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# Some Previously Untranslated Writings of Saint Vincent de Paul

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## Some Previously Untranslated Writings of Saint Vincent de Paul

*Translated by Alma Homrighausen*

In 1960 André Dodin, C.M., published a new edition of the spiritual writings of Saint Vincent de Paul, entitled: *Entretiens spirituels de saint Vincent de Paul* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1960). He presented in new format the conferences found in Coste's volumes XI and XII, and added twenty-five conferences that had not appeared in Coste's work. A translation of the latter is published here for the first time.

### 16. Conference Between Richelieu and M. Vincent [1638-1642]

*Abelly, bk. I, chap. XXXV, p. 170.*

One day I was given the responsibility of asking Cardinal Richelieu to help poor Ireland. It was at the time England was at war with its King.

When I had done so, he said to me: "Ha! M. Vincent, the King is too busy to be able to do that."

I told him that the Pope would support him and was offering one hundred thousand crowns. "A hundred thousand crowns," he replied "does nothing for an army. There must be so many soldiers, equipment, weapons, and convoys everywhere; an army is a large machine which can be moved only with difficulty."

### 24. Allocution on Charity and Union [End of 1646]

Unity alone permits us to live in Jesus Christ and to attract souls.

*Abelly, bk. I, chap. I, pp. 145-146.*

*M. Vincent addresses the Missionaries who are leaving for Ireland: MM. Jean Bourdet, Gerald Brin, Edmond Barry, Francois*

*White, and Dermot Duggan. Two clerics, Philippe Le Vacher and perhaps Thaddée Lye were given to them as assistants. Pierre Leclerc and Salomon Patriarche, coadjutor brothers, accompanied them. -- This conference was not reproduced by the Coste edition.*

Be united together and God will bless you; but may this be by the charity of Jesus Christ, because all other union which is not consolidated by the blood of this Divine Savior cannot subsist. It is then in Jesus Christ, by Jesus Christ, and for Jesus Christ that you should all be united with one another.

The Spirit of Jesus Christ is a spirit of union and of peace. How could you draw souls to Jesus Christ if you were not united among yourselves and to Him? That could not be. Have then the same affection and the same intention, otherwise you would be acting like horses which, although hitched to the same cart, pull some from one side, some from the other, and thus damage and destroy everything.

God calls us to work in His vineyard. Go there as having in Him only one heart and one intention and in this way you will bring back fruit.

## **26. Conference on Frequent Communion**

[1648?]

*Abelly, bk. III, pp. 77-78. This conference was not reproduced in the Coste edition.*

*The Abelly editions of 1667, 1668, etc., mention it without reproducing it (bk. II, pp. 45-46). P. Collet gives a much shorter extract in the 1748 edition and changes several words. (Vol. II, bk. VII, p. 137. See Vie abrégée, Paris, 1764, p. 388.)*

Another time, speaking to his community on the same subject, he told them they should ask God to please grant them the desire to receive Communion often, that there was reason to lament before God and be saddened at seeing that ardor for this devotion had diminished among Christians, and that new

opinions were partly the cause of this.

When he was conversing about this with the Superior of a holy company and with another who was a great director of souls, he had asked them if they were seeing as many people coming to confession and frequenting Holy Communion as in the past. They had replied that, far from it, their number had significantly decreased; that the Eucharist was nevertheless the daily bread Our Lord wanted us to ask of Him; and that it was the practice of the early Christians to receive Communion every day; but these newcomers had led a great number of people astray. It was no wonder they were listened to because nature got something out of it, and those who followed their inclinations willingly embraced these new opinions, which seemed to comfort them by relieving them of the care and trouble required to place themselves and keep themselves in the dispositions necessary to receive Holy Communion worthily and frequently.

He added that he knew a pious lady of rank who with the advice of her director had for a long time continued to communicate on the Sundays and Thursdays of each week. Then, out of some indefinable curiosity and desire for greater perfection, she had placed herself in the hands of a confessor who was following this new doctrine. He had her abandon this holy practice, allowing her in the beginning to communicate only once a week. Then he had her put it off for two weeks, and then for a month, etc. After remaining eight months in this laxity, when she was one day reflecting on herself, she had found that she was in a most deplorable state, quite full of imperfections and subject to committing a large number of faults, delighting in vanity, letting herself give in to anger, impatience, and other passions, indeed very different than she had been before being estranged from Holy Communion. Extremely surprised and touched by this, she said through her tears, "O wretched one, in what state do I now find myself, from where have I fallen, and where will all these disorders

and fits of passion end? How has such an unfortunate change come over me? No doubt it is from having given up my former practice and having listened to and followed the advice of these new directors, who are very dangerous since they produce such bad effects, as I know from my own experience.”

