



The Official Newsletter of the Filipino Cursillo Community Diocese of Oakland

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#### ***Points to Ponder from Various Mystics***

I feel real deep-down awe when I see that the good and gentle Jesus – the One who rules and feeds the whole universe – was born into such great want and need that no one else has ever been so poor as He was. Look, Jesus is born into utter destitution and His life began in a wanting that would complete our every neediness and feed our every hunger pang. And remember that in the end, Jesus dies poor and naked on the cross so that He might reclothe us and cover our own nakedness.

***Catherine of Siena - Letters***

#### ***The Other Story of Christmas***

***By: Sis Carmen Revecho***



An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, descendant of David, do not be afraid to take Mary to be your wife. For it is by the Holy Spirit that

she has conceived. She will have a son, and you will name him Jesus – because he will save his people from their sins.”  
Matthew 1:20-21

Sometimes in my life, I wish myself back to my youth and Christmas in the Philippines. To me, it was “Mano Po Ninong/Ninang” for that coveted few centavos, for the much awaited taste of small portions of “hamon” and “queso de bola”, and for that beautiful gift of a doll in spite of its crude workmanship. As a young child, I bartered my warm bed to attend the Misa de Gallo for a good share of “puto bumbong” and “bibingka”.

During my adolescent life, through the teachings of my parents, I easily grasped the meaning of Christmas and why the whole of Christendom celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ. Understandably, the focus is on the birth of the Messiah.

When I became a mother, I came to be more aware of the other characters in this blessed event, particularly about Mary. As a mother, I traveled with her through the difficult last days of pregnancy. I followed her awkward movement, swollen and heavy with child. I pictured her condition traveling on foot and on a donkey on uneven terrain. As she started labor pains, I felt for her when the only place to deliver the baby was a manger with animals as witnesses to the celestial miracle. She bore the pangs of childbirth uncomplaining and with dignity. This is the Mary I can relate to.

Although, I sometimes wonder if in her human frailty she harbored an iota of doubt about her plight. Isn't it unthinkable that when she was to deliver the Son of God, she seemed abandoned? How about Joseph, her worried spouse? Was there ever a doubt in his mind about why they had to suffer such terrible conditions? Biblical scholars and theologians are inclined to

believe that Mary and Joseph did not waver in their faith.

In our lives there are times when we are faced with problems that ruffle our faith. At times, we question Him why we suffer unjustly. Confronted with seemingly hopeless predicaments, it is sometimes easier to give up and cry “bahala na”! As a true model of our Christian faith, Mary submitted her life to the will of the Lord and encourages us to follow her example. Though it's never easy, we must be childlike in our faith and trust the Lord's bountiful mercies and love to comfort us.

The greatest gift God gave us was not wrapped in glittering tinsel but in swaddling clothes. As we celebrate this Christmas let us not only meditate on the birth of our Redeemer, but also of Mary and Joseph's sacrifices and their indomitable faiths.

MALIGAYANG PASKO SA INYONG LAHAT!

Caveat:

This article is a reprint and was originally published in the Mariposa Newsletter of the Cursillo of the Diocese of Oakland in December 1994.

*Points to Ponder from Various Mystics*

I saw the eyes of my soul that – up above all things – a fire was burning on and on without stopping. This fire had been burning with no beginning and it will keep on burning without end. This fire is God Eternal, who holds within Himself eternal life and from whom all things have been birthed.

The bright flickerings of the fire are the saints of God because their lives have given Christianity many a fine sparkle. The ever-glowing coals of the fire are all the blessed here on earth who are on fire with heavenly love and who shine as good examples, living lives of good deeds and peace and joy. All those who have grown cold in sin can warm themselves on these coals.

*Methchild of Magdeburg --  
The Flowing Light of the Godhead*

**Exceeding Expectations**  
**By: Sis Vicky Yap**

God's surpassing greatness is the source and summit of all graces. His generosity and love for us gives us clarity in confusion, enlightenment in darkness, wellness and wholeness in sickness, thus restoring us to become one whole again. He is ecstasy in awe.

