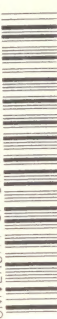


UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



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THE DEVOTION
TO
THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

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THE DEVOTION

TO

THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

*Intended Specially for Priests and Candidates
for the Priesthood.*

BY THE
REV. H. NOLDIN, S.J.

✦ Permissu Superiorum. ✦

AUTHORIZED TRANSLATION FROM THE GERMAN.

REVISED BY THE
REV. W. H. KENT, O.S.C.

✦ ✦ ✦
A. J. Simard
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PREFACE.

EVER since I was placed by my Superiors at the head of the theological seminary at Innsbruck, it has been my firm persuasion that the blessing of God which rests upon it is proportioned to and goes hand in hand with the zeal wherewith the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is promoted and practised in that Institute. And with no less certitude have I told myself that the candidate for the priesthood who knows and practises this devotion will assuredly acquire the sacerdotal spirit and the virtues proper to a priest in preparation for receiving Holy Orders, and that it will also furnish him with a sure means of maintaining and preserving the spirit of his sacred calling unto his life's end.

It has therefore been my constant endeavor to make the Alumni committed to my charge

acquainted with the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to inspire them with love for it, and to keep their ardor for a devotion so rich in graces alive and in active operation. All that I have recommended to them and earnestly impressed upon them with this object I have collected and arranged as a whole in the book now laid before the reader. The end proposed in its compilation will be fully attained should this little book conduce in any degree to awaken, to foster, to promote among those for whom it is intended more especially a devotion fraught with such abundant blessings.

This work is as far from laying claim to originality as to erudition. For several years past I have, for my own information and edification, read various books on the subject, some of them a second time; thus many thoughts which have impressed themselves on my mind and heart during the course of my reading will be reproduced in these pages, without it being possible for me to indicate the source whence they are derived.

INNSBRUCK, Whitsunday, 1883.

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THE DEVOTION

TO THE

SACRED HEART OF JESUS.

I. THE HISTORY OF THE DEVOTION.

IN the order of grace as in the order of nature, in the usual course of things no phenomena are seen, no events occur which have not been brought about by a gradual process. In everything there is an organic connection and continuity, and from the tender germ, the small and feeble beginning, the plant is developed until it reaches perfection in the brilliant blossom or fully matured fruit. In like manner the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus did not appear all of a sudden in the Church, as a meteor in the nightly firmament; during the centuries preceding its introduction and propagation, its rise was long foreseen and the hearts of the faithful were prepared to welcome it.

It may be asserted with perfect justice that the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus dates from the foundation of the Church. For its theological basis rests upon the principal and most well-known truths of our holy faith, and the sacred humanity of Our Lord was from the outset venerated and adored; hence it would be strange if Christian sentiment and love for Christ had never led the faithful in the first centuries to include the cultus of the Sacred Heart of the Redeemer in their practices of piety and devotion. And if in the earliest ages of Christianity little definite evidence is found to substantiate this fact, yet there are unmistakable elementary indications and traces of this devotion both in the writings of St. Paul,¹

¹ "Testis enim mihi est Deus, quomodo cupiam omnes vos in visceribus Jesu Christi" (Phil. i. 8). Here reference is made to the love of Our Lord as represented by its natural symbol. It may not be superfluous to bid the reader observe that in this and in the following chapters we speak of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus as it is presented to us by the Church and practised at the present time; for were it only a question of the veneration of the divine and human love of Our Lord for us, Holy Scripture (cf. 1 John iii. 4; John xv. 9 seq.; Gal. ii. 20, etc.) and the writings of the Fathers afford abundant proof that for the Christians of the first centuries this was an object of homage and of love.

and also in those of St. Augustine and St. John Chrysostom.¹

In the course of the Middle Ages we meet with a greater number of witnesses; as time goes on more and more devout and saintly souls come into view who know and practise this devotion, preeminently the two holy daughters of St. Benedict, St. Gertrude and St. Mechtilde, both of whom made the Heart of the Redeemer in a special manner the object of their fervent adoration. The work of the former, "The Messenger of Divine Love," and that of the latter nun, "The Book of Spiritual Favors," alike abound in prayers of intense fervor and touching exercises of piety to the Heart of Jesus, which were taught to them by the Holy Spirit. In fact, so useful and so attractive did this devotion appear to St. Gertrude, so fully, so clearly did she know and appreciate the treasures laid up in that divine Heart, that in one of her numerous visions she asked St. John how it was that, since he had

¹ It is true that this devotion in its initial stage was directed rather to the wound in the Saviour's side, and consequently to His pierced Heart, than to the Heart as an emblem of His love. See the treatise: *Theses de cultu sacratissimi Cordis Jesus a P.P. A Martorell et J. Castella, S.J.* Pars 1, thes. 1. Barcinone, 1877.

been privileged to lean upon Our Lord's breast at the Last Supper, he had spoken so seldom and revealed so little concerning His Sacred Heart. What Mechtilde and Gertrude effected in the Benedictine Order, that Landsberger († 1539) did in the Carthusian Order. A century and a half before the revelations of B. Margaret Mary, he both knew and practised the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus himself, and spread it diligently. He it was who first drew attention to St. Gertrude's writings, and by having them printed gave publicity to them. Not only did he himself obtain an intimate knowledge of the Heart of his Lord, but he was also untiring in his efforts to acquaint others with the excellency, the beauty of that Heart, and, by the distribution of pictures of the Sacred Heart, to spread and popularize the cultus of it amongst all classes of Christians. By his direction every monk in the Carthusian monastery in Cologne set up a picture of the Heart of Jesus on the door or in the interior of his cell, and offered homage to it.¹ Others venerated in

¹ Cf. "Landsberger the Carthusian, a Precursor of B. M. M. Alacoque in the Sixteenth Century," and the "Devotion to the Divine Heart of Jesus," by Dom Cyprian M. Boutrais. Trans. (into German) by Bernard Hermes. Mayence, 1880.

a similar manner the Sacred Heart of Our Lord, notably St. Bonaventure, St. Elzear, Ludolphus of Saxony, Henry Suso, B. Peter Canisius, St. Aloysius Gonzaga.¹

