

Images in Selected Letters (Alpha)

St. Francis de Sales: Selected Letters (trans. Elizabeth Stopp). New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960.

Abbess (Mary) – circumstance of life

Look at your **Abbess** in all the **circumstances of her life**. In her room at Nazareth she shows her modesty in that she is afraid, her candor in wanting to be instructed and in asking a question, her submission, her humility in calling herself a handmaid. Look at her in Bethlehem: she lives simply and in poverty, she listens to the shepherds as though they were learned doctors. Look at her in the company of the kings: she does not try to make any long speeches. Look at her at the time of her purification: she goes to the temple in order to conform to church customs. In going to Egypt and in returning she is simply obeying Joseph. She does not consider she is wasting time when she goes to visit her cousin Elizabeth as an act of loving courtesy. She looks for Our Lord not only in joy but also in tears. She has compassion on the poverty and confusion of those who invited her to the wedding, meeting their needs. She is at the foot of the cross, full of humility, lowliness, virtue, never drawing any attention to herself in the exercise of these qualities. (**SeiLet** 159)

Abbess' (Mary's) knees – Rachel – children – Bala

As **Rachel** was unable to have **children**, she gave **Bala** to her husband as a second in marriage (at that time men were allowed to have several wives so as to multiply the people of God). Bala bore her children on Rachel's knees; then Rachel took them as her own, so that Bala, her second, had no more responsibility for them, at least, no prime responsibility. O my daughter, I think that I have born you once and for all on the **knees** of the beautiful Rachel, our very dear and **sacred Abbess**; she has taken you to herself; as for me, I no longer have the chief responsibility for you. Stay there on her knees, or rather humbly prostrate at her feet. (**SeiLet** 92)

Abraham's servant – Rebecca

We know what **Abraham's servant** did in order to see whether **Rebecca** was fit to be the wife of his master's son: he asked her for a drink of water, to see whether she would give it willingly, and also to his camels. A little courtesy, a humble virtue, but the sign of a much greater one. (**SeiLet** 159)

Alarm - armor ready – prepared

It seems to me that it is always a matter of great reproach to mortals that they should die without having thought about death; but it is doubly wrong for those whom Our Lord has favored with the blessing of old age. Those who get their **armor ready** before the **alarm** sounds are always better **prepared** than people who rush round collecting their breastplate, thigh pieces and helmet when the alert has actually been given. (**SeiLet** 54)

Aloes - thorns of difficulty – lance – gall – vinegar – wormwood

How are we to show our love of him who suffered so much for us if not when we are beset by circumstances we loathe and abhor and which go against the grain? We must thrust our head among the **thorns of difficulty** and let our heart be pierced by the **lance** of contradiction; drink the **gall** and swallow the vinegar, eat **wormwood** and bitter **aloes** as it is God who invites us. (**SeiLet** 251)

Amber – magnet – iron - straw - Infant

A **magnet** attracts **iron**, **amber** attracts **straw** and hay: now whether we are hard in heart as **iron** or feeble and helpless as **straw** we should follow the attraction of this sovereign little Child, the real **magnet** of hearts. (**SelLet** 260)

Anchor – high seas of worldly life – captain – mast – sails – breeze - haven

And to end where I began: you are taking to the **high seas of worldly life**, but do not on that account change your **captain**, your **mast**, your **sails**, your **anchor**, your fair **breeze**. Always keep Jesus as your **captain**, his cross for your **mast** on which to spread the **sails** of your good resolutions; let your **anchor** be deep trust in him and then sail on happily. May the favorable **breeze** of heavenly grace fill your sails more and more and carry you safely and joyfully into the **haven** of a blessed eternity, which is the true and heartfelt wish, Sir, of, your most humble servant, Francis, Bishop of Geneva. (**SelLet** 190)

Angels – minds

We must act on the **minds** of others as far as possible as the **angels** do, graciously and without coercion. (**SelLet** 68)

Animals – benefactors

For **animals** who are without a spirit, having only senses and flesh, love their **benefactors** and those who treat them gently and kindly. (**SelLet** 241)

Anoint – Mary Magdalen – wash – balm - prayer

Mary Magdalene had to **wash** Our Lord's feet first, kiss them and dry them before she could speak to him heart to heart in the secret places of **prayer**. She had to **anoint** his body before she could pour out the **balm** of her contemplation upon his divinity. (**SelLet** 49)

Apple – chestnut peel - nutshell

And the apostle of the Cross and the Crucifix cries out and says: 'Even unto this hour we both hunger and thirst and are naked and are buffeted'; and finally, 'we are made as the refuse of this world, the off-scouring of all', like a bit of **apple** or **chestnut peel**, or a **nutshell**. (**SelLet** 289)

Apple of perdition – Eve

You gave the **first woman** the **apple of perdition** and now you want me to taste it too! (**SelLet** 66)

Apples - strawberries – cherries – pears – garden – season - death

Strawberries and **cherries** are picked before even the most delicious kinds of **pears** and **apples**; but that is because they are in season at a different time. Let God gather to him whatever he has planted in his **garden**; he takes nothing out of season. (**SelLet** 141)

Apprentices (spiritual life) – masters

Young **apprentices in the love of God** gird themselves: they take on the mortifications which they themselves think good, they choose their penance, their form of resignation and devotion and do their own will along with God's will; but the old **masters** of the trade suffer themselves to be bound and girt by others, submitting to the yoke imposed on them, and go along the kind of roads which they would not choose by their own inclination. It is also true that they stretch forth their hands; for although their inclinations resist, they willingly allow themselves to be governed against their will, and say that obedience is better than burnt-offerings: and this is how they give glory to God, crucifying not only their flesh but their spirit as well. (**SelLet** 203)

Archer - arrows – shaft – quiver

May we be for ever attached to the cross and may a hundred thousand **arrows** pierce us, provided that our heart has first been pierced by the burning **shaft** of the love of God. May this arrow make us die that holy death which is worth more than a thousand lives. I shall go and beg this of the **Archer** who bears the **quiver**, and by the intercession of St. Sebastian whose feast-day we celebrate today. (**SelLet** 129)

Armed host

'Unhappy man that I am,' said the great apostle, 'who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' He felt that an **armed host** consisting of his moods, aversions, natural habits and inclinations had conspired to bring about his spiritual death; and because he fears them he proves that he detests them; and because he detests them, he cannot endure them without pain; and his pain makes him cry out in this way and then give himself an answer: that the grace of God, through Jesus Christ, will save him, not indeed from fear, terror, alarm, nor from the fight, but from defeat and from being overcome. (**SelLet** 272)

Armor ready – alarm - prepared

It seems to me that it is always a matter of great reproach to mortals that they should die without having thought about death; but it is doubly wrong for those whom Our Lord has favored with the blessing of old age. Those who get their **armor ready** before the **alarm** sounds are always better **prepared** than people who rush round collecting their breastplate, thigh pieces and helmet when the alert has actually been given. (**SelLet** 54)

Arms – fight

Come now, what do you want me to say to you, my very dear daughter, if not that when your troubles return or your enemy makes his appearance, you must take up your **arms** and your courage again to **fight** harder than ever. (**SelLet** 194)

Arrows – shaft – Archer - quiver

May we be for ever attached to the cross and may a hundred thousand **arrows** pierce us, provided that our heart has first been pierced by the burning **shaft** of the love of God. May this arrow make us die that holy death which is worth more than a thousand lives. I shall go and beg this of the **Archer** who bears the **quiver**, and by the intercession of St. Sebastian whose feast-day we celebrate today. (**SelLet** 129)

Ashes – spark

In the meanwhile foster your good desire and see that the **spark** of it lives on beneath the **ashes** of humility and resignation to the will of God. (**SelLet** 149)

Assault – temptations

As to your old **temptations**, do not cling too much to the desire to be delivered from them; hide it from yourself that they are attacking you and do not be terrified by their **assault**. With God's help you will soon be delivered from them, and I shall beg this of him, but you may be sure that I shall entreat him fully resigned to his good pleasure; and my resignation will be gay and gentle. (**SelLet** 138)

Balm - Mary Magdalen – wash – anoint – prayer

Mary Magdalene had to **wash** Our Lord's feet first, kiss them and dry them before she could speak to him heart to heart in the secret places of **prayer**. She had to **anoint** his body before she could pour out the **balm** of her contemplation upon his divinity. (**SelLet** 49)

Balm – name of Jesus

O, my daughter, if we could only for once really say this **sacred name** from our heart! What sweet **balm** would spread to all the powers of our spirit! How happy we should be, my daughter, to have only Jesus in our understanding, Jesus in our memory, Jesus in our will, Jesus in our imagination! Jesus would be everywhere in us, and we should be all in him. (SelLet 144)

Balm – precious ointment

It is of very great benefit for us to speak to so great a lord, and when he answers he pours out **balm** and much **precious ointment** to fill the soul with sweetness. (SelLet 148)

Balm of divine charity

O Lord Jesus, save, bless, confirm and preserve this heart which it has pleased you to call wholly to your divine love; and since you have led it to consecrate itself to your holy Name, may your holy Name fill it as with the **balm of divine charity**, spreading in perfect unity an odor of manifold sweetness for the edification of its neighbor. (SelLet 228)

Bark – beast – gates – temptations

The apostle Paul suffered terrible temptations but God did not want to remove them, and all for love. Come now, dear daughter, be brave; let this heart of yours never leave Jesus to whom it belongs, and let this hateful **beast bark** and raise his false alarm at the **gates** as loud and as long as he likes. (SelLet 98)

Bark – compass – Jesus on Cross

Alas, the Son of Man, my dear **Jesus**, had hardly as much as that **on the cross** when he had left everything for love of his Father, and in obedience to him, and was then, as it were, forsaken and left by him; and when the torrent of passions carried away his **bark** to the waters of desolation, he could hardly see his **compass** which was not only pointing towards God but inseparably united with him. (SelLet 143)

Barley loaves – God - cooks and caterers - Solomon

No, no, it is not difficult for **God** to do just as much with five **barley loaves** as **Solomon** did with all his **cooks and caterers**. (SelLet 291)

Battle with temptations to faith – arguing – Eve - sally of the will

And now I want to suggest another remedy. **Temptations against the faith** aim directly at the understanding, striving to draw it into argument, to occupy and absorb it. Do you know what to do while the enemy is wasting his energy trying to scale the intellect? Make a **sally through the gates of the will** and charge him roundly; when the temptation against faith presents itself in order to draw you into argument, saying: 'How can this be? And if this applies, how does that fit in?' you arrange things in such a way that instead of arguing with the enemy by parleying, your will and your feelings round on him boldly while you cry out with heart and voice: 'Traitor! Wretch! You left the Church of the angels and you are trying to get me to leave the Church of the saints! You are disloyal, faithless, perfidious! You gave the first woman the apple of perdition and now you want me to taste it too! Get thee behind me, Satan; it is written, thou shalt not tempt the Lord, thy God. No, I will not argue, I will not dispute with you. **Eve** thought she could argue with you and she was lost. May Jesus reign supreme, I believe in him; may the Church triumph, and I cleave to it!' (SelLet 65)

Beast – bark – gates – temptations

The apostle Paul suffered terrible temptations but God did not want to remove them, and all for love. Come now, dear daughter, be brave; let this heart of yours never leave Jesus to whom it belongs, and let this hateful **beast bark** and raise his false alarm at the **gates** as loud and as long as he likes. (**SelLet** 98)

Bed – fever – self-will

No place is comfortable to those who are sick of a **fever**: they spend a quarter of an hour in one **bed** and then they want to change over to another. There is nothing wrong with the bed but the trouble is that their own fever torments them wherever they find themselves. A person who is not suffering from the **fever** of his own **self-will** puts up with everything; provided that he is serving God he does not care in what capacity God uses him, and as long as he is doing God's divine will he has no personal preference. (**SelLet** 59)

Bed of suffering

My dear Mother, love your Bridegroom well on your **bed of suffering**, for it is on this bed that he fashioned your heart when he foresaw it in his divine plan before ever it was fashioned on earth. (**SelLet** 229)

Bee – honey – flower – herb

Be like the **bee** and gather your **honey** from every **flower** and **herb** alike. (**SelLet** 45)

Bee – honey – wax- household

Live in peace, my very dear daughter, walk faithfully along the road which God has marked out for you; take great care to make your partner in life happy; be like a small **bee** which carefully makes the **honey** of devotion but is just as careful to manufacture the **wax** of household affairs; for if he who ate butter and honey when he was in this world is pleasing to Our Lord, the other also serves for his honor, as it makes candles which are lit for the edification of our neighbor. (**SelLet** 259)

Bee – sun – Jesus

When you wrote to me, my very dear Mother, and said that you were like a poor **bee**, I thought that I did not want this for you while your dryness and interior affliction last; for this little animal which is so diligent and busy in health, loses heart and does nothing at all when it falls ill. But since then I have changed my mind and said: 'O yes, I do indeed want my Mother to be like a bee, even when she is suffering spiritually; for this little animal knows of no other remedy when it is ill than to expose itself to the **sun** and to wait for warmth and healing from its bright rays.' Oh my daughter, let us put ourselves before our crucified Sun in this way and then say to him: 'O lovely **Sun** of our hearts, the rays of your goodness pour life into everything; here we are before you, half dead, and we shall not stir from here till your warmth gives us life, Lord Jesus.' (**SelLet** 210)

Bees – poison - sting – thoughts

As to your **thoughts**, you are not asked to account for those which just pass through your head, but only those which like **bees**, leave their **poison** and **sting** when they have wounded you. (**SelLet** 95)

Bees – temptations

Not long ago I was near some beehives and a few **bees** came and settled on my face. I wanted to raise my hand and brush them off. No, said a peasant to me, don't be afraid, and whatever you do don't touch them, they will attack you. I trusted his word and not a single one stung me. Believe me, don't be afraid of **temptations**, and whatever you do don't touch them, they will not do you any damage; go on, right past them, and don't linger over them. (SelLet 97)

Bees – weather (misty)

The other day I was watching the **bees** and how they stayed quietly in the shelter of their hives because the air was **misty**; they came out from time to time to see how things were going, and yet they did not seem in any hurry to come out, but were busy eating their fill of honey. Be of good cheer! We have no control over any spiritual light or consolation except what depends on our will, and that is protected and sheltered by our holy resolutions. (SelLet 99)

Bees (new swarm) – hive (new) - honey

You are about to render to Our Lord and to his glorious Mother a service which can be called apostolic; for you are going to gather together a number of souls in one congregation, my very dear daughter, with a view to leading them in a new band into spiritual warfare for God's glory and against the world, the devil and the flesh; or rather, you are going to collect a **new swarm of bees** in a **new hive** to do God's work of divine love, which is sweeter above **honey**. (SelLet 246)

Beggar – prayer

You say that you do nothing at all in **prayer**. But what do you want to do when you pray except precisely what you are doing, which is to present and to represent to God your nothingness and your poverty? The most effective appeal which **beggars** can make to us is to show us their sores and their neediness. (SelLet 88)

Beggar before God

I will add to this as a general reflection that when we cannot properly distinguish whether we have really done our duty as we should in some instance, and are wondering whether we have offended God, we must humble ourselves, beg God to forgive us and ask for more light on another occasion, completely forget what has happened and go on our way as usual; for curious and eager research into whether we have done right or not undoubtedly springs from self-love which makes us want to know for sure whether we are worth anything, whereas a pure love of God prompts us to say to ourselves: **beggar** and coward that you are, humble yourself and put your trust in God's mercy, ask forgiveness in any case; and promising God yet again that you will be faithful, just carry straight on. (SelLet 167)

Bird chained – fledgling – flying - wings – dove – patience

A **bird chained** to its perch is not conscious of its captivity and does not feel the pull of its chain until it wants to fly; in the same way an **unfledged nestling** only finds out that it cannot fly when it makes the actual attempt. And the remedy for this, my dear daughter, is not to struggle, not to make eager attempts to fly as your **wings** have not yet grown and you lack power for too great an effort. Be **patient** until you get the **wings** of a **dove**, and then you can fly. (SelLet 78)

Birds feeding in snowy courtyard

There had been a heavy **snowfall** and the **courtyard** was over a foot deep in snow. John went and swept a little clearing in the snow and threw some corn to **feed the pigeons** who all came together to this refectory to eat in the most peaceful and sedate way; and I took delight in watching them. You would not believe how greatly these little creatures edified me, for they never made a sound, and those who had finished feeding before the others flew away to a place close by to wait. And when they had cleared about half of what was there, a number of small birds who had been watching from afar came to join them; and all the pigeons that were still feeding retired to one corner so as to leave more room for the **smaller birds** who then settled down to their meal without the pigeons disturbing them in any way.

I admired this charity; for the poor pigeons were so loath to disturb the small birds to which they were giving alms that they all clustered together at one end of the table. I admired the discretion of the smaller birds who did not come to beg till they saw that the pigeons had nearly got to the end of their meal and that there was still plenty left over. In short, I could not restrain my tears to see the loving simplicity of the doves and the way the small birds trusted their charity. I doubt if a sermon would have touched me so deeply. (**SelLet** 230)

Bishop Spiridion – pilgrim - eating – liberty of spirit

Bishop Spiridion of old once took in a famished **pilgrim** during the season of Lent. There was nothing to **eat** in his place except salt meat, so he had some cooked and served to the pilgrim. Of course he did not want to take it in spite of his hunger; Spiridion did not need it but out of charity he ate some first so as to remove the pilgrim's scruple by his example. Here you have the loving freedom of a holy man. (**SelLet** 73)

Blind man in Gospel – singing

And when you are in choir and the temptation says: stop **singing!** Go on singing all the more perseveringly, as the **blind man in the Gospel** did. (**SelLet** 278)

Boat – boatman

Yesterday I went out on the lakes in a very small **boat** to visit the Archbishop of Vienne, and I was very happy that apart from divine providence I had to depend utterly on a few narrow planks of wood. And I was also very happy to be under obedience to the **boatman** who made us sit still without moving, as he thought fit: and really I did not stir. (**SelLet** 134)

Boat – St. Martha – St. Mary Magdalen – pilot

Yesterday I also remembered **St. Martha**, exposed in a small **boat** with **Mary Magdalen**; God was her **pilot** and cast her upon our shores here in France. (**SelLet** 135)

Boat (little) – storm – tempest - Jesus

Keep firm in your resolutions; stay in the **little boat** in which I have launched you; come **storm**, come **tempest**, may **Jesus** reign in you, and indeed you will not perish. He will be asleep, but in his own good time and place he will waken so as to restore your calm. (**SelLet** 125)

Boatman - boat

Yesterday I went out on the lakes in a very small **boat** to visit the Archbishop of Vienne, and I was very happy that apart from divine providence I had to depend utterly on a few narrow planks of wood. And I was also very happy to be under obedience to the **boatman** who made us sit still without moving, as he thought fit: and really I did not stir. (**SelLet** 134)

Bones of paschal lamb – temptations

In this case you must act as one does in **temptations** of the flesh: do not make any attempt to argue. Do as the children of Israel did with the **bones of the paschal lamb** which they did not even break but simply threw into the fire. (**SelLet** 65)

Bread – sugar

Our Lord is already treating you as being stronger and more grown-up; try to live up to this. It is better to eat **bread** without **sugar** than **sugar** without **bread**. (**SelLet** 178)

Bread (daily)

And in order to cut the ground from under the arguments which human prudence, under the pretext of humility, generally puts forward on such occasions, remember that Our Lord does not want us to ask for bread to last us a year or a month or a week, but only a day at a time, our **daily bread**. (**SelLet** 283)

Breeze - high seas of worldly life – captain – mast – sails – anchor – haven

And to end where I began: you are taking to the **high seas of worldly life**, but do not on that account change your **captain**, your **mast**, your **sails**, your **anchor**, your fair **breeze**. Always keep Jesus as your **captain**, his cross for your **mast** on which to spread the **sails** of your good resolutions; let your **anchor** be deep trust in him and then sail on happily. May the favorable **breeze** of heavenly grace fill your sails more and more and carry you safely and joyfully into the **haven** of a blessed eternity, which is the true and heartfelt wish, Sir, of, your most humble servant, Francis, Bishop of Geneva. (**SelLet** 190)

Breeze – wind – earthquake – flame – God

I should like to impress on your mind what is written in the Book of Kings: **God** is not in the mighty **wind**, nor in the **earthquake**, nor yet in these fiery **flames** but in the soft and gentle stirring of a **breeze** that we can hardly feel. Let yourself be ruled by God, do not think about yourself so much. (**SelLet** 43)

Bridge – prayer

From all this I gather that you should abstain from long periods of prayer (for I do not call a half or three quarters hours' prayer long), from the use of your imagination in a forced, particularized and long-drawn-out manner; your use of it should be simple and very brief, only serving as a mere **bridge** from distraction to recollection. (**SelLet** 113)

Brooklets of love - sea of charity

O how impossible to tell, my Lord and God, how consoling it will be to love one another in heaven in this full **sea of charity**, when even these little **brooklets of love** give us so much! (**SelLet** 95)

Brother ass – fasting

As for **brother ass**, I approve of **fasting** on Fridays and of a frugal supper on Saturdays. (**SelLet** 68)

Brush – hammer – chisel – heart

The only thing I can ask of him on your behalf is that he may fashion your **heart** entirely according to his liking so that he may live and reign there eternally; that he may fashion it, I say, either with a **hammer** or with a **chisel** or with the stroke of a **brush**: it is for him to do as he wills, don't you agree, my dear daughter? Surely this is the attitude we should take? . (SelLet 198)

Building houses - child

When we were **small**, how eagerly we put together little bits of tiles and wood and mud to **make houses** and tiny buildings! And if someone smashed them, how very miserable we were and how we wept; but now we see how very unimportant it all was. One day we shall experience the same thing in heaven when we see that what we clung to in this world was nothing more than a child's fancy. (SelLet 152)

Burn the offering

I have just been speaking to Our Lord about you in the most holy mass, my very dear daughter, and really I did not dare to ask him outright that you should be delivered from your trial; for if it is his pleasure to **burn the offering** which is to be presented to him, it is not for me to wish he should not do it; but I implored him and I continue to implore him by that extreme dereliction which made him sweat blood and cry out on the cross: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ? That he may always hold you with his holy hand as he has done up till now, although you do not know where he is holding you, or at least you do not feel it. (SelLet 118)

Captain – high seas of worldly life – mast – sails – anchor – breeze - haven

And to end where I began: you are taking to the **high seas of worldly life**, but do not on that account change your **captain**, your **mast**, your **sails**, your **anchor**, your fair **breeze**. Always keep Jesus as your **captain**, his cross for your **mast** on which to spread the **sails** of your good resolutions; let your **anchor** be deep trust in him and then sail on happily. May the favorable **breeze** of heavenly grace fill your sails more and more and carry you safely and joyfully into the **haven** of a blessed eternity, which is the true and heartfelt wish, Sir, of, your most humble servant, Francis, Bishop of Geneva. (SelLet 190)

Captive Israelites – slave of the court

The **Israelites** long ago said they could not do it because they were **captives** and slaves of the Babylonians as well as living in their land; but the man who is not a **slave of the court** can adore the Lord and serve him in sanctity at the court itself. No indeed, my very dear son, although you may change the place where you live, the work you do and the people you talk to, you will never, as I hope, change your heart, nor your heart change its love, nor your love its object, since you could never choose a worthier love for your heart nor a worthier object for your love than the One who is to make you happy for ever. In this way variety in the aspect of the court and of the world will never change your own aspect, for your eyes will always be fixed on heaven to which you aspire, and your tongue will always be invoking the sovereign good which is the object of your hope. . (SelLet 222)

Carry off the ring - run within barriers

But here is a little hint of a remedy. **Run within the barriers** because they have been put up; it will not stop you from **carrying off the ring**, and with even greater certainty. (SelLet 93)

Chains - St. Peter – angel of deliverance

Our great **St. Peter**, roused from sleep by the **angel**, says good morning to you, my very dear Mother. How many lovely things there are in the story of his **deliverance**, for his soul is so startled that he does not know whether he is dreaming or not dreaming. May our angel touch our side today, waking us to loving attention to God, delivering us from all the **chains** of self-seeking and consecrate us for ever to this heavenly love, so that we may say: 'Now I know in very deed that the Lord hath sent his angel and hath delivered me.' (**SelLet** 202-203)

Charlatan - world

It is a good thing to say that you are not what the world thinks you when it thinks well of you, for the **world** is a **charlatan**, and always exaggerates both good and evil. (**SelLet** 109)

Cherries – strawberries – pears – apples - garden – season - death

Strawberries and **cherries** are picked before even the most delicious kinds of **pears** and **apples**; but that is because they are in season at a different time. Let God gather to him whatever he has planted in his **garden**; he takes nothing out of season. (**SelLet** 141)

Cherry tree – palm tree – fruit

Cherry trees bear their **fruit** quickly because they only bear cherries which keep but a short time; but the **palm**, the prince of trees, only begins bearing **fruit** a hundred years after it has been planted, it is said. A mediocre sort of life can be achieved in a year; but the perfection for which we are striving—that, my dear daughter, takes quite a few years to establish itself, I mean in the ordinary way. (**SelLet** 274)

Chestnut peel - apple – nutshell

And the apostle of the Cross and the Crucifix cries out and says: 'Even unto this hour we both hunger and thirst and are naked and are buffeted'; and finally, 'we are made as the refuse of this world, the off-scouring of all', like a bit of **apple** or **chestnut peel**, or a **nutshell**. (**SelLet** 289)

Child – building houses

When we were **small**, how eagerly we put together little bits of tiles and wood and mud to **make houses** and tiny buildings! And if someone smashed them, how very miserable we were and how we wept; but now we see how very unimportant it all was. One day we shall experience the same thing in heaven when we see that what we clung to in this world was nothing more than a child's fancy. (**SelLet** 152)

Child – father

From one day to the next we should entrust our general wish for perfection to God's providence; and as we look to him for this, we should cast ourselves into God's arms like a little **child** who in order to grow, simply eats what its **father** provides day by day, hoping that he will provide according to its appetite and need. (**SelLet** 162)