In the week of Fatima of October, 2016, I had a heart attack (cardiac arrest). I was brought to emergency. I was asleep in a comma for three weeks. The doctors were thinking I would not make it back to health and even to life again. When I woke up, one of the doctors talked to me to thank my God for waking me up one whole piece. Being a Moslem, my doctor admitted it was a remarkable testimony that probably planted a good seed about my God's greatness.

From the time I came home from the hospital, I have been questioning myself why this happened and what was the lesson learned. What does God want from me to live life with a purposeful goal?

Firstly, I learned that true Love and Forgiveness means detachment from material pursuit. Why? Because in one snap, we can lose everything, therefore we are nothing. We have no control of life. I learned that the only way to wholeness and peace is forgiveness and no-judgmentalism. Allow me to share with you my Testimony that during this temporary lifeless condition I met Jesus face to face. When our pastor

heard about my being in the hospital, he rushed to the hospital to give me the last rites. Lo and behold, instead of seeing him, it was Jesus I saw telling me to forgive my pastor unconditionally. I never talked to him because he would have mood swings. I did forgive willingly because I knew Jesus gave me the grace to do it. From my hind sight as I was leaving the room, I saw Jesus by my bedside doing His healing on me. That was the most peaceful moment for me.

From it I learned that He forgives because we love instead of us loving because He forgives.

De colores!

***Points to Ponder from Various Mystics***

I saw Jesus Christ, so gorgeous no human heart could imagine what I saw. On God's graceful hands and feet were the gracious wounds He suffered because He loves us. From these magnificent wounds poured out a light so great, it was stunning. It was as if all the beauty of Gods divinity was shining through it.

Christ's splendid body was so generous and transparent you could clearly see the soul within it. God's body was so generous you could see yourself reflected there in Him more clearly than you could in any mirror. His body was so beautiful you could see the angels and the saints there, too, as if they'd been painted on Him. God's face was so graceful, the angels who've been looking on it since the moment of their creation can't get enough of it. They always want to be looking at Him.

Surely if you would only visualize and consider the beauty and goodness within Christ, you'd love God so much, all other things would seem ugly or bitter. Think how sweet God is, how generous and kind. Christ shares all the good He has with His friends.

*Marguerite d'Oingt, Mirror*

**An Apology**  
**By: Sis Temi Garcia**

Articles on this issue should have been published in the last quarter of 2017. Unfortunately, events overtook us hence the lateness of this publication. Please bear with my story.

We left for the East Coast on November 11, 2017 for an overdue visit to our respective families. The visits went well, everyone in the family bonded. We came back to the Bay Area via Amtrak on December 21<sup>st</sup>. All in all, it was a good trip.

Two days later, Bro Vic, while walking by himself along Mission Street, suddenly fell and lost consciousness. Thank God for the folks around him who immediately called 911. The medics came and brought him to the San Francisco General Hospital ER. The doctors suspected that his glucose count must have plummeted below the normal level. After the usual check-up, he was sent home and instructed to rest and take lots of fluids for the next week.

Meanwhile, my left knee started to swell. And as days pass, I was having a hard time walking, climbing the stairs up and down to our apartment gave me excruciating pain. Both of us spent Christmas and New Year homebound when we used to gather at other relatives' home to welcome these joyous events.

On January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018, we both decided it is time to venture out of the house. As we were having brunch in a restaurant, I suddenly felt faint. I had to lie down on another table's bench as I was afraid that I

may hit my head if I pass out. The medics were called and I was brought to the Seton Hospital ER. After check-ups, I was found to have the flu and pneumonia. A blessing in disguise, right?! I was given antibiotics and meds and sent home to recuperate for next two weeks with the instruction to rest, take lots of fluid, see my primary care doctor.

Despite of following the ER doctor's instruction to the letter, I continue to feel tired most of the time. When I saw my primary care doctor, he advised me to continue to rest for another month since it was my lungs that was affected by the pneumonia. Bro Vic has to contend himself with canned goods or take outs for our meals.

My apologies to Sis Carmen Revecho, who mailed me her article way back in November, 2017, to Bro Vic in December, 2017, and to Sis Vicky Yap in February, 2018. I strongly feel that the articles are worthy of sharing with our readers.

I pray that you continue to enjoy perusing this newsletter. Thank you for your patience and continued support.