The nearer one approaches to the seventeenth century the more frequently are adorers of the Sacred Heart met with, the clearer and more definite is their knowledge of its virtues, the reverence wherewith they regard it; but as yet their devotions are practised for themselves alone, forming part of their private prayers and meditations. In the commencement of the seventeenth century two figures stand out prominently who are remarkable for the surprising extent of their knowledge of the Heart of Jesus and the profound reverence they entertain for it. The Ven. John Eudes, the founder of the Eudist Fathers, in his writings and devotional exercises invariably spoke of the Heart of Jesus

¹ The dates in the life of B. Margaret Mary given in this and in the following chapter are taken from her autobiography and from the Life of the Ven. Sister M. M. Alacoque, by the Rev. M. Strom, Cologne and Neuss, 1875. For the facts relating to the history of the devotion and of the feast the author is indebted to Father Hattler's "History of the Feast and the Devotion of the Heart of Jesus," and to the well-known work: *De rationibus festorum S.S. Cordis Jesu et pur. Cordis Mariæ*, by N. Nilles.

and that of Mary conjointly, giving perhaps greater prominence to the heart of Mary. St. Francis of Sales was in this as in other matters the instrument chosen by Providence to execute the divine designs; he was to be the pioneer to prepare the way for the public recognition of this devotion. He did not, it is true, attain to a full knowledge of it himself; he must, however, have had a vague, a dim presentiment that some development of a new and special nature was shortly to take place in the Church of God. He gave the Order of the Visitation which he founded a heart encircled with a crown of thorns and surmounted by a cross as their armorial bearings and official seal; and he impressed on his spiritual daughters as their principal task to imitate the favorite virtues of the Sacred Heart, meekness and humility; above all to take the hidden life of Our Lord as their example. Moreover, he thought the name of Daughters of the Holy Gospel or Daughters of the Heart of Jesus would be a suitable one for them to take; but neither of these was formally adopted. This Order was founded expressly for the purpose of furthering the devotion to the Sacred Heart; in it, as a grain of mustard-seed in a fertile soil, the germ of that devotion, destined to attain vast proportions

and spread far and wide, was to be initially planted and carefully tended; this design, however, never took actual shape in the saint's mind, although his letters and his whole life show plainly how intimately he was acquainted with the secrets of Our Lord's Heart, and how fervently he adored it; and in that school, the school of Christ, he acquired the perfection which raised him to the rank of a saint.

Consequently, when the time was come which the Most High in His eternal counsels had appointed for the introduction and propagation of this devotion, everything was prepared for it, prepared for it to expand in the full beauty of its bloom, like a rose from the unfolding bud. Before all else it remained to be seen whom it would please God to make choice of to be instrumental in executing His designs, and again it was apparent that He prefers to employ the weakest, most insignificant individuals to bring to pass great things in His Church. Just as in the thirteenth century He chose a poor, obscure nun in a convent at Liège, named Juliana, to be the means of inaugurating the celebration of the festival of Corpus Christi, rather than the saintly Louis IX., king of France, or the erudite theologians St. Thomas of Aquin and St. Bonaventure, so for the institution and diffusion of

the devotion to the Heart of Jesus He did not make use of the holy Doctor of the Church, St. Francis of Sales, but the poorest and humblest of his spiritual daughters in the Order of the Visitation, Margaret Mary Alacoque.

She was born in 1647 at Lauthecourt in France, and her youth was passed in innocence and piety. When about twenty-four years of age she embraced the religious life in the Order of the Visitation at Paray-le-Monial. From her earliest childhood God had taken this privileged and highly favored soul into His school, and constituted Himself her guide and teacher in the spiritual life. When she had been sufficiently trained in this school, and prepared for the task which was shortly to be entrusted to her, Our Lord commenced the series of revelations and instructions concerning His Sacred Heart, which must be regarded as the starting-point of the devotion.

Margaret had already been several years in the convent at Paray when the first revelation respecting the devotion to the Heart of Jesus was made to her. She was engaged in prayer one day before the Blessed Sacrament, when Our Lord appeared to her, and opening His breast, permitted her to behold His Heart. It was surrounded with fire and flames, resplen-

dent as the sun, transparent as crystal, encircled with a crown of thorns, and surmounted by a cross. Disclosing to her the marvels and mysteries of His love, He spoke thus to her: "My Heart is so full of love for men that it can no longer contain within itself the fire of charity. Through thy instrumentality it must flow out and make itself known to men, in order to enrich them with the treasures it contains. I will make thee acquainted with the priceless value of these treasures; they are salutary and sanctifying graces, and they alone are capable of rescuing mankind from the abyss of perdition. In spite of thy unworthiness and ignorance I have chosen thee to carry out this My purpose, that it may be all the more evident that all is My work."

From that time forward the favors of which Margaret was the recipient became continually greater and more numerous. One day when she was praying before the Blessed Sacrament exposed, the Saviour appeared to her and made known to her the infinite magnitude of His love for men, bewailing their ingratitude and indicating this as the one among all His sufferings that He felt most acutely. "If," He said, "they would only return love for love, all that I have done for them would be next to nothing in

My eyes; but I meet only with coldness on their part, and to My most loving invitations they respond only with contempt. Do thou at least give Me this solace: make amends to the utmost of thy power for their ingratitude." Overwhelmed with confusion and shame, she attempted to expostulate; but Our Lord reassured her and showed her in what manner and by what means He desired that in future she should venerate His Sacred Heart. First of all He bade her receive holy communion as often as she was permitted to do so; on the first Friday of each month she must certainly communicate; and finally in the night between Thursday and Friday, every week, she must rise between eleven o'clock and midnight and, lying prostrate upon the floor, unite herself to Him in prayer in order to appease the anger of God and implore pardon for sinners.

Subsequently to these revelations and graces the humble handmaid of the Lord was favored with the Apparition of the 16th June, 1675, which afterwards attained such celebrity. It occurred on the Sunday in the octave of Corpus Christi, and it cannot be regarded otherwise than as the immediate cause of the public and general devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

On the day in question, while Margaret was praying before the Blessed Sacrament, animated by an intense longing to return love for love to Our Lord, He said to her: "Thou canst give Me no greater proof of thy love than by doing what I have already repeatedly asked of thee." Then showing her His divine Heart, He went on: "Behold this Heart which has so loved men that it has spared nothing to testify its love for them, even to the exhausting and consuming of itself for their sake. But in return for this I receive nothing from the generality of mankind but ingratitude through the contempt, irreverences, sacrileges, and coldness with which I am treated in this Sacrament of love. What, however, afflicts Me most is that even hearts which are consecrated to Me do Me this wrong. Wherefore I require of thee that the first Friday in this octave [of Corpus Christi] should be appointed as a special festival in honor of My Heart, that satisfaction may be made to it on that day by a solemn act of reparation, and the faithful may receive holy communion to make amends for the outrages which are committed against it when it is exposed for veneration upon the altar. I promise thee that My Heart shall so expand as to pour out the effect of its charity in superabundant plenitude on those who honor

it, and who endeavor to prevail on others to pay it similar homage."