Child – father

What can a **child** fear in the arms of such a **Father**? Really try to be a little child, my very dear daughter; and as you know, children don't have a lot of things to worry about because they have others to think for them; they are really strong if they stay close to their father. So do this, my very dear daughter, and you will have peace. Amen. (**SelLet** 262)

Child – father - walking

Tell her that though she may shy back often and stumble, she is never to be disheartened or angry with herself; that she is rather to look at Our Lord who is watching her from heaven as a **father watches his child**, a child that is still weak and finds it hard to **walk** properly. And he says: steady, now, dear child go gently, child; and if she falls, he encourages her and says: you went too fast, you're really very good, so don't cry; and then he goes up to her and holds out his hand to help her rise. If this girl is really a child in her humility and understands that she is nothing but a child, she will not be upset at falling over because she will not be falling from any great height. (**SelLet** 280)

Child – father (good) – God

Go straight on, and always in God's sight. **God** takes pleasure in seeing you make your little steps; and like a **good father** who holds his **child** by the hand, he will conform his steps to yours and will be quite happy not to go any faster than you. What are you anxious about? Whether you are taking this road or that other way, going fast or slow? All that matters is that he is with you, and you with him. (**SelLet** 160)

Child – guardian – fortune

You are like a **child** whose **guardian** deprives it of the use of its whole **fortune**, so that though the money really belongs to the child, it cannot handle it, nor does the child seem to possess or have anything of its own except life. As St. Paul says, 'He differed nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all'; and so God does not want you to feel your faith, my very dear daughter, your hope and your charity, nor does he want you to have the enjoyment or use of them, except just what is needed for your bare existence and on occasions of absolute need. . (**SelLet** 201)

Child – mother – complaining to God

Do not impose force on yourself not to complain, but I would like you to **complain to God** in a spirit of dependence, as a tender **child** would speak to its **mother**; for provided you do it lovingly, there is no danger in complaining, nor in asking to be healed, nor in changing one's position and allowing oneself to be helped and relieved. (**SelLet** 155)

Child - mother – infirmity

Thus a **child's** weakness and **infirmity** does not please a **mother** but she nevertheless goes on loving her child, even tenderly and with compassion; and so too, although God does not love our imperfections and venial sins, he goes on loving us tenderly. (**SelLet** 256)

Child – mother – walking – kiss of charity - God

My third rule is that you should be like a little **child** who while it knows that its **mother** is holding its sleeve **walks** boldly and runs all round without being distressed at a little fall or stumble; after all, it is as yet rather unsteady on its legs. In the same way, as long as you realize that **God** is holding on to you by your will and resolution to serve him, go on boldly and do not be upset by your little set-backs and falls; there is need to be put out by this provided you throw yourself into his arms from time to time and kiss him with the **kiss of charity**. (**SelLet** 45-46)

Child – mother's breast - sleeping

A little **child** that is at its **mother's breast** while she is **asleep** is really in its right and proper place although both are silent. (**SelLet** 175)

Childish pursuits – go to bed - agitated

Let us carry on with our **childish pursuits** since we are children, but do not let us take them too seriously. And if someone smashes our little houses and plans, let us not get too **agitated**, for here too, when evening comes and it is time for us to **go to bed**, I mean when death comes, all these little houses will be useless: we shall have to leave them and go into our father's house. (SelLet 152)

Children – Leah – Rachel

Poor **Leah** is a little bleary-eyed and ugly, but your spirit must make do with her before you can have the beautiful **Rachel**. Be of good cheer, her **children** will be beautiful, her works agreeable to God. (SelLet 78)

Children – Rachel – Bala – Abbess' (Mary's) knees

As **Rachel** was unable to have **children**, she gave **Bala** to her husband as a second in marriage (at that time men were allowed to have several wives so as to multiply the people of God). Bala bore her children on Rachel's knees; then Rachel took them as her own, so that Bala, her second, had no more responsibility for them, at least, no prime responsibility. O my daughter, I think that I have born you once and for all on the **knees** of the beautiful Rachel, our very dear and **sacred Abbess**; she has taken you to herself; as for me, I no longer have the chief responsibility for you. Stay there on her knees, or rather humbly prostrate at her feet. (SelLet 92)

Children – sugar – wormwood

For even little **children** can love God when everything is **sugar** and sweetness, but loving him when all is **wormwood** and bitterness is the result of our loving faithfulness. (SelLet 197)

Chill – traitor – kindle – run - eagerness

I am inclined to think that if you could prevent this **bustling eagerness** you would gain a great deal; for it is one of the greatest **traitors** encountered by devotion and true virtue. It pretends to **kindle** us for our profit but all it does is to **chill** our fervor, only making us **run** so as to trip us up. That is why we must beware of it at all times but more especially during prayer. (SelLet 148)

Chisel – hammer – brush – heart

The only thing I can ask of him on your behalf is that he may fashion your **heart** entirely according to his liking so that he may live and reign there eternally; that he may fashion it, I say, either with a **hammer** or with a **chisel** or with the stroke of a **brush**: it is for him to do as he wills, don't you agree, my dear daughter? Surely this is the attitude we should take? . (SelLet 198)

Chord – lute – God

But in temporal losses, my daughter, let **God** strike whatever **chord** he chooses on our **lute**, his harmony cannot but be good and right: Lord Jesus, may your will be done upon our father, mother, daughter, in everything and in every way, without any qualification, without an if, without a but, without any exception, without reserves. (SelLet 142)

Clash of armor - wind – rustling of leaves

You cling too jealously to the purity of your faith, and you feel that any little thing can spoil it. No, no, dear daughter, let the **wind** blow freely, and don't mistake the **rustling of leaves** for the **clash of armor**. (SelLet 97)

Cloak – ring – necklace – coat

And again, St. Augustine bids us notice that Our Lord does not say, if anyone wants to take away your **ring**, give him your **necklace**, both of which are superfluous; but he is talking about **coats** and **cloaks** which are necessities. . (SelLet 288)

Clothe in crucified Savior

Clothe yourself in our crucified Savior, love him in his suffering, offer up aspirations on this subject. (SelLet 245)

Clothes my heart

But include some acts of your own, my very dear Mother, some ejaculatory prayers expressing your renunciation, as for example: I really want this, Lord; take away, take away everything that **clothes my heart**. (SelLet 243)

Clothing - spinning wool – Jane

Put this distaff reverently at your left side and go on **spinning** all the time with considerations, aspirations and good exercises, in holy imitation. Spin, I say, and draw forth all this delicate white wool from the spindle of your heart: the cloth that you will make of it will cover you and save you from confusion on the day of your death; it will keep you warm in winter, and as the Wise Man says, you will not fear the cold of the snows. And this is perhaps what this same Wise Man had in mind when he praised the virtuous woman, saying that, 'She hath put out her hand to strong things: and her fingers have taken hold of the spindle.' For what are these 'strong things' connected with the spindle, if not the mysteries of the Passion spun by means of our imitation? And then I wished you thousands and thousands of blessings, and prayed that on the great day of judgment we might all find ourselves clothed, some as bishops, some as widows, some as married people, some as Capuchins, some as Jesuits, some as vineyard workers, but all **clothed** in a garment of that same red and white wool, for these are the colors of the Bridegroom. (SelLet 115-116)

Clouds – heart

Never have I had more inner sweetness and happiness, until last night when my **heart** was covered over with **clouds**; and now that I am back from holy mass, all is serene and bright. (SelLet 95)

Clouds - storm

The **storm** which I told you about has not yet broken and nothing has happened to me so far; but the **clouds** are still heavy, dark and threatening above my head. (SelLet 86)

Coat - ring – necklace – cloak

And again, St. Augustine bids us notice that Our Lord does not say, if anyone wants to take away your **ring**, give him your **necklace**, both of which are superfluous; but he is talking about **coats** and **cloaks** which are necessities. . (SelLet 288)

Coat of arms

So I have thought, dear Mother, if you agree, we should take as our **coat of arms** a single heart pierced by two arrows, the whole enclosed in a crown of thorns, and with the poor heart serving to hold and support a cross which is to surmount it; and the heart is to be engraved with the sacred names of JESUS and MARY. (SelLet 193)

Coldness - Jesus

Your sense of spiritual **coldness**, my very dear daughter, should not in any way dismay you provided you have a real desire for warmth and that you do not let your coldness stop you from going on with all your usual little exercises. Tell me, dear daughter, was not our sweet **Jesus** born in the heart of the **cold season**? So why then should he not stay with us even in our coldness of heart? (**SelLet** 139)

Compass – bark – Jesus on Cross

Alas, the Son of Man, my dear **Jesus**, had hardly as much as that **on the cross** when he had left everything for love of his Father, and in obedience to him, and was then, as it were, forsaken and left by him; and when the torrent of passions carried away his **bark** to the waters of desolation, he could hardly see his **compass** which was not only pointing towards God but inseparably united with him. (**SelLet** 143)

Compass- guiding star

Tell me; did your **compass** point all through to its **guiding star**, to its God? What did your heart do? (**SelLet** 142)

Condition of road – desert – meadow - eyes on God

May we, please God, look less at the **condition of the road** along which we are toiling, and keep our **eyes fixed on him who leads us** and on the blessed land which is our goal. Why should we worry whether we are passing through the **desert** or through **meadows**, provided that God is with us and that we are going to paradise? (**SelLet** 83)

Confederate –devil – flesh

I suppose the reason is that outward feeling distracts from interior difficulty and affliction, and calls out God's mercy; and also that the **evil spirit**, seeing his partisan and **confederate**, the **flesh**, being beaten, gets frightened and takes himself off. (**SelLet** 66)

Cooks and caterers - barley loaves – God - Solomon

No, no, it is not difficult for **God** to do just as much with five **barley loaves** as **Solomon** did with all his **cooks and caterers**. (**SelLet** 291)

Corn - road – desert – Promised Land - manna

You will see that in spite of the fact that the **road** twists and turns we shall get there in the end and that Our Lord will lead us by way of the **desert** to his **promised land**; and from time to time he will give us something that will make us prize the desert more than cultivated ground where the **corn** grows in due season but where no **manna** falls. (**SelLet** 210)

Corporal – open heart

Do you know what I say as I spread out your **corporal** for the consecration? Thus may the **heart** of her who sent me this be **opened** out to the sacred influence of the Savior's will. (**SelLet** 168)

Court-room – prayer

If we cannot speak because our voice fails us, let us nevertheless stay in his **court-room** and bow down before him; he will see us there, he will graciously accept our patience and look favorably upon our silence. (**SelLet** 149)

Courtiers – king – presence

How many **courtiers** are there who seek the **king's presence** over and over again, not to speak to him or to hear him speak, but simply to be seen by him and to signify by this regular attendance that they are his servants? (**SelLet** 148)

Courtiers of St. Louis

Imagine that you were a **courtier of St. Louis**: this saintly king (and your king is at present holy by innocence) liked the people about him to be brave, courageous, generous, cheerful, courteous, affable, frank, polite; but above all he wanted them to be good Christians. And if you had been with him you would have seen him laugh merrily when occasion offered, speak out boldly when the need arose, maintaining a brave outward show of royal splendor and dignity, like another Solomon; and the next moment you would have seen him serving the poor at the hospitals, and in short marrying civil virtue to Christian virtue, and majesty to humility. And this, in a word, should be your aim: to be no less brave for being Christian and no less Christian for being brave. And this implies being a very good Christian, that is to say, very devout, pious, and if you can, spiritual, for, as St. Paul says: the spiritual man discerns all things, he knows the right time and order to practice every virtue. (**SelLet** 189)

Cowherd's heart

During the past few days I have seen terrifying mountains covered with great glaciers, and the people who live in the valleys round here told me that a **cowherd** going out to look for one of his animals fell into a deep crevasse where he froze to death. Dear God, I said, and was the ice not able to cool this shepherd's **ardor** when he went in search of his beast? And why am I then so cowardly in going to look for my sheep? (**SelLet** 118)

Cross (your) – four arms

I want to talk about your **cross** and I am wondering whether God has allowed me to understand it and to see the whole extent of it, with its **four arms**. . (**SelLet** 75)

Crosses – fragrant wood – foul-smelling wood

You should often kiss the **crosses** which Our Lord has himself put into your arms; do not stop to find out whether they are made of precious and **fragrant wood**: they are crosses all the more when they are made of vile, worthless, **foul-smelling wood**. (**SelLet** 136)

Crosses – gold – pearls – precious stones

Yes, my very dear daughter, I knew very well that your piety was a prop for your self-love, and pitifully human. In short, we do not love **crosses** if they are not made of **gold**, studded with **pearls** and **precious stones**. (**SelLet** 290)

Crosses – thorns – illness

My very dear Mother, how can one get to know whole-hearted and living love except among **thorns**, **crosses** and by means of a **long-drawn out illness**, especially if it is wearisome as well as long? (**SelLet** 229)

Crown – St. Louis – eagle – sea of penance

For the next point, remember the feast day of **blessed King Louis**, the day on which you took the **crown** of your kingdom from your own heart so as to put it at the feet of Jesus, the King; the day on which you renewed your youth like the **eagle's**, plunging into the **sea of penance**; the day which heralded the eternal day for your soul. (**SelLet** 74)

Crown of thorns

I know that your pain has increased recently, and my grief about this in the same measure; although together with you I praise and bless Our Lord for showing his divine pleasure in you, giving you a share in his holy cross and crowning you with a **crown of thorns**. (SelLet 198)

Cure

. It is the same with bodily illness where the **cure** depends on a well regulated life. (SelLet 236)

Cut – shape us – God

Let us lift our heart on high, my very dear Mother, and look upon **God's** heart which is so good and so loving towards us; let us adore and bless all that he wills for us: let him **cut** and **shape us** as he wishes, for we are his for ever. (SelLet 209-210)

Darkness - Mary – John

Go on like this, then, my very dear daughter, in the **darkness** of the Passion. I say, in the darkness, and I leave you to think this out: at the foot of the cross, in the strange and dreadful darkness which came down on earth, **Our Lady** and St. **John** no longer heard our Savior, no longer saw him and felt nothing except bitterness and distress; and although they had faith, that too was in darkness, for it was necessary that they should share in the Savior's dereliction. (SelLet 202)

Daughter –mother – tranquility

The most important thing of all is to make sure of having **tranquility**, not because it is the **mother of contentment** but because it is the **daughter of the love of God** and of our own will's resignation. (SelLet 154)

Daughter of Eve – daughter of Mary

You are right in what you say, my poor dear Peronne-Marie, my daughter: there are two persons, two women in you. One is a certain Peronne who like her godfather Peter long ago is a little touchy, resentful and liable to flare up when approached too closely; this is the Peronne who is **Eve's daughter** and who is therefore bad-tempered. The other is a certain Peronne-Marie who is full of good will and wants to belong to God, and in order to belong to God she wants to be quite simply humble and humbly gentle towards all her sisters; and this is the one who would like to imitate St. Peter who was so good after Our Lord had converted him; the one who is the glorious Virgin **Mary's daughter** and is therefore good-tempered. (SelLet 223)

Daughter of Mary - daughter of Eve

You are right in what you say, my poor dear Peronne-Marie, my daughter: there are two persons, two women in you. One is a certain Peronne who like her godfather Peter long ago is a little touchy, resentful and liable to flare up when approached too closely; this is the Peronne who is **Eve's daughter** and who is therefore bad-tempered. The other is a certain Peronne-Marie who is full of good will and wants to belong to God, and in order to belong to God she wants to be quite simply humble and humbly gentle towards all her sisters; and this is the one who would like to imitate St. Peter who was so good after Our Lord had converted him; the one who is the glorious Virgin **Mary's daughter** and is therefore good-tempered. (SelLet 223)

Daughters – mothers – tribulations

So what I say is this: your temptations come from the devil and from hell, but your distress and affliction come from God and paradise; the **mothers** come from Babylon but the **daughters** from Jerusalem. Despise the temptations, embrace the **tribulations**. (SelLet 86)

Daughters who marry

Alas, my very dear daughter, **girls who get married** have to renounce father and mother and their own country to submit to husbands whom they often do not know, or at least whose temper is unknown to them; and the object is to provide children for this world. So God's daughters, leading a holy and pure life, must show still greater courage in providing children for his divine Majesty. (SelLet 233)

David – animals - armies

David first of all learnt how to hunt animals and afterwards how to defeat **armies**. (SelLet 159)

David – rod – chastisement – choice

God gave **David** the **choice** of the **rod** with which he should be **scourged**; and it seems to me (blessed be God) that I would rather not have chosen, but have left it all to his Divine Majesty. The more wholly a cross comes from God, the more we ought to love it. (SelLet 79)

Day – spinning – distaff – night - thread – knotted tangle

Keep on doing this, putting your hand to the task, **spinning** a little every **day**, whether by daylight, in interior joy and brightness, or at **night**, by the lamplight of helplessness and dryness of spirit. The Wise Man praises the valiant woman for this: 'Her fingers,' he says, 'have taken hold of the spindle.' How I should like to talk to you about these words! Your **distaff** is the store of all your desires: spin just a little every day, draw out the **thread** of your plans until you put them into effect, and you will certainly do well. But beware of over-eager haste, else your thread will get into a **knotted tangle** and you will not be able to work your spindle. Let us keep going all the time; however slowly we get on, we shall still make plenty of way. (SelLet 119-120)

Desert – road – promised land - corn - manna

You will see that in spite of the fact that the **road** twists and turns we shall get there in the end and that Our Lord will lead us by way of the **desert** to his **promised land**; and from time to time he will give us something that will make us prize the desert more than cultivated ground where the **corn** grows in due season but where no **manna** falls. (SelLet 210)

Dew (fall of)

But believe me, your wishes play quite a big part in this resolution; for I have great feelings of affection for your contentment and consolation, though at the same time my heart remains quite free and open, this affection settling silently and softly upon it, like a **fall of dew**. (SelLet 112)

Dew of heaven – pearl oyster – waters of the world - heart

Do not allow your mind to be preoccupied with a vain promise of tranquility, delight, merit; but hold up your heart to your spouse, completely empty of all affections other than his chaste love, and beg him to fill it purely and simply with the inclinations, desires and wishes which are in his own heart, so that like a **pearl oyster** your **heart** only conceives by the **dew of heaven** and not by the **waters of the world**; and you will see that God will help us and that we shall do well, choosing rightly and putting our ideas into effect. (**SelLet** 124)

Digesting Jesus

But what do you think this means, **digesting Jesus** Christ spiritually? People who have a good digestion feel their whole body strengthened as the food distributes itself evenly to every part of them. In the same way, my daughter, people who have a good spiritual digestion feel that Jesus Christ who is their food penetrates to every part of their soul and of their body and communicates himself to them. They have Jesus Christ in their head, heart, breast, eyes, hands, tongue, ears and feet. But what does our Savior do in them? He straightens everything out, purifying, mortifying, and quickening all things. He loves in our heart, understands in our head, inspires our actions within us, he sees in our eyes, he speaks with our tongue, and so with all the rest: he does everything in us, and then we live, not we ourselves, but Jesus Christ lives in us. O when will that be, my dear daughter? When, O God? But in the meanwhile I am showing you what to aim at even though we must be content to get there gradually. Let us stay humble and go to communion trustfully; little by little our faculty of spiritual digestion will get accustomed to this food and will learn to assimilate it as it should. It is a great matter, my daughter, to confine ourselves to eating one dish only when it is a good one; the stomach can do its job more easily. If we only long for our Savior, then I have every hope that our digestion will be good. (**SelLet** 145-146)

Digestion (spiritual) - tied to perch

He can send darkness, helplessness, can keep you **tied to your perch**, can lead you into dereliction and strip you of all strength, can upset your **spiritual digestion** and make your inner mouth taste bitter so that the sweetest wine in the world turns to gall; but suggestions of blasphemy, infidelity, unbelief—oh no, these can never come from our merciful God: he is too pure to conceive such ideas. (**SelLet** 84)

Distaff - lamb – wool – Savior

I will only tell you about one of them which came to me on the octave day of Corpus Christi when I was carrying the Blessed Sacrament at the last procession. It seemed to me that I was preparing a lot of work for you to spin, and on a good distaff. You see, I was adoring him whom I was carrying, and my heart knew that he was the true **Lamb of God** who takes away the sins of the world. O holy and divine Lamb, I said, how poor and needy I was without you! Alas, I have no other clothing but your **wool** to cover my misery before the face of your Father. And here is what Isaias said about this thought, that Our Lord in his passion was as a lamb before his shearer and did not open his mouth.² And what is that divine fleece if not the merit, if not the example, if not the mystery of the cross? It seems to me therefore that the cross is the beautiful **distaff** of the bride in the Canticle, of that devout Shulamite; the wool of the innocent Lamb, his merit, his example, his mystery, is richly wrought there. (**SelLet** 115)

Distaff – spindle (small - Jane)

Meanwhile you will wield your **distaff**, not with those great loaded **spindles**, for your fingers would not know how to handle them, but only in accordance with your **small** capacity. Humility, patience, abjection, gentleness of heart, resignation, simplicity, charity to the poor who are sick, putting up with those who are difficult, and imitating Christ in ways such as these can well be wound on your **little spindle**. (**SelLet** 116)

Distaff – spinning – day – night - thread – knotted tangle

Keep on doing this, putting your hand to the task, **spinning** a little every **day**, whether by daylight, in interior joy and brightness, or at **night**, by the lamplight of helplessness and dryness of spirit. The Wise Man praises the valiant woman for this: 'Her fingers,' he says, 'have taken hold of the spindle.' How I should like to talk to you about these words! Your **distaff** is the store of all your desires: spin just a little every day, draw out the **thread** of your plans until you put them into effect, and you will certainly do well. But beware of over-eager haste, else your thread will get into a **knotted tangle** and you will not be able to work your spindle. Let us keep going all the time; however slowly we get on, we shall still make plenty of way. (**SelLet** 119-120)

Disturber of the peace - door locked – temptations

. But the chief thing is to keep the **door well locked** and not to open it, however little, to spy who is there or to shoo away this **disturber of the peace**. In the end he will get tired of shouting and will leave you alone. (**SelLet** 65)

Doctor - sick people – impossible

People who are **physically ill** often have a mental craving for the **doctor** who is at a distance, preferring him to the one who is close by. You must not long for the **impossible** or try to build on things which are difficult and uncertain of attainment. (**SelLet** 47)

Door – light – sun – lattices

Make use of the little **light** you have, said Our Lord, until the **sun** rises. The **door** has not been opened yet, but through the **lattices** you can see the forecourt and the outside of Solomon's temple: stay where you are. (**SelLet** 94)

Door locked – disturber of the peace - temptations

. But the chief thing is to keep the **door well locked** and not to open it, however little, to spy who is there or to shoo away this **disturber of the peace**. In the end he will get tired of shouting and will leave you alone. (**SelLet** 65)

Doors – windows – siege

Let him kick his heels outside, and keep all the **doors** and **windows** tightly shut: he will get tired of it in the end, and if he does not, God will make him raise the **siege**. . (**SelLet** 85)

Doors of your heart – direction

I am convinced that there are few secret places of your heart which are not accessible to me; and when you open the **doors of your heart** even a very little way, I feel I can look right in and see all there is to see. (**SelLet** 87)

Dove – bird chained – fledgling – flying - wings – patience

A **bird chained** to its perch is not conscious of its captivity and does not feel the pull of its chain until it wants to fly; in the same way an **unfledged nestling** only finds out that it cannot fly when it makes the actual attempt. And the remedy for this, my dear daughter, is not to struggle, not to make eager attempts to fly as your **wings** have not yet grown and you lack power for too great an effort. Be **patient** until you get the **wings** of a **dove**, and then you can fly. (**SelLet** 78)

Dove – fledglings – Church

Next to love of Our Lord I commend to you love of his holy bride, the **Church**, that gentle **dove** which alone is able to rear true **fledglings** for her bridegroom. (**SelLet** 52-53)

Dove – serpent – heretics

Your good patron's son was writing one day to the devout Maxima, his spiritual daughter, and he said something of this kind: be simple and gracious as a **dove** when you are speaking to **heretics**, having compassion on their misfortune; be prudent as a **serpent** to slip away from their company quickly at chance meetings or on other occasions and after occasional visits. (**SelLet** 94-95)

Dove – serpent – virtues

To tell you the truth, helpless little white **doves** are much more attractive than **serpents**; and when we have to join the qualities of one with the other, I for my part would not like to give the dove's simplicity to the serpent, for the serpent would remain a serpent; but I should like to give the serpent's prudence to the dove, for it would still be beautiful. (**SelLet** 137)

Draymen – parrots – peacocks – monkeys

I am miserable and so I don't feel like talking: **draymen** and **parrots** do as much; I feel miserable, but since charity demands that I should talk I will do it: that is what spiritual people say. I have been slighted and I get cross: **peacocks** and **monkeys** do as much; I have been slighted and I rejoice: that is what the apostles did. (**SelLet** 242)

Drinking - well of Samaritan woman

Well now, if you too had to die without **drinking** of the **well of the Samaritan woman**, what would it matter, as long as your soul is admitted to **drink** for ever at the source and fountain of life? Do not go chasing eagerly after vain longings, and I would even go as far as to say, do not be eager in avoiding eagerness. Keep quietly on along your way, for it is a good way. (**SelLet** 79)

Dry food

And although our taste and self-esteem finds sweetness and tenderness more pleasing, dryness is more profitable, more to God's taste and to his love; just as **dry food** is better for those suffering from dropsy, although they always prefer the opposite. (**SelLet** 194)

Dust – scurvy

But do not be ashamed, daughter, of being a little grimy and covered with **dust**; it is better to be dusty than covered with **scurvy**, and as long as you humble yourself all will be well. (**SelLet** 224)

Dust of life - horse – wolf

It is a strange thing, but one confirmed by experience and by various authors, that when a **horse**, however fine and strong, follows in the trail and tracks of a **wolf**, it becomes torpid and stumbles. It is not possible for us who live in the world to avoid being soiled with its **dust**, even though we may only be in contact with it by the soles of our feet in passing. (**SelLet** 54)