*Points to Ponder from Various Mystics*  
Lord, may my deepest good intentions lead to acts of love. Then the grieving I feel right now can be transformed into comfort and rest. You're the one who said that a woman suffers when she gives birth, but when her child is born, she no longer remembers her suffering because of her new responsibilities and because of her inexpressible joy. Jesus, my friend, You are the highest humility.  
Give me a great love tonight. As Your birthday nears, give me rich gifts, and listen to me with Your unending compassion.  
*Umilta of Faenza, Sermons*

## **RECOGNIZING OUR MORTALITY**

By: Bro. Tim Pedrosa



Web link: <http://timyrna.com/index.htm>

Sometimes we open our book of life and some of its pages are blank and we put words of opportunities, courage, faith and confidence on them ourselves to inspire us. When we scan the pages, we cherish the wonderful memories and we also remember and honor our loved ones who have gone before us; we become aware of our own mortality which could lead us to wake up and live an authentic and meaningful life.

A useless life is an early death. To live defeated and dishonored is to die every day.

Many of the lessons we learn when we think of our mortality could only be derived through the things we experience and sometimes suffer. God expects and trusts us to face temporary mortal adversity, so we could learn what we need to learn and ultimately become what we are to become in eternity.

No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven do not want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is, as it should be, because death is life's

change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new.

The fear of death follows from the fear of life. Dying is nothing to fear. It can be the most wonderful experience of our life depending on how we have lived. What we have done for ourselves alone dies with us; however, what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal. Death is not the greatest loss in life; it is what dies inside us while we live.

**An awareness of one's mortality can lead you to wake up and live an authentic, meaningful life. - Bernie Siegel**

I have learned that death is simply a shedding of the physical body like the butterfly shedding its cocoon. It is a transition to a higher state of consciousness where we continue to perceive, to understand, to laugh, and to be able to grow. For those who seek to understand it, death is a highly creative force. The highest spiritual values of life can originate from the thought and study of death.

It's only when we truly know and understand that we have a limited time on earth and that we have no way of knowing when our time is up, that we will then begin to live each day to the fullest, as if it were the only one we had.

I have also learned that there is no joy without hardship. If not for death, would we appreciate life? If not for hate, would we know that our ultimate goal is love? We can either hold on to negativity, look for someone or something to blame, or we can choose to heal and keep on loving. Those who learned to know death, rather than to

fear and fight it, could become our teachers about life.

**The Lord is well aware of our mortality. He knows our weaknesses. He understands the challenges of our everyday lives. He has great empathy for the temptations of earthly appetites and passions. - Joseph B. Wirthlin**

*Points to Ponder from Various Mystics*

Sweet Jesus, I've chosen You above all others. You're the most trustworthy Lover of my soul and the best partner of my life. My rational soul pines for You. I offer my heart to You. I choose You as my companion and guide. I offer You myself – body and soul – as Your servant. I belong to You and You belong to me.

Cement me to You, my true Love. Your love, kindness and gentleness attract me to You. When I obey You, I tie myself to You, and clinging to You is the best love anyone can experience. Loving You is the sweetest thing I know. It's what I want more than anything else.

Christ says, "I'll support you in my Holy Spirit. I'll draw you close to me in inseparable union. You'll be my guest. I'll hug you to my happy, cherishing love. I'll make you a robe of the finest purple of my precious blood. I'll fill up your desire with Myself and that's how I'll make you glad forever".

*Gertrude the Great, Spiritual Exercises*

**From The Editor's Desk**

**By: Bro Vic Ramos**

**The First Christmas**



Have you ever asked yourself the question, "Who was with God the Father the day just before our Lord Jesus Christ was born"? To get the exact answer to this question, let us turn our Bibles to the first chapter of St. John's Gospel and read, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the word was God". So, the answer is the "Word" which was God Himself, for God and His Word are but one.

The same was in the beginning with God, all things were made by Him and without Him was made nothing that was made. In Him was life and the life was the light of man, and the light shineth in darkness and the darkness did not interfere with it.

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. This man came as a witness that all might believe in Him. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him but the world knew Him not. He was in His own but His own received Him not.

But to those who did accept Him, He gave the power to become children of God, to those who believe in His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of man but of God. "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son full of grace and truth".