The timid nun was not a little startled and abashed at receiving this commission. "Alas! Lord," she exclaimed, "whom hast Thou chosen for this purpose! The weakest of creatures, a poor sinner, whose unworthiness is in itself sufficient to frustrate Thy designs." "Knowest thou not," the Lord answered her, "that I make use of the weak to confound the strong, that My power is displayed most signally in the little ones and the poor in spirit?" "Then," rejoined Margaret, "provide me with the means of bringing to pass that which Thou desirest." Thereupon the Lord replied: "Address thyself to My servant, Father de la Colombière, whom I will send to thee, and tell him in My name that he must do his utmost to establish this devotion and thus rejoice My Heart. Let him not be discouraged by the difficulties which he will encounter; they will not be wanting, but he must remember that whosoever mistrusts himself and places all his trust in Me will prove omnipotent." Margaret communicated all that had occurred to Father de la Colombière, who did not delay for a moment to do his Lord's bidding. First of all he consecrated himself wholly and irrevocably to the

Heart of the Redeemer.¹ Thenceforth both Margaret Mary and Colombière did all that was in their power to make the Sacred Heart of Jesus widely known and universally honored; and the greater the obstacles they had to surmount, the more painful the humiliations which they had to bear whilst engaged in this work, the more signal were the results they achieved. In the case of B. Margaret Mary particularly, we see one whose life was wholly and exclusively devoted to the fulfilment of the task assigned to her, the introduction and diffusion of the devotion to the Heart of Jesus. All her thoughts and affections were centred on this one object, the Heart of her Lord and Saviour; her aspirations, her prayers, all her works and her sufferings were directed to no other end

¹ This act of consecration and the occasion of it are given in Colombière's "Spiritual Diary." This Diary is in general a real treasure for the Christian who seriously strives after virtue and perfection. From it we learn the secrets of a soul who was not from the outset the recipient of graces lavishly outpoured, nor did he find himself almost without a conflict against his corrupt nature admitted to the full possession of divine love; on the contrary we see one who, after a fierce struggle and hard-fought battle with his inherent frailties and evil tendencies, by long years of unremitting vigilance finally climbed to the height of sanctity on which we behold and admire him.

than the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus; every word she uttered, every line she wrote had this for its single aim. Great as was her natural aversion to speak or write on any subject, she overcame her disinclination whenever an occasion presented itself to extol and recommend to others her favorite devotion.¹ Her state of life precluded her from any other external activity for the furtherance of the devotion, yet the unspeakable joy was afforded her, after, it is true, experiencing much opposition and bitter suffering, of seeing it enthusiastically taken up and zealously practised in the Order of which she was a member. As

¹ The writings which we have from the pen of B. Margaret Mary, composed principally during the later portion of her life, are: 1. An autobiography, written in obedience to the order of her confessor (Fr. Ignatius Rolin, S.J.); 2. A considerable number of letters, all of them written for the purpose of promoting the devotion to the Heart of Jesus; 3. A series of counsels, hints, and instructions concerning the spiritual life, given, some orally, some in writing, while she was mistress of novices; 4. A collection of prayers and aspirations to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, composed for her own use and to be given to others. All these writings were arranged and published in two volumes on the occasion of her beatification by the Convent of the Visitation in Paray, entitled *Vie et Œuvres de la B. Marg. Marie Alacoque*.

for Father de la Colombière, it may be seen from his own memoranda how unremittingly and indefatigably this fervent servant of God devoted his life to the execution of the task entrusted to him by his divine Master Himself. In his sermons, his spiritual conferences, his discourses, his letters, at all times and in all places he calls upon those whom he addresses to adore the Heart of Jesus and induce others to adore it also.

Yet if the devotion was to be more widely known and practised among all ranks of society, it was necessary that books and pamphlets explaining and advocating it should be disseminated amongst the working classes. Our Lord had already revealed to B. Margaret Mary that a work of this description should be composed by Fr. Croiset, and give a powerful impetus to the devotion. The book in question appeared at last in the year 1691, and as Margaret Mary was then dead (she died on 17th October, 1690) there was no objection to a biography of the departed nun and an account of the marvels which the Lord had wrought in her being added to it. This circumstance contributed vastly to interest the reader in the devotion and aid in its diffusion.

Yet, however zealously devout souls labored

to spread the devotion, that which Our Lord had expressly enjoined on B. Margaret to bring about, the institution of a festival in honor of the divine Heart of Jesus, had not as yet been attempted, nor could it be accomplished without the consent and permission of the Holy See. Application was accordingly made to the proper authorities. But Rome moves slowly, and, true to its conservative principles, it hesitated long before the request was finally granted. The nuns of the Visitation and the ex-Queen Mary of England were the first to solicit in 1697 from Innocent XII. a special Office and Mass in honor of the Heart of Jesus; but their request was not acceded to. In 1707, during the pontificate of Clement XI., the Order of the Visitation renewed their petition, yet again fruitlessly. About twenty years later, when Benedict XIII. filled the Chair of Peter, fresh attempts from various quarters were made to obtain the long-wished-for favor, and great hopes of success were entertained, as the opinion of the Holy Father was known to be favorable. The matter was submitted to the Congregation of Rites for examination. Fr. Galliffet, S.J., who was then residing in Rome, was appointed *postulator causæ*, and Prosper Lambertini *promotor fidei*. For a long time the rea-