Eagle – crown – St. Louis – sea of penance

For the next point, remember the feast day of **blessed King Louis**, the day on which you took the **crown** of your kingdom from your own heart so as to put it at the feet of Jesus, the King; the day on which you renewed your youth like the **eagle's**, plunging into the **sea of penance**; the day which heralded the eternal day for your soul. (**SelLet 74**)

Eagle – smoke

For those who put their trust in the Lord shall take wings like the **eagle**; but whoever loses heart shall come to nothing and vanish like **smoke**. . (**SelLet 212**)

Earthquake – wind – flame – breeze – God

I should like to impress on your mind what is written in the Book of Kings: **God** is not in the mighty **wind**, nor in the **earthquake**, nor yet in these fiery **flames** but in the soft and gentle stirring of a **breeze** that we can hardly feel. Let yourself be ruled by God, do not think about yourself so much. (**SelLet 43**)

Eating - food

The result of these convulsions is a certain inner disgust, so that you cannot relish **food**, however well. But what does it matter whether you relish your food or not, as long as you do not stop **eating**? (**SelLet 77**)

Eating – without savor

It is the highest point of holy resignation to be content with naked, dry and unfelt acts made only by the superior part of the will, as it would be the highest degree of abstinence to be satisfied with never **eating** except with distaste, against one's desire, and not only **without** enjoyment and **savor**. (**SelLet 201**)

Eating one dish only

It is a great matter, my daughter, to confine ourselves to **eating one dish only** when it is a good one; the stomach can do its job more easily. If we only long for our Savior, then I have every hope that our digestion will be good. (**SelLet 146**)

Edifice – language – nest of doves

Take no pains to construct your letters to me carefully, for I am not looking for a fine **edifice** or the **language** of angels, but for the **nest of doves** and the language of love. . (**SelLet 268**)

Esau and Jacob – two nations within – Rebecca - self-love – love of God

Oh blessed be God, my dear daughter, this sickness is not unto death, but so that God may be glorified thereby.' Two **nations are in your womb**, as **Rebecca** was told; one is struggling against the other in your spirit, but in the end the younger shall defeat the elder. **Self-love** never dies until we ourselves die; it has thousands of ways of entrenching itself in our soul, but we cannot cast it out; it is the first-born of our soul, for it is natural, or at least co-natural to us; self-love is attended by a legion of armed horsemen to help it—emotions, activities, passions; it is skilful and knows a thousand subtle twists and turns. To balance this you have the **love of God** on the other side, which is conceived and born later; and that too has its emotions, inclinations, passions, activities. These two children in the same womb struggle with one another like Esau and Jacob; that is why Rebecca cried out: Would it not be better for me to die than to bear children with so much pain? The result of these convulsions is a certain inner disgust, so that you cannot relish food, however good. But what does it matter whether you relish your food or not, as long as you do not stop eating? (**SelLet 77**)

Eve - battle with temptations to faith – arguing – sally of the will

And now I want to suggest another remedy. **Temptations against the faith** aim directly at the understanding, striving to draw it into argument, to occupy and absorb it. Do you know what to do while the enemy is wasting his energy trying to scale the intellect? Make a **sally through the gates of the will** and charge him roundly; when the temptation against faith presents itself in order to draw you into argument, saying: 'How can this be? And if this applies, how does that fit in?' you arrange things in such a way that instead of arguing with the enemy by parleying, your will and your feelings round on him boldly while you cry out with heart and voice: 'Traitor! Wretch! You left the Church of the angels and you are trying to get me to leave the Church of the saints! You are disloyal, faithless, and perfidious! You gave the first woman the apple of perdition and now you want me to taste it too! Get thee behind me, Satan; it is written, thou shalt not tempt the Lord, thy God. No, I will not argue, I will not dispute with you. **Eve** thought she could argue with you and she was lost. May Jesus reign supreme, I believe in him; may the Church triumph, and I cleave to it!' (**SelLet** 65-66)

Eve - fruit

From amongst a great number of delicious kinds of **fruit Eve** chose the forbidden one, and if she had been free to eat it she would very probably not have wanted it. (**SelLet** 58)

Eyes – sun

And as the mind ceases to think anything else good in comparison with this Goodness, so too the will can no longer desire or love any goodness in comparison with this Goodness, even as when our **eyes** look deep into the **sun** we can no longer see any other light. (**SelLet** 281)

Father - child

From one day to the next we should entrust our general wish for perfection to God's providence; and as we look to him for this, we should cast ourselves into God's arms like a little **child** who in order to grow, simply eats what its **father** provides day by day, hoping that he will provide according to its appetite and need. (**SelLet** 162)

Father - child

What can a **child** fear in the arms of such a **Father**? Really try to be a little child, my very dear daughter; and as you know, children don't have a lot of things to worry about because they have others to think for them; they are really strong if they stay close to their father. So do this, my very dear daughter, and you will have peace. Amen. (**SelLet** 262)

Father - child – walking

Tell her that though she may shy back often and stumble, she is never to be disheartened or angry with herself; that she is rather to look at Our Lord who is watching her from heaven as a **father watches his child**, a child that is still weak and finds it hard to **walk** properly. And he says: steady, now, dear child go gently, child; and if she falls, he encourages her and says: you went too fast, you're really very good, so don't cry; and then he goes up to her and holds out his hand to help her rise. If this girl is really a child in her humility and understands that she is nothing but a child, she will not be upset at falling over because she will not be falling from any great height. (**SelLet** 280)

Father (good) – child – God

Go straight on, and always in God's sight. **God** takes pleasure in seeing you make your little steps; and like a **good father** who holds his **child** by the hand, he will conform his steps to yours and will be quite happy not to go any faster than you. What are you anxious about? Whether you are taking this road or that other way, going fast or slow? All that matters is that he is with you, and you with him. (**SelLet** 160)

Feather – will

All day yesterday my **will** was really so helpless that a **feather** could have crushed it. (**SelLet** 94)

Feeding lambs

Now if we love him we must **feed** his sheep and his **lambs**: this is the sign of faithful love. . (**SelLet** 203)

Fertile in goodness – widows – valleys – sun - ice

Little **widows**, little village women, like lowly **valleys**, are so **fertile in goodness**, and bishops, who hold such a high rank in God's Church, are so frozen and cold! Oh, is there no **sun** strong enough to melt the **ice** that chills me? ? (**SelLet** 118)

Fever – bed – self-will

No place is comfortable to those who are sick of a **fever**: they spend a quarter of an hour in one **bed** and then they want to change over to another. There is nothing wrong with the bed but the trouble is that their own fever torments them wherever they find themselves. A person who is not suffering from the **fever** of his own **self-will** puts up with everything; provided that he is serving God he does not care in what capacity God uses him, and as long as he is doing God's divine will he has no personal preference. (**SelLet** 59)

Fire – spark – Spirit

I shall never cease to pray God graciously to perfect his holy work in you, that is to say, to further your excellent desire and design to lead a perfect Christian life, a desire which you should love and foster tenderly in your heart as given to you by the **Holy Ghost** and as a **spark** of his **divine fire**. (**SelLet** 51)

Fire – tongue - imprinting

Alas, my daughter, I do not know; all I know is if we are to say it well our **tongue** must be on **fire**, that is, we must be saying it moved only by divine love which alone is capable of expressing Jesus in our lives and of **imprinting** him in the depths of our heart. . (**SelLet** 144)

Fire (rekindle morning's) – evening meditation

In the **evening** between Vespers and supper you will retire for a quarter of an hour or a short half hour, either in the church or in your room; and so as to **rekindle** the **morning's fire**, either by resuming the matter already **meditated** or by taking Christ crucified as your subject, you will make fervent and loving aspirations to your Beloved, at the same time renewing your good resolutions of always belonging to him. (**SelLet** 101)

Fire (sacred) – flames – unity of love

May this **sacred fire** which changes all things in its **flames** transform our heart so that nothing may remain except **love**, and we may no longer be loving, but love itself, no longer two, but a single self, since love binds all things in a sovereign **unity**. (**SelLet** 192)

Flame – oil in lamp

An even temper, gentleness and sweetness are rarer than perfect chastity but no less desirable for that. I commend these virtues to you, my very dear daughter, because the **flame** of good example depends on them as on **oil in a lamp**; nothing edifies others more than a loving good temper. (**SelLet** 247)

Flame – wind – earthquake – breeze – God

I should like to impress on your mind what is written in the Book of Kings: **God** is not in the mighty **wind**, nor in the **earthquake**, nor yet in these fiery **flames** but in the soft and gentle stirring of a **breeze** that we can hardly feel. Let yourself be ruled by God, do not think about yourself so much. (**SelLet** 43)

Fledgling – bird chained – flying - wings – dove – patience

A **bird chained** to its perch is not conscious of its captivity and does not feel the pull of its chain until it wants to fly; in the same way an **unfledged nestling** only finds out that it cannot fly when it makes the actual attempt. And the remedy for this, my dear daughter, is not to struggle, not to make eager attempts to fly as your **wings** have not yet grown and you lack power for too great an effort. Be **patient** until you get the **wings** of a **dove**, and then you can fly. (**SelLet** 78)

Fledglings – dove – Church

Next to love of Our Lord I commend to you love of his holy bride, the **Church**, that gentle **dove** which alone is able to rear true **fledglings** for her bridegroom. (**SelLet** 52-53)

Flies - summer journey

To have to see to a great variety of things is really a continual martyrdom; for in the same way as those who make a **journey in the summer** find the **flies** more troublesome and irritating than the journey itself, so the fact that one has to attend to a great many different sorts of things is in itself more troublesome than the actual load of business. (**SelLet** 151)

Flock

Here you have enough matter for meditation, daughter, until I see you with the dear little **flock** on which may God bestow his blessing. (**SelLet** 185)

Flood - halcyon bird – waves

Persevere, my very dear son, in this great courage and determination which keeps you lifted high above temporal things, making you pass over them like a happy **halcyon bird** lifted safely above the **waves** of the world which **flood** this age. (**SelLet** 236)

Flower – bee – honey – herb

Be like the **bee** and gather your **honey** from every **flower** and **herb** alike. (**SelLet** 45)

Flower – garden – herb – care

Do not look at the many and various imperfections in yourself and in the children whom God and Our Lady have entrusted to you, unless to keep alive in you the fear of offending God; but never let imperfections dismay you, for it is not surprising that every individual **herb** and **flower** in a **garden** needs its own particular kind of **care**. (SelLet 234)

Flowering branches - pillar – tabernacle – tree – leaves

These longings are the **flowering branches** on the **tree** of your purpose in life; the **leaves** are your frequent realization of your weakness and keep your good works and your good desires in a healthy state. All this may be called one of the **pillars** of your **tabernacle**. (SelLet 51)

Flowers – garden

No, before you see him in his glory he wants to plant many **flowers** in your **garden**; they may be small and humble, but they are the kind that please him; that is why he comes to you clothed in this way. (SelLet 136)

Flowers - honey

It is difficult, my very dear sister, to find people of all-round discernment who can see clearly to an equal degree in all matters: nor is it essential to have people of this kind so as to be well directed, and there is no harm, it seems to me, in gathering from many **flowers** the **honey** which we cannot find in one alone. (SelLet 262)

Flowers – orange trees – fruit – leaves – desire for holiness

This **desire** of yours, dear Madam, should be like the **orange trees** on the sea coast at Genoa, covered almost the whole year round with **fruit, flowers and leaves** growing all at the same time; for your desires should always be bearing fruit as you put some of them into effect every day, and at the same time you should never cease longing for some new occasion of progress. (SelLet 51)

Flowers – thorns – God's voice – weather

What does it matter whether **God's voice** comes to us amongst **thorns** or amongst **flowers**? Indeed, I do not remember that he has ever spoken where there are flowers, but his voice has often been heard in deserts and thorny bushes. So go on your way, my dear daughter, and forge ahead while the **weather** is bad and the night dark. (SelLet 99)

Flowers of your good desires – gaming

You see, my dear Sir, I am afraid that you may return to **gaming**, and I dread it because it will do you very great damage; in the space of a few days this would dissipate your heart and make all the **flowers of your good desires** wither and die. (SelLet 188)

Fluttering – wings grow

But you do not feel you are firm, for if you did, it would give you untold joy. Come now, stop **fluttering** and being in a hurry; you will feel all the better for it and your **wings** will **grow** all the faster. (SelLet 78-79)

Flying - bird chained – fledgling – wings – dove – patience

A **bird chained** to its perch is not conscious of its captivity and does not feel the pull of its chain until it wants to fly; in the same way an **unfledged nestling** only finds out that it cannot fly when it makes the actual attempt. And the remedy for this, my dear daughter, is not to struggle, not to make eager attempts to fly as your **wings** have not yet grown and you lack power for too great an effort. Be **patient** until you get the **wings** of a **dove**, and then you can fly. (**SelLet 78**)

Flying – fluttering heart – gently

And meanwhile this constant **flutter of your heart** exhausts your strength all the time. Of course you must try to **fly** but do it gently and without struggling and without getting flustered. (**SelLet 78**)

Flying - wings

As your **wings** have not yet grown try to find pleasure in not **flying**. (**SelLet 79**)

Food – eating

The result of these convulsions is a certain inner disgust, so that you cannot relish **food**, however good. But what does it matter whether you relish your food or not, as long as you do not stop **eating**? (**SelLet 77**)

Food – Spouse – worms

Tell her to have no fear in going to communion but to go in peace and in all humility, so as to meet the desire of her **Spouse** who made himself lowly and sweetly humbled himself to unite himself to us, even making himself our **food** and nourishment, whereas we are nothing but the food and repast of **worms**. (**SelLet 268**)

Food for lions - St. Ignatius

My very dear Mother, my daughter, I have been thinking about the story of the great **St. Ignatius** who carried Jesus Christ in his heart and cheerfully went to serve as **food for the lions** and suffer the martyrdom of their fangs: and here are you, here are we, going to Lyons, please our Savior, to render Our Lord various services and prepare souls for him so that he can be their Bridegroom. What can stop us from going joyfully in the name of our Savior, since this saint went so blithely to be martyred for our Savior? (**SelLet 227-228**)

Food sweetened

In short, we always want to have our **food sweetened** with consolation, that is to say we want to feel love and tenderness, and thus consolation. (**SelLet 256**)

Foods (mixture – quantity) – spiritual things

A **mixture** of different kinds of **foods**, if eaten in **quantity**, is always a strain on the digestion and proves disastrous if the organs are weak. When the soul has given up concupiscence and has purged itself of evil and worldly affections, at the same time discovering **spiritual and holy things**, it acts like any starved person, **stuffing** itself so greedily and with so many desires that the effect is overwhelming. (**SelLet 48**)

Forest (hidden) - Mary – promptness

According to supernatural standards, my very dear daughter, how wisely you have acted! For so it was that **Our Lady** acted on that feast in the Gospel story of the day you entered, going in haste straight into the hill country of Judah. **Promptness** in doing the will of God is a sure way of attracting great and powerful graces for carrying out any good work; and you see, my very dear daughter, after the rude shock your heart felt when it gave up its feelings, fancies and inclinations to follow a higher attraction, you are now at last perfectly still and happy, at rest in the blessed and **hidden forest** you have chosen as a home where you will live and sing for ever the glory of your soul's savior and creator. (**SelLet** 283-284)

Fortress

Your ideas about leaving the convent bear every sign of a genuine temptation; but blessed be God that the **fortress** has not yet yielded to this assault and is not likely to either, as I see it. ? (**SelLet** 278)

Fortress – inner stronghold

You see, my daughter, my soul, this is a sign that all is taken and the enemy has seized everything in our **fortress** except for the **inner stronghold** which is impregnable, immovable, and which cannot be taken except by its own will. It is, in fact, our free will which dwells before God, bare and alone in the highest and most spiritual part of the soul, depending on no one except on God and on itself; and when all the other faculties of the soul are defeated and delivered over to the enemy, the will alone remains in full possession of itself and does not consent. (**SelLet** 85)

Fortune - child – guardian

You are like a **child** whose **guardian** deprives it of the use of its whole **fortune**, so that though the money really belongs to the child, it cannot handle it, nor does the child seem to possess or have anything of its own except life. As St. Paul says, 'he differed nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all'; and so God does not want you to feel your faith, my very dear daughter, your hope and your charity, nor does he want you to have the enjoyment or use of them, except just what is needed for your bare existence and on occasions of absolute need. . (**SelLet** 201)

Fountain - spring

Indeed, my very dear Sister, you and your daughters are happy to have at last struck the **spring** of that living water which leads to eternal life and to want to drink it from our Savior's hand, to whom together with St. Catherine of Genoa and Blessed Mother Theresa you are saying this prayer: 'Lord, give me this water.'¹ May his divine Mercy be praised for ever, for he has made himself a source of living water in the midst of your community; for when we give ourselves to him in prayer Our Lord is a **fountain** from which our prayer can draw water to cleanse us, to cool us, to make us fruitful and fill us with sweetness. (**SelLet** 220)

Fountain of perfection – sink of iniquity – Mary Magdalen

God did, of course, cure some people suddenly, without leaving them any mark of their former diseases, as for instance in the case of Mary Magdalene whom he transformed from a **sink of iniquity** into a pure **fountain of perfection**; nor was she ever troubled from that moment onwards. (**SelLet** 87-88)

Fruit - cherry tree – palm tree

Cherry trees bear their **fruit** quickly because they only bear cherries which keep but a short time; but the **palm**, the prince of trees, only begins bearing **fruit** a hundred years after it has been planted, it is said. A mediocre sort of life can be achieved in a year; but the perfection for which we are striving—that, my dear daughter, takes quite a few years to establish itself, I mean in the ordinary way. (**SelLet** 274)

Fruit - Eve

From amongst a great number of delicious kinds of **fruit Eve** chose the forbidden one, and if she had been free to eat it she would very probably not have wanted it. (**SelLet** 58)

Fruit – leaves – vines – trees – desires - actions

You prevent the formation of **leaves** on **vines** and **trees** so as to preserve enough moisture and sap for the **fruit** later on and not waste too much of the vine's natural force in producing foliage. It is a good thing to prevent the formation of too many **desires** for fear that our soul might waste time on them and neglect real tasks; for the least attempt at practical **action** is more profitable than great **desire** for what is beyond our power. (**SelLet** 49)

Fruit – orange trees – flowers – leaves – desire for holiness

This **desire** of yours, dear Madam, should be like the **orange trees** on the sea coast at Genoa, covered almost the whole year round with **fruit, flowers and leaves** growing all at the same time; for your desires should always be bearing fruit as you put some of them into effect every day, and at the same time you should never cease longing for some new occasion of progress. (**SelLet** 51)

Fruit - orchard unfenced – changes

The least pretext is enough to make one **change** an exercise, a plan, a rule; a mere trifle causes one to give up a rule or good habits, and in this way the heart grows dissipated and distracted; it is like an **orchard unfenced** on all sides so that the **fruit** is not for the owner but for any chance passer-by. (**SelLet** 71)

Fruit - tree (mountain)

You know very well the kind of country which produced me: can you expect delicate **fruit** from a **mountain tree**, and such a poor tree at that? (**SelLet** 291-292)

Fruit – trees – sun – presence of God

Trees only bear **fruit** because of the presence of the **sun**, some sooner and some later, some every year and others every three years, nor is their harvest always equal. We are very fortunate to be able to remain in the **presence of God**; let us be content that his presence will make us bear fruit sooner or later, or every day, or sometimes, according to his good pleasure, to which we should wholly resign ourselves. (**SelLet** 88)

Fruit (sin) - shoots

Selfishness, complacency, false liberty of spirit, these are things which one cannot well uproot from the human heart; one cannot do more than prevent them from bearing their **fruit**, which is **sin**; for one can never altogether stop their uprising, their first impetus, their **shoots**, as it were, their first impact and stirring; but one can moderate their number and frequency by the practice of opposite virtues and chiefly by the love of God. (**SelLet** 236-237)

Gall – thorns of difficulty – lance – vinegar – wormwood - aloes

How are we to show our love of him who suffered so much for us if not when we are beset by circumstances we loathe and abhor and which go against the grain? We must thrust our head among the **thorns of difficulty** and let our heart be pierced by the **lance** of contradiction; drink the **gall** and swallow the vinegar, eat **wormwood** and bitter **aloes** as it is God who invites us. (SelLet 251)

Garden – flower – herb – care

Do not look at the many and various imperfections in yourself and in the children whom God and Our Lady have entrusted to you, unless to keep alive in you the fear of offending God; but never let imperfections dismay you, for it is not surprising that every individual **herb** and **flower** in a **garden** needs its own particular kind of **care**. (SelLet 234)

Garden - flowers

No, before you see him in his glory he wants to plant many **flowers** in your **garden**; they may be small and humble, but they are the kind that please him; that is why he comes to you clothed in this way. (SelLet 136)

Garden – strawberries – cherries – pears – apples - season - death

Strawberries and **cherries** are picked before even the most delicious kinds of **pears** and **apples**; but that is because they are in season at a different time. Let God gather to him whatever he has planted in his **garden**; he takes nothing out of season. (SelLet 141)

Garden of prayer - path

Another time we shall be much astonished when he takes us by the hand, talks about one thing and another, and walks up and down with us in the **path of his garden of prayer**; and even if he never does this, let us be content with the fact that it is our duty to be in his suite and that it is a great grace for us and a still greater honor that he should allow us to be in his presence. (SelLet 149)

Gardener – St. Mary Magdalen

Mary Magdalen is looking for Our Lord and it is him she holds; she is asking for him, and it is him she asks. She could not see him as she would have wished to see him; that is why she is not content to see him in this form and searches so as to find him in some other guise. She wanted to see him in his robes of glory and not in the lowly clothes of a **gardener**; but all the same, in the end she knew it was Jesus when he said to her: Mary. (SelLet 136)

Garlic – manna – onions of Egypt

Another good instance: God gave the children of Israel **manna** in the desert, a most delicious food; and what happens? They do not want it but set their heart on the **garlic and onions of Egypt**. Our miserable nature always wants to have things its own way and not God's way. (SelLet 59)

Garment of his charity - Jacob's blessing

This is your father's wish, my very dear daughter: may God be with you on your way; may God keep you clothed in the **garment of his charity** always; may God nourish your soul with the heavenly bread of his consolations; may God bring you back safe and sound to your father's house; may God be your God for ever, my dear Mother. These are the **blessings** which **Jacob** called down upon himself when he set out for Bethel, and I wish them to my own self, my very dear and only daughter, as you leave this place where you stay even when you are far away, and from which you are distant even though you remain. (**SelLet** 226)

Garment (wedding) – charity

Your body is feeble, but **charity**, which is your **wedding garment**, will cover up all that. (**SelLet** 246)

Gates – beast – bark – temptations

The apostle Paul suffered terrible temptations but God did not want to remove them, and all for love. Come now, dear daughter, be brave; let this heart of yours never leave Jesus to whom it belongs, and let this hateful **beast bark** and raise his false alarm at the **gates** as loud and as long as he likes. (**SelLet** 98)

Glass of water - Moses – Promised Land

You make me think of **Moses**. When this holy man had arrived on Mount Pisgah he saw the whole of the **Promised Land** before his eyes, the land which he had longed and hoped for for forty years in the hardship of the desert, while his people murmured and rebelled. He saw the land of promise but did not set foot in it, and died even as he beheld it. He had your **glass of water** at his lips and could not drink. How deeply his soul must have sighed within him! He died a more blessed death there than many did in the Promised Land, since God himself honored him in his burial. (**SelLet** 79)

Go to bed - childish pursuits – agitated

Let us carry on with our **childish pursuits** since we are children, but do not let us take them too seriously. And if someone smashes our little houses and plans, let us not get too **agitated**, for here too, when evening comes and it is time for us to **go to bed**, I mean when death comes, all these little houses will be useless: we shall have to leave them and go into our father's house. (**SelLet** 152)

Gold – crosses – pearls – precious stones

Yes, my very dear daughter, I knew very well that your piety was a prop for your self-love, and pitifully human. In short, we do not love **crosses** if they are not made of **gold**, studded with **pearls** and **precious stones**. (**SelLet** 290)

Gold – incense – myrrh

Keep very close to the crib throughout the octave of the Holy Kings. If you love riches you will find there the **gold** that the Kings left; if you love honors you will find **incense**, and if you love things that delight the senses there is the sweet-smelling **myrrh** which scents the whole stable. (**SelLet** 225)

Gold (refining) – treasury – God

In a word, these troublesome temptations come from the devil's malice; but the distress and suffering which they make us feel come from **God's** mercy, who makes holy tribulation spring from this malice in spite of his enemy, and by this means **refines the gold** that he wants to put in his **treasury**. (SelLet 86)

Guardian – child – fortune

You are like a **child** whose **guardian** deprives it of the use of its whole **fortune**, so that though the money really belongs to the child, it cannot handle it, nor does the child seem to possess or have anything of its own except life. As St. Paul says, 'he differed nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all'; and so God does not want you to feel your faith, my very dear daughter, your hope and your charity, nor does he want you to have the enjoyment or use of them, except just what is needed for your bare existence and on occasions of absolute need. . (SelLet 201)

Hair (mental)

Barbe-Marie's **mental hair** is even more unruly than the hair on her head and that is why it gets tied up in knots. She must not be so fussy and waste her energy on little details which Our Lord does not worry about. (SelLet 253)

Halcyon bird – waves – flood

Persevere, my very dear son, in this great courage and determination which keeps you lifted high above temporal things, making you pass over them like a happy **halcyon bird** lifted safely above the **waves** of the world which **flood** this age. (SelLet 236)

Halcyons – nests

The other day I was considering what authors tell us about **halcyons**, small birds that lay their eggs out at sea. It appears that they make completely round **nests** and so tightly compact that the water can in no way penetrate them; right at the top there is just a small hole by which they can breathe and draw in air. In this nest they put their little ones, so that when the sea takes them by surprise, they can swim safely and float on the waves without being either water-logged or submerged; and the air which is taken in by the little hole serves as a counter-weight and balances these small spheres and tiny boats in such a way that they never overturn. O dear daughter, how I wish that our hearts could be like that, very compact, snugly lined all round, so that when the world's anxieties and tempests beat against them, they cannot force an entry. There is, moreover, no opening except towards heaven, so that we may only breathe towards our Savior and draw him in as we draw in air. And for whom or for what is this nest to be made, my dear daughter? For our little fledglings, for our love of God, for our divine and heavenly affections.

