

# The Spiritual Life, What A Grace!

Dear Friend,

*In a few weeks, it will be the September triduum at Spiri-Maria. Mathilda's parents always attend it and the children must participate in it too, except if there is a good reason not to do so, for these days of prayer are lived as a family. This time, however, Mathilda would prefer staying home. She doesn't really feel like going to Spiri-Maria. Moreover, her friends at school are organizing an activity. The other evening, in preparation for that weekend, her mother asked her to check that her white dress was in good order. Mathilda answered her with annoyance and went off to her room, grumbling and sullen. She even slammed the door in protest, thus letting her anger get the better of her, unfortunately. Now, she will have to think things over in silence and regain her peace, so as to let her heart open up once again.*

And you, how do you feel about those days? In what frame of mind do you live them: joy, enthusiasm, eagerness, anticipation or rather, like Mathilda, with feelings bordering on vexation or displeasure? We suspect that among those who will read this letter, some will be happy to participate in them, and that really gladdens us. On the other hand, some will be much less enthusiastic, but far from being scandalized by such feelings, we understand that less positive feelings can sometimes overcome us concerning these activities or with regard to our spiritual duties or obligations. That is why we want to reflect with you on the place we give to the spiritual in our life.

Do you know that, whether we are young or older, all of us experience days when the duties of our spiritual life weigh more heavily on us and require that we really make an effort to accomplish them? Oh yes! Even we who are Sisters do not always "feel" like saying the rosary, and Mass may seem long, our piety feels as though it is dying out and our efforts at recollection are useless. The same is true for your parents at times. Those feelings of inertia or weariness which we all experience are lived in

our psychic body, in our inferior soul. However, we must remember that it is not the psychic body which ought to determine our actions, but well and truly the spiritual body which is the one that must guide us. In other words, our will tending towards God, tending towards the superior Good, is the one that must dictate what we accept to do or not do.

We must live our spiritual life not as an unpleasant obligation imposed upon us by our parents, but really as something we personally need, as a necessity, a joy and a grace. Yes, it is indeed a need, a necessity, a joy and a grace! Stop and think about it... We give our physical body all the food it needs; that is a natural law. Our soul too has its own needs so that it is able to continue to develop, grow and sanctify itself, and this is a supernatural law. If we do not give it what it needs, it will die; its light will be extinguished just like the flame in a fireplace goes out when there is no longer any wood in it.

One day, Marie-Paule gave us a good piece of advice to help us. She told us: "When prayer doesn't mean anything, we must offer up our prayer for others." That, moreover, is a very noble spiritual way of loving our neighbor. And here is another secret for you. The day you decide to voluntarily make time for God, to put prayer in your life, to attend Mass whenever you can, then all of this will not be as difficult anymore and, little by little, you will even feel the need for these "meetings of love". This will no longer be a demanding obligation; on the contrary, you will find happiness and graces in this. There you have our sincerest wish for you.

*As for Mathilda, alone in her room, she noticed that things did not feel right in her heart and she was unhappy. Anger is not really very nice and it leaves the heart in a bad condition! So, after having asked the help of her guardian angel, of God and of Marie-Paule whom she loves, she calmed down and was better able to think things through. After all, a day or two at Spiri-Maria is not an effort that leads to death but truly one that makes us live!*

The Daughters of Mary