

Yes, my dear Sister, it is a happy metamorphosis that mercy has just brought about in you. I am very much consoled by it and so full of gratitude to the author of all good, that the sentiments will remain deeply engraved in my heart. How good God is and how fortunate we are to see ourselves in this way as objects of his ineffable love! I am all the more conscious of that bestowal of grace and generosity, as I like to persuade myself that your heart will in no way be ungrateful! I think I know you enough to be able to expect you to respond generously to the designs of your divine Spouse, to form yourself according to the obligations of a spouse of Jesus Christ, and an instrument of divine mercy for the salvation of the souls that are to be entrusted to your care.

The conclusions that grace has made you draw from your retreat, and the good intentions it has made you have, are for me a fresh proof that the Lord will accomplish what he has so generously begun in you. Dear Child, follow the voice of the Lamb who is calling you; walk in the odor of sweetness that Jesus Christ bestows to attract you; and, when the way appears hard to you, cast your eyes on the author of your happiness; the sight of him will give you courage and the love of the divine Heart will warm you; then nothing will oppose the designs of the goodness of God on you and perhaps on a great many others whom you are to attract to him.

How sweet it is for me also, my dear Olympiade, to find you simple enough to talk about yourself in all truth. Let us cast down the enemies of our peace, tread underfoot those inventions of pride; may Jesus with all his humiliations serve as our model and let us set more store by the voice of obedience than by all the glories of the world. Let us know how to please Jesus meek and humble of heart, and we will be exalted enough, happy enough, perfect enough. With his heart, we will be rich enough.

Persevere in the practice of meditation in conformity with what God appears to require of you in that respect. Follow your inclinations in that matter and you will reach the goal that the designs of Providence destines for you. Nevertheless, go gently; spare your strength, and do not upset your heart but let it remain wide open and ready for the orders of your divine Spouse.

That, my child, is what is said to you by one who knows no greater happiness than that of leading you in the ways of God, according to the obligations imposed on him by the office of spiritual Father in which he is invested and which he specially esteems because of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

C. G. Van Crombrughe

Ghent, 20th September 1834