

JULY

ZEAL FOR SOULS

July 1: These are the very words of our good Savior Jesus to His apostles, "In this is my Father glorified, that you bring forth very much fruit and become my disciples." Often repeat these blessed words uttered by the lips of our good Master. Tell all my good Sisters from me, each and all of them, that it is a question of God's glory, the glory of my heavenly Father, that they should all bring forth fruit of justice and truth.

2: The graces which the Heart of Jesus has bestowed upon our Institute, through the hands of Mary Immaculate, indicate clearly, that God meant us to be the "Company of Mary," that is to say, Sisters of Notre Dame. This will teach us how great are our responsibilities. Let us show our gratitude by perfectly fulfilling our duties to God, to the Institute and to souls.

3: The Institute of Notre Dame must be composed of valiant souls, of courageous and magnanimous hearts, of persons who never say, "It is enough," in the matter of perfection and apostolic devotedness. Only they who run win the prize. We must run to our last breath in the way of perfection; spend ourselves till death for the souls entrusted to us.

4: Let alone all merely human views, and take those of a lively faith. What a consolation it is to teach little children to know God! And having no desire but this, what can we fear? Let us do all the good God points out to us, moment by moment, wishing nothing but what He shows us by His adorable Providence.

5: My dear Sisters, you are not made for yourselves alone; the principal end of our Institute is to propagate God's glory. How happy you are, dear Sisters, to be called to the office of the Apostles, nay, of Jesus Christ Himself.

6: We want no ordinary souls here. We must have souls of faith, capable of sacrificing themselves; not perpetually looking into themselves, but occupied wholly with the interests of God's glory.

7: Everyday I offer you to God, my dear good daughters. Do the work of the Lord well, in a spirit of great faith and immense charity. A glass of water given for God's sake will not go unrewarded. Let us in our Holy Institute do all our actions in this spirit of love. I cannot repeat this too often.

8: Why are you not more generous towards God who has called you to so high a vocation? Who knows but that He gathered all of us together here to win Him one single soul? And would it not be a great thing to put one souls on the way of salvation, soul which cost the Blood of God?

9: My daughters, if you want your pupils to respect you, speak to them yourselves with respect; no good can be done otherwise.

10: We must go step by step in dealing with souls. We must follow the spirit of the good God, a spirit of patience, of long, long patience. Have we not ourselves been the objects of it?

11: How happy we are to belong to God with our whole hearts! My dear children, let the good God fashion your hearts as He wills by His grace; show your greatness of soul by forgetting yourselves to think only of the interests of God.

12: You will receive my letter on the anniversary of my baptism. Surely I ought to die of shame for not having long since died of love for God, of gratitude to my good Jesus. (Baptized 7/12/1751)

13: We, my dear Sisters, have been inspired by God with the idea of imitating especially the apostolic life of our Divine Master, by the Christian education of the children of our sex, above all, amongst the poor. It is by the education of the rising generations that we are to form Christian mothers, Christian families, and to save countless souls.

14: How great to the eyes of faith is the mission of a religious teacher! We must have noble souls, there must be nothing little about us, we must have the hearts of the Apostles.

15: What a consolation for a heart which loves Jesus Christ to form young souls for the good God! Appreciate your happiness, my daughters, appreciate the grace of your high vocation.

16: We must always have recourse to the Blessed Virgin in all our wants, both spiritual and temporal. Let us place ourselves under the protection and rely only on her tender care.

17: My good daughters, people generally attribute public calamities to the disorders rife in the world, but I asked myself during meditation this morning, whether it would not be more just to attribute them partly, at least, to the low degree of sanctity attained by many religious. People look to the prayers of religious for peace among nations, as well as for the happiness of families and of individuals.

18: Make use of prayer and mortification in order to conquer your inordinate inclination and become instruments worthy to be employed for the salvation of souls.

19: I beseech you, by the love which you owe to our Lord Jesus Christ, perfect yourselves in virtue and in learning; understand the necessity under which you lie of

reaching forward to attain the end of an Institute which not only guides you along the way of salvation but obliges you to lead all the children entrusted to you to the knowledge and love of God.

20: How unworthy of her vocation would she be who would not forget herself and her little personal interests, in order to sacrifice herself entirely to the glory of her Savior.

21: Never will I suffer amongst us those effeminate Hearts which cannot endure anything. You must be able to set self completely aside in order to devote yourselves unreservedly to the interests of the good God.

22: A religious must not be taken up with a headache, with those thousand and one aches and pains to which human nature is subject...I must have Apostolic souls, souls veritably poor who, like the Apostle, rejoice in nakedness and suffering.

23: My dear daughters, we need magnanimous souls for our sublime vocation. There must be nothing little among us; we must have the hearts of Apostles.

24: I should like very much to be with you, but "My Father's business" calls me elsewhere. He needs some little messengers to go His errands, and He has been good enough to choose me - it is too real a happiness....For Him we must work, suffer and die.

25: Let us do God's work in a manner worthy of Him. Courage, dear daughters! But let it be undaunted and generous. Away with scrupulosity and all those petty grievances to which women are so often prey. Shall Sisters of Notre Dame be taken up with trifling aches and pains, whether of mind or body? No, this shall not be. I expect something altogether different from each one of you.

26: The good God often derives great glory from our generosity in the perpetual succession of little sacrifices which, in our life, link themselves one to another, day by day, even hour by hour. In these lies all the strength of our fidelity.

27: Turn the tender attachment of your pupils to the greater glory of God; let our only thought be tow in souls to our blessed Jesus. When I see you occupied in teaching you seem to me greater than all the potentates of the earth. And what are we, dear Sisters, that we should have the handling of souls entrusted to us, poor women like us! The angels envy our happiness.

28: God asks of us not promises but efforts, sustained persevering efforts. For a work like ours we ought to have saints ready made, whereas we have all yet to become saints. At least let us give ourselves to the work with all our heart and strength.

29: We must have humble souls: humble souls are courageous souls, apostolic souls, souls that go out of themselves. These are the souls our Institute demands.

30: We must have in our Institute magnanimous souls, frightened at nothing, fearing temptations no more than they fear the buzzing of flies. Let us not render void the grace of our vocation. A crowd of souls would rise up against us at the Last Day, and would say to us: "You are the cause of my eternal damnation; if you had been more united to God you would have won my heart for Him. You passed for a person consecrated to God, but you were only so in appearance."

31: Peace and union of hearts, my good daughter, that is the bond of all on this earth -- without that life becomes a place of torment, especially life in religion where we ought to be united by having one heart and one soul. This is what I shall ask of the good God through the intercession of my kind Father, St. Ignatius. (After 1814 Mere Julie always signed herself - Julie, unworthy Sister of Notre Dame called Sr. St. Ignatius.)