“O my God, who are opening my eyes to recognize this, give me the grace to liberate myself from it completely!”

After that, when she had detached herself from her new directors and had renounced their dangerous maxims, which had completely distracted her and nearly caused her ruin, she returned by following more salutary advice to her former practices, frequenting the sacraments as before with the required dispositions. She there found peace of conscience and the remedy for all her faults.

### **31. Condemnation of Jansenius**

**[June 1653]**

*Ms. of Brother Robineau, p. 57.*

The five propositions were condemned on May 31, 1653, but the condemnation was not promulgated until June 9. Vincent wrote on June 29 that the news was being spread abroad in Paris. (IV, 620.)

On the eve of the feast of Pentecost, the last day of May 1653, Pope Innocent X, by his Bull sent to France, condemned five propositions of Jansenius.

Now while reporting to his Community what the Pope had said to the delegates, Monsieur Vincent said “that during his life he had never received such an abundance of light and of grace as that which he had received on this subject, especially on the eve and on the day of the Bull’s propagation. He said that His Holiness himself, although seventy-nine years old, was determined to assist at the conferences and stayed there several times from three to four hours, despite the entreaties and remonstrances that his relatives and friends made to him not to do so, that it would cause his death or notably disturb

his health. Notwithstanding all these entreaties and remonstrances, he had had such urgent interior inspirations that he paid no attention to any of these entreaties and remonstrances.”

He also told us that the greatest dread of his entire life had been that he would indulge in these new opinions and come to adhere to them. “In the time of the Arian heresy, how many pillars were shaken, in the time of Calvin also,” he said to us on this subject. Then continuing his discourse, he said: “Now we must thank God very much for having preserved the Company from this evil, which today we see being condemned by the Holy See. When we find ourselves with any of those who used to be of these opinions, we must not reproach them for it. Instead, we should pass over it in silence.”

### **160. A Chaplain’s Spirit of Faith**

To consider Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary in the Lord of the house and in his Lady.

*Abelly, bk. I, chap. VII, p. 29.*

He said “that he knew someone who in this position had greatly profited himself and others in the house of a Lord by having always seen and honored Jesus Christ in the person of this Lord, and the Blessed Virgin in the person of the Lady. This consideration, having always kept him modest and circumspect in all his deeds and words, had gained for him the affection of this Lord and Lady and of all the servants, and had given him the means of bearing considerable fruit in this family.”

### **179. Advice to a Missionary Simplicity With Clever People**

*Abelly, bk. III, p. 242.*

“You are going into a country where it is said that the inhabitants are for the most part shrewd and clever. Now if

that is so, the best way to be of service to them is to act with them in great simplicity. The maxims of the Gospel are entirely opposed to the world's ways of acting, and as you are going for Our Lord's service, you must also comport yourself according to His spirit, which is a spirit of honesty and simplicity."

### **180. Prudence in Conversations**

*Abelly, bk. III, p. 252.*

"It is an effect of prudence and of wisdom not only to speak well and to say good things, but also to say them at the right moment, so that they will be well received and will profit those to whom one speaks. Our Lord gave an example of this on several occasions, particularly when He was speaking to the Samaritan woman. He took the opportunity of the water she had come to draw to speak to her of grace and to inspire in her the desire for a perfect conversion."<sup>1</sup>

### **185. On Humility**

We are the baggage carriers of apostolic workers.

*Abelly, bk. III, p. 103.*

"Let us be, my brothers, like the peasant who carried the baggage of Saint Ignatius and his companions, weary from travel, and who, seeing that they knelt when they arrived in some place to stay, also knelt. Seeing them pray, he likewise prayed; and as these saintly persons had once asked him what he was doing there, he replied: "I am asking God to do what you request. I am like a poor beast that cannot pray; I ask Him to listen to you. I would like to tell Him what you tell Him, but I would not know how, and so I offer Him your prayers."

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<sup>1</sup>John 4:1-43.

