聖母マリアに導かれて

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私は5歳のときに母を失した。小学三年になったとき、長屋に住む貧しい病人を見かけ、いたわざに耐えられず、かならず医者になって、このような病人を助けたいと固く心に決める。以来、この望みは私の人生の指標となった。

九歳になった秋、少女誌の口絵にアラファエルの聖母子画を見つけたとき、なぜか、亡き母へのノスタルジーにおそわれた。「もし、このような母がいたら、どんなに幸せであろう！」私は無意識のうちに、未知の聖母と幼い頃別れた母親との重ね合わせていたのである。このめぐりあいの日から、私は喜びにつけ、悲しみにつけ、勉強部屋に掲げた聖母子の名画を仰いだ。まだ、この方がどうかを知らない。けれども、心からマリアを慕い、マリアに支えを求め、マリアをお喜ばせしたいと願いながら、七年の間、同じ祈りを繰り返す。「ああ、もし、このような母がいたら...」

女学生になり、病気で静養を余儀なくされた一日月間、私は真理を乾き求めた。学校に戻ったとき、聖母は私に道を開いて下さる。ドミニコ会士と顔見知りであった一人の友が私の願望を聞いて、カタドラルに案内してくれたのである。

待降節第一主日に備える土曜日の夕べ、自らそれと知らず、私は聖母に導かれてカタドラルの重い扉を開く。ステンドグラスをとおして、晩秋の七色の光が神の家に溢れていた。海辺におよそせせる波のように、沈黙の神が私の魂を満たすのを覚えたその瞬間、私は勝利の聖母像を発見したのである。なんというめぐりあいであろう！幼い私を引き寄せておられた方が、ここで待っていてくださったとは！聖母像の前でわれを忘れている私のそばに、いつの間にか白い修道服の司祭（ピエール・ピサンル師）がひそりとたたずみ、優しい声で嘆いた。「これはイエスの御母マリア、あなたの天のお母さんですよ。」

この日から、神を「アッパ、お父さま」とお呼びできる喜びに圧倒され、毎日深く父と子と聖霊の交わりの秘密に引き入れられて行った。

求道者となったある日曜日の午後、聖ウルスラ修道院で聖体感謝式にあずかっていた時のことである。突然、内心に、「あなたの生涯を修道女として捧げなさい」との確かな促しを感じた。あまりの驚きに、私は「いいえ、決して決して！」と激しく抵抗し、式が終わるやいなや、この声をぶり払うように、走った。ほとんど泣かんばかりになって家に辿り着いたとき、私はいつの間にかこの招きに同意し、不思議なやすらぎと信頼感に満たされていたのである。
I lost my mother when I was 5 years old. When I was in third grade I had the opportunity to visit a sick person who was very poor. Feeling great pity, I resolved to become a doctor to heal the sick poor. From that day on this desire became the goal of my life. At the age of 9 I found a picture of Raphaël’s Madonna in a magazine. Suddenly nostalgia for my mother filled my soul. I said to myself: “Ah, if I had a mother like her how happy I would be!” Unconsciously, I had identified this unknown Lady as my mother lost since my childhood. After this first contact with Mary, I placed this picture of the Madonna on the wall of my room. Since then, I turn to her in times of joy and of sorrow. I still did not know who she was; however, deep in my heart, I loved the Blessed Virgin, I leaned on her, I sought to please this mother. For seven years, every day as I looked at the picture I repeated the same prayer: “Ah, if I had a mother like her!...”

At the age of 16, when I fell ill, the search for the Truth became an unquenchable thirst. After a month, the Mother of Christ showed me the way. To answer my desire, one of my classmates who knew a Dominican priest brought me to the cathedral. It was a Saturday afternoon in Advent. Led by Mary’s invisible hand I entered the cathedral. A ray of fall sunlight shone through the windows like a rainbow. Like waves breaking on the seashore, the silent presence of God swept through my soul. At that very moment, my eyes became fixed on the statue of Our Lady of Victory. What an encounter! The one who had been calling me since my childhood was waiting for me here!... A priest wearing a white habit (Father Pierre Bissonnette) approached me quietly and whispered in my ear: “This is the Virgin Mary, Mother of Christ and your Mother in Heaven...”

Since that day, having been overcome with the joy of calling God: “Abba, Father”, I was drawn more and more deeply into the mystery of the Trinity.
One Sunday evening during the period of the catechumenate, I was attending Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at the convent of the Ursulines. All of a sudden, I felt a very steady pressure deep within my heart. “Consecrate your life to God as a religious.” At that moment, in shock, I said to myself “No, no, never!” After the ceremony, wanting to escape this inner voice, I left and crying started to run. When I returned home, I don’t know how, but from my heart sprang up a Yes followed by a profound sense of peace and confidence.

Two years later, on the bright morning of the Assumption of Mary, I was baptized by Bishop Marie Joseph Lemieux, O.P. When receiving communion for the first time, I consecrated myself to God.

In the last year of my medical studies, when I visited, for the first time, the Congregation of Notre Dame in Fukushima and saw the statue of Our Lady at the entrance, I had a strong feeling that Mary was welcoming me, that she who had guided my life to that day was the Virgin Mary, and that it was here that she wanted me to consecrate myself to God as a religious.

Now my dream of working as a doctor among the sick poor is being realized through my former students of Meiji Gakuen.