very much and I should reciprocate.

My God, how can I make myself worthy of so many graces? Where I cannot reach, my beloved guardian Angel will take my place. May God never let me deceive myself nor others.

I spent the rest of the day united with Jesus; I suffer a little but no one sees my suffering; only from time to time does some lament come forth but, my God, it is truly involuntary.

Today it took very little, indeed nothing, for me to collect myself: my mind was already with Jesus and I immediately went in spirit as well. How affectionate Jesus showed Himself to be today. But how He suffers! I do what I can to diminish the anguish and I would do more if I had permission. He came near today, lifted the crown from my head, and then I did not see Him replace it as usual on his head; He held it in His hands, all his wounds were open, but they did not drip blood as usual. They were beautiful.

He usually blesses me before leaving, and in fact He lifted his right hand; from that hand I then saw a ray of light shine forth, much stronger than a lamp. He kept his hand raised; I remained fixed in watching it, I could not get enough of Him. Oh if! could make everyone know and see how beautiful is my Jesus. He blessed me with that same hand He had raised, and He left me. After this happened to me, I wanted to know the meaning of the light that shone from his wounds, in particular from his right hand, the one he blessed me with. My guardian Angel said these words to me: "Daughter, on this day Jesus' blessing has showered an abundance of graces upon you."

Now that I am writing this he approached me and said: "I urge you, my daughter, always to obey, and in everything. Reveal everything to your confessor; tell him not to neglect you but to keep you hidden." And then he added: "Tell him that Jesus wants him to have much more concern toward you, that he give you more thought, because otherwise you are too inexperienced."

He repeated these things even after I had written them; he said them many times, when I was awake, and I felt as if I actually saw him and heard him speak. Jesus, may your holy will always be done.

But how I suffer for the obligation to write certain things. The disgust I felt initially, instead of diminishing keeps growing enormously, and I am enduring deathly anguish. How many times today I tried to find and burn all my writings. And then? You maybe, oh my God, You would like me to write also about those hidden things, that You let me know out of your goodness, in order always to keep me low and humble me? If you wish, oh Jesus, I'm ready to do even that: make Your will known. But these writings, of what benefit are they? For your greater glory, oh Jesus, or to make me fall into more and more sin? You wished me to do so, and I did. You think about it. In the wound of your sacred side, oh Jesus, I hide my every word.

Saturday—Sunday, August 18—19

During Holy Communion this morning Jesus let me know that tonight at midnight Mother Maria Teresa will fly to Heaven. Nothing else for now.

Jesus promised to give me a sign. Midnight has come, nothing yet; now it's 1:00am, still nothing; toward 1:30 it looked to me like the Blessed Virgin would come to give me news, since the hour was approaching.

After a little while in fact I thought I saw that Mother Teresa was coming, dressed as a Passionist, accompanied by her guardian Angel and by Jesus. How she had changed since that day I first saw her. Laughing, she approached me and said she was truly happy and was going to enjoy her Jesus in eternity; she thanked me again and added: "Tell Mother Giuseppa that I am happy and set her at ease." She made a sign several times with her hand to say goodbye and together with Jesus and her guardian angel she flew to Heaven around 2:30am. That night I suffered a lot because I too wanted to go to heaven, but no one thought to take me.

The desire Jesus had nurtured in me for so long finally was satisfied; Mother Teresa is in heaven; but even from heaven she promised to return to see me."

PART IV

August 20th to September 3rd 1900

Monday, August 20

Yesterday during the day I had to talk with my guardian angel once again; he reproached me above all for my laziness about prayer; he reminded me of many other things: all about the eyes, still, he threatened me severely. Last night in church he reminded me again of what he had said that day, telling me I would have to reckon with Jesus. Finally, before going to bed, as I was asking his blessing, he warned me that today, August 20, Jesus wished me to undergo an assault from the demon, this because for several days I had been negligent in prayer. He warned me that the devil would make every effort to prevent me from praying, especially mentally for all of today, and he would also deprive me of his visit (I mean my guardian angel's), but only for today.

I went to Holy Communion, but who knows in what a state! So distracted -with my mind still on last night—that is, on a bad dream, which I recognized as the work of the devil.

Oh God, the moment of the assault has come; and it was strong, even terrible I would almost say. No sign of the cross, no scapular was enough to halt the most ugly temptation one could imagine; he was so horrifying that I closed my eyes and never opened them again until I was absolutely freed.

My God, if I am without sin, I owe it only to you. You be thanked. What to say in those moments? To look for Jesus and not find him is a greater penance than the temptation itself. What I feel only Jesus knows, who watches secretly and is pleased. At a certain point when it seemed the temptation would take on more force, it came to mind to invoke the holy father of Jesus, and I shouted: "Eternal Father, for the blood of Jesus free me."

I don't know what happened; that good-for-nothing devil gave me such a strong shove that I fell off the bed, causing me to bang my head on the floor with such great force that I felt a sharp pain; I fainted and remained on the ground for a long time before regaining consciousness.

Jesus be thanked, that today also everything turned out in the best way, as He wished. The rest of the day went wonderfully. In the evening, as it happens to me many times, all my grave sins came to mind but with such enormity that I had to make a great effort not to cry out loud: I felt a pain more alive than I had ever undergone before. The number of my sins surpasses by a thousand fold my age and my capacity; but what consoled me is that I endured the greatest pain because of my sins, so that I wished this pain would never be canceled from my mind and never be diminished. My God! to what point my malice has reached!

This evening, to say the truth, I was awaiting Jesus—no way! No one showed up; only my guardian Angel does not cease to watch over me, to instruct me and to give me wise counsel. Many times during the day he reveals himself to me and talks to me. Yesterday he kept me company while I ate but he didn't force me like the others do. After I had eaten, I didn't feel at all well so he brought me a cup of coffee so good that I was healed instantly and then he made me rest a little. Many times I make him ask Jesus for permission to stay with me all night; he goes to ask and then he does not leave me until morning, if Jesus approves.

Tuesday, August 21

I may perhaps be wrong, but today I await a little visit from Brother Gabriel and if this is true, I have a lot to talk about with him. Jesus, give light, give light not to me but to Father Germano and to my confessor.

Wednesday, August 22

Yesterday my guardian Angel informed me that in the course of the day Jesus would come; he^[15] yelled at me, called me conceited, but then we made up quickly. I did not think further about Jesus' visit because I did not believe it; but in getting ready for evening prayers I felt in union with Jesus, who instantly reproached me sweetly, saying: "Gemma, don't you want me anymore?" "Oh my God, my God," I answered him, "what do you mean, I don't seek you? I desire you everywhere, I want you, I seek you always, I yearn only for you."

Then right away it came to my mind to ask him: "But Jesus, you came tonight so that means you won't come tomorrow night?" He promised me that He would. But my confessor told me that my conscience would be responsible if I suffered and then did not feel well; if I feel well, I may suffer the usual hour with Jesus; if not, let Jesus come anyway but without making me suffer; I may stay with him and have compassion for him and take part with him in the deathly sadness he suffered in the Garden of Olives. Anyway, I shall obey.

Jesus also spoke to me, without my bringing it up, of the holy soul of Mrs. Giuseppina Imperiali. "Oh how dear she is to Me!" Jesus repeated. "See," He added, "how much she suffers, without a moment of peace. Happiness to her!" He left me with an ineffable sense of consolation, as usual.

For the grace of Jesus and for his infinite mercy, my guardian Angel does not leave me for even a tiny second. Yesterday I saw several angels: mine assisted me continuously and I saw another for another person, and here there certainly is no need to record further all the details; if obedience should require it, I shall be ready, but for now . . . that is enough . . . If necessary, I shall remember.

Thursday, August 23

Alas, evening comes and the usual coldness, the usual repugnance assails me; fatigue would want to win over me, but with a little effort I never want to neglect to do my duty.

Tonight Jesus placed his crown on my head at about 10:00, after I had been collected for a little while. My suffering, which in no way equals Jesus,' was very strong: even all my teeth hurt; any movement brought a sharp pain; I thought I could not resist but instead I did, everything went well.

I offered those little penances for sinners and in particular for my poor soul. I begged Him to return soon. When he was about to leave, a contest sprang up between me and Jesus: which of us would be the first to visit (and I went first, I mean to Holy Communion) and together we said and we agreed that I would go to Him and He would come to me. He promised me the assistance of my holy Angel, and He left me.

Friday, August 24

Later Jesus returned to take back His crown but he came very early, saying I had already done a lot; and since I did not want to, because I did not keep it the usual number of hours, He answered that I was still little, and this is more than enough. I suffered continuously for several hours; Jesus caressed me a lot. At a certain point in our discussion I asked enlightenment for my confessor; on that point my guardian Angel had tattled on Jesus. The morning before he had told me how Father Germano is enlightened about me and how he cares for me. I mentioned this to Jesus without thinking, and Jesus did not know that my guardian Angel had told me this; he made a serious face and told me He did not want my guardian Angel to tattle on him.

While he was talking in this way, instead of being speechless, as happens when Jesus becomes serious or severe, I was taken, on the contrary, with more intimacy toward Him, and I asked: "Jesus, could you not . . ." I kept quiet, thinking to make myself understood without speaking further, and Jesus did understand instantly and responded: "Do not be afflicted, my

daughter: we will make use of Father Germano soon enough. Do you understand?" He asked. "Yes," I answered. And at the end he repeated these words: "Fear not, because soon we will use him." He raised His hand goodbye and disappeared.

Still later I went to church for the usual blessing but I felt tired; in fact I truly was, but it is not, as I've said many times, true tiredness; it is laziness, a lack of desire to pray. My guardian Angel whispered in my ear that I should pray even while sitting. At first I could not give in but he insisted a second time and so for obedience I remained sitting. For sure I was pleased about this, since I was unable to stay on my knees.

Last night he also made me understand that when Jesus complains about me because I do not do my meditation, He does not mean Thursday and Friday, He means the other days of the week; in fact it's true, because on those two days I never forget. I promised to be more conscientious, and he ordered me to bed, saying I was tired and I had to sleep. I urged him to stay with me but he made no promise, and in fact he did not stay.

"Now then," I said to him, "run to Jesus and plead with him, because tomorrow evening I must go to confession and I need to see him"; and he instantly responded: "And if Brother Gabriel should come?" "That would be the same," I answered. "Either Jesus or Brother Gabriel, one way or another I need a visit; beg Him to concede me this grace, I need it." "Can you tell me?" he asked. "As for you," I responded, "go to Jesus and tell him everything and then return and tell me." He nodded yes.

He had spoken to me a few minutes ago about Brother Gabriel and, as always, even just hearing about him made me happy all over, so I could not refrain from exclaiming: "Brother Gabriel, how long I have been awaiting him, how much I desire him!" "Just so, because you have such a strong desire, Jesus does not want to satisfy you." Then, laughing, he instructed me that when Jesus came I should not let him know that I had a desire to see Brother Gabriel, in which case Jesus would grant my wish easily.

I realized he was kidding, because I know nothing can be hidden from Jesus.

"Show indifference," he repeated, "and you will see that Jesus will send him more often." "I won't be able to do that," I said. "I'll teach you; you have to talk like this to Jesus: If he comes, fine, if not, it's all the same." And in saying this he laughed heartily.

So I also repeated the phrase but I understood that he was having fun. He ordered me to bed, saying I had to stay alone that night, because if he stayed I would never get to sleep, and he left.

It's true, because when he is there I do not sleep: he teaches me so many things about Heaven and the night passes quickly, very quickly. But last night was not like that: he left me alone, and I slept, although I did awaken several times and instantly he said: "Sleep, otherwise I'm going away for real."

I heard loud thunderclaps, very loud, and I was afraid; so he came and made himself visible; he blessed me once again and I went back to sleep.

Saturday, August 25

During Communion this morning no consolation; I did everything coldly. Let the holy will of my God be done. What will happen today? Jesus is not coming, and I don't even feel Him nearby. I go to bed and I see a guardian Angel approaching, whom I recognized to be mine; but I was overtaken with a bit of fear and an internal disquiet.

So many times fear assails me when I see someone appear but little by little this passes and ends in consolation. Yesterday, instead, my disquiet grew until, if someone touched me, I shook: something that never happens to me when it is truly my dear Angel. In short, I was uncertain about this when he asked me: "When are you going to confession?" "This evening," I answered. "And why? Why do you go so often? Don't you know that your confessor is a swindler?" Then I understood what was happening here and I made the sign of

the cross several times; he struck me so severely that I shook. My Angel never speaks to me this way.

The combat lasted in this way for a long while and I promised that in spite of him I would go to confession, and in fact I went. I called Jesus, and my Mom, but what! No one. After a while my real guardian Angel appeared, obliging me to confess every detail and he specified two things to tell my confessor.

Distress and fear of the enemy vanished quickly and I calmed down until it was time to go to confession; I didn't want to go for anything. With effort I went but I was able to say very, very little. But I do want to tell everything, so I will write.

Last night my beloved Mother came, but Her visit was so short; nevertheless it consoled me greatly. I prayed to Her as much as I could on my own behalf, that She take me to Heaven, and I also prayed fervidly for other matters. How She smiled when I repeatedly called her Mom! She came near, caressed me, and left me in the company of my guardian Angel, who remained joyful and cheerful until morning.

Sunday, August 26

In the morning, after I left my room, he also left. I received Holy Communion without knowing anything of Jesus; during the morning I felt such a strong wish to cry that I had to hide myself out of the sight of others so they wouldn't notice. My soul felt uneasy and I did not know what to rely on. My God, how shall I begin to describe it! But it's for the best, because if this notebook of mine should fall into people's hands, they will recognize in me nothing other than a disobedient, bad person.

Yesterday, while eating, I raised my eyes and saw my guardian Angel looking at me with an expression so severe I was frightened; he did not speak. Later, when I went to bed for a moment, my God! He commanded me to look him in the face; I looked and then almost immediately I lowered my gaze, but he insisted and said: "Aren't you ashamed to commit sins in my presence? You certainly feel ashamed after you commit them!" He insisted I look at him; for more than half an hour he made me stay in his presence looking him in the face; he gave me some very stern looks.

I did nothing but cry. I commended myself to my God, to our Mother, to get me out of there, because I could not resist much longer. Every so often he repeated: "I am ashamed of you." I prayed that others would not see him in that state, because then no one would ever come near me; I don't know if others saw him.

I suffered for an entire day, and whenever I lifted my eyes, he always looked at me sternly; I could not collect myself for even a minute. That evening I said my prayers anyway, and he was always there watching me with the same expression; he let me go to bed, but he did bless me; he never abandoned me: he stayed with me for several hours, without speaking and always stern. I never did have the courage to speak a word to him; I only said: "My God, what shame if others should see my angel so angry!"

There was no way I could sleep last night; I was awake until after 2:00; I know, because I heard the clock strike. I stayed in bed, not moving, my mind turned to God but without praying. Finally, after the clock struck 3:00, I saw my guardian Angel approaching; he placed his hand on my forehead and said these words: "Sleep, bad girl!" I saw him no more.

Monday, August 27

This morning I received Holy Communion: I hardly had the courage to receive it. Jesus seemed to let me know a little about why my guardian Angel was acting this way: I had made my last confession badly. Unfortunately, this was true.

Tuesday, August 28

My guardian Angel remained very stern until this morning, after I revealed everything to my confessor. Upon my exiting from the confessional, he looked at me happily, with an air of kindness: I returned from death to life. Later he spoke to me on his own (I did not have the courage to question him) he asked me how I was, because I was not feeling well the night before. I answered that only he could cure me;[16] he came near, caressed me again and again, and said I should be good.

