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DAY 23

The Blindness to Sin

Living the Little Way requires that we recognize our littleness. Problem is, many of us don't see it. As St. Therese put it, "We must be humbled and recognize our nothingness, and that is what so many are not willing to do."

Now, that surely is true.

There are certainly many people who are unwilling to "be humbled" and recognize their "nothingness." But today, I believe the bigger problem is that so many people simply don't see it. They sincerely don't realize that they're sinners. They're spiritually blind. Let me put it this way: I'm a priest. I hear confessions. And let's just say there are a lot of people out there who are extremely spiritually blind. They'd almost have you believe that they were immaculately conceived, like Mary. For instance, after years of not going to Confession, people say things like, "Look, Father, I'm a good person. I don't have any sins."

Now, there are two problems here. First, they're wrong. They do have sins, and lots of them. The Bible says that even the just man sins seven times a day (Prov 24:16).

Second, too many people think it's enough simply to be a "good person."

Well, it's not enough! Jesus doesn't just want "good people" — he wants saints. He wants us to be on fire with his love, and anything less is not enough for him. For instance, the Lord's moving words from the Gospel of Luke come to mind: "I have come to set the earth on fire, and how I wish it were already blazing!" (12:49). Also, I can't help but think of his frightening words from the Book of Revelation: "So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will vomit you out of my mouth" (3:16).

Okay, so blindness to one's sin is a big problem today. And why is it a problem? Let me put it this way: the Good News isn't really news if we don't feel we're in need of it. I mean, why should we get excited about God's abundant mercy for sinners if we don't really think we're sinners? Why care about mercy if we don't feel we're in need of it? Why go to Confession when we've not done anything wrong? Well, we have done something wrong — and again, not just one thing, but lots of things. I mean, we're all sinners (see Rom 3:23, 1 Jn 1:8-10), and we all desperately need God's mercy.

Now, at this point, many of us may be enthusiastically agreeing, "That's right! We're all sinners!" In fact, we may even be congratulating ourselves: "Oh, thank goodness I'm not like those spiritually blind people. I clearly see my sins." But do we?

Spiritual blindness extends even to those who recognize that they're sinners. Consider this: Jesus once told St. Faustina — Saint Faustina — "If I were to reveal to you the whole misery that you are, you would die of terror." Now, I hesitate to bring up that quote, because I don't want little souls to begin beating themselves up and falling into discouragement. However, there's a deeply important truth here, and if we don't get it, we'll have a hard time living the Little Way.

Let me put it this way: Have you ever wondered why the great saints often spoke of themselves as being the biggest sinners? It doesn't seem to make any sense, right? So, what do they see that we don't? For instance, apart from what we covered on Day 7, why does St. Therese, "the greatest saint of modern times," see herself as

being such a little soul? Well, if we can discover the secret to her littleness, then we'll discover the secret to her sanctity. Okay, so here's the secret: Therese realized that she could not compete with God. Let me explain. God wants us to love him as he loves us. In fact, he even commands us to "be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt 5:48). And as I mentioned earlier, he wants us to be on fire with love. Now, St. Therese knew all this, so she tried to perfectly fulfill the commandment of love — but she couldn't do it. She realized that she couldn't compete with God's love. As she herself put it, compared to God's love for her, her love for him "is not even a drop of dew lost in the ocean!" And the deeper she delved into the mystery of God's love for her, the more she realized she couldn't compete. She clearly understood that she couldn't love God as he loved her. She knew that, compared to God, she'd always be a weak, pitiful lover.

So, the light that illumines the darkness of our spiritual blindness to our sins is the fire of God's love. Think of it: God loves us so much more than we love him. From the Cross, he cries out for love of us, "I thirst!" — and we mumble our prayers. He pours out his life for us in his Passion and Death — and we complain about a headache. His loving gaze is fixed on us night and day — and we hardly look at him. He does everything to please us — and we're focused on pleasing ourselves.

When we compare, then, the mystery of God's infinite, burning love for us with our own weak efforts to love him in return, it humbles us, lowers us, reduces us, and crushes us to the dust — but it doesn't destroy us.

Yes, I know it may seem that God's love would destroy us. After all, we just heard that Jesus told St. Faustina that she'd die of terror if he showed her her wretchedness. But here's some saving good news: In his loving mercy, God fills up the abyss of our wretchedness with his own divine love. This is St. Thérèse's amazing insight after she was conquered by love. As she expressed it to the Lord: "For me to love You as You love me, I would have to borrow Your own love."

And she knew he'd give it. She knew that after God conquers us and humbles us with his love, he then saves us with love by giving us his own divine love. In other words, after he flattens us with his overwhelming love, God then lifts us up and fills us with His love so we actually can love him as he loves us. In the end, then, we can compete. We can be perfect. We can be set on fire. (More on this tomorrow.)

Today's Prayer:

Come, Holy Spirit, fire of mercy.

Open the eyes of my heart with your love that I may see my need for your Merciful Love.

