

VII. Form holy resolutions on the particular points in which you will understand that God requires some change and reformation of life.— For instance, on the most notable fault which you have to correct, on the most vicious habit which you have to overcome, on the most immediate occasion of sin which you have to avoid. And that these resolutions may be more solid, form them in the presence of Jesus Christ, who, in the depth of your heart will ratify and accept them, as if you should say to him: *Yes, O Lord! it is to yourself I make my engagements, and I desire that you should raise up against me, if the promises I make you be not sincere and true. I have sworn, O my God! and have determined to keep all the observances of your divine law.* Ps. 118. I have sworn to be more regular and more exact in my christian duties, to have more charity for my neighbour, to have more restraint on the liberty I take in speaking of others, &c. I have sworn, and I take you yourself as the witness of my oath, that you may confirm it, and that your adorable sacrament which I have received, may be its seal, so that I could never violate it, without being reckoned in your eyes, a perjurer and a reprobate.

VIII. Excite yourself to Christian perseverance, which should be one of the principal fruits of your communion, by asking yourself with St. Paul, *who shall henceforth be able to separate me from Jesus Christ,* (Rom. viii.) after having been so closely united to him? Then answering yourself in the words of the same apostle, *No: I am certain that neither death, nor life, nor prosperity, nor adversity, nor grandeur, nor abasement, nor any other creature whatever shall ever separate me from him.* Ibid. It is not, O my God, through a spirit of presumption, that I speak in this manner. I know my nothingness and misery, and I am aware that if you abandon me to myself, I shall fall back again into all my disorders. But, united to you as I am in this sacrament, I have a right to rise above myself, and to promise, notwithstanding all my weakness and inconstancy, that I will persevere in your love, and in the possession of your grace.

IX. Follow up in your subsequent life the resolutions you have made at Communion, leading such a life after it, that you may be still able to say with St. Paul, *I live: but no; it is no longer I; it is Jesus Christ that lives in me,* (Gal. ii.) remembering that the greatest of all scandals, even in the opinion of the world, is to behold a christian, whose conduct, after Communion, is not more holy and more edifying than before. It is necessary then, as Jesus Christ lives in you by Communion, that He should thenceforth act in you—that he should make you think, act, and speak, and that there should be nothing unworthy of him in your entire conduct. For if, after Communion, you live as before, in the disorders of a negligent and disordered life; if your thoughts be as worldly, your words as indiscreet, your actions as irregular as they were before, that which Salvian said on another occasion, would be verified in you: to the letter, namely, that in you Jesus Christ would receive confusion and shame, as for instance, it would be a shame for him that a tongue which was sanctified by the sacrament of his body, should still utter lascivious or impure words, and a confession to him, that a heart of which he has made his dwelling, should be still full of evil desires.

X. Observe, and if possible commit to writing after Communion, some of the most tender and affectionate sentiments, with which you have been moved at the holy table; so that if you afterwards fall into languor or tepidity, you may be able to revive yourself, by the remembrance of those things which then made an impression on your heart. For you will thus profit by the salutary advice of David in one of his psalms, *and the holy thoughts with which your heart was filled at Communion, being collected and preserved like so many precious relics, will make you celebrate a new festival* (Ps. 75.) every time you read or call them to mind.

(To be continued.)