Repeatedly I asked him if he loved me as much as before and if he loved me despite everything; he answered in this way: "Today I am not ashamed of you, yesterday I was." I asked many times for forgiveness and he indicated that I was forgiven for every past action. Finally, I sent him to Jesus for three things: (1) If He was happy with me now? (2) If He had forgiven everything? (3) That He should rid me of this shame so that I could be obedient to my confessor.

He went away instantly and returned very late; he said Jesus was very happy; that He has forgiven me, but for the last time; as to the shame, he said Jesus responded with these exact words: "Tell her to obey perfectly." Later, then, I went to bed and after a little while I felt some remorse. I was thinking, it's true, on the subject of a meditation on the Passion, but in bed. My guardian Angel asked what I was thinking. "About the Passion," I answered, "what will Jesus say about me, who leads such an easy life, praying little, and in bed; in short, all my time in prayer I spend in bed?" Unfortunately, all this is true. He answered by asking what I thought. "It is laziness," I responded. But I promised that from that evening on I would never again pray in bed; except for the day that I was supposed to, out of obedience. Last evening and for the whole night he never left me, but with an agreement: I must be quiet and sleep. I did it.

Wednesday, August 29

Today there's one thing I shall do: I want to write a little note to Brother Gabriel; then I'll give it to my guardian Angel and await a reply. And we're going to do this without Jesus knowing; he himself said we will not tell Jesus anything.

And I did it: I wrote a very long letter; I spoke of all my experiences without leaving out anything; then I advised my guardian Angel that it was ready, and if he wanted to . . . This evening, Wednesday, I placed it under my pillow, and this morning when I got up I didn't think about checking because I had better things in mind: I was going to Jesus.[17]

Thursday, August 30

As soon as I returned I looked, and how odd! The letter wasn't there anymore. I say odd because I heard from others that this is a strange happening; but to me it doesn't seem so. My guardian angel then asked me if I needed an answer. I laughed. "What else," I told him, "of course I need one." "All right," he said, "but until Saturday you can't have one." Patience, until Saturday then.

In the meantime, here I am at Thursday evening. Oh God! All my sins are paraded before me. What an enormity! Yes, all of you should know; my life until now has been a continuous series of sins. Always I see their great quantity, and the malicious intent with which I committed them, especially when Thursday evening approaches; they parade before me in a manner so frightening that I become ashamed and unbearable even to myself. So, especially that evening, I make resolutions and repent continuously; but then I keep none of them and return to my usual ways. A little strength, a little courage comes to me when I feel Jesus at the hour when he places the crown of thorns on me and makes me suffer until Friday evening, because this I offer for sinful souls, especially my own.

This is how things went yesterday evening, Thursday; I thought Jesus would do like usual that evening: He placed the crown of thorns on my head, the cause of so much pain for my

beloved Jesus, and left it there for several hours. It made me suffer a little but when I say suffering I mean taking pleasure. It is a pleasure, that suffering. How He was afflicted! And the cause: for the many sins committed, and the many ungrateful souls whom He assists, only to receive in return exactly the opposite. Of this ingratitude how much I feel guilty myself! For sure, Jesus must have spoken of me.

My guardian Angel warned me that the hour allowed to me for obedience had ended; what to do? Jesus would have stayed longer, but He saw clearly the embarrassing situation I found myself in. I reminded myself about obedience, and for obedience I should have sent Jesus away, because the hour was up. "Come on," said Jesus, "give me a sign now that you will always obey." So I exclaimed: "Jesus, you can go away because now I don't want you anymore." And Jesus smiled as He blessed me, along with all the members of the Sacra Collegio, and He commended me to my guardian Angel, and left me so happy that I cannot express myself.

As usual, that night I cannot sleep because I am united with Jesus, united more closely than usual, and also because I think my head aches a bit; I kept vigil together with my beloved Angel.

Friday, August 31

In the morning I ran to receive Holy Communion, but I could not say anything; I just stayed in silence; the pain in my head impeded me. My God, how much I lack in this! Jesus held back nothing on my behalf while I instead, in order not to suffer, avoid making even the slightest movement if I can. What would you say, my Jesus, about this laziness and ill will? All morning I did nothing but rest. Day came and effortlessly I flew to Jesus; He lifted the thorns and asked if I had suffered much. "Oh, my Jesus," I exclaimed, "the suffering begins now because you go away. Yesterday and today, I took much pleasure because I felt close to You; but from now on, until You return, it will truly be constant suffering for me." I implored him "Come, my Jesus, come more often: I will be good, I will always obey everyone. Make me happy, Jesus." I suffered as I spoke this way because little by little Jesus was leaving me. Finally after a short while He left me alone, once again in the usual state of abandonment. Toward evening I went to confession and the confessor, believing I was not feeling well, because I had been suffering some, ordered me to go to bed as soon as I entered my room, and he ordered me to sleep, without speaking with my guardian Angel (because sometimes we would talk for hours on end), and that I should sleep.

I went to bed but I could not fall asleep out of the curiosity I had; I wanted to ask my guardian Angel so many things, and I waited for him to speak on his own, but no way! All he told me was to go to sleep, several times. Finally I fell asleep.

Saturday, September 1

This morning on his own he awakened me early and said that today I would have an answer. "How?" I asked. "You will see," he said, laughing.

For all of today I stayed without any temptations; toward evening one suddenly came over me, in the ugliest manner. But here I don't think it would be good to tell, because it's too . . . Who would have imagined that my beloved Mother would come to see me? I wasn't even thinking about it because I believed my bad conduct wouldn't allow it; but She took pity on me and in a short time I felt collected; following this collection, as so often happened, my head took off. I found myself (I thought) with Our Lady of Sorrows. What happiness in those moments. How dear to pronounce the name Mom! What sweetness I felt in my heart in those moments! Let whoever is able to, explain it. It seemed to me, after a few minutes of commotion, that She took me in her lap and made me rest my head on Her shoulder, keeping me there a while. My heart in that moment was filled with happiness and contentment; I

could desire nothing more. “Do you love no one but Me?” She asked from time to time. “Oh no,” I answered, “I love someone else even more than You.”

“And who is that?” She asked, pretending not to know. “It’s a person who is most dear to me, more than anything else; I love Him so much I would give up my life this very instant; because of Him I no longer care about my body.” “But tell me who He is,” She asked impatiently. “If You had come the evening before last, You would have seen Him staying with me. But You see, He comes to me very rarely while I go to him every day, and I would go even more often if I could. But do you know, dear Mother” I said, “why He does this? Because He wants to see whether at so great a distance I might become capable of not loving Him anymore; instead, the further away He is, the more I feel drawn to him.” She repeated: “Tell me who He is.” “No, I won’t tell you,” I responded. “You should see, dear Mom, how his beauty resembles yours, your hair is the same color as His.” And it seemed my Mom was caressing me as She said, “But, My daughter, who are you talking about?” And I exclaimed loudly: “Don’t you understand me? I’m talking about Jesus. About Jesus,” I repeated even more loudly. She looked at me, smiling, and she hugged me tightly to her: “Go ahead and love Him, love Him very much, but love only Him.” “Don’t be afraid,” I said, “no one in the world shall taste my affections, only Jesus.”

She hugged me again and it seemed like She kissed me on the forehead; I awoke and found myself on the floor, with the crucifix nearby.

Whoever reads these things, I repeat again, should not believe, because they are all my imagination; nevertheless I agree to describe everything, because I am bound by obedience, otherwise I would do differently. I believed that from day to day the repugnance I experience in writing certain things would finally cease, but instead it always increases: it is a punishment such that I cannot withstand, I almost die from it.

Sunday, September 2

Tonight I slept with my guardian Angel by my side; upon awakening I saw him next to me; he asked me where I was going. “To Jesus,” I answered.

The rest of the day went very well. But my God, toward evening what happened! My guardian Angel got serious and stern; I could not figure out the reason, but he, from whom nothing can be hidden, in a stern tone (at the moment when I started to recite my usual prayers) asked me what I was doing. “I am praying.” “Who are you waiting for?” (becoming yet more serious). Without thinking, I said: “Brother Gabriel.” Upon hearing me pronounce those words he started to yell at me, saying I was waiting in vain, just as I could wait in vain for the response^[18] because . . .

And here I remember two sins I had committed during the day. My God, what sternness! He pronounced these words more than once: “I am ashamed of you. I will end up by not coming to you anymore, and maybe . . . who knows if even tomorrow.” And he left me in that state. He made me cry so much. I want to ask forgiveness but when he is that angry, there is no way he wants to forgive.

Monday, September 3

I did not see him again that night, nor this morning; today he told me to adore Jesus, who was alone, and then he disappeared again.

This evening it was much better than the evening before; I asked him many times for forgiveness and he seemed willing to forgive me. Tonight he stayed with me constantly: he repeated that I should be good and not give further disgust to our Jesus, and when I am in his presence, I should try to be better.

EARLIEST MEMORIES - HER MOTHER

The first thing I remember is that when I was a little girl not seven years old, my mother used to take me into her arms and often when she did this she cried and said to me: "I have prayed so much that Jesus would give me a little girl. He has given me this consolation; it is true, but too late. I am ill," she would say to me, "and I must die. I must leave you. Oh, if I could only take you with me! Would you come?" I understood very little of this but I wept because I saw my mother weeping. "And where are you going?" I asked her. "To heaven with Jesus and the angels," she replied. It was my mother, dear Father, who first made me want to go to heaven when I was just a little child. And when I still show this desire, I am reprimanded and receive an emphatic "No" for an answer. But when my mother asked me this I told her that I did want to go with her. And I remember that when she spoke so often of taking me to heaven with her I did not want to be separated from her. I would not even leave her room. The doctor forbade me to go near mother's bed but such a command was useless for I did not obey. Every evening before going to bed I would go to her and, kneeling beside her bed, I would say my prayers. One evening she had me add to the usual prayers a De Profundis to the souls in Purgatory and five Gloria's to the Wounds of Jesus. I said these prayers but as usual carelessly and without attention (all my life I have never paid attention to my prayers). I made a great show over it, complaining to my mother that these were too many prayers to say and I didn't want to say them. And she, indulgent as she was, shortened the prayers after that.

CONFIRMATION, 1885 HER MOTHER IN HEAVEN, 1886

Meanwhile, the time was coming when I was to receive Confirmation. I wanted to take some instructions because I knew nothing. But, bad as I was, I would not leave my mother's room and a Catechist had to come to our house every evening where I took the instructions in the presence of my mother. On the 26th of May 1885 I received Confirmation but I did so weeping. For after the function there was to be a Mass and I was always afraid that Mother would go away (die) without taking me with her. I assisted at the Mass as best I could, all the while praying for her. All of a sudden I heard a voice in my heart saying to me: "Are you willing to give your mother to me?" "Yes," I answered, "if you will take me, too." "No," replied the voice, "give me your mother willingly. But you must remain with your father for the present. I will take your mother to heaven, understand? Do you give her to me willingly?" I was forced to give my consent. When the Mass was over I ran home. Oh, my God! I looked at Mother and wept. I simply could not contain myself. Two more months passed. I never left her side. But finally my father, who feared that I would die before Mother, forced me to leave one day and took me to the home of my mother's brother who lived near Lucca. Father, dear Father, such was my lot. What a torture it was! I did not see anyone, neither my father nor my brothers. I learned that my mother died on September 17 of that year.

AT S. GENNARO WITH HER UNCLE

My life was changed when I went to live with my uncle. My aunt was there but she was in no way like my mother. She was good and religious but was interested in the Church only to a certain point. I had formerly complained that my mother had made me pray too much. But all the time that I was with my aunt I could not even go to confession (which I wanted so much). I had been to confession only seven times and I wanted to go every day after the death of my mother (my mother had made me go every week after my confirmation). My aunt decided to keep me as her daughter but my brother, who is now dead, learned of it and

would not allow it. So, on Christmas day I returned to my family and lived with my father, my brothers, my two sisters (one of whom I did not know because she had been taken away shortly after her birth) and two servants. What consolation I experienced on returning to my family and being out of the hands of my aunt! She wanted the best for me, but I wanted none of it. My father then sent me to school at the Institute of St. Zita which was conducted by nuns. During the time when I was with my aunt I was always bad. She had a son who was always tormenting me, pulling my hands behind me. One day when he was on a horse (15 hands high) my aunt told me to take him some kind of a coat to put on. I took it to him and when I was near he pinched me. Then I gave him a hard push, and he fell off and hurt his head. In punishment, my aunt tied my hands behind me for the entire day. Thus mistreated I got very angry and I told him so with strong words. I even threatened to get even, but did not do so.

THE SCHOOL OF ST. ZITA FIRST COMMUNION, 1887

I started to school at the Nun's school and it was heaven for me. I immediately expressed my desire to make my first Communion but they found me so bad and so ignorant that they discouraged me from it. They began, however, to instruct me and to give me much good advice. But I only became worse. Nevertheless, my only desire was to make my first Communion soon and they, knowing how strong was my desire, granted my request before long. The nuns used to have the children make their first Communion in the month of June. The time had come and I had to ask my father's permission to enter the convent for a short time. My father, who was 50 indisposed, did not grant me permission. But I knew a very clever way to make him let me do anything, so I used it and got the permission at once. (Every time my father saw me weeping he would grant me whatever I wanted.) I cried, otherwise I would not have received the permission. In the evening he gave it and early the next morning I went into the convent where I remained for fifteen days. During this time I saw none of my family. But how happy I was! What a heaven it was, dear Father! Once inside the convent, I found it to my liking and ran to the chapel to thank Jesus. I begged him fervently to prepare me for Holy Communion. But I had also another desire besides this. When I was a little girl my mother used to show me the crucifix and tell me that Christ died on the cross for men. Later on, my teachers taught me the same thing but I had never understood it. Now I wanted to know all about the life and Passion of Jesus. I told my teacher of this desire and she began, day by day, to explain these things to me, choosing for this a time when the other children were in bed. She did this, I believe, without the Mother Superior knowing of it. One evening when she was explaining something to me about the crucifixion, the crowning with thorns, and all the sufferings of Jesus, she explained it so very well that a great sorrow and compassion came over me. So much so that I was seized immediately with fever so intense that I was forced to remain in bed all the next day. From that day on the teacher explained such things only briefly. These nuns caused me some disquiet. They wanted to inform my father that I had contracted the fever. But it did cause a lot of trouble, not only for me but for them and for the whole convent. This happened especially during the ten days of the retreat. With eleven other children I began the retreat on the day of June. Father Raphael Cianetti preached the retreat. All the children devoted themselves eagerly to prepare well to receive Jesus. Among so many, only I was very negligent and distracted. I gave no thought to changing my life. I listened to the sermons but very soon forgot what I heard. 51 Often, even every day, that good Father said: "He who eats of Jesus will live of his life." These words filled me with much consolation and I reasoned with myself: Therefore when Jesus comes to me I will no longer live of myself because Jesus will live in me. And I nearly died of the desire to be able to say these words soon (Jesus lives in me). Sometimes I would spend whole nights meditating on these words, being consumed with desire. Finally

the day I wanted so much arrived. The day before I wrote these few lines to my father: Dear Papa, Today is the vigil of my first Holy Communion, a day of great joy for me. I write these lines to assure you of my affection and to beg you to pray to Jesus that the first time he comes to me he may find me disposed to receive all those graces that he has prepared for me. I beg your pardon for all the displeasures and all the disobedience that I have been guilty of, and I beg you this evening to forget all these things. Asking your blessing, I am Your affectionate daughter, GEMMA I prepared myself, with much work on the part of those good nuns, for my general confession. I made it in three sessions to Msgr. Volpi. I finished it on Saturday, the vigil of that happy day. Finally, Sunday morning came. I arose early and ran to Jesus for the first time. At last my desires were realized. I understood for the first time the promise of Jesus: "He who eats of me shall live of my life." Dear Father, I do not know how to tell what passed between Jesus and me at that moment. Jesus made himself felt very strongly by my poor soul. I understood at that moment that the delights of heaven are not like those of the earth. I felt myself overcome by the desire to render that union with my God continual. I felt weary of the world more and more, and more disposed to recollection. It was that same morning that Jesus gave me the great desire to be a religious.