But while the halcyons are building their nests and while their little ones are yet frail to withstand the power of the tossing waves, see how God takes care of them and has pity on them, so that the sea does not carry them away and swallow them up. For his holy love's sake, his sovereign goodness will safeguard the nest of our hearts against the assaults of the world, protecting us from attack. Oh, how I love these birds which are surrounded by water and live by the air, which hide in the ocean and only see the sky! They swim like fish and sing like birds; and what I find most delightful is that they cast their anchor in an upward, not in a downward direction. O my sister, my daughter, may our sweet Jesus make us such, that surrounded by the world and by the flesh, we may live only by the spirit; that in the midst of the vanities of this earth we may always have heaven in view; that living with men, we may praise him with the angels, and that the anchorage of our hopes may always be on high and in paradise. (SelLet 105-106)

Hammer – chisel – brush – heart

The only thing I can ask of him on your behalf is that he may fashion your **heart** entirely according to his liking so that he may live and reign there eternally; that he may fashion it, I say, either with a **hammer** or with a **chisel** or with the stroke of a **brush**: it is for him to do as he wills, don't you agree, my dear daughter? Surely this is the attitude we should take? . (SelLet 198)

Hammering and raging at the door – temptation

Meanwhile it is a very good sign that he is hammering and **raging at the door** because it proves that he is not getting what he is after. Had he got it he would not go on shouting; he would walk in and be quite still. Remember that so as to avoid scruples. . (SelLet 65)

Hands (Our Lady's)

If you find yourself harassed beyond measure, calm and quieten your spirit. Imagine how **Our Lady** calmly used **one hand** to do what needed doing while she held her Child with her **other hand** or on her other arm, for she held him most carefully. . (SelLet 150)

Haven - high seas of worldly life – captain – mast – sails – anchor – breeze

And to end where I began: you are taking to the **high seas of worldly life**, but do not on that account change your **captain**, your **mast**, your **sails**, your **anchor**, your fair **breeze**. Always keep Jesus as your **captain**, his cross for your **mast** on which to spread the **sails** of your good resolutions; let your **anchor** be deep trust in him and then sail on happily. May the favorable **breeze** of heavenly grace fill your sails more and more and carry you safely and joyfully into the **haven** of a blessed eternity, which is the true and heartfelt wish, Sir, of, your most humble servant, Francis, Bishop of Geneva. (SelLet 190)

Heart (fluttering) – flying – gently

And meanwhile this constant **flutter of your heart** exhausts your strength all the time. Of course you must try to **fly** but do it gently and without struggling and without getting flustered. (SelLet 78)

Heart (panting) – wings (fluttering) – resignation

A simple desire is not contrary to resignation, but a **panting heart**, **fluttering wings**, an agitated will, and many restless movements—all these undoubtedly add up to lack of **resignation**. . (SelLet 79)

Heaven – waters – prayer

And to help you in this, remember that the graces and benefits of **prayer** are not earthly **waters** but come from **heaven**, and that therefore all our efforts cannot acquire them, although it is true that we must dispose ourselves to receive them with great care but humbly and peacefully. (SelLet 148)

Herb - bee – honey – flower

Be like the **bee** and gather your **honey** from every **flower** and **herb** alike. (SelLet 45)

Herb – garden – flower – care

Do not look at the many and various imperfections in yourself and in the children whom God and Our Lady have entrusted to you, unless to keep alive in you the fear of offending God; but never let imperfections dismay you, for it is not surprising that every individual **herb** and **flower** in a **garden** needs its own particular kind of **care**. (SelLet 234)

High seas – hoist sail – court

So you are at last about to **hoist sail** and launch out on to the **high seas** of the world: you are going to **court**. (SelLet 186)

High seas of worldly life – captain – mast – sails – anchor – breeze - haven

And to end where I began: you are taking to the **high seas of worldly life**, but do not on that account change your **captain**, your **mast**, your **sails**, your **anchor**, your fair **breeze**. Always keep Jesus as your **captain**, his cross for your **mast** on which to spread the **sails** of your good resolutions; let your **anchor** be deep trust in him and then sail on happily. May the favorable **breeze** of heavenly grace fill your sails more and more and carry you safely and joyfully into the **haven** of a blessed eternity, which is the true and heartfelt wish, Sir, of, your most humble servant, Francis, Bishop of Geneva. (SelLet 190)

Highway – light – path – imagination in prayer

This is the great **highway**, my dear daughter, which we must not leave for yet awhile until the **light** grows a little stronger and we can see the **paths** more clearly. (SelLet 110)

Hive (new) - bees – (new swarm) - honey

You are about to render to Our Lord and to his glorious Mother a service which can be called apostolic; for you are going to gather together a number of souls in one congregation, my very dear daughter, with a view to leading them in a new band into spiritual warfare for God's glory and against the world, the devil and the flesh; or rather, you are going to collect a **new swarm of bees** in a **new hive** to do God's work of divine love, which is sweeter above **honey**. (SelLet 246)

Hoist sail – high seas – court

So you are at last about to **hoist sail** and launch out on to the **high seas** of the world: you are going to **court**. (SelLet 186)

Holocaust – heart

O Lord, bless the **heart** of my dear daughter, make it burn like a **holocaust** of sweetness in honor of your divine love; may it not seek any contentment but in you, nor ask for any other consolation than that of being most perfectly consecrated to your glory. (SelLet 178)

Holocaust – self-offering - St. Lawrence

But I must go on to tell you this, my very dear daughter: now that you are sweetly dead to the world and the world dead in you, that is only a part of the **holocaust**. Two things remain: the victim must be consumed, you must strip your heart of self, cut back hard all the little shortcomings prompted by nature and by the world; and the other is to burn and reduce your self-love to ashes and transform your dear soul into flames of heavenly love. Now this, my really very dear daughter, is not done in a day, and he who gave you the grace to strike the first blow will himself see to the other two matters in union with you; and because his hand is most fatherly, he will either do it without your knowledge, or if he makes you feel it, he will give you the constancy, indeed the joy of **St. Lawrence** the martyr, the vigil of whose feast we celebrate today. (SelLet 284-285)

Honey – bee – flower – herb

Be like the **bee** and gather your **honey** from every **flower** and **herb** alike. (SelLet 45)

Honey – bee – wax- household

Live in peace, my very dear daughter, walk faithfully along the road which God has marked out for you; take great care to make your partner in life happy; be like a small **bee** which carefully makes the **honey** of devotion but is just as careful to manufacture the **wax** of household affairs; for if he who ate butter and honey when he was in this world is pleasing to Our Lord, the other also serves for his honor, as it makes candles which are lit for the edification of our neighbor. (SelLet 259)

Honey - bees – (new swarm) – hive (new)

You are about to render to Our Lord and to his glorious Mother a service which can be called apostolic; for you are going to gather together a number of souls in one congregation, my very dear daughter, with a view to leading them in a new band into spiritual warfare for God's glory and against the world, the devil and the flesh; or rather, you are going to collect a **new swarm of bees** in a **new hive** to do God's work of divine love, which is sweeter above **honey**. (SelLet 246)

Honey – flowers

It is difficult, my very dear sister, to find people of all-round discernment who can see clearly to an equal degree in all matters: nor is it essential to have people of this kind so as to be well directed, and there is no harm, it seems to me, in gathering from many **flowers** the **honey** which we cannot find in one alone. (SelLet 262)

Honey (heavenly) – prayer

But now that God has given you back your health, you should take up your prayer again, my dear daughter, at least for half an hour in the morning and for a quarter of an hour in the evening before supper; for since Our Lord has given you a taste for this **heavenly honey**, it would be a matter of great reproach to you if you lost the taste of it, and especially as he made you taste of it with much facility and devotion, as I very well remember your admitting to me. (SelLet 183)

Horse – wolf – dust of life

It is a strange thing, but one confirmed by experience and by various authors, that when a **horse**, however fine and strong, follows in the trail and tracks of a **wolf**, it becomes torpid and stumbles. It is not possible for us who live in the world to avoid being soiled with its **dust**, even though we may only be in contact with it by the soles of our feet in passing. (SelLet 54))

Horse training

Therefore you will tell her from me that her first care should be to keep her spirit controlled, gentle and tranquil, and that in order to achieve this she should even slow down her external actions, the way she stands and walks, her general behavior, her gestures, and if she likes, even her tongue and her speech. And tell her not to think it strange that this is not done in a moment. It takes years to **train a young horse** to obedience and get it used to the saddle and the bit. (SelLet 280)

Hospitality - water – washing feet – cleanse affections

Our fathers of old, Abraham and his children, used to offer their guests **water** to **wash their feet**; I think, Sir, that the first thing to do is to **cleanse the affections** of our soul so as to look forward to our dear Lord's **hospitality** in paradise. (SelLet 54)

Hunger – communion

There are two kinds of **hunger**: one which is the result of a good digestion, the other comes of an upset stomach clamoring for food. Humble yourself as much as you can, my daughter, and warm yourself inside with the holy love of Christ crucified, so that you can spiritually digest this **heavenly food** as you should. (**SelLet** 145)

Ice - fertile in goodness – widows – valleys – sun

Little **widows**, little village women, like lowly **valleys**, are so **fertile in goodness**, and bishops, who hold such a high rank in God's Church, are so frozen and cold! Oh, is there no **sun** strong enough to melt the **ice** that chills me? ? (**SelLet** 118)

Ice – mountains (snow-covered) – infirmities

And believe me that this heart of mine which lives in the midst of the **snow-covered mountains** and **ice** of my own **infirmities** never felt any coldness for my very dear daughter's heart; my own misfortune is robbing me of this heart, but I prefer to lose it, provided God is not angered, rather than be found lacking in that holy sincerity which I vowed in the service of her soul, a soul which I could not flatter without betraying it, nor betray without causing its perdition; and this loss would be my affliction, for I love this daughter. (**SelLet** 292)

Idol in your heart

I see how highly you esteem me and that this esteem is a source of great happiness to you: but what you are really doing, my daughter, is to set up an **idol in your heart**. (**SelLet** 157)

Image of Father - portraits

I cannot refuse you anything, my very dear daughter, and so the two **portraits** you want shall be painted. Why have I not done more to keep our **Father's image** faithfully mirrored in my heart? . (**SelLet** 258)

Imprinting – fire – tongue

Alas, my daughter, I do not know; all I know is if we are to say it well our **tongue** must be on **fire**, that is, we must be saying it moved only by divine love which alone is capable of expressing Jesus in our lives and of **imprinting** him in the depths of our heart. . (**SelLet** 144)

Incense – gold – myrrh

Keep very close to the crib throughout the octave of the Holy Kings. If you love riches you will find there the **gold** that the Kings left; if you love honors you will find **incense**, and if you love things that delight the senses there is the sweet-smelling **myrrh** which scents the whole stable. (**SelLet** 225)

Inner stronghold - fortress

You see, my daughter, my soul, this is a sign that all is taken and the enemy has seized everything in our **fortress** except for the **inner stronghold** which is impregnable, immovable, and which cannot be taken except by its own will. It is, in fact, our free will which dwells before God, bare and alone in the highest and most spiritual part of the soul, depending on no one except on God and on itself; and when all the other faculties of the soul are defeated and delivered over to the enemy, the will alone remains in full possession of itself and does not consent. (**SelLet** 85)

Iron - magnet – amber – straw - Infant

A **magnet** attracts **iron**, **amber** attracts **straw** and hay: now whether we are hard in heart as **iron** or feeble and helpless as **straw** we should follow the attraction of this sovereign little Child, the real **magnet** of hearts. (**SelLet** 260)

Jacob – stone – St. John

Lean your spirit against the **stone** which was represented by the one **Jacob** had beneath his head when he saw his beautiful ladder, for it is the same stone against which **St. John** the Evangelist rested on the day of the exceeding great charity of his Master Jesus. May our heart and the Heart of our heart watch lovingly over you. (**SelLet** 210)

Jacob's blessing – garment of his charity

This is your father's wish, my very dear daughter: may God be with you on your way; may God keep you clothed in the **garment of his charity** always; may God nourish your soul with the heavenly bread of his consolations; may God bring you back safe and sound to your father's house; may God be your God for ever, my dear Mother. These are the **blessings** which **Jacob** called down upon himself when he set out for Bethel, and I wish them to my own self, my very dear and only daughter, as you leave this place where you stay even when you are far away, and from which you are distant even though you remain. (**SelLet** 226)

Jawbone of an ass - water – Samson

Here is **water**, Sir; even if it comes out of the **jawbone of an ass**, **Samson** will not refuse to drink. (**SelLet** 56)

Joshua – Moses

So you will be my **Joshua** who will fight God's cause in person, and I shall be here like another **Moses**, lifting up my hands to heaven, imploring the divine mercy for you so that you may overcome the difficulties in the way of your good intentions. (**SelLet** 222)

Journey – weather – sun

Be brave, my dear daughter; we shall win through with God's help; and believe me, this is better sort of **weather** for a **journey** than if the **sun** were glaring down on us. (**SelLet** 99)

Journey of life - ship (our own)

We must stay in our **own ship** to make the **journey from this life to the next**, and stay there willingly and lovingly. Even if it is not God's hand that has put us there but some human agency, we are there and we must stay put without fuss or protest. (**SelLet** 251)

Kernel of seed of eternity

In these passing moments there lies enclosed as in a tiny **kernel the seed of all eternity**; and in our humble little works of devotion there lies hidden the prize of everlasting glory, and the little pains we take to serve God lead to the repose of a bliss that can never end. (**SelLet** 236)

Kicking

And this is the reason, or rather the cause which has no foundation in reason: we find it hard to believe that God is using the evil of lawsuits as an exercise for us, because we see that it is men who are prosecuting us; and not daring to **kick** against providence which we know to be both good and wise, we **kick** against the people who are afflicting us and we upbraid and blame them, not without great danger of losing charity, the only loss we ought to fear in this life. (SelLet 184)

Kindle – traitor – chill – run - eagerness

I am inclined to think that if you could prevent this **bustling eagerness** you would gain a great deal; for it is one of the greatest **traitors** encountered by devotion and true virtue. It pretends to **kindle** us for our profit but all it does is to **chill** our fervor, only making us **run** so as to trip us up. That is why we must beware of it at all times but more especially during prayer. (SelLet 148)

King – courtiers – presence

How many **courtiers** are there who seek the **king's presence** over and over again, not to speak to him or to hear him speak, but simply to be seen by him and to signify by this regular attendance that they are his servants? (SelLet 148)

King of all hearts

How ardently I long for the Savior's heart to be **king of all our hearts!** (SelLet 129)

Kiss of charity - child – mother – walking – God

My third rule is that you should be like a little **child** who while it knows that its **mother** is holding its sleeve **walks** boldly and runs all round without being distressed at a little fall or stumble; after all, it is as yet rather unsteady on its legs. In the same way, as long as you realize that **God** is holding on to you by your will and resolution to serve him, go on boldly and do not be upset by your little set-backs and falls; there is need to be put out by this provided you throw yourself into his arms from time to time and kiss him with the **kiss of charity**. (SelLet 45-46)

Kissing crucifix – way to God – St. Bernard

Your **St. Bernard** says that the soul which wants to **reach God** should begin by **kissing** the **feet of the crucifix**, purge its affections and firmly resolve to withdraw gradually from the world and its vanities. Then the new element which enters the soul after its affections are purged and changed makes it **kiss Our Lord's hands**; and finally, as the soul unites itself to this supreme goodness by a burning love, it **kisses his mouth**. This is how we gradually proceed to a right and happy death. (SelLet 55)

Knotted tangle - spinning – distaff – day – night - thread

Keep on doing this, putting your hand to the task, **spinning** a little every **day**, whether by daylight, in interior joy and brightness, or at **night**, by the lamplight of helplessness and dryness of spirit. The Wise Man praises the valiant woman for this: 'Her fingers,' he says, 'have taken hold of the spindle.' How I should like to talk to you about these words! Your **distaff** is the store of all your desires: spin just a little every day, draw out the **thread** of your plans until you put them into effect, and you will certainly do well. But beware of over-eager haste, else your thread will get into a **knotted tangle** and you will not be able to work your spindle. Let us keep going all the time; however slowly we get on, we shall still make plenty of way. (SelLet 119-120)

Lady of the house – serving maid – immediate change

Solomon said that a **serving maid** who suddenly becomes the **lady of the house** is a very insolent sort of creature. There is a great risk that the soul which has served its own passions and affections for a long time might turn proud and vain if it mastered them immediately. (**SelLet** 88)

Lamb – wool – distaff - Savior

I will only tell you about one of them which came to me on the octave day of Corpus Christi when I was carrying the Blessed Sacrament at the last procession. It seemed to me that I was preparing a lot of work for you to spin, and on a good distaff. You see, I was adoring him whom I was carrying, and my heart knew that he was the true **Lamb of God** who takes away the sins of the world. O holy and divine Lamb, I said, how poor and needy I was without you! Alas, I have no other clothing but your **wool** to cover my misery before the face of your Father. And here is what Isaias said about this thought, that Our Lord in his passion was as a lamb before his shearer and did not open his mouth.² And what is that divine fleece if not the merit, if not the example, if not the mystery of the cross ? It seems to me therefore that the cross is the beautiful **distaff** of the bride in the Canticle, of that devout Shulamite; the wool of the innocent Lamb, his merit, his example, his mystery, is richly wrought there. (**SelLet** 115)

Lance – thorns of difficulty – gall – vinegar – wormwood - aloes

How are we to show our love of him who suffered so much for us if not when we are beset by circumstances we loathe and abhor and which go against the grain? We must thrust our head among the **thorns of difficulty** and let our heart be pierced by the **lance** of contradiction; drink the **gall** and swallow the vinegar, eat **wormwood** and bitter **aloes** as it is God who invites us. (**SelLet** 251)

Language – edifice – nest of doves

Take no pains to construct your letters to me carefully, for I am not looking for a fine **edifice** or the **language** of angels, but for the **nest of doves** and the language of love. . (**SelLet** 268)

Last step

You should often call to mind this good reflection: that in this world we are poised between paradise and hell, that our, **last step** will land us in our eternal dwelling place, and that we do not know which will be the last; and in order to make the last step a good one, we must go on trying to make all the others good too. (**SelLet** 189)

Lattices - light – sun – door

Make use of the little **light** you have, said Our Lord, until the **sun** rises. The **door** has not been opened yet, but through the **lattices** you can see the forecourt and the outside of Solomon's temple: stay where you are. (**SelLet** 94)

Launched – waters (stormy) – sea of the Church

Indeed I need your prayers badly as I have **launched** out on the stormiest and troubled **waters** of the **sea of the Church**. (**SelLet** 50)

Leah – children – Rachel

Poor **Leah** is a little bleary-eyed and ugly, but your spirit must make do with her before you can have the beautiful **Rachel**. Be of good cheer, her **children** will be beautiful, her works agreeable to God. (**SelLet** 78)

Leaves – orange trees – fruit – flowers – desire for holiness

This **desire** of yours, dear Madam, should be like the **orange trees** on the sea coast at Genoa, covered almost the whole year round with **fruit, flowers and leaves** growing all at the same time; for your desires should always be bearing fruit as you put some of them into effect every day, and at the same time you should never cease longing for some new occasion of progress. (**SelLet** 51)

Leaves - pillar – tabernacle – tree – flowering branches

These longings are the **flowering branches** on the **tree** of your purpose in life; the **leaves** are your frequent realization of your weakness and keep your good works and your good desires in a healthy state. All this may be called one of the **pillars** of your **tabernacle**. (**SelLet** 51)

Leaves – vines – trees – fruit – desires - actions

You prevent the formation of **leaves** on **vines** and **trees** so as to preserve enough moisture and sap for the **fruit** later on and not waste too much of the vine's natural force in producing foliage. It is a good thing to prevent the formation of too many **desires** for fear that our soul might waste time on them and neglect real tasks; for the least attempt at practical **action** is more profitable than great **desire** for what is beyond our power. (**SelLet** 49)

Light – highway – path – imagination in prayer

This is the great **highway**, my dear daughter, which we must not leave for yet awhile until the **light** grows a little stronger and we can see the **paths** more clearly. (**SelLet** 110)

Light – sun – door – lattices

Make use of the little **light** you have, said Our Lord, until the **sun** rises. The **door** has not been opened yet, but through the **lattices** you can see the forecourt and the outside of Solomon's temple: stay where you are. (**SelLet** 94)

Lightning - Mt. Sinai – smoke – thunder – God

But if we know that **God** lives in the darkness and on **Mount Sinai** which is full of **smoke** and surrounded with the roar of **thunder** and **lightning**, shall not all be well with us as long as we keep close to him . (**SelLet** 125)

Locked in memory

I have also been learning a practice of the presence of God which for the time being I have **locked in a corner of my memory** so as to tell you about it as soon as I have read the treatise on it by Fr. Arias. (**SelLet** 168)

Look-out in prow – sailing – ocean of worldly affairs – nose in right direction

People who are **sailing** on the broad **ocean of worldly affairs** and yet striving to reach the land of eternity have a certain presentiment of heaven which cheers and encourages them in a marvelous way; but they should keep on the **look-out in the prow** of the ship and have their **nose** turned in the **right direction**. (**SelLet** 55-56)

Lovers - prisoners

God knows, my very dear Sister, what the monasteries are like where this holy exercise is not practiced; God knows what kind of obedience, poverty and chastity is observed there in the face of his divine Providence, and if these assemblies of women are not rather communities of **prisoners** than of true **lovers** of Jesus Christ. (**SelLet** 220)

Lute – chord – God

But in temporal losses, my daughter, let **God** strike whatever **chord** he chooses on our **lute**, his harmony cannot but be good and right: Lord Jesus, may your will be done upon our father, mother, daughter, in everything and in every way, without any qualification, without an if, without a but, without any exception, without reserves. (**SelLet** 142)

Magnet – iron - amber – straw - Infant

A **magnet** attracts **iron**, **amber** attracts **straw** and hay: now whether we are hard in heart as **iron** or feeble and helpless as **straw** we should follow the attraction of this sovereign little Child, the real **magnet** of hearts. (**SelLet** 260)

Man leaving wife – discernment

Thus a **man who is thinking of leaving his wife** will hardly give her all the love he should in the meanwhile. So that if you think you have not done your work as you should it is better to throw yourself more intensively into the task than to give up completely. (**SelLet** 212)

Manna – garlic – onions of Egypt

Another good instance: God gave the children of Israel **manna** in the desert, a most delicious food; and what happens? They do not want it but set their heart on the **garlic and onions of Egypt**. Our miserable nature always wants to have things its own way and not God's way. (**SelLet** 59)

Manna - road – desert – Promised Land - corn

You will see that in spite of the fact that the **road** twists and turns we shall get there in the end and that Our Lord will lead us by way of the **desert** to his **promised land**; and from time to time he will give us something that will make us prize the desert more than cultivated ground where the **corn** grows in due season but where no **manna** falls. (**SelLet** 210)

Mansion of your heart – mansions of Paris – name of owner

I also remembered the **great houses in Paris** on the front of which is written the **name** of the prince to whom they belong, and I rejoiced in the thought that the **mansion of your heart** belongs to Jesus Christ. May he live there eternally. (**SelLet** 91)

Mansions of Paris – mansion of your heart – name of owner

I also remembered the **great houses in Paris** on the front of which is written the **name** of the prince to whom they belong, and I rejoiced in the thought that the **mansion of your heart** belongs to Jesus Christ. May he live there eternally. (**SelLet** 91)

Mary – Joseph - shepherds – angels – stable – our desires

We are always wanting this and that, and although we have our sweet Jesus resting on our heart we are not satisfied; and yet this is all we can possibly need and desire. One thing alone is necessary—to be near him. Now tell me, my dear daughter, you know, don't you, that at the birth of Our Lord the **shepherds** heard the **angelic** and divine songs of heavenly beings; this is what the scriptures tell us. But nowhere does it say that **Our Lady and St. Joseph**, who were closest to the child, heard the angels' voices or saw the marvelous radiance; on the contrary, instead of hearing the angels sing they heard the child crying, and by the wretched light of some poor lantern they saw the eyes of this divine boy full of tears and saw him chilled by the cold. Now tell me frankly, would you not rather have been in the **dark stable** which was full of the baby's crying, rather than with the shepherds, ravished with joy and gladness by sweet heavenly music and the beauty of this marvelous light? (**SelLet** 120-121)

Mary - Peter

When **St. Peter** was still crude and unformed he had plenty of courage to say, 'May Jesus reign,' but only his **Mother** and his faithful lover who was given her as her child were ready to say this on Mount Calvary. (**SelLet** 197)

Mary – promptness – forest (hidden)

According to supernatural standards, my very dear daughter, how wisely you have acted! For so it was that **Our Lady** acted on that feast in the Gospel story of the day you entered, going in haste straight into the hill country of Judah. **Promptness** in doing the will of God is a sure way of attracting great and powerful graces for carrying out any good work; and you see, my very dear daughter, after the rude shock your heart felt when it gave up its feelings, fancies and inclinations to follow a higher attraction, you are now at last perfectly still and happy, at rest in the blessed and **hidden forest** you have chosen as a home where you will live and sing for ever the glory of your soul's savior and creator. (**SelLet** 283)

Mary – St. John – darkness

Go on like this, then, my very dear daughter, in the **darkness** of the Passion. I say, in the darkness, and I leave you to think this out: at the foot of the cross, in the strange and dreadful darkness which came down on earth, **Our Lady** and **St. John** no longer heard our Savior, no longer saw him and felt nothing except bitterness and distress; and although they had faith, that too was in darkness, for it was necessary that they should share in the Savior's dereliction. (**SelLet** 202)