sons pro and con were weighed and examined. Meanwhile Fr. Galliffet was tireless in advocating the cause which he considered it to be his life's task to further; and in his work entitled "On the Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ, Our Lord and God," he sought to give all the explanations and elucidations that were needed. He did not live to see his dearest wish fulfilled. The Congregation were still adverse to granting the petition laid before them; there were still three difficulties as yet insufficiently solved which stood in the way of a favorable result of the negotiations. The matter in question, it was said, was an innovation and at the best would lead to an unlimited increase in the ecclesiastical festivals; moreover, the revelations of B. Margaret had not as yet undergone official examination and received formal approval; and finally, the granting of the petition was in a measure dependent on a philosophical question as yet undecided as to the seat of the sensible affections. Not until renewed appeals were made in the reign of Clement XIII. and the subject again brought before the Congregation of Rites, a lengthy and exhaustive memorial having meanwhile been drawn up by the Polish bishops, in which all remaining difficulties and scruples were re-

moved or explained away, was the petition urged so frequently and from such various quarters finally granted. Permission was given to celebrate the feast of the Sacred Heart, for which a special Office and Mass were appointed, but provisionally only in individual churches on application being made for this permission. Thus official sanction was given to the devotion and it was raised to the rank of an ecclesiastical function. Numerous applications were made from all parts for the privilege of celebrating the newly instituted festival.

Any one who followed all the negotiations carried on with the Holy See concerning this matter could not fail to be struck by two prominent facts. In the first place he could not but observe that the Church, far from being prepossessed in favor of this devotion and well-disposed towards it, rather regarded it with a cautious reserve, almost bordering on suspicion, when it was submitted to her for scrutiny; and in the second place, that during the investigations the revelations of B. Margaret were of no account, being almost entirely disregarded.¹ The main point with which the Church was

¹ The feast in question was instituted before the Church had pronounced a verdict regarding the revelations of B. Margaret Mary.

concerned was to ascertain that the devotion rested on the immutable basis of Catholic dogma, and that it would tend to the greater glory of God as well as the salvation of man. Consequently it is quite incorrect, to say the least, to assert that the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus rests on the revelations made to a private individual, which very possibly may be illusory and deceptive. It is true that it was owing to the revelations vouchsafed to B. Margaret that this devotion was practised by the faithful and examined by the Church, yet it was not in virtue of those revelations, but of the infallible dogmas of the faith, that ecclesiastical sanction was accorded to it. One cannot, of course, suppose such a thing after they have undergone official scrutiny and been pronounced authentic, yet even were it possible for the revelations of B. Margaret to have been figments of the imagination, the devotion would lose nothing as to its interior truth or outward stability.

About the middle of the eighteenth century the devotion had already become widely known; in many localities it was a popular and favorite devotion, for, since the Church had given her sanction to it, there was nothing to prevent it from spreading rapidly throughout the whole

Catholic world. Yet the following years were anything but favorable to its growth and diffusion. Proud and godless science, supported by the force of the law, rose up in angry antagonism to the Heart of Jesus and those who paid homage to it. The Jansenists had from the outset displayed determined hostility to the cultus; and about the time of which we are speaking, posterior to the year 1765, their enmity knew no bounds. The so-called enlightened principles of the day had penetrated even into the sanctuary and infected many a representative of the Catholic priesthood with their spirit, causing them to wither under its breath as the green leaves grow sere and yellow in the autumnal blast. Thus it came to pass that unhappily some Catholic priests joined hands with the Jansenists in their hatred to the devotion and their rancor against those who practised it. The efforts made by that party in combination with the Austrian government to completely extirpate the "Jesuitical devotion," as they were pleased to call it, are almost incredible. The Jansenist bishop of Pistoja, Scipio Ricci, the Jansenistic periodicals *Nouvelles ecclésiastiques* in France and *Annali ecclesiastici* in Italy, the pseudo-synod of Pistoja, Bishop Morosini of Verona, one of the Illumi-

nati, waged war against the devotion primarily by means of sophisms and misrepresentations, contempt and sarcasm, and where these weapons failed the secular authority was appealed to for aid. At first simple fines, later on imprisonment and banishment were the penalties inflicted; nay, the cultus of the Sacred Heart had even its martyrs. At the time of the French Revolution the veneration of a picture of the Heart of Jesus was a crime punishable with death.

The proceedings of the enemies of this devotion were the same in all countries. At first in *feuilletons* and periodicals they poured out a perfect deluge of scorn and derision upon the devotion and its promoters. True to their resolution to exterminate it from the world, they were not content with the means first employed, but applied to the government authorities, in order that the devotion might be forcibly suppressed, and its defenders silenced. Nowhere was their application received so favorably as by the Austrian government. The devotion was interdicted from motives of state policy, and the propagation of it rendered punishable by law. The astronomer royal, the well-known ex-Jesuit Maximilian Hell, was sentenced to pay the enormous fine of 500

florins merely because he distributed some little books on the Sacred Heart; and one of the canons of the cathedral in Vienna was actually sent to prison for the same "crime." Priests who were desirous of taking their doctor's degree in theology were compelled previously to promise that they would keep the Christian religion free from erroneous and pseudo-devotions. Throughout the land orders from high authority were issued to remove all pictures of the Sacred Heart of Jesus from the churches; and where this was not feasible, to cover them with a coat of whitewash. In the Jesuits' church at Innsbruck at the present day the picture which had then to be whitewashed is held in veneration, having been restored in the following year to its original condition at the request of the inhabitants of the Tyrol, and of the magistrate of the town.

The task of defending the devotion against the malicious attacks of these powerful enemies and propagating it amongst the faithful fell to the lot of the Society of Jesus. The Jansenists and their adherents hoped all the more confidently to see it disappear from the face of the earth because the very Order on which it mainly depended for support had been forced to yield to stress of popular opinion, which was

most adverse to it at that period. But their hopes were not destined to be fulfilled. The members of the suppressed Order were stirred up to greater zeal and more unsparing efforts in the defence and furtherance of the much-abused devotion, because it was their firm belief that the toleration they enjoyed in Russia was to be attributed to the protection of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and they earnestly besought and firmly hoped for the restoration of the Society throughout the whole of Christendom from the bounty of the divine Heart. Consequently they exerted themselves to the utmost of their power to promote this cultus with word and pen; their efforts, however, met with isolated and scanty success. Not until more than half a century later, together with the revival of Catholic life and recognition of the Church's claims, did brighter days dawn for this devotion. During the glorious pontificate of Pius IX. of happy memory, it rose to the highest point of prosperity. In the year 1856, in accordance with the petition of the French bishops, the feast of the Sacred Heart was extended to the whole Church; and in 1864 the beatification of the handmaid of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, M. Mary Alacoque, took place. Besides the manifold blessings which Our Lord God be-

stowed everywhere with a lavish hand on the adorers of the Heart of Jesus, nothing contributed so much to further and give importance to this cultus as the fact that the favored disciple of the divine Heart was raised by the Church to our altars. Finally Pius IX. crowned all his exertions for the propagation of the devotion by dedicating the whole Church to the divine Heart of Our Lord. When in 1865 the bicentenary of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus was celebrated, the Holy Father gave permission to every member of his flock throughout the whole Catholic world to consecrate him or her self individually in like manner, by the use of an act of consecration, the formula of which was approved by the Congregation of Rites.