FIRST COMMUNION RESOLUTIONS

Before leaving the convent I made certain resolutions regarding the conduct of my life: 1. I will receive Confession and Communion each time as though it were my last. 2. I will visit Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament often, especially when I am afflicted. 3. I will prepare myself for every feast of our Blessed Mother by some mortification, and every evening I will ask my heavenly Mother's blessing. 4. I want to remain always in the presence of God. 5. Every time the clock strikes I will repeat three times: My Jesus, mercy. I would have liked to add other resolutions to these but my teacher would not permit it. And she had good reason, for within a year after I returned to my family I had forgotten these resolutions as well as the good advice I had received and I became worse than before. I continued to go to school to the nuns and they were fairly satisfied with me. I went to Communion two or three times a week and Jesus made himself felt ever stronger. Several times he made me feel very great consolation. But as soon as I left him, I began to be proud, more disobedient than before, a bad example to my companions and a scandal to all. At school, not a day passed on which I was not punished. I did not know my lessons and I was almost expelled. At home I would not let anyone have peace. Every day I wanted to go for a walk, always wearing new clothes which my poor father provided me for a long time. I ceased to say my usual prayers morning and evening. But while I was committing all these sins I never forgot to recite every day three Hail Mary's with my hands under my knees (a practice my 53 mother had taught me that Jesus might protect me every day from sins against holy purity).

CHARITY TOWARD THE POOR NEW CONVERSION

During this time which lasted almost an entire year, the only thing I had left was charity to the poor. Every time I left the house I asked my father for money. If he sometimes refused it, I would take bread, flour, or some such thing. And God himself would see to it that I met some poor people, for every time I left the house there would be three or four. To those who came to the door I would give clothes or whatever else I had. But then my confessor forbade me to do these things and I stopped doing them. In this way Jesus worked in me a new conversion. For my father no longer gave me money, I could take nothing from the house, and every time I went out I met none but poor people and they all ran after me. I could not give them anything. This pained me so that I wept continually. For this reason I quit going out except when I really had to. The result was that I grew tired of clothes and everything else. I wanted to make another general confession but I was not permitted to do so. I did confess everything however, and Jesus gave me such a deep sorrow for my sins that I felt it

always. I asked pardon of my teachers because I had displeased them most of all. But this change did not please my father and my brothers. One brother especially chided me because I wanted to go to Mass every morning. But from then on Jesus helped me more than ever.

LIVING WITH HER AUNTS

At this time, as my grandfather and uncle were dead, two of my aunts, my father's sisters, came to live with us. They were good, religious and affectionate, but their affection was never the tender love of a mother. They took us to church every day and they were diligent in instructing us in the religion. 54 Among us brothers and sisters some were better and some worse. The oldest boy, the fourth of our family to die, and the youngest girl, Julia, were the best, and so were more loved by my aunts. But the others, who took my bad example, were far more lively and so less appreciated. Nonetheless, none of us lacked what was needed. I was always the worst of all and who knows what a strict account I must give to the Lord for the bad example that I gave to my brothers and companions!! My aunts never failed to correct me in all my failings but I responded arrogantly, giving them many short answers. Now, as I have said, Jesus used my prohibition to give alms as means to convert me. I began to think of how much my sins offended Jesus. I began also to study and work harder, and my teachers continued to encourage me. The one defect for which I was often reprovved and punished was my pride. My teacher frequently called me "pride personified." Yes, this was my greatest sin but only Jesus knows whether I realized it or not. Many a time I fell on my knees before my teacher and all the class, and even the Mother Superior, to beg pardon for this sin. And also many a time in the evening I wept when I was alone. I was not aware of this sin and every day I fell into it time and again without adverting to it.

A GOOD TEACHER

The teacher who at the time of my retreat had explained the Passion to me reprovved me one day and explained the matter to me (perhaps because she had noticed a change in me). But she did so little by little. She often said to me: "Gemma, you belong to Jesus and you should be all his. Be good. Jesus is pleased with you and you need much help. Meditation on the Passion ought to be something very close to your heart. Oh, if you could always be with me." 55 That good teacher had detected my desire. At other times she said to me: "Gemma, what graces Jesus has given you!" I, who never understood all this, remained as one dumb. But sometimes I felt the need of a little talk and (I don't hesitate to say it) of a caress from my dear teacher so I ran looking for her. Sometimes she would appear very serious and when I saw her like that I would cry. Then she would take me into her arms (even though I was eleven years old) and caress me. As a result I was so attached to her that I called her my mother.

RETREAT OF 1891

Every two years the nuns used to have a retreat which was open also to the external students. It hardly seemed true that I could commune so intimately with Jesus again. But this time I was all alone without any help, for the nuns were making their own retreat at the same time as the children. I understood well that Jesus was giving me this opportunity to know myself better and to purify myself and please him more. The retreat was held in 1891 and during this time Gemma was to be completely changed as to give herself entirely to Jesus. I recall the words which that good priest repeated so often: "Let us remember that we are nothing and that God is all. God is our creator and all that we have he has given us." I remember that after a few days of the retreat the preacher had us make a meditation on sin. It was then that I came

to realize, dear Father, that I was worthy only to be despised by all. I saw myself to be so ungrateful to God, guilty as I was of so many sins. Then we made a meditation on hell, of which I knew myself to be deserving, and during this meditation I made this resolution: I will make acts of contrition during the day, especially when I have committed some fault. During the last days of the retreat we considered the example of humility, meekness, obedience and patience (of Jesus). And from this meditation I formed two more resolutions: 56 1. To make a visit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament every day and speak to him more with the heart than with the tongue. 2. I will try harder to avoid speaking of indifferent things and to speak rather of heavenly things. At the end of the retreat I obtained permission from my confessor to receive communion three times a week and likewise to go to confession three times a week, and I continued to do this for three or four years, until 1895.

MEDITATION ON THE PASSION OF JESUS

I continued to go to school every day but the desire to receive Jesus and to know more about his Passion increased, so much so that I succeeded in getting my teacher to explain it to me for an entire hour after every ten hours of work or study. I desired nothing else. Every day I worked or studied ten hours and spent an hour listening to the explanation of some point on the Passion. Many times as I thought of my sins and my ingratitude to Jesus, we began to weep together. It was during these four years that this good teacher taught me also to perform some little penance for Jesus. The first was the wearing of a little rope around my body, and there were many others. But no matter how hard I tried, I never obtained the permission of my confessor for these things. Therefore she taught me rather to mortify my eyes and my tongue. She succeeded in making me better but with much difficulty. This good teacher died after having led me along for six years. Then I came under the direction of another who was fully as good as the first. But she also had to reprove me often for the ugly sin of pride. Under her direction I began to have a great desire to pray more. Every evening as soon as school was out I would go home and shut myself up in my room and recite the entire rosary on my knees. And often I would rise during the night for about a quarter of an hour to recommend my poor soul to Jesus.

HER FATHER'S BENJAMIN HER BROTHER GINO

My aunts and my brothers did not pay such attention to me. They let me do whatever I wanted because they knew how bad I was. But my father always took great delight in me. He often said (and this often made me cry): "I have only two children, Gino and Gemma." He said such things in the presence of all the others, and to tell the truth we were about the most mischievous in the house. I loved Gino more than the rest. We were always together. During vacation time we would amuse ourselves by making little altars, celebrating feasts etc., and in this we were always alone. As he grew up he had the desire of becoming a priest. So he was sent to seminary and put on clerical dress, but a few years later he died. During the time when he was sick in bed he wanted me always near him. The doctor gave up all hope for him. Since I was so sorry that he was going to die, I started using all his things so that I would die too. As a matter of fact, I almost did die. I became very seriously ill about a month later. I cannot describe the care all lavished on me, especially my father. Many times I saw him weeping and begging Jesus to let him die in my place. He used every means possible to cure me, and after three months I was well again.

SHE LEAVES SCHOOL NECKLACES OF A SPOUSE OF THE

CRUCIFIED The doctor forbade me to study anymore and I quit school. Many times the superior and the nuns sent for me to come and be with them but my father would not let me go. Every day he took me outside. He gave me everything I wanted. And I began to pamper

myself once more. But I kept going to communion three or four times a week and even though I was so bad, Jesus came and dwelt with me and said many things to me. 58 I recall very well one time I was given a gold watch and chain. Ambitious as I was I could hardly wait to put it on and go out (an indication, dear Father, that my imagination was working on me). I did, in fact, go out with it on and when I returned and started to take it off I saw an angel (whom I recognized immediately as my Guardian Angel) who said to me very seriously: "Remember that the precious jewelry that adorns a spouse of the crucified King can only be thorns and the cross." I did not even tell my confessor about this. In fact, I now tell it for the first time. These words made me fear as did the angel himself. But a little later, while reflecting on them without understanding them at all, I made this resolution: I resolve for the love of Jesus and to please him, never to wear the watch again and not even to speak of things that savor vanity. At the time I also had a ring on my finger. I took it off immediately and from that day to this I have not worn such things. So I resolved (because Jesus had given me clear lights to the effect that I should be a religious) to change my life. I had a good occasion to do this, for we were about to begin the year of 1896. I wrote in a little notebook: "During this new year I resolve to begin a new life. I do not know what will happen to me during this year. But I abandon myself entirely to you, my God. And my aspirations and all my affections will be for you. I feel so weak, dear Jesus, but with your help I hope and resolve to live a different life, that is, a life closer to you."

DESIRE FOR HEAVEN

From the moment when my mother inspired me with the desire for heaven I have always (even in the midst of so many sins) wanted it ardently. If God had left the choice to me I would have preferred to escape from the body and fly to heaven. Every time a fever came upon me and I felt ill I experienced a great consolation. But this changed to sorrow when, after some illness, I would feel my strength return. One day after Holy Communion I asked Jesus why he did not take me to heaven. He answered: "My daughter, I do not take you because during your life I will give you many occasions to gain more 59 merit, increasing your desire for heaven as you bear the trials of life with patience." These words in no way diminished my desire. Rather I felt it increasing in me day by day.

LOVING JESUS AND SUFFERING WITH HIM

During this same year of 1896 another desire began to grow in me. I began to feel an ever greater yearning to love Jesus Crucified very much, and at the same time a desire to suffer with him and to help him in his sufferings. One day as I was looking at the crucifix so great a sorrow came over me that I fell to the floor. My father was in the house at the time and he began to reprove me, saying that it was not good for me to stay at home and that I should go out early the next morning (he had not let me go to Mass the last two mornings). I answered in a disturbed tone of voice: "It is not good for me to remain away from Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament." My answer disturbed him because he noticed that my voice was not very strong. I hid myself in a room and there for the first time I gave vent to my sorrow with Jesus alone. Dear Father, I do not remember the words I spoke, but my angel is here and he tells me what I said word for word. It is as follows: "I want to follow you no matter what the cost in pain, and to follow you fervently. No, Jesus, I do not want to continue displeasing you by a tepid life as I have done up to now. That would amount to coming to you to bring you displeasure. Therefore I resolve to make my prayer more devout and my communions more frequent. Jesus, I want to suffer and to suffer much for you. Prayer will ever be on my lips. If even he falls often who makes frequent resolutions, what will happen to him who resolves but rarely." Dear Father, these words came from my heart in that moment of sorrow and of hope when I was alone with my Jesus. I have made so many resolutions and I never kept any of them.

Every day, amid so many sins of every kind, I would ask Jesus to let me suffer and suffer much.

PAIN IN HER FOOT

After a little Jesus sent me a consolation: he sent me a pain in one of my feet. I kept this secret for a while but the pain was severe. A doctor came and said an operation was necessary and perhaps the foot would have to be amputated. All of my family was greatly worried and only I was indifferent. I remember that while they were performing the operation I cried and complained loudly. But then, looking at Jesus, I begged him to pardon my folly. Jesus also sent me other pains and I can say with truth that ever since the death of my mother I have never spent a day without suffering some little thing for Jesus. During this time I never ceased to commit sins. I became worse every day. I was full of every kind of fault and I do not understand why Jesus never showed himself angry with me. Only once did I see Jesus angry at me and I would rather suffer the pains of hell a thousand times in this life than find myself before Jesus so displeased and to see before my eyes the horrible picture of my soul as I did on the occasion of which I will speak later.

HER FIRST VOW

On Christmas day of 1896 I was permitted to go to Mass and receive Holy Communion. I was about fifteen years old at the time and I had already often asked my confessor for permission to make a vow of virginity (I had asked for this for many years but I did not really know what it was; it only seemed to me that it was the most beautiful adornment I could offer to Jesus). He would not let me take this vow of virginity but instead allowed me to make a vow of chastity. So on Christmas night I made my first vow to Jesus. I remember that Jesus was so pleased with it that he asked me after Holy Communion to unite with this vow the offering of my whole self and all my sentiments in abandonment to his holy will. I did this with such a joy that I spent that night and the next day as if in heaven.

A YEAR OF GREAT SORROW (1897): DEATH OF HER FATHER

That year came to an end and we entered upon the year of 1897 which was a year of great sorrow for all my family. I alone being heartless, remained unmoved in the face of so many afflictions. The thing that troubled the others the most was the fact that we were deprived of all means of livelihood, and added to this my father was seriously ill. One morning after communion I understood what a great sacrifice Jesus would ask of us soon. I wept very much but Jesus made himself felt in my soul all the more during those sorrowful days. I saw my father so perfectly resigned to die that I felt strong enough to bear these sorrows very calmly. On the day of his death Jesus told me not to give way to useless weeping and wailing, so I spent the day praying in resignation to the will of God who at that moment took the role of both my heavenly and earthly father.

WITH HER AUNT IN CAMAIORE RETURN TO LUCCA (1898)

After my father's death we found ourselves destitute. We had only enough to live on. One of my aunts, realizing this, helped us a great deal. She was unwilling that I should remain with my family. So the day after my father's death she sent for me and had me stay with her for several months. (This was not the aunt with whom I lived after my mother's death, but another one.) Every morning she took me to Mass but I seldom received communion because I could not bring myself to go to confession to anyone besides Monsignor. During that time I gradually forgot Jesus once more. I neglected prayer and I began anew to seek diversions. Another niece of my aunt who was also living with her became very friendly with me and we

became very much alike in our wickedness. My aunt sent the two of us out together frequently. And I am sure that if Jesus had not had pity on my weakness I would have fallen into serious sins. Love of the world began gradually to awaken in my soul. But Jesus once more came to the rescue. All of a sudden I became 62 stooped and began to have terrible pains in my back. I bore this for a time but as I saw myself growing worse I asked my aunt to take me back to Lucca. She lost no time, but sent someone back with me. But, dear Father, the thought of those months spent in sin filled me with terror. I had committed sins of every kind. Even impure thoughts had run through my mind. I had listened to bad conversation instead of fleeing from it. I had told untruths to my aunt to protect my companion. In short, I had stood on the brink of hell.