Reading further in the same Gospel (JN 3:16), “For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have life eternal”. If I may rephrase this part without the fear of changing its essence and spirit and to fit a glorious occasion – “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son as a Christmas gift for everyone”. Merry Christmas to all Brothers and Sisters.

De colores!

*Points to Ponder from Various Mystics*

Don't think that if your mind becomes slightly distracted, then all is lost. Sometimes I've been terribly oppressed by the chaos of my thoughts. Only four years ago I came to understand by experience that thought is not the same thing as understanding. I asked a learned man about this, and he said I was right. This gave me no small satisfaction.

I'd had a hard time grasping why understanding – as one of the soul's powers – was sometimes very timid and flighty and foolish and inexperienced, while thoughts, generally speaking, fly so fast. As I write this, the noises in my head are so loud, I begin to wonder what's going on in it. My head is filled with the blasting of an overflowing, rushing river, and a tree of birds seems to be whistling and singing – not in my ears – but in the upper part of my head.

I wouldn't be surprised if the Lord sent me this problem so that I might understand it better because all this physical chaos doesn't stop me from praying or from saying what I'm writing down now. The tranquility and love in my soul aren't affected by this noise. While my physical mind races on, the mind of my soul remains clear, as do its desires.

*Teresa of Avila, Interior Castle*

## Housekeeping

- (1) Mariposa Newsletter can also be viewed on the website. Access [www.fccoakland.net](http://www.fccoakland.net) and click on Mariposa.
- (2) Bookmarking the FCC website is easy. [a] In Google Chrome, after entering the web address (#1 above), hover over the Star to the right of the address line. [b] Press the left mouse button to open the Bookmark window. [c] Confirm under **Name:** is the FCC web address.[d] Under **Folder:** select Bookmarks bar. [e] Click <Done>. [f] To test, find the FCC bookmark under the address line. [g] Or click on the right-pointing arrow located under the Star and click on the FCC bookmark. [h] Clicking on the bookmark is easier than typing the web address.



Figure 1 The Mariposa Editorial Team

**SAVE THE DATES**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter of 2018 +**

**Mariposa Editorial Team**

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**WebMaster:**

Tim Pedrosa

**Contributors:**

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Carmen Revecho

Vicky Yap

**Publisher:**

FCC-Oakland

**POST CURSILLO**

- 04/13-15 Region XI Encounter in Fresno
- 04/21 Joint Ultreya @ QAS 6:00PM
- 05/12 Joint Ultreya @ CCTL- 6:30PM
- 05/19 FCC Friendship Dinner -Dance @ St Raymond
- 06/09 West Ultreya @ CCTL
- 06/16 East Ultreya @ QAS
- 07/14 FCC Picnic Heather Farms

**SCHOOL OF LEADERS (SOL)**

- 04/16 Footsteps of St Paul
- 05/21 Mary
- 06/18 How to Bring Your Friend to Cursillo

Venue: CCTL in Oakland at 6:30PM.

NOTE: Team Reps Meeting follows SOL.

**CURSILLO PROPER (3-Day Weekend)**

- 04/29 Joint Orientation – OLG 11:00AM – 5:00PM
- 05/12 Joint Commissioning – CCTL 11:30AM – 5:00PM

**NOTE VENUE LOCATIONS:**

CCTL - 2121 Harrison Street, Oakland  
 OLG - 2500 Bermuda Ave., San Leandro  
 QAS – 2390 Grant St., Concord  
 St Raymond – 11555 Shannon Ave., Dublin  
 Heather Farms – Large Picnic Area –  
 N. San Carlos Dr., Walnut Creek

**Secretariat Members**

- Lay Director: Mario Camorongan
- Secretary: Celsa Taraya
- Treasurer: Celso Perez
- Chairpersons:
- SOL: Cora Tuason
- Pre Cursillo: Reynaldo Dollete
- Post Cursillo: Clarita Perez
- Newsletter Editor: Victor Ramos
- Cursillo Proper: Josie Herrera
- Spiritual Advisor: Dcn. Rey Encarnacion

*PHOTOS FROM THE  
CURSILLO DE CURSILLOS,  
sponsored by the FCC -  
Diocese of Oakland  
January 11-14, 2018  
At the Holy Redeemer  
Retreat Center in  
Oakland, CA*

Many thanks to Bro Rey Dollete for providing many pictures on CDC. These are just a few of the 282 pictures he took during those three days retreat.