Thus at the present time all that the most zealous and ardent adorers of the Heart of Jesus longed and looked for has been accomplished.¹ The devotion has received the highest ecclesiastical sanction, and everything possible on the part of the Holy See has been done to promote it and commend it to the faithful. It may be said with truth that there is scarcely a single

¹ The one thing they now desire and for which they pray is the canonization of B. Margaret Mary and the beatification of Father Claude de la Colombière.

diocese and but few parishes which have not been dedicated publicly and solemnly to the Heart of Jesus, and in which the devotion is not fervently practised; in fact, having now spread throughout the whole Church, it has become a popular and favorite devotion. Into whatever church one enters one is almost sure to see an altar of the Sacred Heart, or at least an image of it, with unmistakable evidence of the homage paid to it by Christian people; and wherever instruction in the catechism is given to children by a priest, or even by a neophyte in some remote heathen land, he shows them a picture of the Sacred Heart, tells them of the unbounded charity of the Saviour, and teaches them to venerate His Sacred Heart and return love for love. No less than one-and-thirty "Messengers of the Divine Heart of Jesus"¹ proclaim in as many different languages the unfathomable riches of this Heart, and publish to all the world the countless blessings and graces wherewith the pious devotion and trust of the faithful are

¹ In this number only those publications are included which are exclusively devoted to the Apostleship of Prayer and the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and serve no ulterior purpose. The different countries and languages in which they are issued are as follows: 7 English (published in England, Ireland,

munificently rewarded. Nor is this to be wondered at, for whoever acquaints himself with the history of the devotion and considers its present wide diffusion, the happy fruits and benedictions that attend it, with an unbiassed mind cannot fail to acknowledge: This is the work of God. It bears unmistakably the impress of the threefold mark which always and everywhere distinguishes the work of God: the instrument chosen by God was in itself weak and apparently most unfit for the accomplishment of the object in view; the devotion, small and insignificant in its beginnings, has, like the grain of mustard-seed, attained gigantic proportions and spread over the whole world, dispensing blessings on every hand; and after a prolonged and fierce contest, in which it often appeared to succumb, a brilliant and glorious victory followed, all the assaults of an adversary far superior in numbers and strength having only served to accelerate its growth and diffusion. In the light of these facts all preposses-

N. America, the East Indies, Australia), 2 German (of which one is American), 1 French, 1 Breton, 7 Spanish (of which three are American), 1 Catalonian, 1 Portuguese, 1 Polish, 1 Hungarian, 1 Bohemian, 1 Croatian, 1 Slavonian, 1 Albanian, 1 Flemish, 1 Dutch, 1 Chinese, 1 in the language of Malabar, and 1 in Tamul.

sions against the devotion must vanish like mist before the rising sun. For some persons it is too lofty and sublime, too mystic and ideal; for others, on the contrary, too sensuous and carnal; while others pronounce it to be fantastic and sentimental. In as far as these judgments do not refer to reprehensible exaggerations or perversions, the answer may be made: "O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"¹ Once this much is certain, that we have to do with what is God's work, all objections must fall to the ground; criticism is presumption, censure is rebellion against the Spirit of the Lord.

¹ Rom. ix. 20.

II. PRELIMINARY CONDITIONS FOR THE PRACTICE OF THE DEVOTION.

ONE of the greatest favors which the Lord our God can bestow upon man is to disclose to him the treasures of His Sacred Heart, and inspire him with true devotion to that divine Heart. Although God confers this grace on whom He wills, without any previous merit on man's part, yet the soul may prepare itself for its reception by fervent prayer and ardent longing, and, by the acquisition of certain preliminary dispositions, render itself, to some extent, worthy of it and in a condition to receive it. From the life of B. Margaret Mary we learn what are the dispositions and attitude of the heart which are best and most fitting for the attainment of this end. Before she was commissioned to introduce and spread the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Church of God, she was herself undoubtedly deeply imbued with it; and before it could strike root and be developed in her heart, her heart must

have been prepared and qualified to embrace it. Few in number are the souls which Christ the Lord has taken so entirely into His school, for the purpose of training them and making them that which He would have them to be, as He did B. Margaret, forming her as a disciple of His Sacred Heart in order to implant this devotion within her. He required of her especially three virtues to render her an instrument meet for the accomplishment of His intentions and designs; and they at the same time constitute the best and most suitable previous conditions for a true devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus: a heart pure from all sin, contempt of the world, and the love of the cross.

If both here and in the following pages many of B. Margaret's visions and utterances are communicated to the reader, let not this be thought strange; for the definite decision of the Church has left no doubt that the Lord our God chose to employ her in an eminent manner for the introduction and diffusion of the devotion; and indeed she lived and labored wholly and solely for the sake of this devotion, the object for which God had created her. The preparation for her far-reaching vocation lasted until the year 1675; from that time forth she reaped the glorious fruits of the devotion by its con-

stant practice, and her exterior life only served the purpose of recommending and spreading it. In regard to the revelations and visions of which she speaks in her autobiography and her letters, one may be confident, in consequence of the ecclesiastical scrutiny and approbation, that not only is there nothing in them at which exception can be taken, but that they were vouchsafed to her by Christ the Lord for the salvation and spiritual profit of the faithful. And if a definite judgment has not been passed on every individual feature and circumstance of the visions, yet it cannot be denied that the three or four best-known ones,¹ which were of decisive weight in regard to the institution of the devotion, received ecclesiastical approval, and thus possess the necessary warranty for us.