SERIOUS ILLNESS (1898 - 1899)

Once again at Lucca, I was better for some time. I never wanted to obey when they wished a doctor to visit me (for I never wanted anyone to touch me or see me.) One evening a doctor came unannounced, examined me by force and found an abscess on my body which he feared was very serious because he thought it had affected my spine. For a long time I had felt pain in that part of my body but I did not want to touch or look at it because when I was a little girl I had heard a priest say: "Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit." Those words had struck me and led me to guard my body as closely as possible. After he had visited me the doctor called a consultant. What affliction it caused me, dear Father, to have to uncover myself. Every time the doctor touched me I cried. After the consultation I grew steadily worse and I was forced to go to bed and was not able to move. Every remedy was used on me but instead of helping me they made me worse. While I was in bed I was ill at ease and a source of annoyance to all. The second day I was in bed I was not at peace and I wrote to Monsignor telling him that I wanted to see him. He came at once and I made a general confession, not indeed because I was so bad off but to regain peace of conscience which I had lost. After confession my 63 peace with Jesus returned and as a sign of this, on that same evening I experienced a very deep sorrow for my sins. Then, dear Father, the pain became worse and worse and the doctors decided to operate on me (in that part of which I have spoken). Three doctors came (and what I suffered from the pain was as nothing). I felt pain and suffering only when I found myself in their presence almost entirely unclothed. Dear Father, how much better it would have been for me to die! Finally the doctors saw that all remedies were useless and they gave me up entirely. After that they came to see me only now and then through courtesy, so to speak. Regarding the nature of this illness, nearly all the doctors said it was a spinal disease and only one insisted that it was hysteria. I had to lie in one position in bed and it was impossible for me to move myself. In order to have a little relief now and then I had to ask some of the family to help me to move an arm, now a leg. They took excellent care of me, but I, on the contrary, repaid them only with bad manners and short answers.

RECEIVES COMFORT FROM HER GUARDIAN ANGEL

One evening when I was more uncomfortable than usual I was complaining to Jesus telling him that I would not have prayed so much if I had known he was not going to cure me, and I asked him why he wanted me to be sick this way. My angel answered me as follows: "If Jesus afflicts you in body it is always in order to purify your soul. Be good." Oh, how many times during my long illness did I not experience consoling words in my heart! But I never profited by them. The thing that afflicted me most was to have to stay in bed, because I wanted to do what the others were doing. I wanted to go to confession every day and to Mass each morning. But one morning when they brought Holy Communion to me at home Jesus made Himself felt rather strongly in my soul and he gave 64 me a severe rebuke, telling me that I was a weak soul. "It is your bad self - love that makes you resent not being able to do

what the others do," he said to me, "and that causes you so much confusion at seeing that you have to be helped by others. If you were dead to yourself you would not be so disturbed."

ST. GABRIEL OF THE SORROWFUL VIRGIN

During this time my family was making triduums and novenas and having others make them for my cure. But they obtained nothing. I myself remained indifferent. The words of Jesus had strengthened but not converted me. One day a lady who often came to visit me brought me a book to read (the life of Venerable Gabriel). I took it almost disdainfully and put it on the pillow. The lady begged me to recommend myself to Gabriel but I thought little of it. My family, however, began to say three Paters, Aves, and Gloria's in his honor every day. One day I was alone. It was a little after noon. I was attacked by a strong temptation and I said within myself that I was tired of all this and staying in bed annoyed me. The devil took advantage of these thoughts and began to tempt me saying that if I had listened to him he would have cured me and would have done all that I asked of him. Dear Father, I was on the point of giving in. I was disturbed and felt that I was conquered. But suddenly a thought came to me. My mind turned to Venerable Gabriel and I said fervently: "The soul comes first and then the body!" Nevertheless the devil continued with even stronger assaults. A thousand ugly thoughts rushed through my mind. Again I turned to Venerable Gabriel and with his help I conquered. Entering within myself, I made the sign of the Cross and in a quarter of an hour I turned to unite myself with God, whom I so little appreciated. I recall that on that very evening I began to read the life of Brother Gabriel. I read it several times. I never grew tired of reading it and admiring his 65 virtues and his example. My resolutions were many, my deeds but few. From the day on which my new protector, Venerable Gabriel, saved my soul I began to practice a special devotion to him. At night I could not sleep unless I had his picture under my pillow. And from that day to this I began to see him near me (here, dear Father, I do not know how to express myself; I have felt his presence). In every act, in every bad action that I have performed I thought of Brother Gabriel and thereupon ceased the action. I have never failed to pray to him every day in these words: "The soul comes before the body." One day the lady who had brought me the life of Venerable Gabriel came to take it back. In taking it from under my pillow and giving it back to her I could not help weeping. The lady, seeing that it was so hard for me to give it up, promised to come back later and get it when the person who had given it to her requested it. She came back a few days later and I had to give it back to her, though I did so weeping. This caused me much displeasure. But that Saint of God very soon rewarded this little sacrifice for that night in a dream he appeared to me clothed in white. I did not recognize him, dear Father. When he saw that I did not recognize him he opened the white garment and I saw him clothed as a Passionist. I knew him immediately. I remained in silence before him. He asked me why I had cried when they took his life from me. I don't recall what I answered but he said: "See how much your sacrifice has pleased me. It has pleased me so much that I have come myself to see you. Do you wish me well?" I did not answer. Then he comforted me and said to me: "Be good because I will return to see you." He told me to kiss his habit and rosary and then he went away. My imagination started working and I found myself always awaiting another visit from him. But he did not come again for many, many months. Here is how it happened. The feast of the Immaculate Conception came. At that time the Barbantine nuns, Sisters of Charity, were coming to change my clothing and tend to me. Among those who came there was one who 66 was not yet vested in the habit and who was not vested until two years later because she was too young. On the vigil of the feast the nuns came as usual and while they were there I had an inspiration. I thought within myself: "Tomorrow is the feast of our Blessed Mother. If I should promise her that if she would cure me I would become a Sister of Charity, what would

happen?" This thought consoled me. I told it to Sister Leonilda and she promised that if I were cured I could be vested with the novice of whom I spoke above. All that remained was that I should make the promise the next morning after Holy Communion. Monsignor came to hear my confession and he immediately gave his permission. He also gave me another consolation. We made a perpetual vow of virginity together that evening, a vow which previously he had never allowed me to make. He renewed it and I made it for the first and last time. What tremendous graces, but I have never corresponded with them! That evening I was in perfect peace. Night came and I went to sleep. All of a sudden I saw my Protector standing before me at the foot of my bed. He said to me: "Gemma, make the vow to become a religious gladly, but add nothing else." "But why!" I asked. Touching me on the forehead while he looked at me and smiled, he answered: "My sister!" I did not understand what it was all about. To thank him, I kissed his habit. He took the woolen heart (which Passionists wear on their breast), had me kiss it and then placed it on the sheet over my heart and again said to me: "My sister!" With that he disappeared. The next morning there was nothing on the sheet. I went to Communion and afterwards made my promise but added nothing else. I did not speak of this either with the nuns or with my confessor. At that time and many times later the nuns reminded me of my vow because they thought I had promised to become a Sister of Charity, and they told me that our Blessed Mother could cure me. Jesus graciously accepted my vow and my poor heart was very glad. 67

MIRACULOUS CURE (MARCH 3,1899)

But the months passed and I did not get any better. On the fourth of January the doctors tried another remedy. They cauterized me in 12 places along the spine. That was enough. I began to grow worse. Besides the usual pains, on January 28 I began to suffer an unbearable headache. The doctor whom they called said that it was very dangerous (calling it a tumor of the brain). They could not operate because I was suffering from extreme weakness. I grew worse from day to day and on the second of February they brought me Holy Viaticum. I made my confession and I was waiting to go and be with Jesus. It seemed that it would be soon. The doctors, thinking that I was no longer conscious, said among themselves that I would not live until midnight. Live Jesus! One of my teachers in school (of whom I have spoken above) came to see me and to tell me farewell saying that she would see me on heaven. But nonetheless she begged me to make a novena to Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque, assuring me that she would gain for me the grace either of being cured perfectly, or else of entering heaven immediately after death. This teacher, before she would leave my bed made me promise her to begin the novena that same evening. It was February 18. I did begin it. That very evening I said the prayers for the first time. The next day I forgot them. On the 20th I began all over again, but once more I forgot to say the prayers. This was very poor attention to prayer, was it not, dear Father? On the 23rd I began for the third time (that is, I intended to), but a little before midnight I heard a rosary rattling and I felt a hand resting on my forehead. I heard someone begin saying the Pater, Ave and Gloria and repeating them nine times. I could hardly answer the prayers because my pain was so intense. Then that same voice that had said the prayers asked me: "Do you want to be cured?" "It's all the same to me," I answered. "Yes," he said, "you will be cured. Pray with faith to 68 the Heart of Jesus. Every evening until the novena is finished I will be here with you and we will pray to the Heart of Jesus together." "And Blessed Margaret Mary?" I asked. "You may add three Gloria's in her honor." The same thing happened for nine successive nights. The same person came every evening, placed his hand on my forehead and we recited together the prayers of the Sacred Heart, after which he had me add three Gloria's in honor of Bl. Margaret Mary. It was the second to last day of the novena and I wanted to receive communion on the last day

which was the first Friday of March. I sent for my confessor and went to confession. The next morning I received communion. What happy moments I spent with Jesus! He kept repeating to me: "Gemma, do you want to be cured?" I was so moved that I could not answer. Poor Jesus! The grace had been given. I was cured.

TENDERNESS OF JESUS

"My daughter," Jesus said embracing me, "I give myself entirely to you and you will be entirely mine." I saw clearly that Jesus had taken my parents from me and sometimes this made me discouraged, because I believed myself abandoned. That morning I complained to Jesus about this and he, always so good and tender, said to me: **"My daughter, I will always be with you. I will be your father and she (indicating our Mother of Sorrows) will be your mother. He who is my hands can never lack fatherly help. You will never lack anything even though I have taken away from you all earthly consolation and support. Come, draw near to me, you are my daughter. Are you not happy to be the daughter of Jesus and Mary?"** The overwhelming affections to which Jesus gave rise in my heart kept me from answering. After about two hours had passed I arose. Those in the house wept for joy. I too was happy, not because I was cured but because Jesus had chosen me to be his daughter. Before leaving me that morning Jesus said to me: **"To the grace that has been given you this morning there will be added many more and greater ones." And this has been so true because Jesus has always protected me in a special way. I have treated him only with coldness and indifference and in exchange he has given me only signs of infinite love.**

HUNGER FOR THE EUCHARIST

From that time on I could hardly bear not to receive Jesus every morning. But I was not able to do so. I had the permission of my confessor to do so but I was so weak that I could hardly stand on my feet. On the second Friday of March 1899, I went to church for the first time to receive Holy Communion. And from then until now I have continued to go every day. I missed only now and then because my great sins made me unworthy, or as a chastisement imposed on me by my confessor.

WITH THE VISITANDINE SISTERS

That same morning, the second Friday of March, the Visitandine Sisters wanted to see me. I went to see them and they promised me that in May I could come to them and make a course of spiritual exercises. Furthermore, they told me that if my desire proved to be a true vocation they would take me into the convent in June for good. I felt great contentment in the thought of

HOLY WEEK OF 1899

The month of March passed with me receiving communion every morning and Jesus was filling me with unspeakable consolations. Then came Holy Week. I wanted so much to attend the sacred functions. But Jesus had arranged otherwise. During the Holy Week he asked of me a great sacrifice. Wednesday of Holy Week came (no sign had been given me except that when I received communion Jesus made himself felt in a most wonderful manner). 70

HER GUARDIAN ANGEL AS MASTER AND GUIDE

From the moment when I got up from my sick bed, my Guardian Angel began to be my master and guide. He corrected me every time I did something wrong and he taught me to

speaking but little and that only when I was spoken to. One day when those in the house were speaking of some person and were not speaking very well of her, I wanted to speak up but the angel gave me a severe rebuke. He taught me to keep my eyes cast down, and one time in church he reprov'd me strongly saying to me: "Is this the way to conduct yourself in the presence of God?" And another time he chided me in this way: "If you are not good I will not let you see me anymore." He taught me many times how to act in the presence of God; that is, to adore him in his infinite goodness, his infinite majesty, his mercy and in all his attributes.

FIRST HOLY HOUR - JESUS CRUCIFIED

As I said before, we were in Holy Week. It was Wednesday. My confessor had finally decided that it would be well for me to make a general confession as I had desired for so long a time. He chose a late hour on Wednesday for me to do this. In his infinite mercy Jesus gave me a very deep sorrow for my sins and here is how it came about. On Thursday evening I began to make the Holy Hour. (I had promised the Sacred Heart that if I were cured I would make the Holy Hour every Thursday without fail.) This was the first time I had made it out of bed. I had made it on the preceding Thursdays but in bed because my confessor would not let me make it any other way on account of my extreme weakness. But from the time of my general confession he permitted me to make it out of bed. I began therefore, to make the Holy Hour but I felt myself so full of sorrow for my sins that it was a time of continual martyrdom. However, in the midst of this sorrow there was one comfort, namely, weeping. This was both a comfort and a relief to me. I spent the entire hour praying and weeping. Finally, being very tired, I sat down but the sorrow continued. I became entirely recollected and after a little bit, all of a sudden, I felt my strength fail. (It was only with great difficulty that I was able to get up and lock the door to the room.) Where was I? Dear Father, I found myself before Jesus Crucified. He was bleeding all over. I lowered my eyes and the sight filled me with pain. I made the sign of the cross and immediately my anguish was succeeded by peace of soul. I continued to feel an even stronger sorrow for my sins and I had not the courage to raise my eyes and look at Jesus. I prostrated myself on the floor and remained there for several hours. "My daughter," He said, "Behold these wounds. They have all been opened for your sins. But now, be consoled, for they have all been closed by your sorrow. Do not offend me anymore. Love me as I have always loved you. Love me." This he repeated several times. The vision vanished and I returned to my senses. From that time on I began to have a great horror for sin (which was the greatest grace Jesus has given me). The wounds of Jesus remained so vividly impressed in my mind that they have never been effaced.