“O gentlemen and my brothers! we must consider ourselves as the porters of these worthy workmen; as poor idiots who do not know how to say anything and who are the scum of others; and as little gleaners who come after the great reapers. Let us thank God that it has pleased Him to accept our small services. Let us offer Him with our small hands the large harvests of others, and let us always be ready to use what there is in us for the service of God and for the assistance of the neighbor. If God gave such a beautiful light and so great a grace to that poor peasant, that he has merited to be spoken of in history because of it, let us hope that, if we do what we can as he did to contribute to God’s being honored and served, His Divine Goodness will receive our offerings in good part and will bless our small works.”

### 186. On Humility

To ask for understanding and the desire for humiliations *Abelly, bk. III, pp. 219-220. There follows a fragment of the conference of April 18, 1659, on humility (SES Coste, vol. XII, p. 209).*

“Pay attention to the recommendation that Our Lord made to us in these words: ‘Learn of me for I am humble of heart’<sup>1</sup> and beg Him to let you understand it. If indeed He inflames us only with the desire for humiliations, that will be enough, although we do not understand this virtue as Our Lord does. He knew its relationship to the perfections of God, His Father, and to the vileness of sinful men. It is true that we shall never understand this except in a very obscure way during this life; but we should, nevertheless, have confidence in the darkness, that if our heart has a love for humiliations, God will grant us

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<sup>1</sup>Matt. 11:29.



humility, maintain us in it, and make it grow in us by acts which He will cause to be done to us. For one act of virtue done well disposes us to do another well, and the first degree of humility serves to advance to the second, and the second to the third, and so on with the others.”

### **189. On Purity of Intention**

Performing one’s deeds to please God

*Abelly, bk. III, pp. 30-31.*

“God does not look so much at the exterior of our deeds as at the degree of love and purity of intention with which we do them. Small deeds performed to please God are not so subject to vain glory as other more magnificent deeds, which often dissolve into thin air. In fact, if we want to please God in great deeds, we must become accustomed to pleasing Him in small ones.”

### **194. Remarks on Patience**

*Abelly, bk. III, p. 325. Then follows a fragment borrowed from a repetition of prayer in 1645 on temptations, given by Coste, vol. XI, p. 150: “The water of a tide, to be always in repose...”*

“The state of affliction and of pain is not a state which is evil. God places us there to exercise us in the virtue of patience and to teach us compassion towards others. He Himself wanted to experience this state, so that we would have a high priest who could sympathize with our misery and encourage us in the practice of virtue by his example.

One of the most certain signs that God has great plans for a person is when He sends him desolation upon desolation and difficulty upon difficulty. The proper time to discover the spiritual profit of a soul is the time of temptation and tribulation, because the way one is in these trials, one usually is afterwards. In a single day of temptation we can acquire more

merit than in many days of tranquility.”<sup>1</sup>

**195. Saint Francis de Sales,  
Example of Meekness**  
*Abelly, bk. III, p. 180.*

On this subject (the subject of meekness), he related the example of the blessed Francis de Sales, Bishop of Geneva, who, he said, was the meekest and the most good-natured person he had ever known. He said that the first time he saw him, he had recognized in his approach, in the serenity of his countenance, and in his manner of conversing and speaking, an extremely clear image of the meekness of Our Lord Jesus Christ, which had won his heart.

**206. Greatness of the Mission  
in the Service of the Barbary Slaves**

To assist Slaves materially and spiritually is a holier work than  
to devote oneself solely to their material redemption  
*Abelly, bk. II, pp. 142-143.*

“This work has been deemed so great and so holy, that it has given rise to the institution of several saintly orders in God’s Church; and these orders have always been highly respected since they are instituted for the slaves. Such are the religious of the Redemption of Captives, who from time to time go to ransom some slaves and then return home. Among the vows they make, one is to spend themselves in ransoming Christian slaves. Is that not excellent and holy, gentlemen and my brothers? Nevertheless, it seems to me that there is something more in those who not only go to Barbary to contribute to the

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<sup>1</sup>Cf. Heb. 5:2.

ransom of those poor Christians but, beyond that, stay there to devote themselves to accomplishing that charitable redemption at any time, to assist those poor slaves corporally and spiritually at any hour, to hasten unceasingly to all their needs, in short, to be there all the time ready to come to their aid, and give them every sort of assistance and consolation, in their very great afflictions and miseries. O gentlemen and my brothers! do you truly esteem the greatness of this work? Is there anything that corresponds more to what Our Lord did when He came down to earth to deliver men from the captivity of sin,<sup>1</sup> and to teach them by His words and examples? That is the example that all Missionaries must follow; they must be ready to leave their country, their comforts, their rest for that reason, as our good brothers who are in Tunis and Algiers have done. They have given themselves entirely to the service of God and the neighbor in those barbaric and infidel lands.”

