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“Our Lord wants us to be glad!”

Acquire the habit of speaking about everyone and about everything they do in a friendly manner, especially when you are speaking of those who labor in God's service. Whenever that is not possible, keep quiet. Sharp or irritated comment may border on gossip or slander. (Furrow, 902)

17 February

Take another look over your life and ask forgiveness for this or that fault

which you notice immediately with the eyes of your conscience: for using your tongue badly; for thoughts that revolve continually around yourself; for those critical judgements you made and consented to and which now cause you to worry foolishly, leaving you restless and fretful. Believe me you can be very happy! Our Lord wants us to be glad, to be drunk with joy, stepping out along the same roads of happiness that he himself walked! We only become miserable when we persist in straying off those roads, and take the path of selfishness and sensuality or, much worse, when we take the path of the hypocrites.

The Christian must prove himself to be genuine, truthful and sincere in all that he undertakes. His conduct should reflect a spirit — the spirit of Christ. If anyone in this world has a duty to be consistent with his beliefs it is the Christian, for he has been

entrusted with a gift that he must make fruitful, and that gift is the truth which liberates and saves. But Father, you might ask me, how I am to achieve this sincerity of life? Jesus Christ has given his Church all the means necessary. He has shown us how to pray, how to get to know his heavenly Father. He has sent us his spirit, the Great Unknown, who acts within our souls. And he has left us those visible signs of his grace that we call the Sacraments. Use them. Intensify your life of piety. Pray every day. And never refuse to shoulder the sweet burden of Christ's Cross.

It is Jesus who has invited you to follow him like a good disciple so that you can journey through this earthly life, sowing the peace and joy which the world cannot give. Therefore — and let me emphasize this once more — we have to walk without fear of life and without fear

of death, without shrinking at any cost from pain and sorrow which, for a Christian, are always a means of purification and a chance for showing that we really love our fellow men, through the thousand and one circumstances of ordinary life. (Friends of God, 141)

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