Finally her own utterances which are met with in her letters, and particularly in her autobiography, are doubtless inspired by the Spirit of God, and conduce to the edification of those

¹ In her autobiography B. Margaret relates three visions which bore upon the devotion to the Heart of Jesus. In a letter to her confessor, Fr. Rolin, she describes another vision of the same import which occurred on St. John's Day. It is not improbable that this is identical with one of the three mentioned above.

who read them; they must, however, always be employed and utilized with caution and discretion. For, not to mention anything else, the communications made by Our Lord to individual, chosen souls are never worded and expressed in a general manner like the dogmas of the Christian religion; they rather retain an individual impress, as they were imparted to the particular soul. It may, however, very easily, and it does often, happen that the divine revelations under the special form in which they are made to us do not commend themselves to minds and characters of a different nature and stamp. Hence wise caution is invariably enjoined in communicating private revelations to other persons for their edification.¹ Now the instructions which she gives in her letters principally are of incalculable value for all Christians, and especially for Religious. What will now be related in this chapter concerning the life of B. Margaret, her purity of heart, her contempt of the world, and her love of the cross, belongs to the period of preparation which preceded the

¹ The principles relating to private revelations will be found in Card. Franzelin's *De Traditione*, thes. 22, Corollarium. Fr. Kleutgen gives some excellent hints on this subject in his instructive essay "On the Miraculous," which was recently printed with his commentary on the Gospel of St. Matthew.

first revelations respecting the devotions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

It is really wonderful to observe what abhorrence of sin, and dread of offending God even in the slightest degree, Our Lord implanted in her childish heart from her earliest years. In her autobiography she thanks God with the most touching expressions of gratitude for having inspired her in her childhood with such a detestation of sin. This circumstance was a recognized fact in her parents' house and was turned to account in her bringing up. In order to curb her youthful vivacity and petulance, to check the ebullitions of anger or impatience so common amongst children, no better and more efficacious means could be found than to say: "That will offend almighty God." The same abhorrence of everything sinful was apparent in her intercourse with others. When she was four years old she went to stay for some time with her godmother, who had in her employ two women, one of whom was very religious, but of a stern, gloomy, and forbidding exterior, while the other was utterly irreligious, frivolous, and worldly, yet kind and pleasing in her manner. In spite of this the child would not be won by her flatteries and caresses, but with childish artlessness attached herself to the other woman.



Her predilection for original purity went hand in hand with her abhorrence of sin. "I felt myself," she says, "continually urged to pronounce these words, of the meaning of which I had as yet no idea: 'I dedicate my purity to Thee, O God; to Thee I vow perpetual virginity.' Once I did utter them during Mass at the time of the consecration. I did not know what I had done; I did not understand what a vow or what chastity was; but ever since that day I felt a longing to hide myself in a desert; only the fear lest I should meet men there kept me back."

Even this highly gifted child was not constant and persevering in justice. She never fell into bad ways, but her spirit of prayer grew faint, her early fervor waxed cold. She began to be vain and arrogant, she acquired a taste for the pleasures of the senses, and allowed attachment to the things of the world to gain an entrance into her heart. Thus she became giddy and distracted. But ere long Our Lord led her back to her former fervor by means of a peculiar punishment. All conversations into which she threw herself with the vivacity of her excitable character were embittered to her by inward disquiet and the stings of conscience; tedious and painful illnesses gradually put a stop to the en-

joyment of all youthful pleasures and diversions, and finally, through the special dispensations of divine Providence, outward circumstances contributed to strengthen and confirm her in the better mind to which she had come. This slight and temporary deviation from the right way was for her a lifelong cause of humiliation, of tears of contrition, of severe penances. Purity of heart, rendered brighter by tears of penitence, imparts to the soul a peculiar value, and is specially pleasing in Our Lord's sight.

From the time of her entrance into the cloister, Our Lord vouchsafed to her a continual sense of His presence, a grace which, combined with reverent awe, increased within her the fear of displeasing His divine Majesty. She was, it is true, not exempt from human frailties and slight faults committed through oversight or thoughtlessness, but the purity of her heart manifested itself in this, that she strove, and strove successfully, to correct those failings which really arose from weakness, confessing them with much contrition and compunction, and seriously, strenuously endeavoring to correct them. In this Our Lord afforded her extraordinary assistance. He never allowed a single fault of which she was guilty to pass without reprimand, and her precipitancy and weakness

of will met with stern reproof. Once when she had committed some fault against simplicity and uprightness of heart, Our Lord said to her: "Know that I am holy and the teacher of holiness. I am pure and cannot tolerate the slightest stain, therefore thou must walk before Me in simplicity of heart and purity of intention; I cannot suffer the least want of straightforwardness." Another time when she had felt a movement of vanity, He rebuked her in these words: "O thou who art dust and ashes, of what hast thou to boast? Of thyself thou art nothing; of that thou must never lose sight." What Our Lord chastised most seriously and severely in her conduct were principally want of reverence and devotion in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament; sins against purity of intention, against humility and charity; disobedience and inward revolt against the commands of her Superiors.

For the purpose of preserving her pure from the least and lightest stain of sin, Our Lord caused her to behold as in a picture how greatly even the slightest sins disfigure the human soul, and how displeasing they are in God's sight. Thus she gained so clear a knowledge of the hideousness even of the least faults that she was filled with abhorrence of them and was ready to suffer the greatest torture rather than

to appear before the all-holy eyes of the Most High with the stain of sin upon her soul. By means of these extraordinary favors she attained to a delicacy of conscience and a purity of heart which fill us with astonishment and admiration.