**207. Praise of the Assistance  
to the Provinces Ravaged by War**

Charitable persons will have a share in the recompense of  
priests

*Abelly, bk. II, pp. 407-408.*

“Indeed, one can think only with admiration of the great alms that God has inspired to be made, and of the large number of garments, sheets, blankets, shirts, footwear, etc., which have been furnished for all sorts of persons: men, women, children, and even for priests; as well as the quantity of albs, chasubles, missals, ciboria, chalices, and other adornments that people have sent for the churches, which had been

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<sup>1</sup>Matt. 1:21.

plundered to such an extent, that, without this assistance, the celebration of the holy mysteries and the practices of the Christian religion would have been barred from them, and these holy places would have been used only for profane purposes. It was truly an edifying spectacle to see the houses of the Ladies of Charity of Paris filled with all those worn clothes; their homes had become like the stores and boutiques of wholesale dealers. Those ladies without doubt will have the priests' crown in heaven, because of their zeal and charity in clothing Jesus Christ on His altars, in His priests, and in His poor members."

**208. Advice Given on the Departure  
of Missionaries For Distant Countries**

Have confidence in God who is a very good Father.

*Abelly, bk. III, p. 12.*

"Go, gentlemen, in the name of Our Lord. It is He who is sending you;<sup>1</sup> it is for His service and His glory that you are undertaking this voyage and this mission. It will also be He who will lead you, and who will assist and protect you. We hope for this from His Infinite Goodness. Always hold fast with faithful dependence on His faithful guidance. Have recourse to Him in all places and on all occasions. Throw yourselves into His arms, as the one whom you should recognize as your very good Father, with a firm confidence that He will assist you and will bless all your works."

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<sup>1</sup>Matt. 28:19.

## 209. Praise of Missionary Work

*Abelly, bk. III, p. 32.*

“Our Lord bids us by these words (Seek first the Kingdom of God<sup>1</sup>) to make God reign in us and then to cooperate with Him in spreading and developing His kingdom in the conquest of souls. Is it not a great honor for us to be called to carry out so great and important a plan? Is it not to act as the angels, who work unceasingly and solely for the advancement of the kingdom of God? Is there any state more desirable than ours, who are neither to live nor act but to establish, enlarge, and advance the kingdom of God? For what reason, my brothers, would we not worthily respond to such a holy and sanctifying vocation?”

## 210. On Charity Towards the Foundlings

*Abelly, bk. III, p. 127.*

“Is it not the duty of fathers to provide for the needs of their children? And seeing that God has substituted us in the place of those who have engendered them, so that we might take on the preservation of their lives and have them reared and instructed in the knowledge of the matters concerning their salvation, let us indeed take care not to slacken in an enterprise that is so pleasing to Him. For if, after their unnatural mothers have thus endangered and abandoned them, we come to neglect the care of their nourishment and education, what will become of them? Can we consent to see them all perish, as they formerly did in this great city of Paris?”

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<sup>1</sup>Matt. 6:33

### 214. On Fraternal Charity

“Fraternal charity is a mark of their predestination, since it is by this virtue that the true disciple of Jesus Christ is recognized.”<sup>1</sup>

*Abelley, bk. III, pp. 160-161.*

One day when they were celebrating the feast of Saint John the Evangelist and he was urging his men to love one another in the words of this apostle: *Filioli diligite alterutrum!*<sup>2</sup> he said: “The Congregation of the Mission will endure as long as charity reigns in it.”

He then said to them: “Charity is the soul of the virtues and the paradise of communities. The house of Saint-Lazare will be a paradise if charity is found there. Paradise is nothing else but love, union, and charity. The principal happiness of eternal life consists in loving; in heaven the blessed are unceasingly given to beatific love. In short, there is nothing more desirable than to live with those one loves and by whom one is loved.”

He also said: “Christian love, which is formed in hearts by charity,<sup>3</sup> is not only above the love of inclination and of that which is produced by the sensitive appetite, which is ordinarily more harmful than useful, but also above rational love. This Christian love is a love by which we love one another in God, according to God, and for God. It is a love which sees to it that we love one another for the same end God loves men, which is to make them holy in this world and happy in the next. And to that end, this love makes us see God and nothing else but God in each of those whom we love.”

