



ABBEY OF GETHSEMANI
TRAPPIST, KENTUCKY

April 3, 1965

Dear Mother Angela:

Well, anyway, congratulations on the new post! I am sure it is in some way or other providential. It is Our Lord's way of moving you where He wants you, and in the end His will doubtless will bring you to solitude in a way you have not planned: but meanwhile the thing is to accept His will in perfect trust and self-forgetfulness, without concern and care, and go ahead with hope in His wisdom. It is quite possible that He wants to use you for the good of Carmel in the ways that are most urgent at the moment, and perhaps put you in a position where you can plan the kind of solutions you have hoped for.

I had already heard about the St Louis meeting from the Cleveland Carmel. I am very glad you are going. They certainly do not give you much time to say anything. Five minutes is just nothing. I don't think there is much point ~~in~~ ~~me~~ ~~going~~ ~~over~~ ~~the~~ ~~paper~~, I just suggest that you emphasize the importance of this for the real objective of Carmel, and take into account the fact that so much is said today about action and "Incarnational witness" etc that even in the contemplative Orders people are tending to doubt the basic value of their most essential traits. I had a letter from Cardinal Bea assuring me that what he was saying for active nuns should not be taken to apply essential changes in the contemplative life. He said contemplatives should continue to be what they are. This does not mean staying where they are, if they are in a rut. But returning to a more perfect living realization of the essential contemplative tradition. This last part is my comment, not Bea.

The solitary life is certainly not an idle one. I am quite busy when in the hermitage. At the moment I have found there is an excellent spring nearby but it is choked up, and the woods between the cottage and there are all grown up with vines and brush, which makes a fine fire hazard too. All this has to be cleared out and the spring opened up. And I can't count on the help of the novices as they are taken up with work in the monastery. I have electricity now, though, and that is a big help. I am down in the monastery for six or eight hours a day, not more. It looks as if I ought to be able to move in completely at the end of the year, when Rev Father has more or less assured me he will let me out of the novice master's job. One reason why he is so much in favor of solitude all of a sudden is that I am constantly being asked to get in on meetings such as the one you are going to. He wants in the worst way to prevent me from doing so, and we have had to refuse several already. Or he has refused them for me. In one case, they even wanted to have the meeting here and he forbade it. Because probably I would meet some very interesting people who are active in the hermit movement. One man you should know is Dom Jacques Winandy, who has now established his (men) hermits at Courtenay, British Columbia, (Address: R. R. 2). If anyone can help with the idea of women being hermits, he can. When you get to Savannah, you could contact him.

I would be happy to see your talk, but don't expect me to contribute anything special. I am sure you will have a hard enough time getting in all you want to

say within the limits assigned to you. But I will certainly pray for you and for the meeting.

If you are in Louisville around the middle of May I still may have a chance to talk to you before you go. Please keep me posted. I would hate to have you ~~leave~~ take off without talking to you, but we have to be used to that kind of disappointment. But I hope we will be able to keep in touch when you are in Savannah. Wherever you are, we will certainly be united in the Holy Spirit and in a common ideal, and I will count heavily on your prayers and those of Sister Regina. Meanwhile, I will offer Mass for you and her and for the Savannah project and everything you are concerned in, on Wednesday in Passion Week, the 8th. I fortunately have some Masses that I can apply as I wish. I will keep you especially in my prayers ~~and~~ in Holy Week, and in the Mass of Holy Thursday in which I may perhaps concelebrate. (Have done this once so far, and it is all right, but there are still too many kinks and delays in the ritual).

Blessings to you and to all the sisters.

Cordially and fraternally in Our Lord,

J. M. Louis

I am sending a couple of essays.

ABBEY OF GETHSEMANI
TRAPPIST, KENTUCKY
40073

(In Louisville) ②

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OPEN
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Conscience Matter

for Louis