

VII. LETTER TO MADAME BLANPIN

Mrs. Blanpin was a widow, rather well to do and painfully scrupulous. She came in contact with Father Libermann when her son Charles entered his novitiate. The Venerable did his best to restore her peace of soul and to guide her in her spiritual life. Her scruples, however, persisted and, when her son was stricken with a disease of the throat which caused him to lose his voice and forced him to return from the missions, she blamed her sins for this misfortune.

In the present letter Father Libermann once again sought to dispel her anxieties and predicted that her son would be cured. This is precisely what happened, and Libermann considered this cure to be truly miraculous.¹

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*Libermann expresses his certainty that her sins are forgiven.
Love, not fear, should govern our relationship with God.*

La Neuville,

October 12, 1846

Vol. 8, p. 303

Dear Mrs. Blanpin:

[*Your Sins Are Forgiven*]

I have prayed and will continue to pray according to your wishes. But after all my prayers past and present and after much reflection, I can only find words of consolation and peace for you. Be without fear and anxiety! God is with you. Your soul is in the state of grace and your past sins are forgiven. This I tell you with all the assurance which faith can give us in such matters.

¹Cf. *Letters to Religious Sisters and Aspirants*, Pittsburgh, 1962, p. 52.

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I tell you truthfully—and in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ—that in no other case have I felt a more complete assurance about sins having been forgiven than in your case regarding the sins that have caused you so much trouble and grief.

I shall say more. If an angel of heaven appeared in all his celestial splendor and told me in God's name that your sins have been forgiven, I could not thereby have greater certitude than I have now; however great the assurance of a supernatural revelation in which all the rules for such a revelation are fulfilled, it could never warrant such a great certainty as the one I actually have regarding the remission of those sins.

For my certitude rests in part on the infallible rules of the Catholic faith, rules which no one may reject except heretics, and in part on principles that are unanimously accepted by all theologians.

However much I examine and approach from every angle all that concerns your state of soul, I am unable to find any thing that can cast the least doubt on the remission of those sins. There is left only the uncertainty that remains generally in the case of the greatest saints regarding the remission of their sins; for you know, following the words of St. Paul, that we cannot judge with absolute certainty whether we are worthy of love or of hatred.

But, I repeat once more, your particular case gives no basis for the least doubt nor a motive for the smallest anxiety. I cannot think of any greater assurance in this world than that of a revelation that is approved by the Church and is declared to be an article of faith, such as that which was made to David in similar circumstances. Don't think now that I am exaggerating in order to hearten and reassure you. I say these things only after careful examination and analysis in accord with all the rigorous and exact principles that are universally

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accepted in the Church. This is the truth, and I proclaim it in the presence of our Divine Master and from the depths of my conscience.

[Live Without Fear in the Love of God]

I trust, therefore, that my words will give you the assurance, peace of soul and courage, that will make you persevere with fervor and fidelity in the way of God. I can also assure you that you are in the way of salvation. I can say more: you are in the way of perfection, and the enemy is causing you all that trouble in order to arrest your progress in the sanctification of your soul. Give a deaf ear to the spirit whom God has condemned for all eternity. Fill your mind with confidence and your heart with love, and cast out fear and anxiety. God dwells in your soul. You belong to Him, and I am joyfully and firmly confident that you will always continue to advance on that road.

Don't worry because you did not give me a complete account of those sins. You know that you were not obliged to give all those details, since all were already absolved. What you did not say to your confessor, you have told me in your letter, and it is after reading and examining your letter, and after praying to God, that I speak to you with so much assurance. You may therefore be perfectly at ease for there remains no reason for harboring the least anxiety for the future.

I repeat what your former confessor already told you: from now on, never confess again nor speak further about those sins. You must forget them entirely and reject every thought that causes you trouble or concern; you must reject such thoughts as temptations that stand in the way of firm progress in perfection.

Live in peace and joy! Be full of happiness and consolation because you have been able to offer to God a worthy sac-

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rifice in giving him your beloved son. Suffer lovingly the trial which Divine Goodness permits your son to pass through for his sanctification. Have no worries about that subject. In due time that same Divine Goodness which now sends him illness will know how to favor him with a cure.

You wrongly imagine that your son's trial is due to your own sins. To believe such a thing would be an insult to God; this is merely another temptation. There is no connection between your sins and your dear son who loves God with all his heart.

Be perfectly at peace then. Live in Divine Love. Cast out every sort of fear. This is what the Divine Master expects of you. And the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will preserve your heart and your mind in our Lord Jesus, in whose charity I am,

Your most devoted and humble servant,

FRANCIS LIBERMANN

P. S. Please tell me if you have finally recovered peace of mind.