He added: “One who would wish to live in a community without support and without charity would, at the sight of so

<sup>1</sup>John 13:35

<sup>2</sup>1 John 3:23.

<sup>3</sup>Rom. 5:5.

many moods and so many actions that clashed with his own, be like a ship without anchor and without rudder, sailing in the midst of steep rocks, at the mercy of the waves and the wind, which would push it from all sides and cause it to shatter.”

Finally he added: “The Missionaries must not only love one another by an interior holy affection and demonstrate it merely by their words, but they must also witness to it by works and good fruit. They must willingly help one another in their occupations in this spirit, and always be ready to assist their brothers.”

He ardently wished that God would inspire this charity in the hearts of all those in his Congregation, since, he said: “By this mutual support the strong will sustain the weak, and God’s work will be accomplished.”

### **215. The Necessity of Praying For Each Other**

*Abelly, bk. III, p. 168.*

“We will pray to God for the family of one who has met such a loss; we must share our Brother’s feelings and pay this respect to one another.”

Sometimes, according to the occasion, he added: “I beg the priests, who do not have particular obligations, to offer Mass for all those in the bereaved family. I, first of all, shall gladly offer to God for them the Holy Mass that I am going to celebrate and I beg my brothers to receive Communion for this same intention.”

### **216. Indulgence With Respect to the Failures of Others**

*Abelly, bk. III, p. 184.*

“We must not be surprised to see the failures of others, because as the nature of brambles and thistles is to bear prickles, so in the state of corrupt nature, the natural condi-

tion of man is to fail since he is conceived and born in sin. Even the just man, according to the opinion of Solomon, falls seven times, that is many times, a day.”<sup>1</sup>

He added: “The spirit of man has its kinds of intemperance and maladies like the body, and instead of being troubled and discouraged by them, he must, as he recognizes his miserable condition, humble himself by saying to God as David did after his sin: *“Bonum mihi quia humiliasti me, ut discam justificationes tuas.”*<sup>2</sup> “It is good for me that you have humbled me, so that I may learn your justifications.” We must put up with ourselves in our weaknesses and imperfections and nevertheless endeavor to be freed from them.

He said still further: “If it is forbidden to judge evil of others, it is even less permissible to talk about it, the nature of charity being, as the holy Apostle said, to cover a multitude of sins.<sup>3</sup> And he added this saying from Wisdom: *Audisti verbum adversus proximum tuum? Commoriatur in te.*<sup>4</sup> “Have you heard something against your neighbor? Suppress it and let it die within you!”

## 219. On Indifference

Our Lord’s first lesson and first class.

*Abelley, bk. III, p. 42.*

“But as for the first state (the state in which God places a person), which comes from the will of God, we must accept whatever it is and be resigned to God’s good pleasure to suffer all that will be pleasing to Him, to the degree and for as long as

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<sup>1</sup>Prov. 24:16.

<sup>2</sup>Ps. 119:71.

<sup>3</sup>1 Peter 4:8.

<sup>4</sup>Eccles. 19:10.



it pleases Him. This, gentlemen and my brothers, is the great lesson of the Son of God, and those who render themselves docile and who take it to heart,<sup>1</sup> are at the top of the class in the School of the Divine Master. As for me, I know of nothing more holy nor of greater perfection than this resignation, when it produces a complete stripping of self and true indifference with regard to all kinds of states, whatever be the manner in which we are placed in them, except for sin. Let us then hold fast, and ask God to grant us the grace to live constantly in this indifference.”

## **222. Conversation With a Priest Concerning Poverty**

*Abelly, vol. III, p. 276.*

One day, when one of his priests was pointing out to him the poverty of his house, he asked him:

“What do you do, Monsieur, when you lack in that way what is necessary for the Community? Do you have recourse to God?”

--“Yes, sometimes,” answered the priest.

--“Well,” he replied, “that is what poverty does. It makes us think of God and raise our heart to Him; whereas, if we were taken care of, we would perhaps forget God. And that is why I am delighted that real, voluntary poverty is in practice in all our houses. There is a hidden grace under that poverty, which we do not recognize.”

--“But,” the priest answered, “you obtain property for other poor people and do you leave your own men poor?”

