

you will see Peter transformed; from a disciple you will see him become an apostle, and from an apostle a martyr.

We know, my brethren, what Peter understood by this expression. If there is for us an evident truth, it is that sacrifice is supreme grandeur; this is "our reasonable service." If there is a truth that lays hold upon us, it is assuredly this. Nevertheless, permit me to add, if there be a law among us but little enforced in our days it is this.

Have you ever thought what it cost to be a Christian in olden times? Yes, simply to do what we are doing to-day: to pray together; to sing the praises of God together; to open this book and to search the words of Eternal Life. Have you read the history of the Church? I do not mean that of the first centuries, with their atrocious persecutions and their sublime devotions. I mean the history of our fathers simply, such as transpired about one hundred and fifty years ago, when, because they served God according to the dictates of their consciences, they were obliged to end their days in prison, in the royal galleys, chained to a ball with thief or assassin; when they were forced to see their children, the subjects of so many prayers, thrown into convents, and to think that their unknowing minds would be filled with aversion to their heretical parents, and with horror at the name Reformed; when, if it were at all possible to escape, they were obliged to flee from their home and country as criminals, and in foreign countries to endure the bitter experience of exile?

And now, to-day, are you not frightened in seeing how easy it is to believe and to profess one's belief? Where are our privations, where are our sacrifices? What does our faith cost us? What part of our fortune has God demanded of us? What affections have we renounced? What griefs have distinguished us from the rest of mankind? By what signs does one recognize in our lives those afflictions by which it is necessary to enter into the kingdom of God? I inquire, I look, I listen, and, shall I say it, in contemplating this audience the

word sacrifice appears to me strange, and I ask myself how is it possible to meditate here upon the great saying of Peter: "Lo, we have left all, and we have followed thee"?

I know your reply. You will tell me that the true sacrifice is spiritual; that God looks upon the heart; that the real separation is not in this or that act alone, but that it is in the direction of the whole life; that it may exist under the most brilliant exterior, or within the heart of all good things visible; and that, in such a condition of apparent goodness and prosperity, one can, in truth, sacrifice one's self unto God without reserve. It is not I who would repel this thought, for it is the expression of the most profound truth. Yes, true sacrifice is spiritual; it must indeed include the entire life. Yet it is necessary to add, *that* is not the truth, which, badly apprehended, would serve to deaden the soul in carelessness and lax security. Ah! let us beware of having a religion so spiritual that it may be volatilized in some sort and dissipate itself in the higher regions of the soul, and leave us unconverted and worldly. Is it not also true that our whole life should be an act of worship? And yet, under this pretext, have we not witnessed the abandonment, and its justification, of every candid profession of faith and of piety? Is it not true that our entire life should be a prayer? And yet, under this pretext, is not actual prayer forgotten every day, which is the death of the religious sentiment in man? You maintain, likewise, that the true sacrifice embraces the whole life. I agree with you. But how can I believe that it *does* embrace it; how believe that it *exists*, when we seek for it vainly in its details in the daily acts of this existence?

Again I ask, What does our faith cost us? What sacrifices have our convictions demanded of us? What separations, what privations, what wounds? Alas! I behold the sacrifices that are daily made unto vanity, to the desire of appearing well! I know that, to accomplish a success of the toilet, there