GOOD FRIDAY (MARCH 31,1899)

On the morning of Good Friday I received Holy Communion and I would have liked to have gone to the services that day in honor of the Agony. But my family would not permit it even though I wept. With great difficulty I made this first sacrifice to Jesus. And Jesus, always so generous, saw fit to reward me even though I made the sacrifice with much difficulty. I shut myself in my room, therefore, to make the hour of Agony alone. But I was not alone. My Guardian Angel came to me and we prayed together. We assisted Jesus in all his sufferings and compassionated our Mother in her sorrows. But my angel did not fail to give me a gentle rebuke, telling me that I should not cry when I had to make a sacrifice to Jesus; but, that I should rather thank those who offered me the occasion to do so. This was the first time and also the first Friday on which Jesus made himself felt so strongly in my soul. And although I did not receive communion from the hands of a priest because it was impossible, Jesus nevertheless came himself and communicated himself to me. And this union with him was so overwhelming that I remained as if stupefied. Jesus spoke very strongly to me. "What are you doing?" he said to me. "What have you to say? Aren't you ever moved at all?" Then it was

that, not being able to resist any longer, I blurted out: "Oh Jesus, how is it that you who are most perfect and all holy choose one so full of coldness and imperfection to love?" He answered: "I am burning with desire to unite myself with you. Hasten to receive me every morning. But remember that I am a father and a zealous spouse. Will you be my daughter and my faithful spouse?" I made a thousand promises to Jesus that morning but, my God, how soon I forgot them! I always felt a horror for sin but at the same time I was always committing it. And Jesus was not satisfied with me though he ever consoled me, sending my Guardian Angel to be my guide in everything. After these things happened to me I felt that I should speak to my confessor about them. I went to confession but I did not have the courage. I left the confessional without saying anything about it. I returned home and on entering my room I noticed that my angel was weeping. I didn't have the courage to ask him what he was crying about but he himself told me. "Do you want to be deprived of seeing me anymore? You are a bad girl. You are hiding things from your confessor. Remember this, and I am telling you for the last time, if you ever hide anything else from your confessor I will never let you see me anymore. Never, never." I fell to my knees and he told me to make an act of contrition and made me promise to reveal everything to my confessor. With this he pardoned me in the name of Jesus. 73

A SEVERE REPROOF FROM JESUS

The month of April had arrived. I was impatiently awaiting the time when I could go to the Visitandine Sisters to make a retreat as they had promised me. One time, it was one morning after communion, Jesus told me about something that had displeased him very much. I had committed the fault the evening before. Two young girls who were friends of one of my sisters used to come to our house and though their conversation was not bad, it was worldly. This time I took part in the conversation adding my little bit like the others. But the next morning Jesus rebuked me so severely that it inspired in me a great terror and I would have desired never to see or speak to anyone else. Nevertheless, Jesus continued to make Himself felt in my soul every day, filling me with consolation. And I, on the other hand, continued to turn my back to him and offend him without any sorrow.

THIRST FOR LOVE AND SUFFERING

Two sentiments were engendered in my heart after the first time Jesus made himself felt and allowed me to see him covered with blood. The first was to love him even to the point of sacrifice. But since I did not know how to love him truly, I asked my confessor to teach me and he answered as follows: "How do we learn to read and write? We practice reading and writing over and over until we finally learn how." This answer did not convince me. In fact, I didn't know what he meant. Often I asked him the same question, but he always gave me the same answer. The other sentiment that sprung up in my heart after having seen Jesus was a desire to suffer something for him seeing that he had suffered so much for me. I got myself a thick rope which I took secretly from the well, made several knots in it and put it around my body. But I didn't have it on a quarter of an hour before my Guardian Angel 74 reprovved me and made me take it off because I had not asked my confessor's permission and obtained it. But my great affliction was not being able to love Jesus as I wished. I tried eagerly not to offend him but my bad inclination to evil was so strong that without a special grace of God I would have fallen into hell.

"LEARN HOW TO LOVE"

Not knowing how to love Jesus caused me much concern but he, in his infinite goodness, was never ashamed to humiliate me in order that he might become my Master. One evening when I was at prayer he came to bring peace to my soul. I felt myself entirely recollected and I

found myself a second time before Jesus Crucified. He said to me: "Look daughter, and learn how to love," and he showed me his five open wounds. "Do you see this cross, these thorns, these nails, these bruises, these tears, these wounds, this blood? They are all works of love and of infinite love. Do you see how much I have loved you? Do you really want to love me? Then first learn to suffer. It is by suffering that one learns to love." On seeing this I experienced a new sorrow and thinking of the infinite love of Jesus for us and the sufferings he had undergone for our salvation, I fell fainting to the floor and I remained thus for several hours. All that had happened to me during these times of prayer brought me such great consolation that although they were prolonged for several hours I was not tired out. I continued to make the Holy Hour every Thursday, but sometimes it happened that it lasted until about two o'clock because I was with Jesus and almost always he gave me a share in the grief that he experienced in the garden at the sight of my many sins and those of the entire world. It was such a deep sorrow that it could well be compared to the agony of death. After all this I would experience so sweet a calm and consolation that I had to give vent to it in tears. And these tears made me taste an incomprehensible love and increased in me the desire to love Jesus and to suffer for him. 75

IN THE MONASTERY OF THE VISITANDINES

The time of the retreat I wanted so much was drawing near, and on the first of May, 1899 at three o'clock I went into the convent. I felt that I was entering heaven itself. What consolations! For the first time I forbade those of my family to come to see me during that time because those days were all for Jesus. On the evening that I entered, Monsignor came and granted me the permission (as the Mother Superior desired) that I should not make the retreat in private but that I should make it as a kind of test, that is, doing all that the nuns did. This consoled me in one way, but in another way it displeased me because that way I could not be as recollected. But I wanted to obey without a word. The Mother Superior put the Mistress of Novices in charge of me. She gave me a schedule to follow while I was there. I had to rise at five o'clock, go to the choir at 5:30, receive Holy Communion and then recite Prime and Sext with the nuns. Then I would leave the choir to take breakfast and a half hour later go to my cell. At nine o'clock I would go to the choir again for the community Mass and to recite None. Then, at 9:30 Monsignor would come to give me a little conference if he could. But when he could not come I would make a meditation from a book that he sent me during that time and then he would come in the evening to give me a little talk. At 10:15 when the meditation was over I would make a visit to Jesus with the nuns. From 10:30 until 11:30 was the dinner hour and from then until 12:30 we had recreation (I had permission from Monsignor to spend only one recreation period a day with the nuns because I wanted to spend the evening recreation in the choir with Jesus). At 12:30 I went to the novitiate where there was work until three o'clock. At three we went again to the choir to recite Vespers and then the community gathered for an instruction from the superior until five o'clock. At five we went again to the choir to recite Compline which was followed by an hour of meditation which we made in any manner we pleased. After meditation we went to the refectory again and then to recreation. This recreation period I spent with the superior in her room or else in the 76 choir. At 8:30 the community gathered again for about a half hour and at 9:00 we recited Matins and went to bed. Dear Father, it seemed to me that this type of life was almost too easy for the nuns, and rather than becoming attached to it I began instead to dislike that manner of life. The novices, who all had special concern for me, would advise me now and then and speak of those things which were more appealing about the community, but I gave no thought to these things. The thing that afflicted me was the thought that I had to return to the world. I would have preferred to remain there (even though that form of life did not appeal to me) than return again to those places where there were many occasions of offending

Jesus. I begged Monsignor to grant me the permission to remain at the convent. With the permission of the Mother Superior and the entire community, I asked permission of the Archbishop to remain there, but he would not grant it, saying that my health was still so poor that I was wearing an iron brace on my back to hold it straight (I haven't the slightest idea who told the Archbishop). The Mother Superior commanded me under obedience, therefore, to take off the brace. I wept on receiving this command because I well knew that I could not do without it. I ran to the novitiate and prayed to my dear Child Jesus. Then I hastened to my room. I took it off, and though nearly two years have passed since then, I have never worn it again and I am doing very well. The superior, on hearing of this, hastened to tell the Monsignor that he might inform the Archbishop. There was only one more day left of the retreat and Monsignor came to hear my confession. He asked me if I would remain in the convent for twelve more days because on May 21 some of the Sisters were going to make their profession and they wanted me to be present. I was infinitely happy to remain with them but I was convinced of one thing: that life was too easy for me. I had sinned so much that I must do penance. I revealed my fears to Jesus after Communion and 77 Jesus, ever considering my misery, consoled me and made himself felt in my soul, quieting me with consoling words. I was present, as Monsignor wished, at the profession of four novices. That morning I wept very much. Jesus was closer to me than usual and some of the Sisters who saw me came up to me and asked if I needed anything because I was at the point of losing my senses. (It was true. The nuns had forgotten to give me breakfast and they hadn't given me my dinner yet, so that I ate only after one o'clock). But I received a stiff rebuke for this as I deserved. I should have gone to the refectory on my own when the bell rang. But I was ashamed or rather, (listen, dear Father to what limit my malice, or rather my human respect leads me) the Mother Superior always kept me beside her wherever we were. But that day of Profession the newly professed nuns took their place alongside the superior so that I remained outside without eating. My pride would not allow me to take second place to them. My God, I merited worse, but Jesus still supported me. He chastised me by not making himself felt for several days. I wept much on account of this but Jesus sent my Guardian Angel to me again and he said to me: "Happy you, daughter, who deserve such a just punishment." I understood none of these words but they brought consolation to my heart.

NOSTALGIA FOR THE CLOISTER - DELUDED HOPES

My God! There came another sorrow. The next day I had to leave the convent and return home. I wanted that day never to come, but it was at hand. At five o'clock in the afternoon on May 21, 1899, I had to leave. In tears, I asked the blessing of the Mother Superior, said good - bye to the nuns, and left. My God! What grief! But an even greater sorrow was to follow soon on this one. I returned to my family but I was no longer able to adapt myself. My mind and heart were fixed on the idea of becoming a religious and no one could 78 discourage me from it. In order to leave the world I seriously considered becoming a Visitandine Nun at once. Almost every day I would hasten to the monastery and the sisters promised me that in the month of June, on the feast of the Sacred Heart, they would accept me. I must say, however, that my heart was not fully at rest because I knew that the Visitandine life was too easy for me. And many times, on different occasions, Jesus said to me in my heart: "Daughter, you need a more austere rule." But I very seldom paid any attention to these words and I remained firm in resolution. We began the month of June and I noticed that the nuns were changing their attitude. Every time I went to see the Superior they told me that she could not come and she would send first one then another to talk to me. They began to speak seriously to me, telling me that unless I could bring at least four medical certificates with me

I would not be accepted. I tried to fulfill this requirement but all efforts were in vain. The doctors would not cooperate and one day the nuns told me that when I brought the certificates they would receive me immediately, but until then absolutely not. This decision did not disturb me in the least because Jesus was consoling me with so many graces.

A VERY PRECIOUS GRACE - THE STIGMATA

On the 8th of June after communion Jesus told me that that evening he would give me a very great grace. I went that same day to confession and I told Monsignor about it. He told me to be very attentive so that I could tell him all about it afterwards. Evening came and all of a sudden, earlier than usual, I felt an interior sorrow for my sins far deeper than I had ever experienced before. In fact, it brought me very, very close to death. After this, all the powers of my soul became recollected. My intellect could think of nothing but my sins and the offense they gave to God. My memory recalled all my 79 sins to mind and made me see all the torments that Jesus had suffered in order to save me. And my will made me detest them and promise to be willing to suffer anything in order to expiate them. My mind was flooded with thoughts, thoughts of sorrow, of love, of fear, of hope and of comfort. Following on this interior recollection I was quickly rapt out of my senses and I found myself before my heavenly Mother. At her right stood my Guardian Angel who told me to make an act of contrition. When I had finished it my blessed Mother said to me: "Daughter, in the name of Jesus all your sins are forgiven." Then she added: "Jesus my Son loves you very much and he wants to give you a grace. Do you know how to make yourself worthy of it?" In my misery I did not know what to answer. She continued: "I will be your Mother. Will you be a true daughter?" She spread her mantle and covered me with it. At that moment Jesus appeared with all his wounds open. But blood no longer came out of those wounds. Rather, flames as of fire issued forth from them and in a moment those flames came to touch my hands, feet and heart. I felt as if I would die. I fell to the floor. But my Mother supported me keeping me covered with her mantle. I had to remain for several hours in that position. Then the Blessed Mother kissed me on the forehead, and it all disappeared and I found myself kneeling on the floor. But I still felt an intense pain in my hands, feet and heart. I arose to lie down on the bed and I noticed that blood was flowing from those places where I felt pain. I covered these parts as best I could and then, with the help of my angel, I was able to get in bed. These sufferings and pains, although they afflicted me, filled me with perfect peace. The next morning I was able to go to communion only with great difficulty and I put on a pair of gloves in order to hide my hands. I could hardly stand on my feet and I thought I would die any minute. The sufferings continued until three o'clock Friday afternoon, the solemn feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. I should have told these things to my confessor at once but instead I went to confession 80 several times without saying anything about them. He asked me about it several times but I would not tell him.

THE STIGMATA IS REPEATED

Meanwhile, some time passed and every Thursday about eight o'clock I began to feel the usual sufferings. And every time this happened to me I first felt a deep and intense sorrow for my sins. This caused me more suffering than the pains in my hands, feet, head and heart. This sorrow for my sins reduced me to a state of grief close to death. But in spite of this wonderful grace from God I did not improve but rather I committed numerous sins every day. I was disobedient and insincere with my confessor, always hiding something or other from him. My angel admonished me many times, telling me that if I continued to do this he would not allow me to see him anymore. But I did not obey him and he did go away, or rather, he would only hide himself for a while.

ARDENT DESIRE FOR THE CLOISTER JESUS COMFORTS AND REPROVES HER

During this time my desire to become a nun kept increasing. I told my confessor about this but he gave me little consolation. I spoke to Jesus about it and one morning when I felt this desire more strongly than usual Jesus said to me: "Daughter, what are you afraid of? Hide this desire in my heart and no one will be able to take it away." Jesus spoke to me in this way because, since this desire to go to the convent and unite myself forever with Jesus was so great, I feared someone would be able to take it away from me. But Jesus immediately consoled me with these words and others that I have forgotten. Jesus never failed to make himself felt and seen, especially when I was afflicted. One day (which deserves special mention) I had been scolded, as I always deserved, by one of my brothers because I was going out for a while to pray in the church. During the little dispute that we had I suffered a slight blow, which I deserved, and I was 81 complaining about it. Jesus was not at all pleased and he reproved me with certain words which truly hurt me. He said: "Daughter, are you also adding your share to the pain of my Heart? **I have exalted you to be my daughter and honored you with the title of my servant, and now how do you behave?** You are an arrogant daughter, and unfaithful servant. You are bad!" These words made such an impression on my heart that even though Jesus added new crosses after that, he always gave me the strength to thank him, and not to complain anymore. Jesus gave me an even stronger rebuke one time in these words, which at that time I did not understand but I later found them to be true. He said: "Daughter, you complain too much in adversity, you are too perplexed in temptation and too timid to control your affections. I give you nothing but love: love in adversity, in prayer, in affronts, love in everything. And tell me, daughter, can you deny me such a just satisfaction and such a little recompense?" I could not find words to answer Jesus. My heart almost burst with sorrow, and I said the following words which I remember so well: "My heart, O Jesus, is ready to do everything. It is ready to burst with sorrow if you will it, my God!"

MISSION AT ST. MARTIN

The month of June was almost over and near the end of the month a mission began in the church of St. Martin. I always preferred to miss the mission rather than miss the sermons on the Sacred Heart at the Visitation church. But finally the latter ended and I began to go to hear the mission sermons in St. Martin Church. I cannot describe the impression made on me when I saw those priests preach! The impression was very great because I saw that they were clothed with the same kind of habit that Brother Gabriel was wearing the first time I saw him. I was seized with such an affection for them that I never missed a sermon from that day until the end of the mission. The last day of the mission arrived and all the people were gathered in the church for the general Communion. I was among the large crowd and Jesus, who was greatly pleased, made Himself strongly felt by my 82 soul and he said to me: "Gemma, do you like the habit that priest is wearing?" (He indicated a Passionist who was somewhat distant from me.) I did not answer with words but my heart answered him with its palpitations. He added: "Would you like to be clothed with the same habit?" "My God!" I exclaimed, "Yes." Jesus continued, "you will be a daughter of my Passion, and a well beloved daughter. One of these sons (of the Passion) will be your father. Go and reveal everything." And I saw that Jesus indicated Father Ignatius. I obeyed. On the last day of the mission I went to church but no matter how hard I tried I could hardly bring myself to speak of the affairs of

my soul. Instead of going to Father Ignatius I went to Father Cajetan and with great difficulty I told him about all that had happened to me as I have here related. He listened to me with infinite patience and he promised he would return to Lucca the following Monday and then he would have more time for my confession. Such was the arrangement. A week later I was able to go to confession to him again and I continued to go to him the next few times. At this time, and by means of this priest, I made the acquaintance of a lady to whom I have to this day the love of a mother and whom I have always regarded as such.

