

Making a Success of One's Life

Dear Friend,

Like all young adolescent girls, Mathilda has great dreams. First of all, she sees herself involved in a good career. For her, like her girlfriends, deciding what to choose is hard, very hard even, but she thinks about this a lot and her thoughts are slowly maturing in her. Then, she most definitely wants a car in a not-too-distant future. What about that!... her very own car which will allow her to go wherever she wants! She also hopes to own a nice house. In fact, she already has some very specific likes and dislikes, and on one of the streets along which she occasionally travels, one house has caught her attention. It's a house whose style is not very modern, but very charming and warm, having a lovely fenced-in yard with lots of flowers. It exudes a feeling of peace and serenity and it must feel good to live happily in it. She easily sees herself in such a house. Moreover, her parents are teaching her good money management and she is saving some money, thinking of the things she is dreaming about. Another thought is also very present in her heart: she wants a husband. And not just any husband, but the most handsome, the most perfect, the one who will love her tenderly and who, she hopes, will meet all her material, emotional and human needs. Like in the movies, of course!

With time, life will teach her many things, but at this time in adolescence, it is normal to imagine a world of great happiness, filled with love and ideal, without all the inevitable adversities in life. You too have dreams which are a little bit like Mathilda's. And, in your mind, the fulfillment of those dreams will determine the success of your life.

However, let's stop to think about this important question a little bit: "Really, what is a successful life?"

Speaking to a group of young girls, one day, Marie-Paule told them that "the success of one's life lies in one's sanctification." It might seem a little strange to you to talk of sanctification and sanctity to young people. True enough, that isn't a very "in thing" to talk about, and you have other interests on your mind. Yet, sanctification is the key to the real success of one's life.

Let's repeat it: "The success of one's life lies in one's sanctification." That is so true that when our soul will return to God in order to receive a reward for its accomplishments, it will

not be asked if it accumulated a nice fortune on earth, if it travelled a lot or if it enjoyed an important career. All of that, looked upon as being something desirable and a source of happiness in our world, will be of no use to it, if it has not tried to embellish its heart with an ever greater and genuine love by striving to sanctify itself.

Maybe you're thinking that holiness isn't for you? However, it isn't that complicated! Mother Teresa said: "By learning to love, we learn to be saints." Therefore, instead of talking to you about holiness, we could talk to you about learning how to genuinely love, and that would be the same thing.

However, for a young girl your age, what is loving? Is it your heart starting to race when you catch a glimpse of Alexander, John or the handsome-looking Philip? We will talk about this in our next letter where, together, we will try to understand how we can love, how we can learn to become saints. And you understand that, at the same time, we will learn how to really be able to make a success of our lives.

In the meantime, keep your wonderful dreams, but never forget that working towards our holiness is an essential goal, and that it is everyone's mission. For a more beautiful world in which love will reign, make of me a saint, O my God; make of my life a wonderful success!

The Daughters of Mary