

“To follow Christ — that is the secret”

When I made you a present of that Life of Jesus, I wrote as an inscription. May you seek Christ: may you find Christ: may you love Christ. Three perfectly clear stages. Have you tried, at least, to live the first? (The Way, 382)

April 10

How can we overcome these obstacles? How can we strengthen our initial resolve, when it begins to seem a heavy burden? Let us take

inspiration from the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary, our Mother. She shows us a wide and open road, which necessarily passes through Jesus.

I have distinguished as it were four stages in our effort to identify ourselves with Christ: seeking him, finding him, getting to know him, loving him. It may seem clear to you that you are only at the first stage. Seek him then, hungrily; seek him within yourselves with all your strength. If you act with determination, I am ready to guarantee that you have already found him, and have begun to get to know him and to love him, and to hold your conversation in heaven.

I beg Our Lord to help us make up our minds to nourish in our souls the one noble ambition that matters, the only one that is really worthwhile: to get close to Jesus, like his Blessed

Mother and the Holy Patriarch St Joseph did, with longing hearts and self-denial, without neglect of any kind. We will share in the joy of being God's friends — in a spirit of interior recollection, which is quite compatible with our professional and social duties — and we will thank him for teaching us so clearly and tenderly how to fulfil the Will of Our Father who dwells in heaven.

To follow Christ — that is the secret. We must accompany him so closely that we come to live with him, like the first Twelve did; so closely, that we become identified with him. Soon we will be able to say, provided we haven't put obstacles in the way of grace, that we have put on, have clothed ourselves with Our Lord Jesus Christ [1]. Our Lord is then reflected in our behaviour, as in a mirror. If the mirror is as it ought to be it will capture Our Saviour's most lovable face without distorting it or

making a caricature of it; and then other people will have an opportunity of admiring him and following him. (Friends of God, 299-303)

[1] cf Rom 13:14

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