MARIPOSA NEWSLETTER ★★★★★ MARIPOSA NEWSLETTER



*Points to Ponder from Various Mystics*

On a throne in the sky I saw the Lord Jesus Christ sitting as Judge. He looked serene. At His feet sat Mary and around the throne were an army of angels and an infinite crowd of saints. Below Christ stood a very important looking religious leader on a high rung of a ladder. The bottom of this ladder connected with the earth, and its top touched the sky.

Suspended between earth and heaven, the religious leader was gesticulating wildly, looking cruel and deceitful, demanding of the Judge.

First Question. "Christ, I want to know. You gave me a mouth so why can't I say the things that please me?"

Second question. "You gave me eyes, so why can't I look at things that make me happy?"

Third question. "You gave me ears, so why can't I listen to whatever I like?"

Fourth question. "You gave me hands, so why can't I do whatever I want with them?"

Fifth question. "You gave me feet, so why can't I go wherever I want?"

Christ the Judge responds to the first question. (His own gestures were gentle and dignified.) "Friend, I gave you a mouth so you could speak sensibly about things helpful to your body and soul that brings Me honor."

Christ the Judge responds to the second question. "Second, I gave you eyes to discern evil and run from it and search out healthy things and hold on to them."

Christ the Judge responds to the third question. "Third, I gave you ears to hear things that are truthful and honest."

Christ the Judge responds to the fourth question. "Fourth, I gave you hands to do things necessary for your body that don't damage your soul."

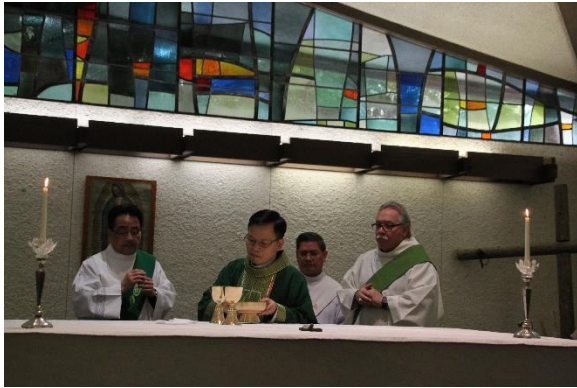
Christ the Judge responds to the fifth question. "Fifth, I gave you feet so you could move away from the love of the world and worldly pleasures and walk instead towards your soul's rest through love for Me, your Creator and Savior."

*Birgitta of Sweden, Revelations*



*Points to Ponder from Various Mystics*  
 God's Soul is the wind rustling plants and leaves, the dew dancing on the grass, the rainy breezes making everything to grow. Just like this, the kindness of person flows, touching those dragging burdens of longing. We should be a breeze helping the homeless, dew comforting those who are depressed, the cool, misty air refreshing the exhausted, and with God's teaching we have got to feed the hungry.  
 This is how we share God's soul.  
*Hildegard of Bingen, Hymn*





*Points to Ponder from Various Mystics*

Gentle, loving Knight, You made nothing of Your death, Your life, or Your shame. No, on the cross You battled the death than is our sin, and though death destroyed Your bodily life, Your death destroyed our death.

Love's the reason, you see. The Lord's eye was fixed on nothing but His Father's honor. He wanted nothing more than to make God's wish for us come true, so we could experience God – that's why He created us.

Constantly look into the gentle eye of God's love.

*Catherine of Siena, Letters*





*Points to Ponder from Various Mystics*  
 After a bitter tonic, a person certainly needs some delicious food. How about good will, humility, and love then?  
 It's better for a person to be inconsolable following God's will, than for a person to be superficially happy following their own will. God's will is pure. All people who love God intensely in their hearts become outwardly calm, because they know all external effort blocks the spirit within. At such times, the spirit sings within in a beautiful voice transcending every earthly song.  
*Mechthild of Magdeburg,  
 The Flowing Light of Godhead*





*Points to Ponder from Various Mystics*

Imitate God. Remember God is all good, and don't let yourself indulge in pride, envy, schisms, and other sins that fight against the spirit. These lead to decadence.

