

ST ALPHONSUS AND THE LABORER

D*iligence in service.* The great Apostle, St Paul, when he stood before King Agrippa, gave an account of his conversion and labors. He says that at mid-day a great light from heaven shone around him, exceeding the brightness of the sun, which struck himself and his companions to the ground : and that a voice spoke to him, telling him that he was chosen to open the eyes of the people who were in darkness, and to bring them to enjoy the lot of the Saints in heaven. — Now he adds, « I was obedient to the heavenly vision, preaching everywhere to the Jews and the Gentiles. » (Acts 26-19.) We all know how he labored with his whole heart and soul, suffering pains, fatigues, persecutions without measure, until he closed his eyes in death. What was the reason he gave himself so little rest ?

It was because he was directed by the Lord to work, and because it was the Lord's work he was doing. Now you have the same reason for diligence and painstaking in your work that St Paul had in his. He was told to work, by a voice from heaven. « He was not unmindful of the heavenly vision. » — You too have been told by a voice from heaven, the voice of the Holy Ghost : « Whatsoever ye do, do it from the heart, as to the Lord, and not to men. Knowing that ye shall receive from the Lord the reward of inheritance. Serve ye the Lord Christ. (Col. 3-24.)

This is the thought of all thoughts to be kept ever before the mind ; which will give you strength and courage to do all that you should do, and to do it in the very best way. — Take, for instance, a servant who has work to do from morning till night. Early in the morning of a washing day she wakes up. There is a heap of clothes to wash ; there is breakfast to get ; and it may be the chief part of the work of a family to do. It will require all her time and strength to do it. When she wakes up, it seems a dismal prospect to her. « Oh, dear ! how I shall have to slave it to-day ! » But now the thought comes, « For