THE THREE VOWS

The only reason I went to confession to this priest was this: my ordinary confessor had forbidden me many times to make the three vows of chastity, obedience and poverty because it would be impossible to observe them as long as I remained in the world. I, who had always had a great desire to make them, made use of that occasion and this was the first thing I asked of him. He immediately gave me the permission to make them from the 5th of July to the solemn feast of the 8th of September and then they were to be renewed. I was very happy at this and it became one of my greatest consolations. At the cost of great patience on the part of this priest and with great shame on my part I revealed everything to him. I told him of all the particular graces the Lord had given me, the visits from my Guardian Angel, the presence of Jesus and also some penances⁸³ which of my own accord and without any permission I had been performing every day. He at once commanded me to cease doing these things and he took from me some of the instruments of penance that I had been using. Then this priest spoke clearly to me and told me that he was not in a position to direct me properly and that I must reveal everything to my confessor. I was in no way minded to follow this advice because I foresaw a great struggle and I feared the danger of being abandoned by Monsignor on account of my lack of sincerity and confidence in him. On no condition would I tell this priest the name of my confessor. I told him that I did not know who he was and I might have even invented a false name. I don't remember. But my little trick did not go far. To my great shame, I was discovered. Father Cajetan knew that Monsignor was my confessor but he could not speak to him about me unless I gave him permission. Finally, after keeping him in suspense for a while I gave him permission and it turned out that the two of them were in complete agreement. Monsignor gave me permission to go to this Father to confession whenever I wished and did not scold me as I had indeed deserved. I told Monsignor about the vows I had made and he approved of them adding to them a fourth vow, namely, sincerity with my confessor. He further commanded me to remain hidden and to speak of the affairs of my soul to no one but himself.

FUTILE VISIT BY THE DOCTOR REPROOFS FROM JESUS

Meanwhile the Friday occurrences continued and Monsignor thought it well to have a doctor visit me during one of them without my knowing it. But Jesus warned me saying: "Tell your confessor that in the presence of the doctor I will do none of the things that he desires." Following the advice of Jesus I told my confessor about this but he did as he had planned, and events turned out as Jesus had said, as you already know. Dear Father, from that day a new life began for me and I could tell you many things here, but, Jesus willing, I will tell them to you when we are alone (in the confessional). This was the first and best humiliation that Jesus gave me. Nevertheless, my great pride and selflove resented it. But Jesus in his infinite charity continued to give⁸⁴ me his graces and favors. One day Jesus lovingly said to me (dear Father, because Jesus spoke these words to me I will tell them to you alone, but maybe you will understand them without me explaining them): "Daughter, what can I say when you, in all your doubts, afflictions and adversities think always of yourself instead of

me. When you always hasten to find some relief and comfort rather than turn to me?" Dear Father, do you understand? This was a just rebuke from Jesus, one that I knew I well deserved. But nonetheless I continued as usual and Jesus again reproved me saying: "Gemma, do you think that I am not offended when in your great needs you turn to things that cannot bring you consolation instead of turning to me? I suffer, daughter, when I see you forget me." This last reproof was enough for me and it succeeded in detaching me entirely from every creature in order to seek my Creator in everything.

FATHER GERMANUS

I received another prohibition from my Confessor regarding the extraordinary experiences on Thursdays and Fridays, and Jesus obeyed for a little while. But then they returned as formerly and even more so. I was no longer afraid to reveal everything (to my confessor) and he told me emphatically that if he was not allowed to see these things clearly he would not believe in such fantasies. Without losing any time, that very day I said a special prayer to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament for this intention. And behold! As often happened to me, I felt myself become interiorly recollected and soon I was rapt out of my senses. I found myself before Jesus but he was not alone. Standing beside him was a man with white hair and from his habit I knew that he was a Passionist. He had his hands joined and he was praying, praying fervently. As I looked at him Jesus said to me: "Daughter, do you know him?" I told him "No," as was true. "Look," he added, "that priest will be your director and it will be he who will recognize in you, miserable creature, the infinite work of my mercy." After this happened I thought no more of it. But one day I chanced to see a little portrait. It was without a doubt a picture of the priest that I had seen beside Jesus though the likeness was very poor. Dear Father, my intimate union with you in prayer began from the moment when I first saw you with Jesus in my vision. From then on I always wanted to have you with me but the more I desired it, the more it seemed impossible. From that day on I would pray many times a day for this and after several months Jesus consoled me by having you come to see me. Now I will say no more because from that time until now you have always known me and you know everything.

The Life Miracles and Diary of Saint Veronica Giuliani

Ursula Giuliani was born on December 27, 1660, in Mercatello, a small village in the Province of the Marche in Italy. Her father was a well-respected member of society. Her mother was a deeply religious woman. She would die before she reached her 40th birthday, leaving Ursula and her four surviving siblings (two having died) to their father's care. But before she died, her mother would consecrate each of her five children to the precious Five Wounds of Our Lord Jesus. To the Wound in Our Lord's Side, she entrusted Ursula, who was all of seven years old. Without her understanding the full implication of her mother's bequest, nevertheless this was the beginning of Ursula's betrothal to Jesus' Heart, the very Heart Which bled on the Cross.



Ursula walks with Jesus from the very beginning of her life

From the time of her infancy, little Ursula sought only paintings and statues of Jesus, His Mother and the Saints, pointing to them from as young as a few months old. Barely able to walk, she cried until someone would carry her to a picture of Mother Mary holding the Baby Jesus, so that she could kiss them. She would talk to them saying, "I am Yours, and You are all mine, dear Jesus!" The Child Jesus at that time would reply "I am yours, and you are Mine!"

Ursula had her first vision of Jesus, seeing Him as a Baby holding out His Hand toward her. She would dream of Jesus. He would play with her in her dreams; her family said they could hear her gleefully talking and laughing.

One day, when she was still a little girl, picking flowers in her garden, Ursula beheld the Infant Jesus. He said, "I am the real flower." Then He disappeared! She thought He had run into the house. She ran after Him with such speed, she later wrote it seemed as if her feet were not touching the ground. Jesus would later call her "His little flower."

Ursula knew Jesus and loved Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, from as early as two years old. When the priest raised the consecrated Host, her mother had all to do to keep her from running up to her Lord Present in the Eucharist. She would stand next to her mother and sisters and watch them receive Holy Communion, drinking in the outer sign on their faces of the real change taking place inside, her mouth opened in joyful anticipation that maybe this time she would receive her Lord.

When she first heard her mother read to her about the Martyrs, Ursula was all of three years old. She was so filled with love of Jesus she too wanted to suffer just like them, to be burned for the love of her Lord. As it was winter, she went over to the stove and placed her hand on

the fire. Imagine her family's grief, when they saw what she had done. But, Ursula later writes, she did not remember shedding a tear.

She began doing penances from an early age in silence, striking her body with rope, all in a desire to imitate the Saints before her. She began walking on her knees, her little arms outstretched in the form of Jesus Crucified. Like St. Rose of Lima, Ursula desired to carry the Cross as her Jesus had done. She fashioned a Cross, putting two pieces of wood together. She later wrote that it was so heavy, she could not carry it; she found herself falling with every step she took. Our Lord, too, fell under the weight of the Cross made heavy by our sins and the sins of the world.

Ursula had a deep love for the poor, never sending a beggar away empty-handed. Now, she had a new pair of shoes that she had carefully placed by her bed. Oh, how she treasured those shoes. She would have worn them to bed, if she had thought she would not spoil them. One day a beggar came to the door; she knew she had to give him one of her new shoes, and she did. Then, the beggar returned and asked for the other shoe. She gave it to him. A book could be written around that one sentence. Many years passed when Jesus appeared to Ursula, holding out golden shoes in His Hands. He said, "These are the shoes you gave to Me when you were a little child. I was that beggar." And He disappeared! Ursula not only invited beggars into her home to share her meal, she led them to pictures of Jesus and Mary, feeding their souls as well as their bodies. And all this began when she was just a little child.

Ursula had an earthly mother who read to her about the Saints, prayed with her and guided her toward Sainthood. Death would bring that to an end, when Ursula was barely seven. She watched her mother die, moment by moment. Ursula was devastated. She was with her mother when she received her last Communion, her Viaticum. Desiring to share this last Gift her mother would receive, she begged the priest for a piece of the Host. He was sad, as he refused her. The child bent close to her mother, to be near her Lord in the Host; she smelled the heavenly fragrance of roses and said to her mother, "Oh what a beautiful thing; oh what a sweet perfume." When they returned from the grave, Ursula refused to go to bed, as her mother was no longer there. The only thing that quieted her was when her family placed the statue of the Blessed Mother holding Jesus in her arms. She would be her Mother from now on.

On February 2, 1670, at the age of ten Ursula was to finally receive her heart's desire, her Lord Jesus in First Holy Communion. When she received her Lord this first time, she said she felt a fire blazing inside her, "her heart burning." From that time on, she would consecrate herself to the Lord alone. She wrote:

"In First Communion, I think the Lord was teaching me that I had to be His bride. I experienced something special. I don't know quite what; I was beside myself, but I couldn't understand a thing. I thought it was always like this at Communion."

After receiving Communion, young Ursula had a burning desire to become a nun, to belong to Jesus completely. She would have to wait for the mystical marriage that would take place between her as the beloved and the Lord as her Spouse.

She asked the Blessed Mother to teach her how to suffer. And the Baby Jesus, speaking from His Mother's precious arms said, "I have suffered so much." To which Ursula replied, "I want to do everything You did." Jesus then said, "The Cross awaits you." But little Ursula was so filled with her Lord, so overflowing and abounding was His love, she wanted to offer

herself completely to Him. So, at only ten years old, she offered the Lord her total abandonment, in the quiet of night pleading:

“My God, don’t delay, any more. My Lord, I do not want to separate from You, until You give me the grace to be Crucified with You. Crucify me with You! Give me Your thorns, Your nails, Your Cross, and all of You; here I am, hands, feet and heart. Wound me, O my Lord!”

Jesus calls Ursula to be His own, and the Courtship begins

Ursula, now a young woman of seventeen, told her father of her desire to be the spouse of her Lord Jesus. He answered by bringing eligible suitors to the house. But seeing the holy stubbornness of his fiery daughter, as she had been called since early childhood, he finally gave in and granted her permission to enter the Monastery.

Writers write one liners which cover a lifetime of struggles and temptations. The road to the Monastery was not to be a smooth one. Ursula always had a very charismatic personality. Her laughter and joy were infectious. She was beautiful, her blonde hair and blue eyes, a decided attraction to young would-be suitors. She later wrote how she was tempted by a relative who always managed to walk with her in the garden, saying all sorts of worldly, upsetting things to her, bringing her messages from eligible young men asking her hand in marriage. She fought him Saint Veronica Giuliani off, saying,

“If you don’t keep quiet, I’ll go away. Don’t keep bringing me messages. I don’t know anybody and I want nobody. My Spouse is Jesus. He is the One I want. He is mine.”

This pursuit by the devil, to tempt her from her Spouse in Heaven lasted two painful years. After much struggling with family, the day finally arrived when Ursula knelt before the bishop and asked for his approval to enter the Monastery in Città di Castello. He was so impressed with her, he suggested to the Capuchinesses they admit her, immediately. He told them, “Take care of this new Sister as precious treasure, because she will be a great Saint.” The day she had anxiously been looking forward to finally came about. As she excitedly anticipated her appearance before the Superior of the Monastery, Ursula went into ecstasy, and when the nuns came to escort her before their Abbess, they had to wait until she returned to this world!

Ursula begins the Way of the Cross as Sister Veronica

On the day she received her heavy coarse maroon-colored habit, Ursula was given the name of the Saint who had the courage to wipe Our Lord’s Face on His Way to the Cross - no longer Ursula but now Veronica of Jesus and Mary. This was to be the sign of her life with the Lord, that of His Passion. When did it begin? Was it at age seven when she saw Our Lord covered in wounds? At that time He told her to be devoted to His Passion and then disappeared. When He again appeared, He looked so wounded, His Wounds forged a stamp onto her heart, carving themselves so deeply into its cavity, she was unable to think of anything or anyone else.

Jesus called out to her “To War! To War!” when she was still a young girl. As with her Seraphic father Francis, she misunderstood and began to study the art of fencing. Our Lord then appeared to her and said, “This is not the war I want from you.” Jesus was preparing her for the battles she would have to wage in His Name.

When she was vested in her habit, Sister Veronica asked three things of the Lord: One, that she would have the strength to live up to the life she had pledged to follow; Two, that she never wander far from His Will; And Three that He keep her on the Cross with Him. [That last one makes me tremble! I know the Cross He could have me share and I am not inviting my Lord to do that.] He promised Veronica she would do all she desired, but cautioned her that the price would be much suffering. She would drink from the cup of bitterness, as she shared the Lord's Way of the Cross.

The Lord was calling her to "make up in her flesh what was lacking in the sufferings of Christ" for the good of the whole Church. The Lord has always turned to His Mystics and Saints calling for sacrifice for His beloved Church, the Church which flowed from His Heart on the Cross. Saint Catherine of Siena, another powerful Visionary, Mystic and Stigmatist, "had a Vision in the early part of 1380, in which the ship of the Church crushed her to the earth. At that moment she offered herself as a willing sacrifice. She was to be ill from that time (until) on April 29th of that year she went to her reward."

In the first year of her religious life, her novitiate, Veronica was to suffer the slings and arrows of the devil through her sister novices. They constantly strived to show her in a very bad light in front of her Novice Mistress who took up the persecution of Veronica with gusto, causing the little novice to struggle against the temptation to fight back! She later wrote, "What a struggle went on inside of me, to overcome myself!"

The enemy never lets up. He barely allows you to catch your breath, when he strikes again, more furiously than before. The attacks would be ongoing throughout Veronica's life as a religious. They were so brutal, they could only have been waged by the number one archenemy of God, Lucifer himself. He took on the identity of some of her fellow sisters accusing her of vile misconduct. When that was not enough to destroy her, they began to abuse her physically, inflicting wounds, bruising her body mercilessly. And then, as with her Seraphic father Francis before her, the enemy thought to do her in by having his fallen angels appear as monsters performing disgusting obscene acts. But wherever the enemy of God is, the Shepherd is not far away. The Lord gave her the strength to not only withstand the assaults, but to infuriate the devil as she laughed at his stupid antics.

Where are You, Lord?

It has been called the Dark Night of the Soul by the Mystics, like Saint Teresa of Avila and Saint John of the Cross, and rightly so. [We can still remember when we lost our son, the pain of not having the consolation of the Lord and His Mother. Only with us, it was not He Who withheld Himself from us but we who turned our backs on Him. And till today, when we are ever slightly tempted to go with the crowd and run from Jesus and his persecuted Church on the Cross, we remember life without Jesus and fight the good fight. Nothing can compare with that Dark Night of the Soul when you no longer feel the Lord inside you. Not even the devastating loss of a loved one can compare with the loss of the Loved One.] Saint Veronica was to write:

"One occasion, when I was dry and desolate and longing for the Lord but unable to find Him, I would come out of myself and run from one place to another. I called for Him out loud, using all kinds of magnificent names, repeating them several times. At times, I seemed to hear Him, but in a way I cannot explain....I felt as though I were on fire, especially around the heart."