Instead, be like newborn babies. Be people of integrity. Never be duplicitous. Why? Remember that the Lord said in Leviticus to His loyal friends that they were to be holy because He was holy.

The Lord has blessed you for many years. He's shown you treasure hidden in a field, and you've enjoyed it for such a long time. With your joy you bought God's priceless treasure, the best pearls and gems. Remember that – without a doubt – if you respect these jewels as you should, they'll always stand before the face of God, praying for you and begging for the salvation of your body and soul.

*Elisabeth of Schonau, Letters*





*Points to Ponder from Various Mystics*

Embrace the impoverished Christ.  
Think on Him and remember that God let  
Himself be scorned for you. Look at Him and  
follow the caring path of His divine-mortal life.  
Make yourself scorned in this world for Him.

*Clare of Assisi, Letters*

O never-ending fire of love! Thank you  
for giving us Your flesh as food and Your blood  
as drink. You're the Lamb roasted in the fire of  
the hottest love for us.

*Catherine of Siena, Letters*





*Points to Ponder from Various Mystics*  
 No matter the time of year or the weather, anyone making works of kindness their companion finds themselves face to face with flowers, joy, summer and sunshine. Kind people are always new and on fire with longing. Winter's bitterness no longer bothers them.  
*Hadewijch, Poems in Stanzas*





*Points to Ponder from Various Mystics*

God is the foundation – the essence, the teaching, the teacher, the end, and the means by which every faithful soul works. God is known and will be known to every soul to whom the Holy Spirit says these truths. I'm positive everyone seeking God will thrive because they are seeking the Truth, and these words are our comfort against sin.

When I first saw that God does everything that's done, I didn't see sin, and I saw all is well. When God did show me sin, He said then, "All will be well." God also said to me, "You won't be overcome," and these words were said adamantly, and I was convinced. They gave me certainty and strength against every tribulation that might come.

God didn't say, "You won't be attacked" or "You won't be overwhelmed" or "You won't be upset" or "You won't be stressed out." No, instead He said, "You won't be overcome." God wants us to pay attention to His words, and always be strong in our certainty – when things are going well and when things are going terribly – God wants us to love Him and delight in Him and trust in Him with all our heart, and all will be well.

*Julian of Norwich, Revelations*





*Points to Ponder from Various Mystics*

The soul that has devoted itself to God journeys along a rarely traveled path that soars. The soul that loves God guides a person's senses just like someone with sight will guide a friend who's blind.

On this path of love the soul experiences true freedom because it lives without inner suffering. How so? Because the soul wants nothing but whatever it is the Lord wants.

The soul that has God as its best friend trusts God, because the soul knows that God always organizes everything for the best.

*Mechthild of Magdeburg,  
The Flowing Light of Godhead*





*Points to Ponder from Various Mystics*

Many think that the way of a Christian is hard, but God said to me, "Imitating Christ's Passion really isn't that difficult. It may seem to be, but it's not. It's easy for those for whom Christ died, to die for Him. It's easy for those for whom Christ suffered, to suffer for Him. It's easy for those for whom Christ was scorned, to be scorned for Him. It's easy for those who are loved by Christ, to love others for Him.

Because God is love, so can we be.

*Angela of Foligno, Instructions*





*Points to Ponder from Various Mystics*

The Lord asked me to make His feet my hallway, His hands my workshop, His mouth my living room, His eyes my library for sitting and reading, and His ears my confessional.

Overwhelmed by love, I said, "Lord, how I want my soul to burn with such fire that it would melt and become a liquid so it could be poured – all of it – into You!"

God answered, "Your will is such a fire for you."

Then I understood that God's will gives us the strength we need to accept every benefit resulting from our good desires towards God.

*Gertrude the Great,  
The Herald of Divine Love*





*Points to Ponder from Various Mystics*  
 When a person doesn't love sin, but hates it and loves God, then all is well. However, even those who sincerely love God sometimes sin through weakness or ignorance of will, but they won't fall.  
 What should you do, then, when you are overcome by weakness and stray off God's path of love for you? Encourage yourself to get up again and look on God because you love your Lord with every ounce of your mighty will.  
*Julian of Norwich, Revelations*