Volume 1

No date

It is entirely different in hearts that reek with pride. I cannot even enter into their hearts because they are so full of themselves that they leave no room for Me. These wretched souls take no account of my graces. They go from fall to fall, to their ruin. That is why today I want you to make continuous acts of humility. I want you to act like a baby in

swaddling clothes, who cannot take a step or move a hand—but who depends entirely on his mother. In this way, you will stay close to Me like a baby—always asking Me to help you; always confessing your nothingness—in short, depending on Me for everything.

I tried to please Him as much as I could. I made myself small. I annihilated myself. Sometimes I felt my very being dissolve—so that I could not work, nor take a step, nor even a breath if He did not sustain me. I saw myself as so evil that I was ashamed to be seen by other people. I viewed myself as the ugliest—and in reality I still am so. I shunned people as much as I could. I said to myself: “O if they knew how wicked I am—and if they could see the graces that the Lord is giving me (for I wouldn’t reveal them to anyone)—and if they knew that I am always the same—how horrified they would be!”

In the morning, when I returned to Holy Communion, He seemed to be overjoyed at finding me so humiliated. He taught me a great deal about self-annihilation—but always in new and different ways. I believe that He spoke to me on this subject not once, but hundreds of times. And if He had spoken to me thousands of times, He would always have found new ways to speak to me about humility. O my Divine Master, how wise You are! If only I had cooperated with You better!

I remember one morning He spoke to me about humility. He told me that my lack of humility had led me into many sins, and that if I had been more humble I would have kept closer to Him—and I would not have done so much evil.

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Jesus added with a note of sadness: “My daughter, how the soul sinks to the bottom, when she does not live in Our Will. Even if she does good, if she lacks the light of Our Will—the power of Our sanctity and its effects—this good thing remains covered by smoke, it blinds her and produces vanity, pride and self-love. It remains poisoned—unable to produce any real benefit for anyone. Poor good works without My Will! They are like bells that make no sound; or coins without the image of the king—which have no value as money—at best they lead to self-satisfaction. Many times for love of souls I am forced to embitter the good that they do, so that they enter themselves and try to work truly and generously. On the other hand, for the soul who lives in Our Will, there is no danger that the smoke of self-esteem may enter even the greatest works that she can do. She is the little flame fed by the great light that is God, and the light knows how to cast out the darkness of passion—the smoke of self-esteem. Being light, she really knows that all the good that she does is done by God Himself, working within her nothingness; and if this nothingness has not been completely emptied of all that does not belong to God, God will not go down into it to make great works worthy of Him. That is why not even humility can enter Our Will—only nothingness that knows itself to be nothing. All the good that enters It is only divine work—and it follows that God is the bearer of nothing—and the nothing is the bearer of God. Indeed, in My Will everything changes for the soul. She is nothing but the little light which has to absorb, as much as she can, the great light of My Fiat, so that she may be fed only by light, love, goodness

and divine sanctity. What an honor to be fed by God! So it is no wonder that, being the creature, the little flame, God also feeds Himself with it.

Volume 14

July 14, 1922

God Wants to Generate Beings Like Himself. Luisa Is the Engenderer of the Reign of the Divine Will in Others.

As I found myself in my usual state, my sweet Jesus transported me outside of my body even into the Bosom of the Eternal One. Lacking words to express it, I am unable to say what I felt and understood as I swam in the Divinity. Then my ever beloved Jesus said to me:

“Beloved daughter of Our Will, I have brought you to the Bosom of Our Divinity so that your will may expand itself more in Our Will, and so that it will take part in Our way of acting. Our Divinity tends naturally towards generation. It does nothing but generate continually. All that We generate also has within itself the generative power. The sun generates light in the human eye. In every act and in every step it seems to multiply itself for every man, for each plant, and for every place on earth. If it did not have this power, this link with its generating Creator, the sun could never give light to all, nor could it be at everyone’s disposal. A flower generates other flowers like itself. A seed engenders other seeds. Humans engender other humans. All things bear within themselves their Creator's power of reproduction, just as We (the Divine Persons) tend very naturally to generate and reproduce beings like Ourselves.

This is why I have called you to Our Bosom: so that as you live with Us, your will can diffuse in Ours, can grow, and can generate with Us holiness, light, and love. In this way, as your will multiplies itself with Us in all creatures, it can generate in others what it has received from Us.

The only thing left for Us to do in Creation relates to Our Will: namely that It act in creatures as it acts in Us. Our Love wants to project Our Will from within Our Bosom to place it within creatures. It goes in search of someone, who is disposed to receive It, who will recognize It and cherish It, so as to generate in her what It generates in Us. That is why you have received so many graces, so many revelations concerning My Will. The Sanctity of My Will requires that before It is placed within a soul, that the soul come to know It, love It and venerate It. Then It will be able to develop within the soul all Its Virtue and Its Power, and the soul will be courted by Our own graces. Indeed, everything that I do with you serves only to prepare and adorn the dwelling place for My Will. So, be attentive. Here in Our Bosom you will learn Our ways better, and you will receive all the prerogatives you need to fulfill Our plans for you.