

# Everyday Holiness

## Lessons from Ven. Madeleine Delbrêl

What are some elements of everyday sainthood? What does Madeleine teach us?

### Element 1: Encounter Jesus

"It is necessary to rediscover the face of Christ with all its intensity."

### Element 2: Prayer

"The Gospel is the Book of the Life of the Lord. It was made in order to become the book of our life. It was not made to be understood but to be approached as a threshold of mystery. It was not made to be read, but to be received in us. Each of its words is spirit and life...Alive, they are themselves like the initial leavening that will attack our dough and ferment it into a new way of life... The words of the Gospel knead us, modify us, assimilate us, so to speak, into themselves. The words of the Gospel are miraculous."

"It is in the Church that I live Jesus Christ, that I am in Jesus Christ; in the Church as a member of a body, as a cell in living matter. My personal Christian life is the result of this communal life of the Church. The communal prayer of the Church, the liturgical prayer, is inseparable from the sacraments; it is wholly based on the Eucharist."

"Do we live every confession, every Communion like people who do not know when they will again be able to go to confession, again Communicate?"

### Element 3: Being Acted Upon by Christ's Charity

"Lord, Lord, at least let this rind that covers me not be a barrier to you. Pass through. My eyes, my hands, my mouth are yours. This woman so sad before me: here is my mouth so that you can smile at her. This child is almost gray, he is so pale: here are my eyes so that you can look upon him. This man so tired, so very tired, here is my whole body so that you can give him my seat, and my voice so that you can say very gently to him: 'Sit down.' This boy, so smug, so foolish, so tough, here is my heart for you to love him with, harder than he has ever been loved."

"Let us take a very small piece of our life and set free the charity of Christ in it to everything it can do, everything it wants to do, and to let it do it. You change trains, you wait in the waiting room in the middle of the night. The charity of the Lord is in you in the midst of this waiting room. What is it going to do? What will that very polite lady, this very proper gentleman say when you share coffee from your thermos with the neighbor to your right, your bread and your cheese with the neighbor to your left, if you wrap that child in your coat...But what will Christ say if you do not do it? The holy Church expects saints, and saints are those who love."

### Element 4: All Are Called to Holiness

"There are some people whom God takes and sets apart. There are others whom he leaves in the masses and whom he does not 'withdraw from the world.' They are people who do ordinary jobs, who have an ordinary household or an ordinary single life. People who have ordinary illnesses, ordinary deaths. People who have an ordinary house, ordinary clothes, these are the people of ordinary life. The people we meet on any street...We, the ordinary people of the streets, believe with all our might that this street, that this world where God has placed us, is, for us, the site of our holiness."

### Element 5: All Are Called to Evangelize

"Let us descend into the depths of this world, to take there the Word of God lived with all the strength of our heart."