Mast – high seas of worldly life – captain – sails – anchor – breeze - haven

And to end where I began: you are taking to the **high seas of worldly life**, but do not on that account change your **captain**, your **mast**, your **sails**, your **anchor**, your fair **breeze**. Always keep Jesus as your **captain**, his cross for your **mast** on which to spread the **sails** of your good resolutions; let your **anchor** be deep trust in him and then sail on happily. May the favorable **breeze** of heavenly grace fill your sails more and more and carry you safely and joyfully into the **haven** of a blessed eternity, which is the true and heartfelt wish, Sir, of, your most humble servant, Francis, Bishop of Geneva. (**SelLet** 190)

Mast – sailors (bad) – seasickness – patience

Learn a lesson from people who are **bad sailors** and feel all the horrors of **sea-sickness**: after they have gone swaying all round the ship, exploring it to find relief, they finally come to rest by clinging to the **mast** and hold on to it tightly so as to prevent the dizziness which seizes them. It is true that their relief is short-lived and uncertain; but if you humbly cling to the foot of the Cross you will at least find **patience** sweeter there than anywhere else, and distress more pleasant. (**SelLet** 49)

Masters - apprentices (spiritual life)

Young **apprentices in the love of God** gird themselves: they take on the mortifications which they themselves think good, they choose their penance, their form of resignation and devotion and do their own will along with God's will; but the old **masters** of the trade suffer themselves to be bound and girt by others, submitting to the yoke imposed on them, and go along the kind of roads which they would not choose by their own inclination. It is also true that they stretch forth their hands; for although their inclinations resist, they willingly allow themselves to be governed against their will, and say that obedience is better than burnt-offerings: and this is how they give glory to God, crucifying not only their flesh but their spirit as well. (**SelLet** 203)

Mirror – heavenly love

You are undoubtedly called to a manly, brave, valiant and unswerving devotion which is to serve as a **mirror** to show forth to many the truth of **heavenly love**; and is also a worthy reparation for past faults, if ever you were ranged on the side of the vanity of earthly loves. (**SelLet** 214)

Mistletoe – tree

But then how is it possible, my daughter, that I can combine so much good will with so many imperfections showing and growing in me? No indeed, this does not happen with my will or by my will, although it appears to form part of my will. It seems to me that they are like **mistletoe** which grows and shows on a **tree**, although it is not part of the tree, on the tree but not of it. (**SelLet** 175)

Mists – sun

My very dear sister, these **mists** are not so thick that the **sun** cannot melt them away. Believe me, God who has led you up till now will go on holding you in his blessed hand; but you must throw yourself into the arms of his providence with complete trust and forgetfulness of self; now is the right time. (**Treatise** 9. 9) (**SelLet** 217)

Mists – sun – patience

But if after all this you cannot find peace in these remedies, be **patient**; wait till the **sun** rises, it will scatter the morning **mists**. (**SelLet** 49)

Mole

Although according to my temperament I am shy, nervous and as timid as a **mole**, I want to have a good try to overcome these natural passions and little by little learn to do everything that belongs to the office which obedience, proceeding from God, has laid upon me. (**SelLet** 241)

Monkeys - draymen – parrots – peacocks

I am miserable and so I don't feel like talking: **draymen** and **parrots** do as much; I feel miserable, but since charity demands that I should talk I will do it: that is what spiritual people say. I have been slighted and I get cross: **peacocks** and **monkeys** do as much; I have been slighted and I rejoice: that is what the apostles did. (**SelLet** 242)

Moses - Joshua

So you will be my **Joshua** who will fight God's cause in person, and I shall be here like another **Moses**, lifting up my hands to heaven, imploring the divine mercy for you so that you may overcome the difficulties in the way of your good intentions. (**SelLet** 222)

Moses – Promised Land – glass of water

You make me think of **Moses**. When this holy man had arrived on Mount Pisgah he saw the whole of the **Promised Land** before his eyes, the land which he had longed and hoped for forty years in the hardship of the desert, while his people murmured and rebelled. He saw the land of promise but did not set foot in it, and died even as he beheld it. He had your **glass of water** at his lips and could not drink. How deeply his soul must have sighed within him! He died a more blessed death there than many did in the Promised Land, since God himself honored him in his burial. (**SelLet 79**)

Mother – child – complaining to God

Do not impose force on yourself not to complain, but I would like you to **complain to God** in a spirit of dependence, as a tender **child** would speak to its **mother**; for provided you do it lovingly, there is no danger in complaining, nor in asking to be healed, nor in changing one's position and allowing oneself to be helped and relieved. (**SelLet 155**)

Mother – child - infirmity

Thus a **child's** weakness and **infirmity** does not please a **mother** but she nevertheless goes on loving her child, even tenderly and with compassion; and so too, although God does not love our imperfections and venial sins, he goes on loving us tenderly. (**SelLet 256**)

Mother – child – walking – kiss of charity - God

My third rule is that you should be like a little **child** who while it knows that its **mother** is holding its sleeve **walks** boldly and runs all round without being distressed at a little fall or stumble; after all, it is as yet rather unsteady on its legs. In the same way, as long as you realize that **God** is holding on to you by your will and resolution to serve him, go on boldly and do not be upset by your little set-backs and falls; there is need to be put out by this provided you throw yourself into his arms from time to time and kiss him with the **kiss of charity**. (**SelLet 45-46**)

Mother – daughter – tranquility

The most important thing of all is to make sure of having **tranquility**, not because it is the **mother of contentment** but because it is the **daughter of the love of God** and of our own will's resignation. (**SelLet 154**)

Mother of God's children – Church

Also speak to the Church, saying: 'O **mother of the children of God!** I will never separate myself from you; I want to die and live in your keeping. (**SelLet 66**)

Mother's breast - child – sleeping

A little **child** that is at its **mother's breast** while she is **asleep** is really in its right and proper place although both are silent. (**SelLet 175**)

Mothers (soft-hearted)

Do not be soft with yourself: **soft-hearted mothers** spoil their children. (**SelLet 237**)

Mothers – daughters – tribulations

So what I say is this: your temptations come from the devil and from hell, but your distress and affliction come from God and paradise; the **mothers** come from Babylon but the **daughters** from Jerusalem. Despise the temptations, embrace the **tribulations**. (**SelLet 86**)

Mountain of perfection – valley

This good Mother says that there is no need to use the imagination to picture the sacred humanity of our Savior. No, perhaps not for those who have already gone a long way up the **mountain of perfection**; but I think it is expedient for the rest of us who are still in the **valleys**, although we long to mount higher, to use all our resources including the imagination. (**SelLet** 109)

Mountains (snow-covered) – ice – infirmities

And believe me that this heart of mine which lives in the midst of the **snow-covered mountains** and **ice** of my own **infirmities** never felt any coldness for my very dear daughter's heart; my own misfortune is robbing me of this heart, but I prefer to lose it, provided God is not angered, rather than be found lacking in that holy sincerity which I vowed in the service of her soul, a soul which I could not flatter without betraying it, nor betray without causing its perdition; and this loss would be my affliction, for I love this daughter. (**SelLet** 292)

Mt. Sinai – smoke – thunder – lightning - God

But if we know that **God** lives in the darkness and on **Mount Sinai** which is full of **smoke** and surrounded with the roar of **thunder** and **lightning**, shall not all be well with us as long as we keep close to him. (**SelLet** 125)

Musician (deaf) – St. Jane

I am working on your Ninth Book of the *Love of God*, and today, praying in front of my crucifix, God showed me your soul and your spiritual state in the image of an excellent **musician**, born subject to a king who loved him dearly, and who had shown him that he cared passionately for the sweet melody of his lute and voice. This poor singer went **deaf, like you**, and no longer heard his own melodies; his master was often away, yet he did not stop singing, because he knew that his master had taken him into his service for his ability to sing. . . . (**Treatise** 9. 9) (**SelLet** 216-217)

Musicians – singing – self-inspection

One might also compare them to **musicians** who **sing** themselves hoarse by too assiduously practicing their motet. The mind which wears itself out with continual, fervid **self-inspection** is exhausted when it should go into action in real earnest. (**SelLet** 45)

Myrrh - gold – incense

Keep very close to the crib throughout the octave of the Holy Kings. If you love riches you will find there the **gold** that the Kings left; if you love honors you will find **incense**, and if you love things that delight the senses there is the sweet-smelling **myrrh** which scents the whole stable. (**SelLet** 225)

Myrrh (bundle of) – difficult time (pregnancy)

Do not worry because you are unable to perform acts of virtue as you would like to; for as I have told you, they do not cease to be good even if they are done apathetically and dully and are, as it were, forced. You can only give God what you have got, and in this difficult time you have nothing else to offer. **At a time like this**, dear daughter, your beloved is as a **bundle of myrrh** to you; go on pressing him to your heart. (**SelLet** 155)

Nails – shadows - thorns – spears - with Jesus and Mary

Live with your sweet **Jesus** and your holy **Abbess**, my dear daughter, among dark **shadows**, **nails**, **thorns**, **spears** and dereliction; and together with your Mistress live long in tears without getting anything in return; in the end God will raise you up and fill you with rejoicing and will make you see the desire of your heart. (**SelLet** 98)

Necklace – ring – cloak – coat

And again, St. Augustine bids us notice that Our Lord does not say, if anyone wants to take away your **ring**, give him your **necklace**, both of which are superfluous; but he is talking about **coats** and **cloaks** which are necessities. . (**SelLet** 288)

Needle – thread

All the same I did note for you somewhere that this use of the imagination should be very simple, and as it were, a **needle** into which we **thread** our soul's affections and resolutions. (**SelLet** 110)

Nest of doves - edifice – language

Take no pains to construct your letters to me carefully, for I am not looking for a fine **edifice** or the **language** of angels, but for the **nest of doves** and the language of love. . (**SelLet** 268)

Nests - halcyons

The other day I was considering what authors tell us about **halcyons**, small birds that lay their eggs out at sea. It appears that they make completely round **nests** and so tightly compact that the water can in no way penetrate them; right at the top there is just a small hole by which they can breathe and draw in air. In this nest they put their little ones, so that when the sea takes them by surprise, they can swim safely and float on the waves without being either waterlogged or submerged; and the air which is taken in by the little hole serves as a counterweight and balances these small spheres and tiny boats in such a way that they never overturn. O dear daughter, how I wish that our hearts could be like that, very compact, snugly lined all round, so that when the world's anxieties and tempests beat against them, they cannot force an entry. There is, moreover, no opening except towards heaven, so that we may only breathe towards our Savior and draw him in as we draw in air. And for whom or for what is this nest to be made, my dear daughter? For our little fledglings, for our love of God, for our divine and heavenly affections.

But while the halcyons are building their nests and while their little ones are yet frail to withstand the power of the tossing waves, see how God takes care of them and has pity on them, so that the sea does not carry them away and swallow them up. For his holy love's sake, his sovereign goodness will safeguard the nest of our hearts against the assaults of the world, protecting us from attack. Oh, how I love these birds which are surrounded by water and live by the air, which hide in the ocean and only see the sky! They swim like fish and sing like birds; and what I find most delightful is that they cast their anchor in an upward, not in a downward direction. O my sister, my daughter, may our sweet Jesus make us such, that surrounded by the world and by the flesh, we may live only by the spirit; that in the midst of the vanities of this earth we may always have heaven in view; that living with men, we may praise him with the angels, and that the anchorage of our hopes may always be on high and in paradise. (**SelLet** 105-106)

Night – day

Night is as **day** to us, when God is in our heart, and the **day** is as the **night** when he is not there. (SelLet 104)

Night - spinning – distaff – day – thread – knotted tangle

Keep on doing this, putting your hand to the task, **spinning** a little every **day**, whether by daylight, in interior joy and brightness, or at **night**, by the lamplight of helplessness and dryness of spirit. The Wise Man praises the valiant woman for this: 'Her fingers,' he says, 'have taken hold of the spindle.' How I should like to talk to you about these words! Your **distaff** is the store of all your desires: spin just a little every day, draw out the **thread** of your plans until you put them into effect, and you will certainly do well. But beware of over-eager haste, else your thread will get into a **knotted tangle** and you will not be able to work your spindle. Let us keep going all the time; however slowly we get on, we shall still make plenty of way. (SelLet 119-120)

Nose in right direction - sailing – ocean of worldly affairs – look-out in prow

People who are **sailing** on the broad **ocean of worldly affairs** and yet striving to reach the land of eternity have a certain presentiment of heaven which cheers and encourages them in a marvelous way; but they should keep on the **look-out in the prow** of the ship and have their **nose** turned in the **right direction**. (SelLet 55-56)

Nurse

Furthermore, my very dear Mother, you must not keep any sort of **nurse**, but as you see, you must give up even the nurse who will nevertheless still be there; and you must remain before the throne of God's mercy like a poor, needy little creature, quite naked, never asking for any action or affection for this creature. At the same time you must practice indifference with regard to all things of this kind which it may please God to prescribe for you, without stopping to consider whether it is I who am to serve as your nurse. As you see, if you took a nurse to your own liking you would not be going out of yourself but still have your own way; but this is what you must chiefly avoid. (SelLet 243)

Nutshell - apple – chestnut peel

And the apostle of the Cross and the Crucifix cries out and says: 'Even unto this hour we both hunger and thirst and are naked and are buffeted'; and finally, 'we are made as the refuse of this world, the off-scouring of all', like a bit of **apple** or **chestnut peel**, or a **nutshell**. (SelLet 289)

Ocean of worldly affairs – sailing – look-out in prow – nose in right direction

People who are **sailing** on the broad **ocean of worldly affairs** and yet striving to reach the land of eternity have a certain presentiment of heaven which cheers and encourages them in a marvelous way; but they should keep on the **look-out in the prow** of the ship and have their **nose** turned in the **right direction**. (SelLet 55-56)

Odor – holocaust

God has not shut us out from enjoying his sweetness, he has only withdrawn for a little while so that we may live for him and not for his delights; so that our sisters who are in need may find compassionate help in us and tender, loving support; so as to receive a sweet **odor** from the **holocaust** of a heart that has been burnt, consumed and brought low. (SelLet 199)

Offices (lowly) – inner sanctuary

We ourselves do not deserve such a high rank in God's service; we must first of all serve him in **lowly offices** before being drawn into the **inner sanctuary**. (**SelLet** 158)

Oil in lamp - flame

An even temper, gentleness and sweetness are rarer than perfect chastity but no less desirable for that. I commend these virtues to you, my very dear daughter, because the **flame** of good example depends on them as on **oil in a lamp**; nothing edifies others more than a loving good temper. (**SelLet** 247)

Oil of kindness

There were ten virgins and only five had enough **oil of** merciful and meek **kindness**. (**SelLet** 247)

Onesimus - Philemon

When the great apostle commends poor **Onesimus** to **Philemon** he says so many beautiful things that we are quite carried away with love: if you love me, he says, if you have received me in your heart, 'receive him as my own bowels'. This is what he calls Onesimus who had done some injury to Philemon, which is why he is angry. O my dear Philemon, my daughter I mean, if you love me, if you have received me in your heart, receive too my dear daughter Onesima, and bear with her; that is, receive her as my own bowels, for this is what she really is for Our Lord. (**SelLet** 280)

Onions of Egypt - manna – garlic

Another good instance: God gave the children of Israel **manna** in the desert, a most delicious food; and what happens? They do not want it but set their heart on the **garlic and onions of Egypt**. Our miserable nature always wants to have things its own way and not God's way. (**SelLet** 59)

Orange trees – fruit – flowers – leaves – desire for holiness

This **desire** of yours, dear Madam, should be like the **orange trees** on the sea coast at Genoa, covered almost the whole year round with **fruit, flowers and leaves** growing all at the same time; for your desires should always be bearing fruit as you put some of them into effect every day, and at the same time you should never cease longing for some new occasion of progress. (**SelLet** 51)

Orchard unfenced – fruit - changes

The least pretext is enough to make one **change** an exercise, a plan, a rule; a mere trifle causes one to give up a rule or good habits, and in this way the heart grows dissipated and distracted; it is like an **orchard unfenced** on all sides so that the **fruit** is not for the owner but for any chance passer-by. (**SelLet** 71)

Organ – wind – one pumping

We are like the **organ** where nothing can be done without the **wind**, and yet the **person who does the pumping** gets no praise. So pray for me often, my dear daughter, and you will be preaching with me. (**SelLet** 260)

Owl – mind of man

Holy Scripture is therefore clear in its words; but the **mind of man** is dark, and like an **owl**, it cannot see such a clear light. (**SelLet** 269)

Palm tree – cherry tree – fruit

Cherry trees bear their **fruit** quickly because they only bear cherries which keep but a short time; but the **palm**, the prince of trees, only begins bearing **fruit** a hundred years after it has been planted, it is said. A mediocre sort of life can be achieved in a year; but the perfection for which we are striving—that, my dear daughter, takes quite a few years to establish itself, I mean in the ordinary way. (**SelLet** 274)

Parrots – draymen – peacocks – monkeys

I am miserable and so I don't feel like talking: **draymen** and **parrots** do as much; I feel miserable, but since charity demands that I should talk I will do it: that is what spiritual people say. I have been slighted and I get cross: **peacocks** and **monkeys** do as much; I have been slighted and I rejoice: that is what the apostles did. (**SelLet** 242)

Path - garden of prayer

Another time we shall be much astonished when he takes us by the hand, talks about one thing and another, and walks up and down with us in the **path of his garden of prayer**; and even if he never does this, let us be content with the fact that it is our duty to be in his suite and that it is a great grace for us and a still greater honor that he should allow us to be in his presence. (**SelLet** 149)

Path – highway – light – imagination in prayer

This is the great **highway**, my dear daughter, which we must not leave for yet awhile until the **light** grows a little stronger and we can see the **paths** more clearly. (**SelLet** 110)

Peacocks – draymen – parrots – monkeys

I am miserable and so I don't feel like talking: **draymen** and **parrots** do as much; I feel miserable, but since charity demands that I should talk I will do it: that is what spiritual people say. I have been slighted and I get cross: **peacocks** and **monkeys** do as much; I have been slighted and I rejoice: that is what the apostles did. (**SelLet** 242)

Pearl oyster – dew of heaven – waters of the world - heart

Do not allow your mind to be preoccupied with a vain promise of tranquility, delight, merit; but hold up your heart to your spouse, completely empty of all affections other than his chaste love, and beg him to fill it purely and simply with the inclinations, desires and wishes which are in his own heart, so that like a **pearl oyster** your **heart** only conceives by the **dew of heaven** and not by the **waters of the world**; and you will see that God will help us and that we shall do well, choosing rightly and putting our ideas into effect. (**SelLet** 124)

Pearls – crosses – gold – precious stones

Yes, my very dear daughter, I knew very well that your piety was a prop for your self-love, and pitifully human. In short, we do not love **crosses** if they are not made of **gold**, studded with **pearls** and **precious stones**. (**SelLet** 290)

Pears – strawberries – cherries – apples - garden – season - death

Strawberries and **cherries** are picked before even the most delicious kinds of **pears** and **apples**; but that is because they are in season at a different time. Let God gather to him whatever he has planted in his **garden**; he takes nothing out of season.

(SelLet 141)

Pheasants – dust plumage

Do tell her to go on in good faith, keeping to the middle way of the lovable virtues of simplicity and humility, and not rushing to extremes with so many subtle arguments and considerations. Let her boldly powder her hair; don't **pheasants**, those pretty birds, powder and **dust their plumage** so as not to risk getting lice? (SelLet 253)

Philemon – Onesimus

When the great apostle commends poor **Onesimus** to **Philemon** he says so many beautiful things that we are quite carried away with love: if you love me, he says, if you have received me in your heart, 'receive him as my own bowels'. This is what he calls Onesimus who had done some injury to Philemon, which is why he is angry. O my dear Philemon, my daughter I mean, if you love me, if you have received me in your heart, receive too my dear daughter Onesima, and bear with her; that is, receive her as my own bowels, for this is what she really is for Our Lord. (SelLet 280)

Pillar – tabernacle – tree – flowering branches - leaves

These longings are the **flowering branches** on the **tree** of your purpose in life; the **leaves** are your frequent realization of your weakness and keep your good works and your good desires in a healthy state. All this may be called one of the **pillars** of your **tabernacle**. (SelLet 51)

Pillar – widowhood (love for) – stars

The **other** (pillar) is your **love for your widowhood**, a love which is holy and desirable for as many reasons as there are **stars** in the sky and without which widowhood is false and not honorable. St. Paul commands us to honor widows who are widows indeed; but women who do not honor their widowhood are only widows outwardly while their heart is still in the married state. (SelLet 52)

Pillars (twin) – tabernacle

As long as you keep the **twin pillars** of your **tabernacle** in good condition and make them ever more firm and stable it matters little how it is done. (SelLet 52)

Pilot - St. Martha – St. Mary Magdalen – boat

Yesterday I also remembered **St. Martha**, exposed in a small **boat** with **Mary Magdalen**; God was her **pilot** and cast her upon our shores here in France. (SelLet 135)

Poison - bees – sting – thoughts

As to your **thoughts**, you are not asked to account for those which just pass through your head, but only those which like **bees**, leave their **poison** and **sting** when they have wounded you. (SelLet 95)

Port (Royal) – road (royal)

Do not burden yourself too heavily with vigils and austerities (and do believe me, my very dear daughter, for I know what I am talking about in this matter), but go to the **Royal Port** of religious life by the **royal road** of the love of God and your neighbor, of humility and meekness. (SelLet 266)

Portraits – image of Father

I cannot refuse you anything, my very dear daughter, and so the two **portraits** you want shall be painted. Why have I not done more to keep our **Father's image** faithfully mirrored in my heart? . (SelLet 258)

Precious ointment - balm

It is of very great benefit for us to speak to so great a lord, and when he answers he pours out **balm** and much **precious ointment** to fill the soul with sweetness. (SelLet 148)

Precious stones - crosses – gold – pearls

Yes, my very dear daughter, I knew very well that your piety was a prop for your self-love, and pitifully human. In short, we do not love **crosses** if they are not made of **gold**, studded with **pearls** and **precious stones**. (SelLet 290)

Precipice - roads (rough)

Well now, my very dear daughter, when are we going to make up our minds to prove our fidelity to our Savior if not on occasions like these? When are we going to learn to rein in our heart, our judgment and our tongue, if not along these **rough roads** so near to the edge of the **precipice**? (SelLet 184)

Pregnant woman – one child – desires

Our Lord compares the soul which desires perfection to a woman who brings forth a child; but surely, if the **pregnant woman** wanted to produce two or more children at the same time and together she would die of it. Each must wait its turn. If you let **each child** of your soul, that is to say every **desire** of yours to serve God in various ways, emerge singly and in turn you will find this a great relief to your soul. (SelLet 49)

Prisoners – lovers

God knows, my very dear Sister, what the monasteries are like where this holy exercise is not practiced; God knows what kind of obedience, poverty and chastity is observed there in the face of his divine Providence, and if these assemblies of women are not rather communities of **prisoners** than of true **lovers** of Jesus Christ. (SelLet 220)

Procession - widow – tallow candle

Not long ago I saw a **widow** in a **procession** of the Blessed Sacrament, and while the others were carrying large candles of white wax she was only carrying a tiny **tallow candle** which she had probably made herself; and to make things worse the wind put it out. This neither brought her closer to the Blessed Sacrament, nor kept her at a greater distance; she got to the church as soon as everybody else. (SelLet 93-94)

Promised Land - road – desert – corn - manna

You will see that in spite of the fact that the **road** twists and turns we shall get there in the end and that Our Lord will lead us by way of the **desert** to his **promised land**; and from time to time he will give us something that will make us prize the desert more than cultivated ground where the **corn** grows in due season but where no **manna** falls. (SelLet 210)

Pruning-hook – shoots

For I am a great friend of simplicity, but I generally leave the **pruning-hook** for cutting back useless **shoots** in the hands of God: and here he is, cutting back this matter of powder and gilt cards. (SelLet 276)

Quiver - arrows – shaft – Archer

May we be for ever attached to the cross and may a hundred thousand **arrows** pierce us, provided that our heart has first been pierced by the burning **shaft** of the love of God. May this arrow make us die that holy death which is worth more than a thousand lives. I shall go and beg this of the **Archer** who bears the **quiver**, and by the intercession of St. Sebastian whose feast-day we celebrate today. (SelLet 129)

Rachel – children – Bala – Abbess' (Mary's) knees

As **Rachel** was unable to have **children**, she gave **Bala** to her husband as a second in marriage (at that time men were allowed to have several wives so as to multiply the people of God). Bala bore her children on Rachel's knees; then Rachel took them as her own, so that Bala, her second, had no more responsibility for them, at least, no prime responsibility. O my daughter, I think that I have born you once and for all on the **knees** of the beautiful Rachel, our very dear and **sacred Abbess**; she has taken you to herself; as for me, I no longer have the chief responsibility for you. Stay there on her knees, or rather humbly prostrate at her feet. (SelLet 92)

Rachel - Leah – children

Poor **Leah** is a little bleary-eyed and ugly, but your spirit must make do with her before you can have the beautiful **Rachel**. Be of good cheer, her **children** will be beautiful, her works agreeable to God. (SelLet 78)

Rain (after, fine)

Do not force yourself, do not make yourself miserable: **after the rain** it will be **fine**. Do not keep such an anxious and watchful eye on yourself. . (SelLet 93)

Rain down tears

Would you believe it, I have a daughter who writes to tell me that my being far away from her rends her with bitter grief; that if she did not restrain her eyes they would **rain down as many tears** to weep at my departure as the sky holds water; and more rhapsodies of this kind. (SelLet 257)

Razor

Who would not tremble when the **razor** cuts and divides soul from spirit, the heart of flesh from the spiritual heart and self from self? (SelLet 277)