The other virtue which Our Lord produced in her soul by His gracious operation was a complete contempt for the world and all earthly things. Our heart clings to earth with its every fibre; the inclination for and love of ease, diversion, enjoyment, the desire to have preference and proofs of affection shown us by our neighbor is inherent in every one of us. From each and all of these Margaret's heart had to be completely purged by divine grace, if she was to be worthy to fulfil her vocation, that of making known the treasures contained in the Heart of Jesus. It was about the time of her first communion that she first became conscious in a striking manner of the work of grace going on within her. "My first communion," she writes in her autobiography, "was the means of diffusing such bitterness over all the little joys and pleasures of my age that I no longer cared for them, although I began by pursuing them eagerly. If I did but join with my playfellows in some innocent frolic, I was conscious of some-

thing within me which bade me withdraw from their company, and called on me to hide myself in a solitary corner; nor had I any peace until I obeyed that voice." From that time forth the Lord God, training her in His school, led her by degrees to complete detachment of the heart from all worldly things. Most probably, in spite of the abundant graces lavished upon her by God, it cost His favored servant many a hard-fought battle, many an arduous conquest of self, before the last lingering attachment to earth was banished from her heart. It has already been stated that in her early youth she gave herself to the pursuit of worldly pleasures and distractions, but before long she was, by God's grace, cured of this fault, and that by a means which detached her heart more and more from self and the things of time and sense, and united it to God. For several years, through a special dispensation of Providence, she was subjected to such unkind treatment and insolent behavior on the part of her own servants, and was forced to submit to such irksome imprisonment in her own house, that her position there became intolerable. This is how it came about: When her mother was no longer able to superintend so large a household, she found herself compelled to entrust the management of it to

strangers, and engaged two servants, persons of a low class, who, once they had obtained a footing in the house, took upon themselves to rule everything with a rod of iron, often leaving the mother and children without the necessities of life, and behaving towards them with inconceivable rudeness and injustice. God made use of these persons as the means of causing Margaret to make considerable progress in contempt of the world. She herself describes her position in her parent's house, and how she contrived to endure it. "We had no voice in household matters," she says, "and did not dare to do anything without permission. It was a continual struggle. Everything was kept under lock and key, so that I could not so much as dress myself to go to Mass without borrowing some clothes. Then indeed I began to feel my imprisonment most galling. However, I resigned myself to it with a good grace, and so far was I from resisting that I never went out without asking the permission of three several persons. From that time I was only intent on finding solace and happiness in the adorable Sacrament of the Altar. But as I lived at some distance from the village church, I could never go there without the consent of three persons, and not unfrequently it happened that what one

permitted another forbade. And if my grief found vent in tears, they used to taunt me, saying the reason was that I had made an assignation with some one, and was annoyed at not being able, under the pretext of going to Mass or Benediction, to keep it. At such times I took refuge in a secluded corner of the garden or of the stable, and there on my knees poured out my whole soul before God with tears. I often remained there all day long without anything to eat or drink; occasionally, towards evening, the peasants out of compassion for me would give me some milk or fruit. When I returned to the house, it was with such fear and trembling that I might have been a criminal going to hear sentence passed on him. I should have counted myself happier had I begged my bread from door to door than in leading such a life. As soon as I crossed the threshold, the scolding and railing began afresh, because, as they said, I took no interest in household matters. Without being allowed to say a word, I set to work to help the servants. I passed the night much as I had passed the day, crying my heart out at the feet of my crucified Lord." By these sufferings and tribulations her heart was more and more detached from earth and united to God.

Nevertheless it was long ere all bonds were fully broken and her heart given solely and wholly to God. She had already been some time in the Order when she made an intimate and confidential friend of one of her fellow Religious, one whom she could not do otherwise than esteem on account of her piety and virtue. Now all masters of the spiritual life condemn intimate friendships of this kind as prejudicial to and likely to impede progress in virtue. Our divine Lord reproached her for having formed this friendship, and required her to give it up. This wounded Margaret's sensitive and affectionate heart in its tenderest point; for three months she battled with herself before she could resolve to make the sacrifice demanded of her. Not until the Saviour told her that human friendships divided the heart, and took from Him a portion of the love that ought to be His, and also placed an obstacle in the way of the operations of His grace, ending by threatening to withdraw from her if she did not separate from creatures, did she feel herself sufficiently strong to break the last link that bound her to any creature. From that epoch she was entirely dead to all the things of earth. In the last retreat which she had to make before her profession, she wrote

thus: "These are my resolutions which shall be kept unto my life's end, for my beloved Redeemer Himself dictated them to me. After I had received Him in holy communion, He said to me: 'From henceforth thou must live the life of the God-Man; thou must live as if thou didst not live, that I may live perfectly in thee; thou must regard thy body and all that concerns it as if it no longer existed. For this all thy senses, all thy powers must be as it were buried in Me; for all earthly things thou must be blind, deaf, and dumb. Thou must will as if thou hadst no will, no desire, no opinion of thine own; without likes or dislikes, without any other will than to please Me, that must constitute thy sole happiness.'" Margaret wrote the act of consecration or self-surrender in which she promised to fulfil the wishes and will of Our Lord in her own blood, signing herself: "Sister Margaret, who is dead to the world."

The third virtue by which God prepared Margaret for her vocation was the love of the cross and of suffering. Our Lord breathes this love into the souls of those whom He desires to draw nearer to Himself, whom He destines to accomplish great things in the Church and in the kingdom of grace. Margaret was ani-

mated by the same sentiments as were those heroic souls whose prayer was: "To suffer, O Lord, or to die;" and again: "To suffer and not to die."

It has just been related that for several years she was incessantly tormented and thwarted by insolent maid servants in her parents' house. She thus writes about what she had to endure: "The image of Jesus crucified was ever present to my mental vision, either as the Ecce Homo or when carrying His cross. This filled my mind with such profound compassion for Him and such love of His sufferings that, in consequence of my longing to bear affliction and thus resemble my suffering Saviour, all my hardships seemed trifling and insignificant." After she had received the Sacrament of Confirmation the desire for suffering made itself felt more strongly than ever. "How happy should I be," she said, "O my beloved Jesus, if Thou wouldst imprint upon my soul the image of Thy Passion and the pains Thou didst endure!" One All Souls' Day, after her entrance into religion, she experienced greater compunction than usual on account of her past negligence in prayer and in receiving holy communion, and felt an ardent longing to atone for this. Then Our Lord said to her: "Remember that

the God to whom thou desirest to belong is a crucified God, therefore thou must conform thyself to Him, and renounce all the joys of life. There will be no longer any such pleasures for thee; My cross will embitter them all to thee." From this time forward all her prayers, all her desires were directed to this one object, to suffer out of love for Jesus without consolation of any kind, without alleviation, without human sympathy, in order thereby to be made conformable to the image of the Crucified. And when, stimulated by this desire, she prayed for suffering, Our Lord sometimes showed her a cross of vast dimensions, sometimes He appeared to her Himself as the God-Man crucified, telling her that the cross awaiting her would be so great and so heavy that she could not possibly bear it without the support of His almighty arm.

