

to have the Faith, and to abandon oneself to sin, you who have always lived in innocence. I know what it is, for I lived, for some days after my Baptism, in the debauchery of youth. It was a torture to me; my mind was greatly troubled by it, and those bestial pleasures were no longer for me such as they had formerly seemed, before I had any knowledge of the Faith. I found in them more bitterness than sweetness; my heart had no rest, and in the midst of those pleasures it experienced nothing but disgust." It is, beyond a doubt, because God is good even to sinners, that he has pity on those who belong to him, and does not wish that after having tasted the joys [47] of Faith, they should find any peace or content outside of it. "Alas!" he added, "her sin is her torment, and brings her more sorrow than joy. Let us speak to God rather than to her, for all the words in the world cannot enter into a soul that is in such troubles. She sees her misfortune; she feels her misery,—not enough to extricate herself from it, but enough to prevent her from ever enjoying any good, either in this world or in the next, if God himself do not work her salvation."

A Christian woman, who learned that one of her sons, the sole joy and support of her old age, had fallen into the hands of the enemy, could not restrain her tears. But she at once recovered herself after rendering to nature what the transfixed heart of a mother could not forbear giving. "Alas! my God," she exclaimed, "why have I not recourse to your goodness? Is not this the time when I should keep my word to you, and perform in affliction what I promised you in prosperity? Continue to try me, if you will, provided that, at [48] the same time, you