Rebecca - Abraham's servant

We know what **Abraham's servant** did in order to see whether **Rebecca** was fit to be the wife of his master's son: he asked her for a drink of water, to see whether she would give it willingly, and also to his camels. A little courtesy, a humble virtue, but the sign of a much greater one. (**SelLet** 159)

Rebecca - two nations within – Esau and Jacob – self-love – love of God

Oh blessed be God, my dear daughter, this sickness is not unto death, but so that God may be glorified thereby.' Two **nations are in your womb**, as **Rebecca** was told; one is struggling against the other in your spirit, but in the end the younger shall defeat the elder. **Self-love** never dies until we ourselves die; it has thousands of ways of entrenching itself in our soul, but we cannot cast it out; it is the first-born of our soul, for it is natural, or at least co-natural to us; self-love is attended by a legion of armed horsemen to help it—emotions, activities, passions; it is skilful and knows a thousand subtle twists and turns. To balance this you have the **love of God** on the other side, which is conceived and born later; and that too has its emotions, inclinations, passions, activities. These two children in the same womb struggle with one another like Esau and Jacob; that is why Rebecca cried out: Would it not be better for me to die than to bear children with so much pain? The result of these convulsions is a certain inner disgust, so that you cannot relish food, however good. But what does it matter whether you relish your food or not, as long as you do not stop eating? (**SelLet** 77)

Reed – person

You would say: this **person** is a **reed** on which Our Lord wants me to lean; I feel quite safe because it is God's will, but all the same, the **reed** is worthless. (**SelLet** 157)

Reefs – waters (deep)

I am less apprehensive about this way of life than many other people and I do not consider it one of the most dangerous for men of noble spirit and of manly heart, for there are only two main **reefs** to guard against in these **deep waters**: vanity which is the ruin of sensual, slothful, effeminate and vacillating characters, and ambition which ruins those who are foolhardy and presumptuous. (**SelLet** 186)

Remedies – healing

Beg Our Lord and the spiritual fathers near you to give you **healing draughts**; people who can examine at first hand what is wrong with you will know perfectly well what **remedies** to apply. (**SelLet** 48)

Ring – necklace – cloak – coat

And again, St. Augustine bids us notice that Our Lord does not say, if anyone wants to take away your **ring**, give him your **necklace**, both of which are superfluous; but he is talking about **coats** and **cloaks** which are necessities. . (**SelLet** 288)

Road – desert – Promised Land - corn - manna

You will see that in spite of the fact that the **road** twists and turns we shall get there in the end and that Our Lord will lead us by way of the **desert** to his **promised land**; and from time to time he will give us something that will make us prize the desert more than cultivated ground where the **corn** grows in due season but where no **manna** falls. (**SelLet** 210)

Road (right)

Let us go on steadily, my daughter; we are on the **right road**. Do not look either right or left; no, this is the best road for us. Do not let us waste time thinking how attractive the other roads look, but let us just salute those who pass along other roads, saying quite simply to them: may God guide us so that we may all meet at home. (**SelLet** 133)

Road (royal) - Port (Royal)

Do not burden yourself too heavily with vigils and austerities (and do believe me, my very dear daughter, for I know what I am talking about in this matter), but go to the **Royal Port** of religious life by the **royal road** of the love of God and your neighbor, of humility and meekness. (**SelLet** 266)

Road of afflictions – courage

But **take heart**, I entreat you, my very dear sister; you have only suffered the **hardship of the road** for three years, and you want rest! But remember two things: one, that the children of Israel wandered in the desert for forty years before they reached the land they had been promised; and yet this journey could easily have been done in seven weeks. Nor were they allowed to inquire why God made them go such a long way round and led them by such rough roads; and all those who murmured, died before the goal was reached. (**SelLet** 82-83)

Roads (rough)

You have before now conquered many a difficulty, and you did it by God's grace; the same grace will be with you on future occasions and will deliver you from difficulties and **rough roads** as you come upon them, for God will send an angel to carry you over the most dangerous places. (**SelLet** 234)

Roads (rough) – precipice

Well now, my very dear daughter, when are we going to make up our minds to prove our fidelity to our Savior if not on occasions like these? When are we going to learn to rein in our heart, our judgment and our tongue, if not along these **rough roads** so near to the edge of the **precipice**? (**SelLet** 184)

Rod – David – chastisement – choice

God gave **David** the **choice** of the **rod** with which he should be **scourged**; and it seems to me (blessed be God) that I would rather not have chosen, but have left it all to his Divine Majesty. The more wholly a cross comes from God, the more we ought to love it. (**SelLet** 79)

Roses - mercy - thorns – faults

For it is true, dear daughter, that our **faults** which are **thorns** as long as they remain hidden in our hearts are turned into **roses** and sweetness when they come out by voluntary accusation; for as our malice draws them into our hearts so the Holy Spirit's **mercy** casts them out. . (**SelLet** 101)

Run - traitor – kindle – chill – eagerness

I am inclined to think that if you could prevent this **bustling eagerness** you would gain a great deal; for it is one of the greatest **traitors** encountered by devotion and true virtue. It pretends to **kindle** us for our profit but all it does is to **chill** our fervor, only making us **run** so as to trip us up. That is why we must beware of it at all times but more especially during prayer. (SelLet 148)

Run within barriers – carry off the ring

But here is a little hint of a remedy. **Run within the barriers** because they have been put up; it will not stop you from **carrying off the ring**, and with even greater certainty. (SelLet 93)

Running – walking – devotion

Ordinarily good people **walk** in God's ways, but the **devout run**, and the really devout **run swiftly**. (SelLet 57)

Rustling of leaves – wind – clash of armor

You cling too jealously to the purity of your faith, and you feel that any little thing can spoil it. No, no, dear daughter, let the **wind** blow freely, and don't mistake the **rustling of leaves** for the **clash of armor**. (SelLet 97)

Sailing – ocean of worldly affairs – look-out in prow – nose in right direction

People who are **sailing** on the broad **ocean of worldly affairs** and yet striving to reach the land of eternity have a certain presentiment of heaven which cheers and encourages them in a marvelous way; but they should keep on the **look-out in the prow** of the ship and have their **nose** turned in the **right direction**. (SelLet 55-56)

Sailors (bad) – seasickness – mast – patience

Learn a lesson from people who are **bad sailors** and feel all the horrors of **sea-sickness**: after they have gone swaying all round the ship, exploring it to find relief, they finally come to rest by clinging to the **mast** and hold on to it tightly so as to prevent the dizziness which seizes them. It is true that their relief is short-lived and uncertain; but if you humbly cling to the foot of the Cross you will at least find **patience** sweeter there than anywhere else, and distress more pleasant. (SelLet 49)

Sails – high seas of worldly life – captain – mast – anchor – breeze - haven

And to end where I began: you are taking to the **high seas of worldly life**, but do not on that account change your **captain**, your **mast**, your **sails**, your **anchor**, your fair **breeze**. Always keep Jesus as your **captain**, his cross for your **mast** on which to spread the **sails** of your good resolutions; let your **anchor** be deep trust in him and then sail on happily. May the favorable **breeze** of heavenly grace fill your sails more and more and carry you safely and joyfully into the **haven** of a blessed eternity, which is the true and heartfelt wish, Sir, of, your most humble servant, Francis, Bishop of Geneva. (SelLet 190)

Sally of the will - battle with temptations to faith – arguing – Eve

And now I want to suggest another remedy. **Temptations against the faith** aim directly at the understanding, striving to draw it into argument, to occupy and absorb it. Do you know what to do while the enemy is wasting his energy trying to scale the intellect? Make a **sally through the gates of the will** and charge him roundly; when the temptation against faith presents itself in order to draw you into argument, saying: 'How can this be? And if this applies, how does that fit in?' you arrange things in such a way that instead of arguing with the enemy by parleying, your will and your feelings round on him boldly while you cry out with heart and voice: 'Traitor! Wretch! You left the Church of the angels and you are trying to get me to leave the Church of the saints! You are disloyal, faithless, and perfidious! You gave the first woman the apple of perdition and now you want me to taste it too! Get thee behind me, Satan; it is written, thou shalt not tempt the Lord, thy God. No, I will not argue, I will not dispute with you. **Eve** thought she could argue with you and she was lost. May Jesus reign supreme, I believe in him; may the Church triumph, and I cleave to it!' (**SelLet 65**)

Samson – Water – jawbone of an ass

Here is **water**, Sir; even if it comes out of the **jawbone of an ass**, **Samson** will not refuse to drink. (**SelLet 56**)

Sanctuary (inner) - offices (lowly)

We ourselves do not deserve such a high rank in God's service; we must first of all serve him in **lowly offices** before being drawn into the **inner sanctuary**. (**SelLet 158**)

Sauce – God chooses

What a marvelous thing you said when you wrote to me: as long as I am serving God I don't care what kind of **sauce** he puts me in. But be careful to chew this over and over again in your mind; let it melt in your mouth and do not swallow it whole. Mother Theresa whom you love so much and in whom I too rejoice, says somewhere' that we often say certain words by habit and, as it were, only half aware of their meaning; we think they come from the depths of our soul, but we may discover later on when it comes to the test that this is far from being the case. Well, you tell me it is all the same to you whatever the **sauce**. Come now, you know very well into what sauce he has put you, into what state of life and condition; and tell me, is it all the same to you ? And you also know that he wants you to pay that debt day by day, and you write and tell me about it, and surely this is not all the same to you. Dear Lord, how subtly self-love slips into our feelings, even if they look and seem so very devout! . . . The great secret is this: find out what God wants, and when you know, try to do his will gaily or at least bravely; and over and above that we must love God's will and the obligation it lays upon us, even if we have to herd swine all our lives and do the most abject things in the world; for it must be all the same to us, whatever the **sauce** God chooses for us. This is the centre of perfection at which we must all aim, and whoever gets closest to it will win the prize. (**SelLet 88-89**)

Scales of justice

Keep the **scales of justice** well balanced between your daughters so that natural gifts do not make you partial in giving your affection and help. (**SelLet 247**)

School (God's)

My spirit certainly lives in the midst of your darkness and temptations, for it keeps very close to yours; your account of your difficulties touches me with compassion, but I can see clearly that all will be well in the end because **God**, our Beloved, teaches us a great deal in **his school** where you have learnt greater awareness and alertness. (**SelLet 99**)

Scurvy - dust

But do not be ashamed, daughter, of being a little grimy and covered with **dust**; it is better to be dusty than covered with **scurvy**, and as long as you humble yourself all will be well. (**SelLet 224**)

Sea (tempestuous) – diocese

Your messenger reached me when I was in the greatest possible difficulty on the **tempestuous sea of this diocese**, and I can hardly tell you how greatly I was consoled by your letters. . (**SelLet 75**)

Sea of charity – brooklets of love

O how impossible to tell, my Lord and God, how consoling it will be to love one another in heaven in this full **sea of charity**, when even these little **brooklets of love** give us so much! (**SelLet 95**)

Sea of penance - crown – St. Louis – eagle

For the next point, remember the feast day of **blessed King Louis**, the day on which you took the **crown** of your kingdom from your own heart so as to put it at the feet of Jesus, the King; the day on which you renewed your youth like the **eagle's**, plunging into the **sea of penance**; the day which heralded the eternal day for your soul. (**SelLet 74**)

Sea of the Church - waters (stormy) – launched

Indeed I need your prayers badly as I have **launched** out on the stormiest and troubled **waters** of the **sea of the Church**. (**SelLet 50**)

Seal (God's) – heart

While the great **seal of God's chancery** is upon your **heart** there is nothing to fear. (**SelLet 99**)

Seasickness – sailors (bad) – mast – patience

Learn a lesson from people who are **bad sailors** and feel all the horrors of **sea-sickness**: after they have gone swaying all round the ship, exploring it to find relief, they finally come to rest by clinging to the **mast** and hold on to it tightly so as to prevent the dizziness which seizes them. It is true that their relief is short-lived and uncertain; but if you humbly cling to the foot of the Cross you will at least find **patience** sweeter there than anywhere else, and distress more pleasant. (**SelLet 49**)

Season - strawberries – cherries – pears – apples - garden – death

Strawberries and **cherries** are picked before even the most delicious kinds of **pears** and **apples**; but that is because they are in season at a different time. Let God gather to him whatever he has planted in his **garden**; he takes nothing out of season. (**SelLet 141**)

Serpent – dove – heretics

Your good patron's son was writing one day to the devout Maxima, his spiritual daughter, and he said something of this kind: be simple and gracious as a **dove** when you are speaking to **heretics**, having compassion on their misfortune; be prudent as a **serpent** to slip away from their company quickly at chance meetings or on other occasions and after occasional visits. (**SelLet 94-95**)

Serpent – dove – virtues

To tell you the truth, helpless little white **doves** are much more attractive than **serpents**; and when we have to join the qualities of one with the other, I for my part would not like to give the dove's simplicity to the serpent, for the serpent would remain a serpent; but I should like to give the serpent's prudence to the dove, for it would still be beautiful. (**SelLet** 137)

Serpent into staff – water from rocks – thorns into roses

So this happy, longed-for hour will come on the day which God in his sovereign providence has ordained in the secret of his mercy; and then with untold secret consolations you will lay open your heart to his divine Goodness, and he will make **water flow from the rocks**, your **serpent will be turned into a staff**, and all the **thorns** of your heart into as many **sweet-scented roses**, whose sweetness will give great joy to your soul and to mine. (**SelLet** 101)

Serving maid – lady of the house – immediate change

Solomon said that a **serving maid** who suddenly becomes the **lady of the house** is a very insolent sort of creature. There is a great risk that the soul which has served its own passions and affections for a long time might turn proud and vain if it mastered them immediately. (**SelLet** 88)

Set sail

But while you are waiting for the hour when you too may **set sail**, assuage your motherly heart by thinking about this very blessed eternity in which he now is and which is close at hand for you. (**SelLet** 231)

Shadows - nails – thorns – spears - with Jesus and Mary

Live with your sweet **Jesus** and your holy **Abbess**, my dear daughter, among dark **shadows**, **nails**, **thorns**, **spears** and dereliction; and together with your Mistress live long in tears without getting anything in return; in the end God will raise you up and fill you with rejoicing and will make you see the desire of your heart. (**SelLet** 98)

Shaft – arrows – Archer - quiver

May we be for ever attached to the cross and may a hundred thousand **arrows** pierce us, provided that our heart has first been pierced by the burning **shaft** of the love of God. May this arrow make us die that holy death which is worth more than a thousand lives. I shall go and beg this of the **Archer** who bears the **quiver**, and by the intercession of St. Sebastian whose feast-day we celebrate today. (**SelLet** 129)

Shape us – cut – God

Let us lift our heart on high, my very dear Mother, and look upon **God's** heart which is so good and so loving towards us; let us adore and bless all that he wills for us: let him **cut** and **shape us** as he wishes, for we are his for ever. (**SelLet** 209-210)

Sheep

I have got to judge a cause this morning between two of our clergy of Gex, and this deprives me of the consolation of going to see the dearest **sheep** of my flock and of myself feasting them on the Bread of Life. (**SelLet** 193)

Shepherds – angels – Mary – Joseph - stable – our desires

We are always wanting this and that, and although we have our sweet Jesus resting on our heart we are not satisfied; and yet this is all we can possibly need and desire. One thing alone is necessary—to be near him. Now tell me, my dear daughter, you know, don't you, that at the birth of Our Lord the **shepherds** heard the **angelic** and divine songs of heavenly beings; this is what the scriptures tell us. But nowhere does it say that **Our Lady and St. Joseph**, who were closest to the child, heard the angels' voices or saw the marvelous radiance; on the contrary, instead of hearing the angels sing they heard the child crying, and by the wretched light of some poor lantern they saw the eyes of this divine boy full of tears and saw him chilled by the cold. Now tell me frankly, would you not rather have been in the **dark stable** which was full of the baby's crying, rather than with the shepherds, ravished with joy and gladness by sweet heavenly music and the beauty of this marvelous light? (**SelLet** 120-121)

Ship (our own) – journey of life

We must stay in our **own ship** to make the **journey from this life to the next**, and stay there willingly and lovingly. Even if it is not God's hand that has put us there but some human agency, we are there and we must stay put without fuss or protest. (**SelLet** 251)

Shoots – fruit (sin)

Selfishness, complacency, false liberty of spirit, these are things which one cannot well uproot from the human heart; one cannot do more than prevent them from bearing their **fruit**, which is **sin**; for one can never altogether stop their uprising, their first impetus, their **shoots**, as it were, their first impact and stirring; but one can moderate their number and frequency by the practice of opposite virtues and chiefly by the love of God. (**SelLet** 236-237)

Shoots - pruning-hook

For I am a great friend of simplicity, but I generally leave the **pruning-hook** for cutting back useless **shoots** in the hands of God: and here he is, cutting back this matter of powder and gilt cards. (**SelLet** 276)

Sick people – doctor - impossible

People who are **physically ill** often have a mental craving for the **doctor** who is at a distance, preferring him to the one who is close by. You must not long for the **impossible** or try to build on things which are difficult and uncertain of attainment. (**SelLet** 47)

Siege - doors – windows

Let him kick his heels outside, and keep all the **doors** and **windows** tightly shut: he will get tired of it in the end, and if he does not, God will make him raise the **siege**. . (**SelLet** 85)

Singing - blind man in Gospel

And when you are in choir and the temptation says: stop **singing!** Go on singing all the more perseveringly, as the **blind man in the Gospel** did. (**SelLet** 279)

Singing – musicians – self-inspection

One might also compare them to **musicians** who **sing** themselves hoarse by too assiduously practicing their motet. The mind which wears itself out with continual, fervid **self-inspection** is exhausted when it should go into action in real earnest. (**SelLet** 45)

Sink of iniquity – fountain of perfection – Mary Magdalen

God did, of course, cure some people suddenly, without leaving them any mark of their former diseases, as for instance in the case of Mary Magdalene whom he transformed from a **sink of iniquity** into a pure **fountain of perfection**; nor was she ever troubled from that moment onwards. (SelLet 87-88)

Sky of life

When you have asked your Father to console you, if it does not please him to do it, stop thinking about it, and summon up your courage to work out your salvation on the cross, as if you were never to be taken down from it, and as if you were never again to see the **sky of your life** bright and serene. (SelLet 83)

Slave – flirtations - judgment

Take care, I beseech you, not to get involved in **flirtations** and not to allow your affections to run away with your judgment and reason in your choice of those on whom you fix your affections; for once affection is given free rein it drags **judgment** along with it like a **slave** and impels it to very unsuitable choices, fully deserving the repentance which soon follows. . (SelLet 187)

Slave of the court - captive Israelites

The **Israelites** long ago said they could not do it because they were **captives** and slaves of the Babylonians as well as living in their land; but the man who is not a **slave of the court** can adore the Lord and serve him in sanctity at the court itself. No indeed, my very dear son, although you may change the place where you live, the work you do and the people you talk to, you will never, as I hope, change your heart, nor your heart change its love, nor your love its object, since you could never choose a worthier love for your heart nor a worthier object for your love than the One who is to make you happy for ever. In this way variety in the aspect of the court and of the world will never change your own aspect, for your eyes will always be fixed on heaven to which you aspire, and your tongue will always be invoking the sovereign good which is the object of your hope. . (SelLet 222)

Slaves – slave

How fortunate we are to be the **slaves** of this great God who made himself a **slave** for us! . (SelLet 202)

Sleeping - child – mother's breast

A little **child** that is at its **mother's breast** while she is **asleep** is really in its right and proper place although both are silent. (SelLet 175)

Sleeping – God's presence – statue in niche

I think we keep in the **presence of God** even while we are **asleep**, because we fall asleep in his sight, at his will and pleasure, and he puts us on our bed like a **statue into its nook**; and when we wake up we find that he is there, close to us; he has not moved and neither have we, so we can say we have kept in his presence but with our eyes closed in sleep. (SelLet 177)

Smoke - eagle

For those who put their trust in the Lord shall take wings like the **eagle**; but whoever loses heart shall come to nothing and vanish like **smoke**. . (SelLet 212)

Smoke – Mt. Sinai – thunder – lightning - God

But if we know that **God** lives in the darkness and on **Mount Sinai** which is full of **smoke** and surrounded with the roar of **thunder** and **lightning**, shall not all be well with us as long as we keep close to him . (**SelLet** 125)

Smoke of fire – wineskin – aridity

I have become, said David, like a **wineskin** dried in the **smoke of the fire**, so that one cannot tell how it could possibly serve any useful purpose. Let us put up with any amount of dryness and aridity, provided we love God. (**SelLet** 80)

Snow (whiter than) – sun (purer than)

I will not try and say how full my heart is for you, but I will say that it is full beyond compare; and this affection is **whiter than snow**, **purer than the sun**: that is why I have given it free rein since you left me, letting it have its way. (**SelLet** 95)

Soldier – leaving field

The **soldier** who **leaves the field** trembling with fear no doubt finds rest but no greater safety than he who goes on fighting. (**SelLet** 212)

Soldier (poor)

Strengthen the weakness of my shoulders, O God, and only weigh them down with a small load, so as to make me realize clearly what a **poor soldier** I should be if I were to see the armies face to face. (**SelLet** 104)

Soldiers – skirmishes – self-scrutiny

The other reason is that this **self-scrutiny**, if it is anxious and perplexed, is just a waste of time; and those who indulge in it are like **soldiers** who prepare to go into battle by too much **skirmishing** and sham-fighting among them-selves, so that when the time comes for the actual combat they find they are weary and completely spent. (**SelLet** 45)

Spark – ashes

In the meanwhile foster your good desire and see that the **spark** of it lives on beneath the **ashes** of humility and resignation to the will of God. (**SelLet** 149)

Spark – fire – Spirit

I shall never cease to pray God graciously to perfect his holy work in you, that is to say, to further your excellent desire and design to lead a perfect Christian life, a desire which you should love and foster tenderly in your heart as given to you by the **Holy Ghost** and as a **spark** of his **divine fire**. (**SelLet** 51)

Spears - shadows - nails – thorns – with Jesus and Mary

Live with your sweet **Jesus** and your holy **Abbess**, my dear daughter, among dark **shadows**, **nails**, **thorns**, **spears** and dereliction; and together with your Mistress live long in tears without getting anything in return; in the end God will raise you up and fill you with rejoicing and will make you see the desire of your heart. (**SelLet** 98)

Spin thread - woman (valiant) – distaff – spindle

I mean that you should be like the **valiant woman** of whom the Wise Man says: 'She hath put out her hand to strong things: and her fingers have taken hold of the spindle.' Meditate, lift up your mind and let it rise up to God, that is to say, draw God into your mind: those are the strong things. But with all that, do not forget your **distaff** and your **spindle: spin the thread** of little virtues, do humble works of charity. (**SelLet** 159-160)

Spindle – woman (valiant) – distaff – spin thread

I mean that you should be like the **valiant woman** of whom the Wise Man says: 'She hath put out her hand to strong things: and her fingers have taken hold of the spindle.' Meditate, lift up your mind and let it rise up to God, that is to say, draw God into your mind: those are the strong things. But with all that, do not forget your **distaff** and your **spindle: spin the thread** of little virtues, do humble works of charity. (**SelLet** 159-160)

Spindle (small - Jane) - distaff

Meanwhile you will wield your **distaff**, not with those great loaded **spindles**, for your fingers would not know how to handle them, but only in accordance with your **small** capacity. Humility, patience, abjection, gentleness of heart, resignation, simplicity, charity to the poor who are sick, putting up with those who are difficult, and imitating Christ in ways such as these can well be wound on your **little spindle**. (**SelLet** 116)

Spinning – distaff – day – night - thread – knotted tangle

Keep on doing this, putting your hand to the task, **spinning** a little every **day**, whether by daylight, in interior joy and brightness, or at **night**, by the lamplight of helplessness and dryness of spirit. The Wise Man praises the valiant woman for this: 'Her fingers,' he says, 'have taken hold of the spindle.' How I should like to talk to you about these words! Your **distaff** is the store of all your desires: spin just a little every day, draw out the **thread** of your plans until you put them into effect, and you will certainly do well. But beware of over-eager haste, else your thread will get into a **knotted tangle** and you will not be able to work your spindle. Let us keep going all the time; however slowly we get on, we shall still make plenty of way. (**SelLet** 119-120)

Spinning wool – clothing - Jane

Put this distaff reverently at your left side and go on **spinning** all the time with considerations, aspirations and good exercises, in holy imitation. Spin, I say, and draw forth all this delicate white wool from the spindle of your heart: the cloth that you will make of it will cover you and save you from confusion on the day of your death; it will keep you warm in winter, and as the Wise Man says, you will not fear the cold of the snows. And this is perhaps what this same Wise Man had in mind when he praised the virtuous woman, saying that, 'She hath put out her hand to strong things: and her fingers have taken hold of the spindle.' For what are these 'strong things' connected with the spindle, if not the mysteries of the Passion spun by means of our imitation? And then I wished you thousands and thousands of blessings, and prayed that on the great day of judgment we might all find ourselves clothed, some as bishops, some as widows, some as married people, some as Capuchins, some as Jesuits, some as vineyard workers, but all **clothed** in a garment of that same red and white wool, for these are the colors of the Bridegroom. (**SelLet** 115-116)

Spring – fountain

Indeed, my very dear Sister, you and your daughters are happy to have at last struck the **spring** of that living water which leads to eternal life and to want to drink it from our Savior's hand, to whom together with St. Catherine of Genoa and Blessed Mother Theresa you are saying this prayer: 'Lord, give me this water.'¹ May his divine Mercy be praised for ever, for he has made himself a source of living water in the midst of your community; for when we give ourselves to him in prayer Our Lord is a **fountain** from which our prayer can draw water to cleanse us, to cool us, to make us fruitful and fill us with sweetness. (**SelLet 220**)

St. Bernard - kissing crucifix – way to God

Your **St. Bernard** says that the soul which wants to **reach God** should begin by **kissing the feet of the crucifix**, purge its affections and firmly resolve to withdraw gradually from the world and its vanities. Then the new element which enters the soul after its affections are purged and changed makes it **kiss Our Lord's hands**; and finally, as the soul unites itself to this supreme goodness by a burning love, it **kisses his mouth**. This is how we gradually proceed to a right and happy death. (**SelLet 55**)