Sister Veronica would apply cloths soaked in cold water to allay the pain, but upon contact, the heat that was emanating from her body quickly dried them, leaving her in excruciating pain.

Pain was the road she would travel to complete union with Jesus. Most of us can stand almost any kind of pain - physical, spiritual or mental, if we have a loved one at our side. Veronica was all alone, without earthly or Divine consolation! Through this pain, she would know the Spouse Whom she had chosen and Who had chosen her. Her walk was to be to the Cross, to literally hang there with her Spouse Jesus alone, deserted, mocked and rejected. She would cry out, as He had before her: "My God! My God, why have You forsaken me?" in her Dark Night of the Soul.

When we went to make our documentary on Saint Veronica, we stood in front of the Cross upon which she would hang almost every evening (and during the forty days of Lent every evening), after her work was done, for anywhere from an hour to an hour and a half. She would tell the nun who helped her climb onto the cross, to return and help her off the cross when her time was up. One evening, the nun overslept and did not come for Veronica until the following morning (around three hours later, possibly more). When they found Veronica, she was close to death. Her confessor forbid her to hang on the cross from that time on, and she obeyed.

Veronica began suffering from aridity. She was longing for the Lord, trying to find Him, to have Him talk to her; He seemed to be nowhere to be found. Where did she go for help? To the Sacraments! She went to confession sometimes four or five times a day! She desired a complete union with her Spouse; He was not responding. Well, she would not give up; she would wait for Him! She lived as though He would come at any moment. While she was waiting for Him, she would go about making her house (soul) spotless for Him to enter. Even as He withheld Himself from her, she had an unexplainable urgency to prepare herself for that moment when He and she would be one. It reminds us of what someone once said, "When a woman loves you, you can't drive her away; she will never leave you." And so, it was with Saint Veronica and Jesus, only more so.

Veronica is shown Hell

Veronica asked Our Lord for His sufferings, and He said Yes! An eye-witness attested to the following:

"One day, I saw her suspended in midair, shedding tears of blood which stained her veil. Later, she told me that God was greatly offended by sinners and that she, in a trance, had seen the wickedness of sin, and of sinners' ingratitude."

Having been shown hell, Veronica devoted her life to keeping souls from ending up there. She wrote:

"At that moment I was once again shown hell opened, and it seems that many souls descended there, and they were so ugly and black that they struck terror in me. They all dropped down in a rush, one after the other, and once they entered those chasms, there was nothing to be seen but fire and flames."

Upon seeing this, Sister Veronica offered herself as a victim to hold back the Hand of the God of Justice. [Today, when we are being told God is Love (and He most certainly is) and God is merciful (and He most certainly is), we are not being taught He is also the God Who is

Just, the God of Justice. Prophets and Visionaries tell us that in the final days, when the time of the God of Mercy is over, we must stand before the God of Justice.] Veronica pleaded, she be allowed to block the entrance to hell, so that no one would be able to enter, and lose the Lord for all eternity. She outstretched her arms, as if on a cross and said to the Lord,

“As long as I stand in the doorway, no one shall enter. O souls go back! My God, I ask nothing of You but the salvation of sinners. Send me more torments, more crosses!”

On the Cross Our Lord said “I thirst!” He thirsted for souls! As Veronica shared His thirst for souls, He allowed her to experience the pains of Purgatory and Hell. Our Lady who had prepared her told her that “Many do not believe that Hell exists, and I tell you that you yourself, who have been there, have understood nothing of what hell is.”

The Mystical Marriage of Veronica and Jesus

On Easter Sunday, 1694, Jesus appeared to Veronica, seated on a golden throne adorned with sparkling jewels. Before Him, on a throne of alabaster, sat His Mother the Blessed Virgin praying to Him, in readiness to offer Veronica to Him as His bride. Saints Rose of Lima and Catherine of Siena, acting as her ladies in waiting were there encouraging Veronica. Jesus took the wedding ring, embossed with His Name, from His Sacred Heart. Our Lady held out her hand to Veronica and guided her to the Royal throne of her Divine Spouse. She handed Veronica’s right hand to the Lord and He placed the mystical wedding ring on her finger. Veronica wrote in her Diary:

“I felt the pressing of the ring, on my finger; and so it is every time I receive Communion, I feel I am again at the wedding.”

Jesus asks Veronica to make her confession

Before Jesus would share His Wounds with His beloved Veronica, He would require she make a general confession before the entire Heavenly Court. On Good Friday, in the year 1697, she had a vision of the Risen Lord, the Virgin Mary most holy, all the Angels and the Saints. The Lord asked her to begin her confession. She began, “I have offended You and confess to You my God,” when suddenly she could not go any further because there before her, were all the times she had offended her Lord, and the sorrow she felt was indescribable. The Lord turned to her Guardian Angel and commanded him to speak for her.

Then Our Lady came before her Son. She stood at His Feet, just as she had done at the foot of the Cross. She began to pray for Veronica, interceding for her. The Lord revealed to Veronica the unconditional love that He has for all souls, particularly ungrateful souls like hers that have been singularly gifted. As the Lord revealed His Hurts and Wounds, suffered by Him because of the unfaithfulness of His children, she was filled with such overpowering sorrow for the times she had caused Him pain by her sins, she asked the Lord for His suffering, especially His Wounds, His Pain to become her pain. The Lord looked at her and said, “I forgive you, but I want faithfulness in the future.”

How would Veronica remain faithful to the Lord? She walked the Way of the Sacraments, those Graces of Light in our path to the Father! She was ordered by her Spiritual Director to write down all she was experiencing, in a diary. She wrote that when she went to confession:

“I feel an inner tenderness and would like the confessor to penetrate every thought of mine, not only as it exists in me but as it exists before God. I feel such great sorrow that I don’t

know how I shall manage to speak a word. When I come before the one who stands in the place of God on earth, I have such sentiments that I cannot put them into words.”

She wrote that an unexplainable peace filled her after she received absolution for her sins, as if “a mountain of lead” was lifted from her back. She could feel the Lord embracing her soul, and through this Love from the Lord, love began to flow from her to others.

[They say that when we stand before Jesus, it is not He Who condemns us, but we condemn ourselves as our life unfolds before us, revealing to us how many times we have put human respect before Divine love, how many times we have run away from Him and the Cross, how many times we have worshiped the subtle false gods of this world over Him, our One True God. Yes, and at that time we will beg to be purified in Purgatory; at that time, even those who have not believed there is a Purgatory will be grateful for its existence.]

“Many are going to hell because there are so few who pray and sacrifice.” This message, given to the three children at Fatima by our Blessed Mother, has been true from the time of Adam and Eve. Veronica’s vocation would be, singularly, to fulfill that need. The Lord not only chose her to be a victim for sinners, a 16Visionaries, Mystics and Stigmatists

sacrificial lamb as He had been before her, but He also trusted her to fulfill this act of love, day in and day out. She accepted the role of intermediary, acting as a go-between, between God and the people of God living in a state of sin. She knew that, as with her Jesus before her, the only road to forgiveness of the sins that still stain the world that God created, was through atonement! And she said Yes! It reminds us of Blessed Edith Stein¹² who went to the Cross in atonement not only of her Jewish brothers and sisters but for the Nazis who killed them and her, saying if she did not, who would?

Veronica receives the Stigmata

One day, while praying in her cell, Sister Veronica had a vision of Jesus. He was carrying His Cross on His Shoulder. He asked her, “What do you wish?” She replied, “That Cross and I wish it for You, for Your Love.” He took the Cross from His Shoulder and placed it on her shoulder. It was too heavy! She fell under the weight of it, and her Lord lifted her.

Still another time, Our Lord appeared to Veronica, covered with open sores, a Crown of Thorns on His Head. Blood spilled from His precious Body, as He said, “See what sinners have done to Me.” Veronica wrote in her Diary:

“Seeing the great agony that my Lord was in, I begged Him to give Me His Crown. He placed it on my head; I suffered so much, I thought I was dying.”

Another time, Jesus came and showed Veronica a Chalice full of liquid. She wrote that it seemed as if the liquid was on fire. The Lord told her, “If you want to be Mine, you must taste this liquid for My Love.” She later wrote that when He placed just a few drops of the liquid on her tongue, she was filled with such indescribable bitterness and sadness, she thought she would die. Her tongue became dry and from that day on, she could not taste anything.

On Christmas Day, the Infant Jesus appeared to Veronica.

He sent an arrow deep into her heart. When she awakened, she found her heart bleeding. The burning flame roaring inside her heart was so painful, she could not rest day or night. He told her He wanted her heart to bear the marks of His Wound; He said, her heart had to feel the lance and her feet and hands, the nails He felt on the Cross.

Our Lord chose to make Veronica as much Himself as is possible, and what better way than to share His Passion with her. He had asked her many times what she wished, and she had replied, His Cross. Well on April 5, 1697, Veronica had a vision of Jesus Crucified, accompanied by His Mother Our Lady of Sorrows as she appeared at the foot of the Cross on Golgotha. Veronica's heart, as with her Savior before her, was pierced. She experienced the crowning of thorns, the scourging, the crucifixion, her own death and that of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Mother Abbess Mary Catherine told us that the other nuns could see the impressions of the crown of thorns on her head through her veil, the blood at times dripping from her eyes because of the deep wounds inflicted by the long sharp thorns. Sealed with this stigmata, Veronica's body became an indelible sign of the Lord's total communion with her, one of everlasting unity and love. She wrote:

“In an instant, I saw five shining rays shooting out from His Wounds, coming towards me. I watched as they turned into little flames. Four of them (the flames) contained the nails, and the fifth one contained the lance, golden and all aflame, and it pierced my heart. The nails pierced my hands and feet.”

Veronica took the crucifix off the wall in her cell and embraced it saying:

“My Lord, pains with pains, thorns with thorns, sores with sores, here I am all Yours, crucified with You, crowned with thorns with You, wounded with You.”

Veronica takes up the Cross

Veronica received the stigmata. Now it was time for her to take up the Cross! She could not help Jesus carry His Cross, that dark and infamous day He walked to Calvary. He had told her, she would be the bride of the Crucified Savior. Now to be completely one with Him as His bride, in imitation of her Spouse, she would carry her cross each evening. At those times she would wear a robe, lined with sharp long thorns which pierced her body, especially doing damage to the shoulder upon which she carried the cross.

Laden down by the weight of the cross, she staggered as she tried to maintain her balance. She would walk through the monastery's orchard or within the monastery itself until she was to the point of collapse. When she completed her Way of the Cross, she would then climb up many steps to a painting, in the convent, of St. Francis receiving the stigmata, where she would flagellate herself. At other times, she would levitate up into the tree in the cloister gardens, the other nuns saying she looked like a little bird in flight.

At times Veronica would take a very heavy log and carry it across her shoulders as a cross beam to reenact more authentically Our Lord carrying the cross to Calvary. There are crosses there till today, which the nuns carry on Good Friday.

Our dear Lord asked Veronica to fast for three years. Upon receiving permission from her Superior, she fasted for the next three years on bread and water alone.

Veronica experiences internal suffering

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen said that the Wet Martyrs, those who died for the Church, suffered and died, all pain ending with physical death. But the Dry Martyrs suffered and died an ongoing pain and death, day in and day out, for the Faith. As the physical pain ended for Veronica, a new form of suffering would begin.

She described in her Diary the pain she had in her heart resulting from her Lord's great Love, and the purification she underwent through those within her own convent. Sister Veronica's internal suffering was so intense, that after she died they found the traces of her life as a victim. Her heart had Divine incisions on it of the instruments of Our Lord's Passion: the Cross He had carried, the Lance which pierced Our Lord's Heart, the Pliers used to rip the nails from our Lord's Hands and Feet so He could be taken down from the Cross, the Nails that mercilessly ripped away at the Flesh on His Hands and Feet as His Body collapsed,



completely exhausted, after trying to summon enough breath to speak, begging forgiveness for us all.

As you can not separate the Son from the Mother, Veronica's heart also bore the seven swords that pierced the heart of Mother Mary. It was further engraved with letters representing the vows she had taken, a sign of her faithfulness to her vocation: P for Passion, O for Obedience, V for Volunta,¹⁴ F for Faith and C for Caritas.¹⁵ She described each sign to Blessed Florida (one of her nuns), as it was being imprinted on her heart by the Lord, and Blessed Florida would sketch the heart with the sign. And then, as a new one was added, Blessed Florida would sketch the new sign, including the signs that she had previously received, until finally, she sketched the heart containing all the signs the Lord had inscribed. When Veronica died, the bishop, doctors, and nuns, including Blessed Florida, were present at the autopsy. They saw the signs Veronica had spoken of, clearly imprinted on her heart when it was dissected in half.

Attacks from within the Monastery, from within the Church

There is no pain like that from within, whether it is within your family, your church, your ministry, your village, your friends. Veronica was Novice Mistress several times but not without terrible conflict within her own Community. As if that persecution and pain was not enough, when there was peace with her fellow nuns, she had attacks from priests, confessors and bishops, her Superior and then even the Holy See adding to the severe tests she had to undergo.

After she received the stigmata, Veronica was ordered by her confessor to remain locked away in a room in the infirmary for 50 days, to leave only to go to Mass, and then accompanied by two other nuns. The devil kept attacking her, throwing her against the walls and door in an attempt to scare her into disobeying her confessor. Veronica obeyed her confessor! At other times, the Holy Office ordered she be placed under round-the-clock scrutiny for days on end. She never refused or complained, as they examined and probed her mind and her body. She submitted without complaint.

Finally satisfied, the Holy Office lifted the ban which they had imposed on her being elected Abbess, and so in the month of April, 1716, Veronica was elected Mother Abbess of the Monastery. Although she reluctantly agreed to being Abbess, the Lord blessed the Monastery with many vocations under her very able headship. She had a wing built, to accommodate all the new sisters. *[It reminds us of a modern day Abbess, Mother Angelica, who has to keep expanding the monastery because, in this time of shrinking vocations, she has a struggle keeping up with the number of young women who desire to live the cloistered life of the Poor Clare Nuns of Perpetual Adoration, and now the young men who desire to be part of the Order of Missionaries of the Eternal Word that she founded.]*

Veronica became so spiritually attuned to Christ's suffering and passion she asked to not die, but to be allowed to remain on earth so that she could suffer more! She, like the Saints and Mystics before and after her, knew the value of Redemptive suffering. Someone once said, "Catholics know the saving merits of the Cross."

The Diary of Saint Veronica Giuliani lives till today

When they were investigating the cause of Saint Veronica's beatification, as with so many Mystics and Saints who have written so extensively, the process had to have been slowed down considerably; the Church, always prudent in making a proclamation, so as to not face possible scandal some day. Under obedience to her Abbess and confessor, Veronica had written 20,000 pages. [*We had the privilege of holding one of her manuscripts and filming its handwritten pages for our documentary.*]

Veronica never allowed her daily tasks to suffer, in order to write her diary. She, like St. Teresa of Avila, found Jesus among the pots and pans, cooking and baking for the nuns, a loving task she really enjoyed, especially for Feast Days. She devotedly cared for the sick nuns in the Infirmary, seeing Jesus in each and every one of them. At times, when Veronica was going about performing her duties among them, she would pass by the Crucifix in the Infirmary, and Jesus would take His arm off the cross and scoop her up to Him, holding her close to Him. When He lifted her onto the Cross and embraced her, it is the same as when we receive Him in Holy Communion; He embraces us.

She spent very little time sleeping. She walked the Way of the Cross, prayed and wrote down all the Blessed Mother and Jesus dictated to her in the evening hours, after her chores were completed.

