

Love & pain: the ionic bond

Guadalupe's second "formula" for holiness is about facing life's difficulties in a way that leads to being closer to God.

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#Formula2: an ionic bond creates a stable union that is not easily broken. It is the result of an electrostatic attraction between ions of opposing signs, one electropositive and the other electronegative, which bond upon capturing electrons of the other.

Before apparently negative situations – difficulties, sufferings, and misunderstandings – the positive attraction of God's love can create a bond that will remain stable no matter what. And here we have Guadalupe's second "formula" for holiness.

Guadalupe did it this way...

"I am a little tired because I have slept little these past days. But it's all done now, and everything is in order. People like the food, and we have what we need in stock, and at a good price. I thank God a lot, although I see the disaster that I am - how I drown in a glass of water! - and I set to work with all my soul, as you know very well!" (Letter to Nisa González Guzmán, written from the administration of the Abando Residence in Bilbao, Spain, 12 October 1946).

To María Luisa Udaondo, a friend of Guadalupe's, who was taking care of her sick mother: *“Dear María Luisa, I have just received your letter. You can guess how I feel not being able to come to your side to be with you in these moments. I assure you that we will pray a lot for your mother, as you have asked me to. **I am certain that our Lord, as He gives you these sufferings, helps you bear them in such a way that you yourself will be amazed** – isn't that so? And all of this helps us to see with more clarity that only He can do and finish everything. Do not waste anything that happens to you and offer it up. If you could only see how many good things are happening; and it could very well be thanks to what you are contributing. Do you understand?”* (Madrid, 16 September 1949)

To Cristina Ponce, a friend of Guadalupe's, at a time of illness:

“Please, take care of yourself. I understand that now is not a good time for you to get sick, but if God wills it, do everything that is required for you to get better, and be content doing so! I still have the hope that your letter will arrive before I put this one in the mail, so I can know how you are doing. Offer up everything for the school, for our people, for María, for María Ester’s title, and if there is anything left over, offer it up for all of this and for me. You can’t imagine how things are coming along these days, so make the most of everything.” (Mexico City, 7 November 1955)

Guadalupe dealt with illness from a young age. Her last letter to Saint Josemaria reflects her attitude facing it: *“Father, I am writing you from the Clinic. I have been here 22 days and at the end of the month, the cardiologists will decide whether they should change the “heart valves”. I am at*

peace and I am not worried about what is happening. This year, until coming to the clinic, I lived a normal life just as in previous years (but I am getting increasingly more tired).” (Letter to Saint Josemaria, written from Pamplona, Spain, on 22 June 1975).

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