

JANUARY

HOLY SIMPLICITY

January 1: Tell my good daughters I wish them a happy New Year in which to advance along the path of spiritual perfection. To do this they must work hard to fill themselves more and more with the spirit of our Holy Institute -- a spirit of gentleness, simplicity and humble charity.

2: Simplicity, my dear daughter, is, I think what Brother Giles once said to a monk to whom he kept singing: "One to One." That is to say, "A soul alone with God alone."

3: As a rule, a simple soul has no other practice than the duties of her state; her sole preoccupation is to look only at God, and to do His Will in the tasks He sends her.

4: A simple soul is one who seeks only God, and does not fear being laughed at or despised.

5: Simplicity is the true way to find God. Let us get ready for death by a life which is all for God and our duty.

6: A soul to whom God has given the grace of simplicity, takes all from Him. She sees all in God, and God in all.

7: Simplicity is like that beautiful flower they call the sunflower, which follows all the movements of the sun and ever turns towards it. Even so, the mind and heart of a religious who possesses this virtue are always turned toward God alone, from whom she receives the light which beautifies and guides her, and the warmth which vivifies her.

8: If we could never see anything more beautiful than a simple soul at prayer. She talks to God with a sweet familiarity as to her father and her spouse; and she tells Him her faults with candor, and asks His pardon. Then she listens to Our Lord, for He communicates Himself to simple souls.

9: God can no more keep back His secrets from a simple soul than He could from Abraham. This holy familiarity of a simple soul with her God diminishes neither reverence, nor wonder, nor filial fear; on the contrary, none more than the simple souls fears to sadden the Heart of our Divine Master.

10: St. Ignatius, founder of the Society of Jesus, possessed true and holy simplicity for he sought but one thing, the greater glory of God, and, for himself, to be forgotten by the world and despised. These are the things which a good Sister of Notre Dame should desire and seek.

11: It is of great advantage to us to experience now and then, a lack of consolation, and what seems like loss of God. At such times we must act in simplicity, like little children, who, on a dark night, cling tight to the hand of father or mother, and go trustingly wherever they are led.

12: The good God must be the Soul of your souls. Nothing on earth ought to be simpler than the heart of a Sister of Notre Dame, which should be like crystal -- nay, simpler yet: for crystal shows us all the colors of the rainbow, while the heart of a Sister of Notre Dame should reflect nothing but God.

13: A simple soul has the spirit of a child: she is always gentle, open and straight forward.

14: A simple soul is not curious: she cares only for what concerns the glory of God. She has no desire to know her neighbor's faults, and , if she perceives them, she excuses them, and finds some means of drawing food from them.

15: The most simple soul is the most apostolic, because such a soul gives herself unreservedly to God, and offers herself as a holocaust to further His interests.

16: A simple soul lives in harmony with everyone; she sympathizes with the most difficult characters, and always acts supernaturally in her relations with her neighbor.

17: Once she has been told by obedience to do anything, the simple soul stifles all reasoning and willingly accepts whatever is proposed to her.

18: The greatest happiness of a simple soul is to be little in the eyes of creatures and to live "hidden with Christ in God."

19: The simple soul seeks humiliations with avidity, and loves to be hidden and mortified.

20: Simplicity, humility and truth are but one and the same thing. Simplicity teaches us we have nothing which merits the praises of others, truth shows us that our talents are lent us by God to be used for His glory, and humility prevents us from being puffed up, and so losing the merit of the talents the Divine Master has confided to us.

21: A simple soul loves everyone for God's sake, but attaches herself to no one, not even on account of the virtues they may possess.

22: A simple Sister is neither awkward nor shy: simplicity teaches her to make herself all to all, in order to gain all to Jesus Christ.

23: Great things are done for God by a simple soul, because she allows herself to

be chiseled and fashioned for the sublime work which the Heart of Jesus has called her.

24: Whatever happens to a simple soul she is not surprised. If she commits a fault through want of attention, she knows she can do nothing without God's help, so she goes to Him, as to a good father, and asks His pardon for having let go of His Hand for a moment. Then she takes it again with more fidelity and more love.

25: The way to advance in simplicity is to love God intensely. Then we shall always seek to please Him, be ever ready for sacrifices, and not know what it is to seek the esteem of creatures.

26: A simple soul is the delight of God and the Holy Spirit reposes in her as in His temple.

27: Those who possess the virtue of simplicity are never presumptuous; they never trust to their own lights, but confide entirely in God.

28: A simple soul is contented with everything and leaves all in God's hands. In imitation of our Lord she receives with equal calm praise or blame, health or sickness, life or death.

29. A really simple soul is always at peace, no matter what may occur. She knows that all things happen by God's permission, and she loves Him so much that she always accepts His good pleasure with a smile.

30: A simple soul loves solitude and silence: a life "hidden in God" is her delight.

31: Simplicity renders a soul very dear to God the Father, a favorite spouse of God the Son, and the well beloved of the Holy Spirit. Let us each work without ceasing to acquire this holy simplicity, so that our souls may become a sanctuary for the thrice holy God, aglow with the splendor that belongs only to those who see God Alone.