At night, when she retired to her cell and would begin writing her diary, the devil would throw huge cobble stones against her door to frighten her and disrupt her thoughts. The last fifteen years of her life, she was so very ill and under such ferocious attack from the devil, she could barely remember what to write. Our Lady of Sorrows, the Blessed Mother in the painting in her cell, came to life and dictated the last chapters of Veronica's diary.

Through the Diary, we are able to glimpse not only into the life of Saint Veronica but of the Church and world at that time. We, in the Catholic Church have such a wealth of role models, beacons of light to guide us. Saints are like lights placed strategically along a pathway leading to our home that go on when it gets dark. When it seems the light has gone out of our life and there is darkness, and we are approaching despair in our families, in our Church, in our world, the Lord places these lights, these Saints in our path to lead us to our final and eternal Home.

Veronica, daughter of Mary Most Holy

Veronica drank mystically from the Chalice of the Blood of Christ and that of the Tears of Mary; she shared in what really happened at the foot of the Cross. Do you not believe that Jesus' Chalice of Blood was not mingled with Mary's Chalice of Tears? Were not the Blood and Water from His Side, that of Mother Mary, as well? Was His Blood not her blood and His Water not her water? Had she not given all to her Son, right up till the very end?

Mother Mary assigned a second Guardian Angel to Veronica, to help and console her through her difficult journey to the Kingdom. She was further strengthened one time, by the Angel transporting her in a vision to the Holy House of Loreto. Again, as with Saint Joseph of Cupertino, a Saint is brought to the House of the Holy Family in Loreto.

Veronica solemnly consecrated herself to Mary on November 21, 1708, as her "slave."¹⁶ In addition to being Veronica of Jesus and Mary,¹⁷ she became "Veronica of the Divine Will,

daughter and devotee of Mary Most Holy,” her heart melting into those of Jesus and Mary, the three hearts becoming one.

There was a statue of Our Lady of Sorrows in the infirmary, before which Veronica spent hours praying after caring for the infirmed. One night Veronica pleaded she was not worthy to be Abbess; Our Lady came to life in the statue and spoke to her, “I’ll be the Abbess and you will be my Vicar.” When Veronica received the keys to the convent, she handed them to Mother Mary; whereupon the Blessed Mother assured Veronica that it was she who was the true Superior of the Monastery:

“Daughter, be calm. I am the Superior and I will provide all the necessary sustenance for you and your sisters. That is my task. You don’t have to see to anything.”

Mother Mary even took over the instruction of the sisters in Chapter. One time Veronica journeyed into ecstasy, and did not awaken until the Chapter lesson was over. Mother Mary had taught the entire lesson. “She it was who did and said everything.”

Mother Mary never left her daughter alone, always walking beside her, supporting Veronica as she walked closer and closer to perfection in her Son Jesus. Veronica became more and more Jesus, and more and more His Mother Mary.

Mother Mary is our true Mother. Sometimes, thinking of her as Our Queen, which she most certainly is, we lose sight of the fact that she is a Mother, our Mother. And what do mothers do? They help their daughters in everyday tasks. One day, as Veronica was washing clothes in the laundry room, the Blessed Mother appeared to her and said, “Do you want to wash all the clothes, yourself? Move over and leave some for me.” As Mother Mary began to wash the clothes, the ice cold water turned into hot water. We saw the primitive laundry room inside the cloister of the convent, (which we filmed for our Documentary).

Veronica, Mother Mary and the Holy Trinity

She wrote in her Diary that Mother Mary guided and groomed her, as she walked toward becoming “daughter of the Father, spouse of the Word and disciple of the Holy Spirit.”

Mary called her “heart of my heart” and then brought her before the Holy Trinity. Veronica wrote, powerfully:

“I became recollected with the vision of the Blessed Virgin Mary. I behaved as usual, and she had me perform an act of adoration of the Holy Trinity. Then, three rays, with three arrows, came into this heart of mine. It seemed to me, the three Divine Persons were confirming, by a sign of love, what they had graciously shown me on many occasions. Mary explained to me: ‘The Father confirms that you are His daughter, the Eternal Word confirms you as His spouse, the Holy Spirit, that you are His disciple.’ Meanwhile, the three arrows that were in my heart went straight to the heart of Mary, and one arrow came from Mary’s heart to mine, each heart drawing the other to itself. Then the three arrows became like flashes of lightning, and went back and forth from my heart to that of Our Lady.”

Through that experience, Veronica said that it seemed her heart and soul became one with the heart and soul of Mother Mary. That night, the convent began to shake with the force of a huge earthquake. The nuns ran out of their cells, frightened half to death. Veronica told them to go back to sleep; she was having a vision of the Holy Trinity.

The Lord reveals the graces He bestowed upon Veronica

It was as if the Lord was unfolding before her a video of her spiritual life with Him. He told her He had renewed the sorrow in her heart 500 times to bring her closer to Him. When we are under attack, do we consider, the Lord may be trusting us to share in His Passion on the Cross? Jesus gave her the grace to have true repentance for her sins, as He revealed to her who she was and who she was called to be. He made her aware of her faults that she might use the gifts He had given her to perfect herself. Then He helped her to understand all the virtues His generous Heart had instilled in her that they might help and guide her, and through her others on their journey towards sanctity.

He told her, He had renewed His marriage to her sixty times, and He would allow her to experience His Passion thirty-three times, for every year He had spent on the earth that she might know the price, He had paid for His children on earth. He said, He revealed this only to His specially chosen ones.

[It reminds us of St. Clare of Montefalco, when the Lord told her He had been waiting so very long for someone He could trust with His Cross, as He plunged His Cross into her heart.]¹⁸

The Lord showed Himself to Veronica wounded and bleeding, His precious Blood spilling from His open Heart and other Wounds. He once again asked that she do His Holy Will. It's so simple, isn't it? All we need to do is listen for His Will and do His Will. It's simple but it's not always easy to discern His Holy Will. One thing is certain, Our Lord is in charge and nothing is going to happen unless He allows it. As Jesus said to Pilate, "You would have no authority over Me, if My Heavenly Father had not given it to you."¹⁹

How loving Our Lord is to those who carry the Cross with Him. Veronica wrote in her Diary that on three different occasions, Jesus pulled His Arm away from the Cross, and lifting her, brought her close to Him and held her beside Him on the Cross. Five times Our Lord allowed her to drink the Blood and Water from His Side. Fifteen times He washed her heart in His precious Blood which shot forth from His Side like a ray and struck her heart. Twelve times He searched her heart, purifying it, emptying it of all imperfections and remnants of past sins.

Was this to strengthen her so that she could, with her sacrifices make retribution for the Church that flowed from that Holy Side? She wrote, "He gave my soul delightful embraces in a special way, not counting the others which He gave constantly." He pierced her heart with one hundred loving Wounds, to be known to the world only after her death when all would see the signs Our Lord had imprinted on her heart.

This and so much more He gave to her, always after she would receive Holy Communion. What gifts of Grace, Our Lord has ready to give us in the Eucharist! If only the faithful knew Our Lord's generous Heart to those who receive Him worthily.²⁰

Veronica had such a love for the Lord and an awareness of His Real Presence! The night before the convent chaplain was to bring Holy Communion to the bedridden in the infirmary, Veronica would climb four flights of stone stairs on her knees, making the Sign of the Cross with her tongue on each step.²¹ It was as if she were laying out a red carpet for her King, the Eucharist, upon which He would ascend to the infirmed, in the hands of his ambassador-priest. When she got to the top, her tongue, now bleeding profusely, would leave a visible bloody Sign of the Cross on the last steps.

Veronica goes Home

Veronica's last years were spent in total communion with God, enjoying the special Graces of being one with God, a new perfected creation, as are all the Saints in Heaven. When it was revealed to her that she had received the gift of sanctifying Grace, she exclaimed, over and over again, "Forever and forever...Love has conquered and love itself has been overcome." The more that we accept God's Love in our hearts, the more we become aware how small our love is, in comparison to His unconditional never-ending Love for us.

The time for her to enter the Kingdom was at hand. We believe, it must be like the state we are in when we are about to go on a journey, especially (for us) a pilgrimage. You are physically with your loved ones, but your heart and mind is already on the way and you can think of nothing but the place where you are going. What a peaceful death, this Faith gives us.

Our Lady appeared to Veronica. On March 25, 1727, the Feast of the Annunciation of Our Lord, His Mother, who had been dictating the Diary to Veronica for fifteen years, gave her the final message: "Call a halt!" She was telling Veronica it was time to stop writing the Diary.

Veronica suffered a stroke on June the 6th, right after having received Holy Communion. Now paralyzed, the nuns carried her to a bed in the infirmary, she had so faithfully served. But, the Lord would not take her Home to Him, until she suffered thirty-three days of Purgatory on earth. She, and others who have had visions of Purgatory, will tell you, it is God's Mercy that we be able to suffer our Purgatory here and not after we die. For those thirty-three days, she was attacked mercilessly: physically, as she knew the most excruciating pain; spiritually, as she had all the temptations of such Saints as St. Thérèse, the Little Flower, the devil taunting her with her sinfulness and unworthiness to enter Heaven, how she had been a poor nun and led many to sin; on and on, diabolically torturing her, pulling out all stops, in a last ditch effort to have her for himself.

But you see, Veronica knew the devil's game, having prophesied she would suffer his slings of poisonous arrows. She suffered all the pains and sufferings of Our Lord, the complete Passion of Christ, a day for each of His thirty-three years on earth. As you meditate on the last days of Jesus' life, you get a glimpse of what pain, rejection, abandonment, complete vulnerability Veronica shared with Him.

At dawn, July 9th, Veronica asked permission from her confessor to go to her Spouse in Heaven. Having received it, she closed her eyes! Then she uttered final words to her sisters at her bedside: "Love has let Himself be found!" No more pain, no more Passion on earth, job well done, her soul soared up to Heaven where she would experience the Beatific Vision for all eternity.

Mother Church declared Veronica Blessed in 1804. Then in 1839 she entered the Company of Saints and became known to the world as Saint Veronica Giuliani. There is a movement within the Church to declare Saint Veronica a Doctor of the Church because of her invaluable teachings, through her writings: her Diary, her Reports and her Letters. Please continue to read about Saint Veronica Giuliani. Her road to perfection is a loving, spirit-filled journey to the Lord for all those reaching for eternal life with the Father.

Saint Veronica Giuliani speaks to us, today! on the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation

“In some way, the Three Divine Persons, present in the most Holy Sacrament revealed Themselves to my soul, and my soul received a deep and penetrating understanding of this Divine mystery.

“There is no way I can find to explain how this was seen. I can only say it was presented to me as a precious joy. Every time we receive Communion, our soul and heart become a temple of the Most Holy Trinity and, with God coming to us, all Paradise comes. In this joy, I saw how God exists, enclosed in the most Holy Host, and this Grace was for me superior to all the other Graces, I have ever received during my whole life.

“I sensed Divine Love intimately in my soul which united itself to Him and it gave me strength and momentum, light and clarity about my faults, the like of which I have not experienced. Also in that moment, I had a very vivid understanding of the special Grace of the Sacrament of Penance. These two Sacraments are such great Graces for our souls. We do not comprehend; we do not really esteem them as we should.”

Whenever we have given a Retreat or Mission on the Miracles of the Eucharist, as the faithful became more and more aware of the Miracle that comes about on the Altar at the moment of Consecration and of that Lord Who dwells in the Tabernacle, we would see them line up outside of the confessional to receive the Sacrament of Penance. The more we know Jesus in the Eucharist, the more aware we become of our unworthiness and sinfulness; and we want to be washed clean. Normally the Sacrament of Reconciliation brings us to the Sacrament of the Eucharist. In this instance, the Eucharist brought us to Reconciliation.

Saint Veronica speaks of the Sacrament of Reconciliation or Penance as a “Tribunal of Mercy...the confessor takes the place of God: he speaks in the very Person of God (in Persona Cristi).”

“When I go to this Tribunal, I am terrified from head to foot. I do not seem to have a tongue to confess my failings...I wish that the confessor would be able to penetrate every thought I have, not only as it is in me but also as it is in the Eyes of God. I feel such sorrow, I do not know how I can utter a word.

“In the act of receiving absolution from the confessor I seem to feel myself renewed and so lighthearted that really, it seems like I have had a mountain of lead lifted off my shoulders. I experience the loving embrace God gives my soul.

“I sense that Divine Love makes it clear to me what He has and is doing, so that I may say everything to him who stands in His place. Thus with entire frankness I reveal everything just as if I were at the feet of God, and while I am speaking I feel myself changing into someone else, so much so that I remain astonished. He has made me to understand that the obedience of revealing things (about my visions) is my cooperation as is the Penance of writing about them.”

Veronica speaks on God’s Grace

“Revelation teaches that God dwells in us through Grace, that the soul becomes a temple of the Holy Spirit and in addition, a dwelling place of the entire Trinity.”

St. Veronica lived in the reality of the Presence of God. She was not a theologian but a Mystic, a vessel through which the Lord and His Mother could speak to the children of God. As God spoke through the prophets at the time of the Israelites, now Veronica, under the

guidance of the Holy Spirit, simply recounted and reported all that had been passed on to her by the Savior and His Mother.

Whether we realize it or not, we seek the Divine from the day we are conceived. It is as if God keeps a small piece of our hearts with Him, and we long to be united with that part of ourselves. Some of the problems facing the faithful today is, with the de-emphasizing of the Divine by some theologians, we find people fulfilling their need for the Supernatural in the wrong places, running from one alleged Mystic to another, or substituting age-old heresies that deify man.

Saint Veronica said, "God is in me and I am in God." She also cried out, "Lord, I want to love You and to be completely one with You." All of God's children yearn for God. Alleged mystics who give no credit to Divine Revelation and the Supernatural, bringing the faithful to focus on them and not God and his Divine Power to do all things, will invariably end up in Pantheism²³ or the Pantheism of today, New Age! We have two problems: one, those who fall into the danger of Pantheism; and two, those who, fearing Pantheism or New Age, fall into the equally dangerous heresy of Naturalism.²⁴ Mystics, accepted by the Church, who have passed the test of time, have had a Supernatural oneness with God within themselves - as St. Paul said to the Galatians: "Yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me; insofar as I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God Who has loved me and given Himself up for me." ²⁵

So, unlike those practicing Pantheism, true Mystics experience God within, and are raised to the Divine through that indwelling of God within them, God taking over the soul, not the soul becoming God. Veronica said:

"O Love, O Love, what are You doing with this soul? I am no one, dust, ashes, and nothing. I sense this fullness which is God, without limit, united, made One very substance with my soul, and my soul made one and the very same thing with God." (Diary)

Although the soul continues to live, it now experiences itself living in God. Do we not say: Empty me, Lord, of all that is not of You and quickly fill me with Yourself? Our soul continues to live with the Free Will which God has given to it; but completely abandoning itself to God and His Will, we no longer live but God lives within us. And then, God lights that flame that cannot be extinguished.

St. Veronica says that when God takes possession of the human will, what results is one single will and from this one will, one Love alone flows. As a result, everything the soul does from this moment on is not the soul acting, but Love Who is present inside.

This day, turn your will over to the Lord, to do with as He Wills. Invite Jesus into your heart, mind and soul. Ask that your thoughts be His Thoughts, your eyes His Eyes to see, your ears His Ears to hear, your words His Words to speak, your arms His Arms to embrace, your legs His Legs to bring you closer to Him, your heart lost in His Heart that you might love as He does. Adore Him, as did Mother Mary, the Saints, the Angels and the Mystics before you.