St. Charles Borromeo – liberty of spirit

Now take the case of **Cardinal Borromeo** who is going to be canonized in a few days. He was one of the most precise, unbending and austere men imaginable; he lived on bread and water, he was so strict that after he became archbishop he only entered his brothers' house twice in twenty-four years, and that was when they were ill; he only went into his own garden twice. Nevertheless, this strict man, who often accepted invitations from his Swiss neighbors in the hope of winning them back to the truth, made no difficulty about drinking a couple of healths or toasts with them at every meal, over and above what he needed to still his thirst. Here you have a trait of **holy liberty** in the most austere man of our times. (**SelLet 73**)

St. Ignatius – food for lions

My very dear Mother, my daughter, I have been thinking about the story of the great **St. Ignatius** who carried Jesus Christ in his heart and cheerfully went to serve as **food for the lions** and suffer the martyrdom of their fangs: and here are you, here are we, going to Lyons, please our Savior, to render Our Lord various services and prepare souls for him so that he can be their Bridegroom. What can stop us from going joyfully in the name of our Savior, since this saint went so blithely to be martyred for our Savior? (**SelLet 227-228**)

St. Ignatius Loyola – Fasting/eating

Father **Ignatius Loyola** who is also about to be canonized ate **meat** on Wednesday in Holy Week because the doctor ordered it and thought it expedient for some little trouble he had. A man of slavish mind would have contested the point for a good three days. (**SelLet 73**)

St. John – Mary – darkness

Go on like this, then, my very dear daughter, in the **darkness** of the Passion. I say, in the darkness, and I leave you to think this out: at the foot of the cross, in the strange and dreadful darkness which came down on earth, **Our Lady** and **St. John** no longer heard our Savior, no longer saw him and felt nothing except bitterness and distress; and although they had faith, that too was in darkness, for it was necessary that they should share in the Savior's dereliction. (**SelLet 202**)

St. John - stone – Jacob

Lean your spirit against the **stone** which was represented by the one **Jacob** had beneath his head when he saw his beautiful ladder, for it is the same stone against which **St. John** the Evangelist rested on the day of the exceeding great charity of his Master Jesus. May our heart and the Heart of our heart watch lovingly over you. **(SelLet 210)**

St. John the Baptist – resignation

I have often admired the extreme **resignation** of **St. John the Baptist** who stayed in the desert for such a long time quite close to Our Lord without making special efforts to see him or going to hear him and follow him. And how is it that after having seen him and baptized him he can let him go without attaching himself to Jesus in his bodily presence as his heart was so close to him. But he knew that he was serving this same Savior by doing without his real presence. **(SelLet 127)**

St. John the Baptist - sun - detached

But I want to show you a **sun** that shone more brightly than all these, a soul that was truly free and **detached**, cleaving only to the will of God. I have often wondered who is the most mortified of the saints I know, and after some reflection I have come to the conclusion that it was **St. John the Baptist**. He went into the desert when he was five years old and knew that our Savior and his came on earth in a place quite close by, one or two days' journey perhaps. How his heart, touched with love of his Savior from the time he was in his mother's womb, must have longed to enjoy his presence! Yet he spends twenty- five years in the desert without coming to see Our Lord even once; and leaving the desert he stays to catechize without visiting him but waiting till Our Lord comes to seek him out. Then when he has baptized him he does not follow him but stays behind to do his appointed task. How truly mortified was his spirit! To be so near his Savior and not see him, to have him so close and not enjoy his presence! Is this not a completely detached spirit, **detached** even from God himself so as to do his will and serve him, to leave God for God, and not to love God in order to love him better? The example of this great saint overwhelms me with its grandeur. **(SelLet 73-74)**

St. Lawrence - holocaust – self-offering

But I must go on to tell you this, my very dear daughter: now that you are sweetly dead to the world and the world dead in you, that is only a part of the **holocaust**. Two things remain: the victim must be consumed, you must strip your heart of self, cut back hard all the little shortcomings prompted by nature and by the world; and the other is to burn and reduce your self- love to ashes and transform your dear soul into flames of heavenly love. Now this, my really very dear daughter, is not done in a day, and he who gave you the grace to strike the first blow will himself see to the other two matters in union with you; and because his hand is most fatherly, he will either do it without your knowledge, or if he makes you feel it, he will give you the constancy, indeed the joy of **St. Lawrence** the martyr, the vigil of whose feast we celebrate today. **(SelLet 284-285)**

St. Louis – constancy

Be devoted to **St. Louis** and admire his great **constancy**. **(SelLet 75)**

St. Louis – crown – eagle – sea of penance

For the next point, remember the feast day of **blessed King Louis**, the day on which you took the **crown** of your kingdom from your own heart so as to put it at the feet of Jesus, the King; the day on which you renewed your youth like the **eagle's**, plunging into the **sea of penance**; the day which heralded the eternal day for your soul. **(SelLet 74)**

St. Martha - St. Mary Magdalen

O how happy I should be if in one or two years' time from now we could share my burden of office in such a way that I could have the part of **Mary Magdalen** and you that of **Martha!** (SelLet 292)

St. Martha – St. Mary Magdalen – boat – pilot

Yesterday I also remembered **St. Martha**, exposed in a small **boat** with **Mary Magdalen**; God was her **pilot** and cast her upon our shores here in France. (SelLet 135)

St. Mary Magdalen – death of Jesus – darkness – seeing Jesus

When our sweet **Jesus died** there was **darkness** over all the land. I think that **Mary Magdalene** who was with your Lady Abbess, was deeply grieved because she could no longer see her dear Savior clearly and distinctly; she could only **see him** indistinctly on the cross, she got up from her knees, fixed her eyes ardently on him, but she only saw a certain pale and confused whiteness where he was; yet all the time she was as close to him as before. Let this be done to you, everything is going very well. As much darkness as you like, but all the time we are close to the light; as much helplessness as you please, but we are at the feet of the Almighty. (SelLet 92-93)

St. Mary Magdalen - gardener

Mary Magdalen is looking for Our Lord and it is him she holds; she is asking for him, and it is him she asks. She could not see him as she would have wished to see him; that is why she is not content to see him in this form and searches so as to find him in some other guise. She wanted to see him in his robes of glory and not in the lowly clothes of a **gardener**; but all the same, in the end she knew it was Jesus when he said to her: **Mary.** (SelLet 136)

St. Mary Magdalen – Mary

But out of respect for our dear **Mary Magdalen** we did not dare to throw ourselves at his feet; instead we cast ourselves down at the feet of his **holy Mother**, who was also there, if I am not mistaken. And I was very grieved that we had neither as many tears nor such sweet- smelling ointment as this holy penitent; but Our Lady was content with the few little tears we shed upon the hem of her garment, for we did not dare touch her sacred feet. One thing comforted me greatly: after the dinner was over, Our Lord put his dear convert in Our Lady's charge; and from that time onward you see her almost always together with the holy Virgin who made very much of this sinner. This filled me with great courage and I was extremely happy in that thought. . (SelLet 137)

St. Mary Magdalen – seeing Jesus

Tomorrow, the feast of **Mary Magdalene**, I shall be preaching at the Poor Clares' convent; but to you I will say that one day Mary Magdalene was speaking to Our Lord, and considering herself separated from him, she wept and called for him, and was so eager, that **seeing him**, she failed to see him. And so courage, let us not be overeager and restless; our sweet Jesus is with us, we are not separated from him, at least I firmly hope so. (SelLet 91)

St. Mary Magdalen – St. Martha

O how happy I should be if in one or two years' time from now we could share my burden of office in such a way that I could have the part of **Mary Magdalen** and you that of **Martha!** (SelLet 292)

St. Mary Magdalen – St. Martha – boat – pilot

Yesterday I also remembered **St. Martha**, exposed in a small **boat** with **Mary Magdalen**; God was her **pilot** and cast her upon our shores here in France. (**SelLet** 135)

St. Mary Magdalen – statue in her niche

It seems to me that **Mary Magdalen** was a **statue in her niche** when she listened to what Our Lord said, sitting at his feet, without saying a word, without moving and perhaps without looking at him. When he spoke she listened to him; when he stopped speaking she ceased to listen, and yet she was still there. (**SelLet** 175)

St. Mary Magdalen – wash – anoint – balm - prayer

Mary Magdalene had to **wash** Our Lord's feet first, kiss them and dry them before she could speak to him heart to heart in the secret places of **prayer**. She had to **anoint** his body before she could pour out the **balm** of her contemplation upon his divinity. (**SelLet** 49)

St. Monica – son

Have a copy of the *Confessions* of St. Augustine and read it carefully from the eighth book onwards: then you will get to know **St. Monica** when she was a widow and looking after her **son**, Augustine, and you will find much to console you in your own task. (**SelLet** 68)

St. Peter

It seems to me that I hear Christ saying: 'Simon, son of John, Simon Peter, lovest thou me?' and **Simon Peter** answering: 'Thou knowest that I love thee.' And then I hear the Lord saying gravely: 'Feed my lambs.' There is no better proof of your love than carrying out your ministry. (**SelLet** 212)

St. Peter – angel of deliverance - chains

Our great **St. Peter**, roused from sleep by the **angel**, says good morning to you, my very dear Mother. How many lovely things there are in the story of his **deliverance**, for his soul is so startled that he does not know whether he is dreaming or not dreaming. May our angel touch our side today, waking us to loving attention to God, delivering us from all the **chains** of self-seeking and consecrate us for ever to this heavenly love, so that we may say: 'Now I know in very deed that the Lord hath sent his angel and hath delivered me.' (**SelLet** 202-203)

St. Peter – bitterness

Alas, daughter, we always hanker for sweetness, happiness and delicious consolation; but **bitterness** and dryness are really more fruitful. And although **St. Peter** loved the mount of Tabor and fled from the mount of Calvary, the latter was nevertheless of greater profit than the former, and the blood that is shed on the one is more desirable than the radiance shed on the other. (**SelLet** 178)

St. Peter – cross

My dear **St. Peter** did not want his **cross** to be like his Master's, so he had it put upside down; he had his head on the earth and his heart in heaven when he died. (**SelLet** 94)

St. Peter – love

How happy was our dear **St. Peter**, for it was an excess of tenderness that made Our Lord ask him so often: 'Peter, lovest thou me?' Not that he had any doubt of it, but he takes great joy in hearing us say over and over again that we **love** him. (**SelLet** 203)

St. Peter – Mary

When **St. Peter** was still crude and unformed he had plenty of courage to say, 'May Jesus reign,' but only his **Mother** and his faithful lover who was given her as her child were ready to say this on Mount Calvary. (**SelLet** 197)

St. Peter – walking on water – storm – fear

My dear **St. Peter**, as the scriptures say, seeing that the **storm** was raging, was afraid; and as soon as he was afraid, he began to sink and to drown, so he cried out: 'O Lord, save me.' And Our Lord caught hold of his hand and said to him: 'O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?' I Look at this holy apostle; he **walks dry foot on the water**, the waves and the winds could not make him sink; but **fear** of the wind and the waves will make him perish unless his master saves him. Fear is a greater evil than the evil itself. O daughter of little faith, what do you fear? No, do not be afraid; you are walking on the sea, surrounded by wind and water, but you are with Jesus: so what is there to fear? But if terror seizes you, cry out loudly: O Lord, save me. He will stretch forth his hand towards you; clasp it tight and go joyfully on your way. (**SelLet** 125)

St. Simon Stylites – pillar

O do you not see how prompt **Symeon Stylites** was to leave his **column** on the advice of the ancients? And you, my very dear daughter, refuse to give up your abstinence on the advice of so many excellent people who have no interest whatever in making you give it up except to rid you of your love of self? (**SelLet** 278)

Stable – shepherds – angels – Mary – Joseph - our desires

We are always wanting this and that, and although we have our sweet Jesus resting on our heart we are not satisfied; and yet this is all we can possibly need and desire. One thing alone is necessary—to be near him. Now tell me, my dear daughter, you know, don't you, that at the birth of Our Lord the **shepherds** heard the **angelic** and divine songs of heavenly beings; this is what the scriptures tell us. But nowhere does it say that **Our Lady and St. Joseph**, who were closest to the child, heard the angels' voices or saw the marvelous radiance; on the contrary, instead of hearing the angels sing they heard the child crying, and by the wretched light of some poor lantern they saw the eyes of this divine boy full of tears and saw him chilled by the cold. Now tell me frankly, would you not rather have been in the **dark stable** which was full of the baby's crying, rather than with the shepherds, ravished with joy and gladness by sweet heavenly music and the beauty of this marvelous light? (**SelLet** 120-121)

Star (guiding) - compass

Tell me; did your **compass** point all through to its **guiding star**, to its God? What did your heart do? (**SelLet** 142)

Stars - widowhood (love for) – pillar

The **other** (pillar) is your **love for your widowhood**, a love which is holy and desirable for as many reasons as there are **stars** in the sky and without which widowhood is false and not honorable. St. Paul commands us to honor widows who are widows indeed; but women who do not honor their widowhood are only widows outwardly while their heart is still in the married state. (**SelLet** 52)

Statue – prayer

But then again, sometimes you don't even do that, you tell me, but you kneel there like something inanimate or a **statue**. Well, this is no mean achievement either. In the palaces of princes and kings there are statues whose sole purpose is to delight the prince when he happens to see them: be satisfied with playing this part in God's presence. He will give the **statue** life when he thinks fit. (**SelLet** 88)

Statue in her niche - Mary Magdalen

It seems to me that **Mary Magdalen** was a **statue in her niche** when she listened to what Our Lord said, sitting at his feet, without saying a word, without moving and perhaps without looking at him. When he spoke she listened to him; when he stopped speaking she ceased to listen, and yet she was still there. (**SelLet** 175)

Statue in niche – prayer

If a **statue** that has been put into a **niche** in some room were endowed with speech and one were to ask it: 'Why are you here?' It would say, 'Because my master, the sculptor, put me here.' 'Why are you not making any movement?' 'Because he wants me to stay quite still.' 'What use are you? What do you gain by being here like this?' 'I am not here to gain anything for myself but to serve and obey the will of my master.' 'But you do not see him.' 'No,' it would say, 'but he sees me and is pleased that I should be where he has put me.' 'But would you not like to be able to move so as to get closer to him?' 'No, indeed, unless by his command.' 'Do you not want anything at all, then?' 'No, for I am where my master has put me, and the only thing that can make me happy is to do what he wants.' (**SelLet** 175)

Statue in niche - sleeping – God's presence

I think we keep in the **presence of God** even while we are **asleep**, because we fall asleep in his sight, at his will and pleasure, and he puts us on our bed like **a statue into its nook**; and when we wake up we find that he is there, close to us; he has not moved and neither have we, so we can say we have kept in his presence but with our eyes closed in sleep. (**SelLet** 177)

Steel of Savior's lance – heart

I said to myself, oh who will give me the happiness of one day seeing the name of Jesus written in the innermost heart of her who really has it branded on her body? O how I longed to have the **steel of our Savior's lance** in one hand and your **heart** in the other! I am sure I should not have hesitated to do this work. (**SelLet** 91)

Sting – bees – poison - thoughts

As to your **thoughts**, you are not asked to account for those which just pass through your head, but only those which like **bees**, leave their **poison** and **sting** when they have wounded you. (**SelLet** 95)

Stone – Jacob – St. John

Lean your spirit against the **stone** which was represented by the one **Jacob** had beneath his head when he saw his beautiful ladder, for it is the same stone against which **St. John** the Evangelist rested on the day of the exceeding great charity of his Master Jesus. May our heart and the Heart of our heart watch lovingly over you. (**SelLet** 210)

Storm – boat (little) – tempest - Jesus

Keep firm in your resolutions; stay in the **little boat** in which I have launched you; come **storm**, come **tempest**, may **Jesus** reign in you, and indeed you will not perish. He will be asleep, but in his own good time and place he will waken so as to restore your calm. (**SelLet** 125)

Storm – clouds

The **storm** which I told you about has not yet broken and nothing has happened to me so far; but the **clouds** are still heavy, dark and threatening above my head. (**SelLet** 86)

Storm – St. Peter – walking on water – fear

My dear **St. Peter**, as the scriptures say, seeing that the **storm** was raging, was afraid; and as soon as he was afraid, he began to sink and to drown, so he cried out: 'O Lord, save me.' And Our Lord caught hold of his hand and said to him: 'O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?' I look at this holy apostle; he **walks dry foot on the water**, the waves and the winds could not make him sink; but **fear** of the wind and the waves will make him perish unless his master saves him. Fear is a greater evil than the evil itself. O daughter of little faith, what do you fear? No, do not be afraid; you are walking on the sea, surrounded by wind and water, but you are with Jesus: so what is there to fear? But if terror seizes you, cry out loudly: O Lord, save me. He will stretch forth his hand towards you; clasp it tight and go joyfully on your way. (**SelLet** 125)

Storm – temptations

I must tell you that I have known few people make progress without this particular trial and you must be patient; for after the **storm** God will send peace. (**SelLet** 67)

Storms – tempests

Almost everyone can manage to trust God in the sweetness and peace of prosperity, but only his children can put their trust in him when **storms and tempests** rage, I mean put their trust in him with complete self-abandonment. (**SelLet** 217)

Storms – tempests – faith

Do not let us be anxious about the **storms and tempests** which sometimes rage in our hearts and rob us of our calm. Let us mortify our spirit utterly, and as long as our beloved **faith** holds firm, even if everything else comes crashing down around us, we shall yet live secure. Provided that God lives in us, what need we care if everything else dies in us. (**SelLet** 132-133)

Straw - magnet – iron - amber – Infant

A **magnet** attracts **iron**, **amber** attracts **straw** and hay: now whether we are hard in heart as **iron** or feeble and helpless as **straw** we should follow the attraction of this sovereign little Child, the real **magnet** of hearts. (**SelLet** 260)

Strawberries – cherries – pears – apples - garden – season - death

Strawberries and **cherries** are picked before even the most delicious kinds of **pears** and **apples**; but that is because they are in season at a different time. Let God gather to him whatever he has planted in his **garden**; he takes nothing out of season. (**SelLet** 141)

Sts. Martha and Mary

Be **Martha as well as Mary**, and be both gladly, faithfully doing what you are called to do, withdrawing often into your heart, saying as you kneel at Our Lord's feet: My Lord, I am all yours, whether I'm busy working or not; and you are all mine, my bridegroom, and you take first place in my heart, and all I do is done for love of you, every single thing. (**SelLet** 61)

Sugar - bread

Our Lord is already treating you as being stronger and more grown-up; try to live up to this. It is better to eat **bread** without **sugar** than **sugar** without **bread**. (**SelLet** 178)

Sugar – children – wormwood

For even little **children** can love God when everything is **sugar** and sweetness, but loving him when all is **wormwood** and bitterness is the result of our loving faithfulness. (**SelLet** 197)

Summer - winter

After this **winter**-time of coldness, a blissful **summer** will come and we shall be consoled. (**SelLet** 178)

Summer journey – flies

To have to see to a great variety of things is really a continual martyrdom; for in the same way as those who make a **journey in the summer** find the **flies** more troublesome and irritating than the journey itself, so the fact that one has to attend to a great many different sorts of things is in itself more troublesome than the actual load of business. (**SelLet** 151)

Sun

Keep very close to God, my dear daughter; consecrate your difficulties to him, wait patiently for the return of your life's lovely **sun**. (**SelLet** 199)

Sun – bee – Jesus

When you wrote to me, my very dear Mother, and said that you were like a poor **bee**, I thought that I did not want this for you while your dryness and interior affliction last; for this little animal which is so diligent and busy in health, loses heart and does nothing at all when it falls ill. But since then I have changed my mind and said: 'O yes, I do indeed want my Mother to be like a bee, even when she is suffering spiritually; for this little animal knows of no other remedy when it is ill than to expose itself to the **sun** and to wait for warmth and healing from its bright rays.' Oh my daughter, let us put ourselves before our crucified Sun in this way and then say to him: 'O lovely **Sun** of our hearts, the rays of your goodness pour life into everything; here we are before you, half dead, and we shall not stir from here till your warmth gives us life, Lord Jesus.' (**SelLet** 210)

Sun - eyes

And as the mind ceases to think anything else good in comparison with this Goodness, so too the will can no longer desire or love any goodness in comparison with this Goodness, even as when our **eyes** look deep into the **sun** we can no longer see any other light. (**SelLet** 281)

Sun - fertile in goodness – widows – valleys – ice

Little **widows**, little village women, like lowly **valleys**, are so **fertile in goodness**, and bishops, who hold such a high rank in God's Church, are so frozen and cold! Oh, is there no **sun** strong enough to melt the **ice** that chills me? ? (**SelLet** 118)

Sun – light – door – lattices

Make use of the little **light** you have, said Our Lord, until the **sun** rises. The **door** has not been opened yet, but through the **lattices** you can see the forecourt and the outside of Solomon's temple: stay where you are. (**SelLet** 94)

Sun - mists

My very dear sister, these **mists** are not so thick that the **sun** cannot melt them away. Believe me, God who has led you up till now will go on holding you in his blessed hand; but you must throw yourself into the arms of his providence with complete trust and forgetfulness of self; now is the right time. (**Treatise** 9. 9) (**SelLet** 217)

Sun – mists – patience

But if after all this you cannot find peace in these remedies, be **patient**; wait till the **sun** rises, it will scatter the morning **mists**. (**SelLet** 49)

Sun – St. John the Baptist - detached

But I want to show you a **sun** that shone more brightly than all these, a soul that was truly free and **detached**, cleaving only to the will of God. I have often wondered who is the most mortified of the saints I know, and after some reflection I have come to the conclusion that it was **St. John the Baptist**. He went into the desert when he was five years old and knew that our Savior and his came on earth in a place quite close by, one or two days' journey perhaps. How his heart, touched with love of his Savior from the time he was in his mother's womb, must have longed to enjoy his presence! Yet he spends twenty- five years in the desert without coming to see Our Lord even once; and leaving the desert he stays to catechize without visiting him but waiting till Our Lord comes to seek him out. Then when he has baptized him he does not follow him but stays behind to do his appointed task. How truly mortified was his spirit! To be so near his Savior and not see him, to have him so close and not enjoy his presence! Is this not a completely detached spirit, **detached** even from God himself so as to do his will and serve him, to leave God for God, and not to love God in order to love him better? The example of this great saint overwhelms me with its grandeur. (**SelLet** 73-74)

Sun – trees – fruit – presence of God

Trees only bear **fruit** because of the presence of the **sun**, some sooner and some later, some every year and others every three years, nor is their harvest always equal. We are very fortunate to be able to remain in the **presence of God**; let us be content that his presence will make us bear fruit sooner or later, or every day, or sometimes, according to his good pleasure, to which we should wholly resign ourselves. (**SelLet** 88)

Sun - weather – journey

Be brave, my dear daughter; we shall win through with God's help; and believe me, this is better sort of **weather** for a **journey** than if the **sun** were glaring down on us. (**SelLet** 99)

Sun (purer than) - snow (whiter than)

I will not try and say how full my heart is for you, but I will say that it is full beyond compare; and this affection is **whiter than snow, purer than the sun**: that is why I have given it free rein since you left me, letting it have its way. (SelLet 95)

Sweat – Holy Shroud

A year ago and at about this time I was at Turin, and while I was showing the **Holy Shroud** to a great crowd of people, several drops of the **sweat** that was pouring from my face chanced to fall on to the Holy Shroud itself; and then our heart made this prayer: O may it please you, Savior of my life, to unite my unworthy sweat to yours, and to spill my blood, my life, my affections in union with the merits of your holy sacrifice. (SelLet 218-219)

Sword (valiant as)

He was as honest as the day and as **valiant as a sword**. (SelLet 96)

Tabernacle

What more can one say to a soul which God has for so long drawn to complete repose in him and in his providence except just this: stay where you are, my daughter, hidden in the most secret place of this holy **tabernacle**, giving yourself up completely to the will of him who deigns to take care of you. (SelLet 249)

Tabernacle – pillar – tree – flowering branches - leaves

These longings are the **flowering branches** on the **tree** of your purpose in life; the **leaves** are your frequent realization of your weakness and keep your good works and your good desires in a healthy state. All this may be called one of the **pillars** of your **tabernacle**. (SelLet 51)

Tabernacle - pillars (twin)

As long as you keep the **twin pillars** of your **tabernacle** in good condition and make them ever more firm and stable it matters little how it is done. (SelLet 52)

Tallow candle - widow – procession

Not long ago I saw a **widow** in a **procession** of the Blessed Sacrament, and while the others were carrying large candles of white wax she was only carrying a tiny **tallow candle** which she had probably made herself; and to make things worse the wind put it out. This neither brought her closer to the Blessed Sacrament, nor kept her at a greater distance; she got to the church as soon as everybody else. (SelLet 93-94)

Tempest - boat (little) – storm – Jesus

Keep firm in your resolutions; stay in the **little boat** in which I have launched you; come **storm**, come **tempest**, may **Jesus** reign in you, and indeed you will not perish. He will be asleep, but in his own good time and place he will waken so as to restore your calm. (SelLet 125)

Tempests - storms

Almost everyone can manage to trust God in the sweetness and peace of prosperity, but only his children can put their trust in him when **storms and tempests** rage, I mean put their trust in him with complete self-abandonment. (SelLet 217)

Tempests – storms – faith

Do not let us be anxious about the **storms** and **tempests** which sometimes rage in our hearts and rob us of our calm. Let us mortify our spirit utterly, and as long as our beloved **faith** holds firm, even if everything else comes crashing down around us, we shall yet live secure. Provided that God lives in us, what need we care if everything else dies in us. (**SelLet** 132-133)

Tempests – waves – warrior

Believe me, my dear daughter, God loves the souls that are tossed about by the **waves** and **tempests** of the world, as long as they receive their hardships as coming from his hands, and like valiant **warriors**, try to keep faithful in the thick of the attack and fighting. (**SelLet** 205)