--“I pray God,” M. Vincent said to him, “that he will forgive you for those words. I can clearly see that you have spoken them very simply, but know that we will never be richer than when we become like to Jesus Christ.”

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<sup>1</sup>Luke 8:15.

## 225. Dispositions to be Brought to Prayer

*Abelly, bk. III, p. 55.*

With regard to the dispositions, he said he knew none better than humility, the recognition of one's nothingness before God, mortification of the passions and unregulated impulses of nature, interior recollection, honesty, simplicity of heart, attention to the presence of God, total dependence on His will, and frequent aspirations towards His Goodness.

## 241. Vanity and Sloth, Causes of Defection

*Abelly, bk. III, pp. 342-343.*

"In the majority of those who forfeit their vocation, I have observed some slackening in two matters. The first is the morning rising, to which they are not at all exact; and the second is immodesty with regard to their hair. They let it grow too long, and gradually they tend to other similar vanities."

## 243. Repetition of Prayer of December 27

### Curiosity, Charity, Obedience to Inspirations

Pernicious effects of curiosity. Reasons for practicing charity. In what inspiration consists; not confusing it with illusion.

*Recueil autographique, p. 213.*

M. Vincent said that curiosity was the curse of the spiritual life, and more times a curse than there are grains of sand in the sea, and that it was through the curiosity of our first father that death, war, plague, famine, and the other miseries that afflict human nature had come into the world.

He exhorted us and spoke to us the same words as Saint John did to his own: *Filii, diligite alterutrum*,<sup>1</sup> and said that the

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<sup>1</sup>John 3:2.

Company would endure as long as charity dwelt in it. He pronounced a variety of maledictions against the man who would fail in charity, saying that this would cause not only the ruin of the Company, but also some loss or lessening of perfection in the same Company. By his fault, he would be the reason that the Company would be less perfect. He also told us, with regard to Saint Peter, who was troubled over what would become of Saint John,<sup>2</sup> that it was charity that had made him pose that question. Finally he said that charity was a mark of predestination.

M. Vincent then spoke of inspiration and said that it was an interior movement of our soul, which inclined us to flee from some evil or to do some good; or else, an interior word from God to our heart, which He uses when exhortations, readings, and good example do not touch us. "It is," he said, "what is reported in the Gospel concerning that master who, having sent his servants and having seen that they made no progress, wished to speak to them himself in person, and through his son."<sup>3</sup>

"Those" he then said, "who do not heed this interior word are marked with reprobation; trample underfoot the blood of Our Lord, who merited this grace for us by His passion; and resist the Holy Spirit,<sup>4</sup> which is a sin that is pardoned neither in this world nor in the next. In a word, this was not being among God's sheep; *nam oves meae vocem meam audiunt.*"<sup>5</sup>

M. Vincent also told us that the devil transformed himself into an angel of light<sup>6</sup> and gave us inspirations that seemed to

<sup>2</sup>John 21:22.

<sup>3</sup>Matt. 21:37.

<sup>4</sup>Matt. 12:32.

<sup>5</sup>John 10:27.

<sup>6</sup>2 Cor. 11:14.

be from God. To recognize and discern them, he remarked that, as far as impulses that we experience for extraordinary things are concerned, we must always have recourse to our spiritual fathers. With regard to ordinary impulses, we must consider whether the inspiration was accompanied by undue haste, since "*non in commotione Dominus;*"<sup>7</sup> whether it is against the commandments of God or of the Church; or against Christian maxims; or against the rules and saintly customs of the house and the community. If one of these conditions is found, then it is not inspiration, but temptation.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>1 Kings 19:11.

<sup>8</sup>We find in Abelly (*op. cit.*, vol. III, chap. V, sect. I, p. 39) the following words, which could belong to this repetition of prayer: "Among the multitude of thoughts and feelings that come to us unceasingly, there are some that seem good, which nevertheless could not come from God and are not according to His liking. What method do we then use to discern them? We must examine them, have recourse to God by prayer and ask Him for light; consider the motives for them, the ends and the means, to see if everything is seasoned with His good pleasure; propose them to wise men and seek the advice of those who have care of us and who are the depositaries of the treasures of the knowledge and wisdom of God; and in our doing what they advise, we do the will of God."



*One can fall into excess in the practice of virtue and excess is a greater evil, sometimes, than no virtue.*

Saint Vincent de Paul