

PART I



THE
CALL



chapter one

THE GOAL OF LIFE

In Christ's Presence

O Lord, our Lord, how wonderful is thy name
in all the earth.

PSALM 8:2

My dear friend, I am overjoyed to see you. I am with you speaking to you and listening to you. Realize that I am truly present. I am within your soul. Close your ears and eyes to all distractions. Retire within yourself, think my thoughts, and be with me alone.

Do not be afraid. I am your God, your King, robed in majesty, clothed with all power. But I am also human, even as you. I am your Savior.

Do you note what I call you? My friend. Not my creature, not my servant, but my friend. Yes, even more than that, you are my brother, my sister, my mother. Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, my sister, my mother.

I am glad that you desire to watch a while with me, to confide in me and allow me to confide in you.

Have you ever wondered what I would have said to you if you had been at my side as Peter was, and John, Mary, Martha, and the rest?

Do you feel that they were especially favored to have lived when they did, because they saw me, heard me, touched me?

Yes; they were favored. But so are you. It is better for you to live now than at any other time in human history.

Do you not realize that this is my hour just as much as nineteen centuries ago? I see you just as clearly as I saw them. I love you as I loved them. I speak to you. Your good impulses, what are they but my grace and the urgings of the Holy Spirit?

But still you are thinking: They saw you face to face.

What was it that my disciples saw? They saw a man; a worker of wonders, yes, but only a man. It was many months before they knew me as "He who is to come," the messias; and as "He Who Is," God. And when they knew me at last, it was not by the sight of their eyes but by faith. It could not be otherwise. No

mortal can see God face to face and live on in this world.

That is exactly how you know me today: by faith.

Happy, then, are you, happy and thrice blessed. Blessed are you because you see me with surer eyes than those of your human nature: the eyes of faith.

Blessed are you because you speak with me in words more easily understood than those of your mouth: prayer of the heart.

Yes, blessed are you, my friend, because you can more easily become intimately associated with me than could my closest followers before the Last Supper.

Peter and Andrew, James and John; and even my own Mother, for many years of their lives did not enjoy the wondrous privilege that awaits you every day. Never during those many months before the Supper did I unite myself with them so closely as I am united with you in Holy Communion. Already you have had more moments of intimate union with me in my sacrament than some of my dearest disciples had in their whole lives.

If you but let me I will come to you daily in the Sacrament of Love. I will come as man. And I will come as God, bringing the Trinity most intimately into your soul. I do not stay away from you; it is you who stay away from me.

Adam and Eve wished to be as God, and could not. But you, despite all your unworthiness, can become "as God" daily in Holy Communion. I enter into you, live in you, transform you. And when my Father looks on

you, he sees you no longer, but me, his only-begotten Son.

Indeed you are especially favored, far more than you can realize. Think how many there are in the world who do not even know my Name! Why are you so blessed and not these others?

Why is it my will that you should be so intimate with me? Why have I destined you from eternity for this happy hour with me? Why have I sought you, called you, urged you, aided you all the days of your life to bring you close to me?

It is because my love for you passes human understanding.

Do you wonder how you shall thank your God? Thank me by making your soul a true home for me, and from that home offering myself and yourself in divine thanksgiving to the Holy and Undivided Trinity.

Think of this now. Think of it often. Think of it calmly, peacefully, and give me your heart, your mind, your will.

Say to my Father, "I thank you, Lord, with all of myself. I will contemplate all your wondrous deeds. I will be glad and rejoice, and I will sing praise to your holy Name."¹

Christ, the Teacher of Happiness

Happy are the blameless, who walk in the way
of the Lord.

PSALM 118:1

My dear friend, my greatest desire is that you be happy. It would be more impossible for me not to want you to be happy than for you not to want to eat when you are hungry.

I am not good merely as a creature is good. I am goodness. Goodness is of my very nature. You cannot fully comprehend that. I ask only that you believe it.

Believe that I am goodness itself. Believe that I want your happiness far more than you yourself want it. Believe that I can and will give you happiness.

I have made you in my own image, able to share in my divine life, and destined for that life. Give me your good will here on earth, and your happiness even in this life will surpass your dreams. And when you reach your eternal destiny, your joy will be such as you could never begin to imagine.

Do not refuse to do what will make you happy. Millions of your fellow men spurn me. Adam and Eve, anxious to do as they pleased, lost Paradise.

The chosen people of old, instructed by the prophets and even by my Father himself, refused to walk in his ways. They murdered the prophets. They worshiped idols and false gods. They gave themselves up to lust in the wilderness. And the wrath of the Lord was so kindled against them that he delivered them

into the hands of nations who oppressed and humbled them.

I came upon the earth, sharing in your lowly manhood. By my own life I have shown you how to be happy.

Although I constantly teach men peace and contentment through my Church, many close their ears. They seek joy in a thousand vanities and ten thousand pleasures. But the happiness they pursue in sin turns to ashes in their mouths.

Listen to me. Turn to me, give me your mind, your heart, your soul. I shall not hide the truth from you. You desire happiness. I shall teach you the ways of happiness.

Happy is the one who does not follow the advice of the wicked, who does not walk in sin, who does not insult his Maker by foolish pride.

Happy is he who is considerate of the needy and the poor.

Happy are the blameless who follow in my path, who keep my laws night and day, who seek me with their whole heart.

Happy are all who take refuge in me. I shall be their shield, encouraging them and protecting them against danger. They will not fear any evil, even though thousands of enemies are arrayed against them on every side.

They will have great peace. For them there is no stumbling block.

I say to you, happy shall you be if you fear your Lord and walk trustingly in his way.