Thorns – crosses – illness

My very dear Mother, how can one get to know whole-hearted and living love except among **thorns, crosses** and by means of a **long-drawn out illness**, especially if it is wearisome as well as long? (**SelLet** 229)

Thorns – faults – roses - mercy

For it is true, dear daughter, that our **faults** which are **thorns** as long as they remain hidden in our hearts are turned into **roses** and sweetness when they come out by voluntary accusation; for as our malice draws them into our hearts so the Holy Spirit's **mercy** casts them out. . (**SelLet** 101)

Thorns – flowers – God's voice – weather

What does it matter whether **God's voice** comes to us amongst **thorns** or amongst **flowers**? Indeed, I do not remember that he has ever spoken where there are flowers, but his voice has often been heard in deserts and thorny bushes. So go on your way, my dear daughter, and forge ahead while the **weather** is bad and the night dark. (**SelLet** 99)

Thorns – shadows - nails – spears - with Jesus and Mary

Live with your sweet **Jesus** and your holy **Abbess**, my dear daughter, among dark **shadows, nails, thorns, spears** and dereliction; and together with your Mistress live long in tears without getting anything in return; in the end God will raise you up and fill you with rejoicing and will make you see the desire of your heart. (**SelLet** 98)

Thorns into roses - water from rocks – serpent into staff

So this happy, longed-for hour will come on the day which God in his sovereign providence has ordained in the secret of his mercy; and then with untold secret consolations you will lay open your heart to his divine Goodness, and he will make **water flow from the rocks**, your **serpent will be turned into a staff**, and all the **thorns** of your heart into as many **sweet-scented roses**, whose sweetness will give great joy to your soul and to mine. (**SelLet** 101)

Thorns of difficulty – lance – gall – vinegar – wormwood - aloes

How are we to show our love of him who suffered so much for us if not when we are beset by circumstances we loathe and abhor and which go against the grain? We must thrust our head among the **thorns of difficulty** and let our heart be pierced by the **lance** of contradiction; drink the **gall** and swallow the vinegar, eat **wormwood** and bitter **aloes** as it is God who invites us. (SelLet 251)

Thorns of illness

How often do we see people in peace amidst the **thorns of illness** and the loss of friends, and then watch them lose their inner peace when caught up by the worries of a lawsuit. (SelLet 184)

Thread - needle

All the same I did note for you somewhere that this use of the imagination should be very simple, and as it were, a **needle** into which we **thread** our soul's affections and resolutions. (SelLet 110)

Thread – spinning – distaff – day – night - knotted tangle

Keep on doing this, putting your hand to the task, **spinning** a little every **day**, whether by daylight, in interior joy and brightness, or at **night**, by the lamplight of helplessness and dryness of spirit. The Wise Man praises the valiant woman for this: 'Her fingers,' he says, 'have taken hold of the spindle.' How I should like to talk to you about these words! Your **distaff** is the store of all your desires: spin just a little every day, draw out the **thread** of your plans until you put them into effect, and you will certainly do well. But beware of over-eager haste, else your thread will get into a **knotted tangle** and you will not be able to work your spindle. Let us keep going all the time; however slowly we get on, we shall still make plenty of way. (SelLet 119-120)

Throne – misery

Yes, indeed, for our **misery** is as a **throne** to make manifest the sovereign goodness of Our Lord. (SelLet 178)

Thunder – Mt. Sinai – smoke – lightning - God

But if we know that **God** lives in the darkness and on **Mount Sinai** which is full of **smoke** and surrounded with the roar of **thunder** and **lightning**, shall not all be well with us as long as we keep close to him. (SelLet 125)

Tied to perch – digestion (spiritual)

He can send darkness, helplessness, can keep you **tied to your perch**, can lead you into dereliction and strip you of all strength, can upset your **spiritual digestion** and make your inner mouth taste bitter so that the sweetest wine in the world turns to gall; but suggestions of blasphemy, infidelity, unbelief—oh no, these can never come from our merciful God: he is too pure to conceive such ideas. (SelLet 84)

Tigresses

You have so many honorable, wise, spiritual, friendly and devout people where you are; would it not be easy for them to persuade your sisters to some sort of settlement which would leave you enough to live on, judged by heaven's standards? Are they **tigresses** who cannot hear reason? . (SelLet 289)

Tilling our field – ploughing a neighbor's - vocation

Nothing so much hinders us from reaching perfection in our own **vocation** as longing for another. Instead of **tilling the field** in which we find ourselves, we send our plough and oxen elsewhere, into **our neighbor's field**, where of course we cannot reap any harvest this year. And all this is a waste of time, and when our thoughts and hopes face in another direction it is impossible for us to set our heart steadily on the virtues required in the place in which we find ourselves. (SelLet 123-124)

Tongue – fire – imprinting

Alas, my daughter, I do not know; all I know is if we are to say it well our **tongue** must be on **fire**, that is, we must be saying it moved only by divine love which alone is capable of expressing Jesus in our lives and of **imprinting** him in the depths of our heart. . (SelLet 144)

Traitor – kindle – chill – run - eagerness

I am inclined to think that if you could prevent this **bustling eagerness** you would gain a great deal; for it is one of the greatest **traitors** encountered by devotion and true virtue. It pretends to **kindle** us for our profit but all it does is to **chill** our fervor, only making us **run** so as to trip us up. That is why we must beware of it at all times but more especially during prayer. (SelLet 148)

Transplanting – trees uprooted – loosen affections

Trees uprooted by the wind are not fit for **transplanting** because their roots are left behind in the soil; but if they are to be moved to another plot of ground their roots must be deftly and gradually disengaged one by one. And because we are to be transplanted from this miserable earth to the land of the living we must **loosen our affections** one by one from this world. (SelLet 54)

Treasure

Watch over your vows and resolutions, keep them safe and sheltered in the depths of your heart. And if this **treasure** were all that remained to us—and it most certainly will remain—we should be rich enough, with God's help. (SelLet 134)

Treasures

May the eternal Wisdom dwell in our hearts for ever so that we may savor the **treasures** of the infinite sweetness of Jesus Christ crucified. ! (SelLet 192)

Treasury – gold (refining) – God

In a word, these troublesome temptations come from the devil's malice; but the distress and suffering which they make us feel come from **God's** mercy, who makes holy tribulation spring from this malice in spite of his enemy, and by this means **refines the gold** that he wants to put in his **treasury**. (SelLet 86)

Tree - mistletoe

But then how is it possible, my daughter, that I can combine so much good will with so many imperfections showing and growing in me? No indeed, this does not happen with my will or by my will, although it appears to form part of my will. It seems to me that they are like **mistletoe** which grows and shows on a **tree**, although it is not part of the tree, on the tree but not of it. (**SelLet** 175)

Tree – pillar – tabernacle – flowering branches - leaves

These longings are the **flowering branches** on the **tree** of your purpose in life; the **leaves** are your frequent realization of your weakness and keep your good works and your good desires in a healthy state. All this may be called one of the **pillars** of your **tabernacle**. (**SelLet** 51)

Tree (mountain) – fruit

You know very well the kind of country which produced me: can you expect delicate **fruit** from a **mountain tree**, and such a poor tree at that? (**SelLet** 291-292)

Tree (St. Dominic) – tree of desire

I once saw a **tree** in Rome which had been planted by **St. Dominic**; people go to see it and they love it for love of the saint who planted it. In the same way, now that I have seen the **tree of your desire** for holiness which Our Lord has planted in your soul. (**SelLet** 51)

Tree of desire - tree (St. Dominic)

I once saw a **tree** in Rome which had been planted by **St. Dominic**; people go to see it and they love it for love of the saint who planted it. In the same way, now that I have seen the **tree of your desire** for holiness which Our Lord has planted in your soul? (**SelLet** 51)

Trees – fruit – sun – presence of God

Trees only bear **fruit** because of the presence of the **sun**, some sooner and some later, some every year and others every three years, nor is their harvest always equal. We are very fortunate to be able to remain in the **presence of God**; let us be content that his presence will make us bear fruit sooner or later, or every day, or sometimes, according to his good pleasure, to which we should wholly resign ourselves. (**SelLet** 88)

Trees – leaves – vines – fruit – desires - actions

You prevent the formation of **leaves** on **vines** and **trees** so as to preserve enough moisture and sap for the **fruit** later on and not waste too much of the vine's natural force in producing foliage. It is a good thing to prevent the formation of too many **desires** for fear that our soul might waste time on them and neglect real tasks; for the least attempt at practical **action** is more profitable than great **desire** for what is beyond our power. (**SelLet** 49)

Trees uprooted – transplanting – loosen affections

Trees uprooted by the wind are not fit for **transplanting** because their roots are left behind in the soil; but if they are to be moved to another plot of ground their roots must be deftly and gradually disengaged one by one. And because we are to be transplanted from this miserable earth to the land of the living we must **loosen our affections** one by one from this world. (**SelLet** 54)

Trip – ready – waiting peacefully

When people have to **leave a place** unexpectedly they may be excused if they have not said good-bye to their friends and set off ill equipped; but not so those who have been able to foresee the probable time of their departure. We must be **ready**, not as if to set out before we are due to leave but so as to **await** the time of our leave-taking more **peacefully**. (SelLet 54-55)

Two nations within – Rebecca - Esau and Jacob – self-love – love of God

Oh blessed be God, my dear daughter, this sickness is not unto death, but so that God may be glorified thereby.' Two **nations are in your womb**, as **Rebecca** was told; one is struggling against the other in your spirit, but in the end the younger shall defeat the elder. **Self-love** never dies until we ourselves die; it has thousands of ways of entrenching itself in our soul, but we cannot cast it out; it is the first-born of our soul, for it is natural, or at least co-natural to us; self-love is attended by a legion of armed horsemen to help it—emotions, activities, passions; it is skilful and knows a thousand subtle twists and turns. To balance this you have the **love of God** on the other side, which is conceived and born later; and that too has its emotions, inclinations, passions, activities. These two children in the same womb struggle with one another like Esau and Jacob; that is why Rebecca cried out: Would it not be better for me to die than to bear children with so much pain? The result of these convulsions is a certain inner disgust, so that you cannot relish food, however good. But what does it matter whether you relish your food or not, as long as you do not stop eating? (SelLet 77)

Ulcer – arm – face – abjection

Here is a man who has an **ulcer** on his **arm**, another has one on his **face**; the former hides it and only has to bear his affliction; the latter cannot hide it, and together with the affliction he suffers scorn and **abjection**. Now I say that we must love not only the affliction but also the abjection. (SelLet 122)

Unruffled face

A person who has real liberty of spirit will leave his prayer with an **unruffled face** and a heart well disposed towards the importunate friend who has disturbed him. (SelLet 70)

Valley - mountain of perfection

This good Mother says that there is no need to use the imagination to picture the sacred humanity of our Savior. No, perhaps not for those who have already gone a long way up the **mountain of perfection**; but I think it is expedient for the rest of us who are still in the **valleys**, although we long to mount higher, to use all our resources including the imagination. (SelLet 109)

Valleys - fertile in goodness – widows – sun - ice

Little **widows**, little village women, like lowly **valleys**, are so **fertile in goodness**, and bishops, who hold such a high rank in God's Church, are so frozen and cold! Oh, is there no **sun** strong enough to melt the **ice** that chills me? ? (SelLet 118)

Vinegar – thorns of difficulty – lance – gall – wormwood - aloes

How are we to show our love of him who suffered so much for us if not when we are beset by circumstances we loathe and abhor and which go against the grain? We must thrust our head among the **thorns of difficulty** and let our heart be pierced by the **lance** of contradiction; drink the **gall** and swallow the vinegar, eat **wormwood** and bitter **aloes** as it is God who invites us. (SelLet 251)

Vines – leaves – trees – fruit – desires - actions

You prevent the formation of **leaves** on **vines** and **trees** so as to preserve enough moisture and sap for the **fruit** later on and not waste too much of the vine's natural force in producing foliage. It is a good thing to prevent the formation of too many **desires** for fear that our soul might waste time on them and neglect real tasks; for the least attempt at practical **action** is more profitable than great **desire** for what is beyond our power. (**SelLet** 49)

Walking - child – father

Tell her that though she may shy back often and stumble, she is never to be disheartened or angry with herself; that she is rather to look at Our Lord who is watching her from heaven as a **father watches his child**, a child that is still weak and finds it hard to **walk** properly. And he says: steady, now, dear child go gently, child; and if she falls, he encourages her and says: you went too fast, you're really very good, so don't cry; and then he goes up to her and holds out his hand to help her rise. If this girl is really a child in her humility and understands that she is nothing but a child, she will not be upset at falling over because she will not be falling from any great height. (**SelLet** 280)

Walking – child – mother – kiss of charity - God

My third rule is that you should be like a little **child** who while it knows that its **mother** is holding its sleeve **walks** boldly and runs all round without being distressed at a little fall or stumble; after all, it is as yet rather unsteady on its legs. In the same way, as long as you realize that **God** is holding on to you by your will and resolution to serve him, go on boldly and do not be upset by your little set-backs and falls; there is need to be put out by this provided you throw yourself into his arms from time to time and kiss him with the **kiss of charity**. (**SelLet** 45-46)

Walking – running – devotion

Ordinarily good people **walk** in God's ways, but the **devout run**, and the really devout **run swiftly**. (**SelLet** 56)

Walking on water – St. Peter – storm – fear

My dear **St. Peter**, as the scriptures say, seeing that the **storm** was raging, was afraid; and as soon as he was afraid, he began to sink and to drown, so he cried out: 'O Lord, save me.' And Our Lord caught hold of his hand and said to him: 'O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?' Look at this holy apostle; he **walks dry foot on the water**, the waves and the winds could not make him sink; but **fear** of the wind and the waves will make him perish unless his master saves him. Fear is a greater evil than the evil itself. O daughter of little faith, what do you fear? No, do not be afraid; you are walking on the sea, surrounded by wind and water, but you are with Jesus: so what is there to fear? But if terror seizes you, cry out loudly: O Lord, save me. He will stretch forth his hand towards you; clasp it tight and go joyfully on your way. (**SelLet** 125)

Warfare – preparation

Whatever we do towards our salvation is done in God's service, for what did Our Lord himself do here on earth except work our salvation? Do not go out of your way to desire **warfare** but be bravely **prepared** for it when it comes. (**SelLet** 154)

Warrior - waves – tempests

Believe me, my dear daughter, God loves the souls that are tossed about by the **waves** and **tempests** of the world, as long as they receive their hardships as coming from his hands, and like valiant **warriors**, try to keep faithful in the thick of the attack and fighting. (**SelLet** 205)

Wash – Mary Magdalen – anoint – balm - prayer

Mary Magdalene had to **wash** Our Lord's feet first, kiss them and dry them before she could speak to him heart to heart in the secret places of **prayer**. She had to **anoint** his body before she could pour out the **balm** of her contemplation upon his divinity. (**SelLet** 49)

Washing feet – water – hospitality - cleanse affections

Our fathers of old, Abraham and his children, used to offer their guests **water** to **wash their feet**; I think, Sir, that the first thing to do is to **cleanse the affections** of our soul so as to look forward to our dear Lord's **hospitality** in paradise. (**SelLet** 54)

Water – Samson – jawbone of an ass

Here is **water**, Sir; even if it comes out of the **jawbone of an ass**, **Samson** will not refuse to drink. (**SelLet** 56)

Water – washing feet – hospitality - cleanse affections

Our fathers of old, Abraham and his children, used to offer their guests **water** to **wash their feet**; I think, Sir, that the first thing to do is to **cleanse the affections** of our soul so as to look forward to our dear Lord's **hospitality** in paradise. (**SelLet** 54)

Water from rocks – serpent into staff – thorns into roses

So this happy, longed-for hour will come on the day which God in his sovereign providence has ordained in the secret of his mercy; and then with untold secret consolations you will lay open your heart to his divine Goodness, and he will make **water flow from the rocks**, your **serpent will be turned into a staff**, and all the **thorns** of your heart into as many **sweet-scented roses**, whose sweetness will give great joy to your soul and to mine. (**SelLet** 101)

Waters – heaven – prayer

And to help you in this, remember that the graces and benefits of **prayer** are not earthly **waters** but come from **heaven**, and that therefore all our efforts cannot acquire them, although it is true that we must dispose ourselves to receive them with great care but humbly and peacefully. (**SelLet** 148)

Waters of the world - pearl oyster – dew of heaven – heart

Do not allow your mind to be preoccupied with a vain promise of tranquility, delight, merit; but hold up your heart to your spouse, completely empty of all affections other than his chaste love, and beg him to fill it purely and simply with the inclinations, desires and wishes which are in his own heart, so that like a **pearl oyster** your **heart** only conceives by the **dew of heaven** and not by the **waters of the world**; and you will see that God will help us and that we shall do well, choosing rightly and putting our ideas into effect. (**SelLet** 124)

Waters (deep) - reefs

I am less apprehensive about this way of life than many other people and I do not consider it one of the most dangerous for men of noble spirit and of manly heart, for there are only two main **reefs** to guard against in these **deep waters**: vanity which is the ruin of sensual, slothful, effeminate and vacillating characters, and ambition which ruins those who are foolhardy and presumptuous. (**SelLet** 186)

Waters (stormy) – launched – sea of the Church

Indeed I need your prayers badly as I have **launched** out on the stormiest and troubled **waters** of the **sea of the Church**. (SelLet 50)

Waves – halcyon bird – flood

Persevere, my very dear son, in this great courage and determination which keeps you lifted high above temporal things, making you pass over them like a happy **halcyon bird** lifted safely above the **waves** of the world which **flood** this age. (SelLet 236)

Waves – tempests – warrior

Believe me, my dear daughter, God loves the souls that are tossed about by the **waves** and **tempests** of the world, as long as they receive their hardships as coming from his hands, and like valiant **warriors**, try to keep faithful in the thick of the attack and fighting. (SelLet 205)

Wax- bee – honey – household

Live in peace, my very dear daughter, walk faithfully along the road which God has marked out for you; take great care to make your partner in life happy; be like a small **bee** which carefully makes the **honey** of devotion but is just as careful to manufacture the **wax** of household affairs; for if he who ate butter and honey when he was in this world is pleasing to Our Lord, the other also serves for his honor, as it makes candles which are lit for the edification of our neighbor. (SelLet 259)

Weapon

Write to me whenever you like, without ceremony or fear; do not **use respect as a weapon** against the love which God wants us to have for one another and according to which I am unchangingly. (SelLet 273)

Weather – journey – sun

Be brave, my dear daughter; we shall win through with God's help; and believe me, this is better sort of **weather** for a **journey** than if the **sun** were glaring down on us. (SelLet 99)

Weather - thorns – flowers – God's voice

What does it matter whether **God's voice** comes to us amongst **thorns** or amongst **flowers**? Indeed, I do not remember that he has ever spoken where there are flowers, but his voice has often been heard in deserts and thorny bushes. So go on your way, my dear daughter, and forge ahead while the **weather** is bad and the night dark. (SelLet 99)

Weather (misty) - bees

The other day I was watching the **bees** and how they stayed quietly in the shelter of their hives because the air was **misty**; they came out from time to time to see how things were going, and yet they did not seem in any hurry to come out, but were busy eating their fill of honey. Be of good cheer! We have no control over any spiritual light or consolation except what depends on our will, and that is protected and sheltered by our holy resolutions. (SelLet 99)

Well of Samaritan woman – drinking

Well now, if you too had to die without **drinking** of the **well of the Samaritan woman**, what would it matter, as long as your soul is admitted to **drink** for ever at the source and fountain of life? Do not go chasing eagerly after vain longings, and I would even go as far as to say, do not be eager in avoiding eagerness. Keep quietly on along your way, for it is a good way. (SelLet 79)

Widow – tallow candle - procession

Not long ago I saw a **widow** in a **procession** of the Blessed Sacrament, and while the others were carrying large candles of white wax she was only carrying a tiny **tallow candle** which she had probably made herself; and to make things worse the wind put it out. This neither brought her closer to the Blessed Sacrament, nor kept her at a greater distance; she got to the church as soon as everybody else. (SelLet 93-94)

Widowhood (love for) – pillar – stars

The **other** (pillar) is your **love for your widowhood**, a love which is holy and desirable for as many reasons as there are **stars** in the sky and without which widowhood is false and not honorable. St. Paul commands us to honor widows who are widows indeed; but women who do not honor their widowhood are only widows outwardly while their heart is still in the married state. (SelLet 52)

Wind – earthquake – flame – breeze – God

I should like to impress on your mind what is written in the Book of Kings: **God** is not in the mighty **wind**, nor in the **earthquake**, nor yet in these fiery **flames** but in the soft and gentle stirring of a **breeze** that we can hardly feel. Let yourself be ruled by God, do not think about yourself so much. (SelLet 43)

Wind – organ – one pumping

We are like the **organ** where nothing can be done without the **wind**, and yet the **person who does the pumping** gets no praise. So pray for me often, my dear daughter, and you will be preaching with me. (SelLet 260)

Wind – rustling of leaves – clash of armor

You cling too jealously to the purity of your faith, and you feel that any little thing can spoil it. No, no, dear daughter, let the **wind** blow freely, and don't mistake the **rustling of leaves** for the **clash of armor**. (SelLet 97)

Wind (south) – Holy Spirit

O my very dear daughter, how I wish you this gracious **south wind** of divine love, the **Holy Ghost** who gives us the grace to long and yearn for him! (SelLet 192)

Windows – doors – siege

Let him kick his heels outside, and keep all the **doors** and **windows** tightly shut: he will get tired of it in the end, and if he does not, God will make him raise the **siege**. . (SelLet 85)

Winds of passion

This is in reply to what you tell me about the fickleness and inconstancy of your soul, for I quite believe that it is always stirred by the **winds of passion** and is always agitated as a result; but I believe just as firmly that the grace of God and the resolution it inspired, continues operative in the fine point of your soul where the standard of the cross is always raised on high and where faith, hope and charity are always calling out: May Jesus reign! (**SelLet 273**)

Wineskin – smoke of fire – aridity

I have become, said David, like a **wineskin** dried in the **smoke of the fire**, so that one cannot tell how it could possibly serve any useful purpose. Let us put up with any amount of dryness and aridity, provided we love God. (**SelLet 80**)

Wings – bird chained – fledgling – flying - dove – patience

A **bird chained** to its perch is not conscious of its captivity and does not feel the pull of its chain until it wants to fly; in the same way an **unfledged nestling** only finds out that it cannot fly when it makes the actual attempt. And the remedy for this, my dear daughter, is not to struggle, not to make eager attempts to fly as your **wings** have not yet grown and you lack power for too great an effort. Be **patient** until you get the **wings** of a **dove**, and then you can fly. (**SelLet 78**)

Wings – flying

As your **wings** have not yet grown try to find pleasure in not **flying**. (**SelLet 79**)

Wings (fluttering) – heart (panting) – resignation

A simple desire is not contrary to resignation, but a **panting heart**, **fluttering wings**, an agitated will, and many restless movements—all these undoubtedly add up to lack of **resignation**. . (**SelLet 79**)

Wings grow - fluttering

But you do not feel you are firm, for if you did, it would give you untold joy. Come now, stop **fluttering** and being in a hurry; you will feel all the better for it and your **wings** will **grow** all the faster. (**SelLet 78-79**)

Winter – summer

After this **winter**-time of coldness, a blissful **summer** will come and we shall be consoled. (**SelLet 178**)

Wolf – horse – dust of life

It is a strange thing, but one confirmed by experience and by various authors, that when a **horse**, however fine and strong, follows in the trail and tracks of a **wolf**, it becomes torpid and stumbles. It is not possible for us who live in the world to avoid being soiled with its **dust**, even though we may only be in contact with it by the soles of our feet in passing. (**SelLet 54**)

Woman (valiant) – distaff – spindle – spin thread

I mean that you should be like the **valiant woman** of whom the Wise Man says: 'She hath put out her hand to strong things: and her fingers have taken hold of the spindle.' Meditate, lift up your mind and let it rise up to God, that is to say, draw God into your mind: those are the strong things. But with all that, do not forget your **distaff** and your **spindle**: **spin** the **thread** of little virtues, do humble works of charity. (**SelLet 159-160**)

Wool – lamb – distaff - Savior

I will only tell you about one of them which came to me on the octave day of Corpus Christi when I was carrying the Blessed Sacrament at the last procession. It seemed to me that I was preparing a lot of work for you to spin, and on a good distaff. You see, I was adoring him whom I was carrying, and my heart knew that he was the true **Lamb of God** who takes away the sins of the world. O holy and divine Lamb, I said, how poor and needy I was without you! Alas, I have no other clothing but your **wool** to cover my misery before the face of your Father. And here is what Isaias said about this thought, that Our Lord in his passion was as a lamb before his shearer and did not open his mouth.² And what is that divine fleece if not the merit, if not the example, if not the mystery of the cross ? It seems to me therefore that the cross is the beautiful **distaff** of the bride in the Canticle, of that devout Shulamite; the wool of the innocent Lamb, his merit, his example, his mystery, is richly wrought there. (**SelLet** 115)

Wormwood - children – sugar

For even little **children** can love God when everything is **sugar** and sweetness, but loving him when all is **wormwood** and bitterness is the result of our loving faithfulness. (**SelLet** 197)

Wormwood - thorns of difficulty – lance – gall – vinegar – aloes

How are we to show our love of him who suffered so much for us if not when we are beset by circumstances we loathe and abhor and which go against the grain? We must thrust our head among the **thorns of difficulty** and let our heart be pierced by the **lance** of contradiction; drink the **gall** and swallow the vinegar, eat **wormwood** and bitter **aloes** as it is God who invites us. (**SelLet** 251)

Worms - food – Spouse

Tell her to have no fear in going to communion but to go in peace and in all humility, so as to meet the desire of her **Spouse** who made himself lowly and sweetly humbled himself to unite himself to us, even making himself our **food** and nourishment, whereas we are nothing but the food and repast of **worms**. (**SelLet** 268)