“In our life we will find vigour and victory and depression and defeat”

If you are faithful you will be able to count yourself a conqueror. Even though you may lose some battles in your life, you will not know defeat. You can be sure that there is no such thing as failure if you act with purity of intention and with a desire to fulfill the Will of God. And then, whether you win or lose, you will always triumph in the end, because

you will have carried out your work with Love. (The Forge, 199)

August 18

We are creatures and full of defects. I would almost say that we will always *need* defects. They are the shadow which shows up the light of God's grace and our resolve to respond to God's kindness. And this *chiaroscuro* will make us human, humble, understanding and generous.

Let's not deceive ourselves: in our life we will find vigour and victory *and* depression and defeat. This has always been true of the earthly pilgrimage of Christians, even of those we venerate on the altars. Don't you remember Peter, Augustine, Francis? I have never liked biographies of saints which

naively — but also with a lack of sound doctrine — present their deeds as if they had been confirmed in grace from birth. No. The true life stories of christian heroes resemble our own experience: they fought and won; they fought and lost. And then, repentant, they returned to the fray.

We should not be surprised to find ourselves defeated relatively often, usually or even always in things of little importance which we tend to take seriously. If we love God and are humble, if we persevere relentlessly in our struggle, the defeats will never be very important. There will also be abundant victories which bring joy to God's eyes. There is no such thing as failure if you act with a right intention, wanting to fulfill God's will and counting always on his grace and your own nothingness. (Christ is passing by, 76)

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