

## DAY FOURTEEN

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### MY DAY BEGINS

We have our natural likes and dislikes.

We feel drawn to one person  
and may be tempted to go out of our way  
to avoid another.

Well, our Lord tells me  
that this last is the person  
I must love and pray for.

“If you love only those that love you,  
what thanks are to you?

For sinners also love those that love them.”

Nor is it enough to love;  
we must prove our love.

We take a natural delight in pleasing our friends,  
but this is not charity.

Even sinners do the same.

We cannot always, indeed,  
carry out to the letter  
the words of the gospel,  
for occasions arise

when we are compelled to refuse a request.  
Yet when charity has taken deep root in our soul,  
it shows itself outwardly.  
There is always a way of refusing so graciously  
that the refusal affords as much pleasure  
as the gift itself.

We must not avoid the importunate.  
Nor should we be kind  
for the sake of being considered so,  
nor in the hope that our kindness will be returned.  
“Do good hoping for nothing thereby,  
and your reward shall be great.”

The divine precepts  
do assuredly run counter to our natural inclinations,  
and without the help of grace  
it would be impossible  
to understand them,  
much less put them into practice.

#### ALL THROUGH THE DAY

Do good, hoping for nothing thereby,  
and your reward shall be great.

## MY DAY IS ENDING

Loving Father,  
your precepts most certainly  
run counter to my natural inclinations,  
and without the help of grace,  
it would be impossible  
for me to understand them,  
much less put them into practice.

My inclination is  
to love those who love me.  
But even the most sinful among us  
does this much.

My inclination is to be kind  
for the sake of being considered so.

But you ask more.

I am inclined to be kind  
in the hope that my kindness will be returned.

But you tell me  
that I must do good,  
hoping for no return.

Come, then, my loving Father,  
you have been kind to me all my days;

    bless me still  
    as this day ends  
    and the night begins.