

„A Year with Fr. Brisson“



Celebrating the centenary of the death of the Servant of God

THE REVEREND LOUIS BRISSON

(1817-1908)

*Priest and founder of the institutes of the
Oblates and Oblate Sisters of St. Francis de Sales*



First Friday Reflection (#6)

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by

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The Way of Mother Mary de Sales Chappuis

The Way. This is the word Mother Mary de Sales Chappuis used to describe how to walk towards God. She did not invent this word. Our Lord used it to characterize his human-divine person and his work.

“I am the Way, and the Truth and the Life.”

“No one comes to the Father except through me” (Jn 14, 6)

The Psalms were already singing of this Way, Psalm 119 (118) in particular was revealing the Way’s benefits and its obligations. Mother Mary de Sales Chappuis’ base of her interior life was exactly this: “Beati immaculati in Via”.

Let us meditate upon this spirituality of the Way in the light of the teachings of our venerable Fr. Brisson, trust person and spiritual heir of the Good Mother.

the Way

Union with the Redeemer

“Happy are they whose way is straight

“Who place their steps in your footstep, O Lord.” (Ps 119, 1)

“The Way; that is our Lord: “I am the Way”, he says. The Way is a **constant fidelity to the will of God**. What is the will of God for us? God’s and the church’s commandments, the civil duties, furthermore all circumstances of life, the challenges, the more or less unexpected difficulties that affect our existence, the joys, in short all God is sending us. What needs then to be done? We are to unite ourselves to the Savior, to call upon him as

counselor, spiritual director, and supreme lover. With these conditions holiness is not anything extraordinary or something unachievable."

Union in the present moment...

"How I love your friendship, O Lord!

"It is my meditation all the day." (Ps 119, 97)

"The Way is a state of soul that consists in depending from the present will of God by agreeing interiorly to what his good pleasure is and by imitating exteriorly the life of the Savior. You see, it doesn't mean to depend from the will of God in the future. One doesn't say: I will decide later. One rather says: I am submitting myself, I desire what the Savior desires or permits at present, now."

...through the Directory

"I will meditate on your precepts,

"And consider your Ways." (Ps 119, 15)

"Our life isn't anything indistinct. Our way towards God is not only the exterior way that is in fact only a secondary way; our way as Oblate sisters and Oblates is the interior way. Our work will only subsist by means of the interior Way that we will draw from the Directory. You should encounter the next one, the souls, only through your interior life. You will then communicate what you have drawn from the heart of our Savior by uniting yourself to him, because your household is the heart of Jesus present in your own heart. The Savior Jesus, whom we attempt to redraw in ourselves and who lives within us, provides us with what we need in order to act. He is our example, our model; He goes ahead, we only need to place our feet in his footsteps. He carries us and so accomplishes our entire redemption. There are no hesitations or doubts for us. "Directory" means direction. We are on the way, and only need to follow the given Way.

Faithful to grace

"Happy are they who remain faithful to you,

"Who seek you with all their heart." (Ps 119, 2)

"How understand the Way? We probably need to see in it charity, infinite mercy of the Savior, new graces, and intimate graces. Yes, but I desire that we foremost perceive in it **the interaction God requires from his intimate souls**. Let us see in it the faithfulness one has to imitate Our Lord: "I am the Way", he tells us. The Way is the faithfulness to walk toward God, to reproduce him and to imitate him in everything. The Way is the loving obedience towards all our duties; it is the communication with grace; it's the fidelity to the Directory, to the direction of intention. The Way is our entire life brought into conformity with the life of Our Lord. One achieves it by devotion and imitation of the Savior. We profess to be faithful and affectionate towards the person of the Savior. We live in union of heart and action with Him. That's the Way."

... and the sensitive practice of our vows.

"I accepted your commandments,

"I keep your precepts and your decrees,

"And love them deeply

"For all my ways are before you. (Ps 119,167-168)

"If what needs to be shown to others about the Way is in a special way faithfulness, it is easy to understand to what the Way takes us...

First of all it takes us to practice faithfully and lovingly our **vow of obedience**. Let us look at our vows in the light of the Way.

What is the Way telling us regarding the **vow of poverty**? It will teach us many secrets ... Do you want to please the heart of God? Be poor in something ... light, courage, and consolation are fruits of a detachment realized for the sake of God, fruits of a little nothing sacrificed for Him. Enter these secrets; bring yourself in a position to appreciate

the result of those small sacrifices and those little nothings. Let us practice our vow of poverty in a way of pleasing God: that's the Way. Why don't you have your favorite poverty, watch over it carefully and always have something that allows you to experience poverty. Take advantage of the poverty of your daily life. Be intelligent and competent enough not to let any of the treasures slip that you have in your hands.

Chastity takes over the heart, and we offer this heart affectionately to Our Lord. It is not a worldly affection, it is an extraordinary, and supernatural sentiment of an incomparable intimacy. This is the chastity of the Way...

"With all my heart I seek you;

"Let me not stray from your friendship. (Ps 119, 10)

"Incline my heart to your decrees (Ps 119, 36)

"I will run the way of your tenderness." (Ps 119, 32)

"Let us love Our Lord. Let us love him always and everywhere. And we will be on the Way. By loving Our Lord, we do have everything. This is how we are going to proceed on the Way; by imitating Our Lord ... One will see Our Redeemer walk on earth again."

+ May God Be Blessed +