The present volume contains many letters showing Father Libermann's spirituality in action. They were addressed to holy priests and religious and to others who were not so holy, to angry subjects complaining about unreasonable superiors and to saddened superiors discouraged by recalcitrant subjects. For each one Francis Libermann had appropriate words of advice.

Throughout the letters we can hear a voice that is often surprisingly modern in its plea for freedom from anxiety and tension, for the holy liberty of the children of God, for total self-commitment in a joyful surrender to God, for respect for each one's own personality.

"Be in God's hands like a toy in the hands of a child," he counsels an anxious soul. "Don't be harsh; always lean to the side of mercy and gentleness," is his advice to a rigid character. "Don't be so anxious to have God move in the direction of your own ideas," he admonishes one who would like to make his own desires those of God. And his counsel to superiors in general is: "Allow everyone to follow his own ideas and accomplish the good in his own way, and encourage them in doing so. . . . If we let everyone act according to his personal ideas, his character, mentality and his whole make-up, great good will be accomplished."

More than a century old, these gems of spiritual wisdom retain their originality and freshness, they continue to appeal even to the new generation's search for a personal identity.


Duquesne University, November 23, 1965