In the life of B. Margaret an account is also given of a vision such as is not uncommonly met with in the lives of holy servants of God and those who are called to undergo great sufferings. "Once," she narrates in her autobiography, "I beheld our dear Lord holding in one hand the representation of the happiest life conceivable for a nun; a tranquil life, abounding in interior and exterior consolation,

with the enjoyment of excellent health and of the regard and esteem of others, all, in short, in which the natural man takes delight. In the other hand He held a picture portraying an exceptionally poor and abject life, full of suffering both of soul and body, a life of complete crucifixion through the endurance of all imaginable humiliations and slights. Showing me these two pictures, He said: 'Choose which of these two thou preferrest. The option is left to thee; I will impart to thee the same graces whichever thou dost select.' Casting myself at His feet, I replied: 'My Lord, I desire nothing but Thee and whatsoever Thou art pleased to choose for me.' Again He pressed me to make a choice, and again I said: 'In Thee, O my God, I have all that I need; choose for me whatever will conduce the most to Thy glory, without considering my advantage or my desire.' Then, holding out the picture of the mortified life to me, He said: 'See what I have chosen for thee, and what is most pleasing to Me both for the execution of My designs and for the purpose of rendering thee like unto Me.' Thereupon I took the picture of mortification and crucifixion, and kissed the hand that gave it to me, although at the same time I trembled from head to foot."

Her life did indeed abound in sufferings of every kind. After her entrance into the convent one illness followed the other, so that one of her Superiors declared that in six years Margaret had scarcely been well for five months. And all her illnesses left traces behind, permanent traces, so that really there was hardly a part in her body in which she did not experience some pain.

But what is far more painful than corporal suffering is the suffering of the soul, the interior pain caused by being misunderstood, slighted, persecuted by those around one, and this interior pain becomes immeasurably greater when it is caused by those from whom one has a right to expect protection, help, and affection. Margaret had to drink this bitter chalice also to the dregs. We have already seen that through the bad behavior of two servants her position in her parents' house was made almost unbearably miserable and galling. We could well imagine that her refined and sensitive temperament must have suffered acutely under this treatment, even had she not acknowledged this herself; but what is still more astounding than the unaccountable insolence of the menials is the manner in which Margaret bore their persecution. "I felt," she says, "continually urged

to show them every kindness, every attention within my power; in fact my greatest pleasure was to do something for them and speak well of them. This was not my doing, it was the work of my Lord and Master, who would not permit any murmur, any feeling of discontent or of dislike to those persons to arise within my heart."

As her interior suffering increased after her entrance into the convent, so did her heroic patience and unflinching endurance. From the outset all her Superiors regarded her with a certain measure of mistrust and prejudice; nor is this to be wondered at, for Margaret was led by her divine Guide in the extraordinary ways of the spiritual life. Hence they subjected her to the most severe and trying tests in order to convince themselves that her virtue and piety were genuine; and as the Superiors were often changed, every time a new one was appointed the trials began afresh, together with a whole series of humiliations. Nor was she a stranger to that condition of which we often read in the lives of the saints, in which dislike, disgust, and repulsion are felt for all that has to be done; nay, by the special permission of God she could do nothing, not even the commonest, most indifferent actions, without repugnance, while natu-

ral pleasures were a continual torture to her. The supervision of the pupils in the boarding-school, a duty which had been entrusted to her, was so intensely distasteful to her that she could only accomplish it by a strong effort; and she used to say that it cost her more to take necessary nourishment or to take rest at night, to join in the usual recreation of the nuns or to go to the parlor, and other things of the kind, than to bear the pain and languor of a burning fever. Yet she never allowed any one to perceive this; outwardly she always appeared calm and contented. But when alone with God she once broke out into the bitter complaint: "My God, how heavy a price I have to pay for my privileges!"

To put the climax to her sufferings, God ordained for the greater trial and perfecting of His servant that she should be almost universally misapprehended, and consequently slighted and despised. She was appointed to assist the Infirmarian, who, being of a lively disposition and very active and quick at her work, was continually finding fault with Margaret's quiet, deliberate manner. She complained that she did nothing, and what little she did was badly and slowly done. On account of the extraordinary things which the Lord wrought in her,

she was by some considered to be a visionary. Her habit of continual prayer, her austere life of penance, her scrupulous exactitude in the observance of the rules, her lowly simplicity were regarded by many with suspicion, and held to be reprehensible peculiarities and vagaries. All this she bore silently, with unwavering patience and resignation. On a pupil in the school expressing to Margaret her surprise that she was not thought more of, she replied: "My dear child, these people know me better than I know myself. Thank God with me for this grace which they are the means of procuring for me." And when one of her fellow Religious said to her she really must be very virtuous to take everything so quietly as she did, Margaret replied: "Let us go into the chapel, Sister, and ask pardon for our faults in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament; and at the same time let us pray for those who give me occasion to suffer something for Our Lord's sake." By these means Margaret was to be made conformable to the image of the Son of God, who from His birth until His death was misunderstood, persecuted, and contemned, and bore all those sufferings with wondrous patience.

When Our Lord God sets before us a model of virtue and sanctity for our imitation, He ordi-

narily raises that model to an extraordinary height of perfection. St. Aloysius, who was intended to be a pattern to us of purity, employed for the preservation and increase of that angelic virtue, under the direction of divine grace, means from which our nature recoils in horror, and so completely did he live on earth an angel's life, in such unsullied purity, that its brilliance dazzles our mortal sight. God's purpose in acting thus is not to signify that the attainment of a similar height of perfection is necessary or even possible for every Christian; does He not propose Himself to us as a pattern of perfection, and place before us the example of His only-begotten Son for our imitation? Yet generous, magnanimous hearts needs must love the highest when they see it; they feel themselves impelled to approach as near as possible to the ideal, lofty and unattainable though it be, by means of eager effort and stretching forward; only cowardly and pusillanimous souls fold their hands idly in their laps when they perceive the eminence which it is a matter of no slight difficulty to climb.

Thus from the life of B. Margaret we become acquainted with a degree of virtue and sanctity which, in her case a preparation for the practice of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus,

can scarcely, under the most favorable circumstances, be attained as the result of long and fervent practice of the devotion. We cannot venture to hope ever to enter upon the practice of the devotion with reparation of heart like unto that of B. Margaret; but her life teaches us this, that it is impossible really to practise the devotion unless certain impediments are previously removed; and that it is impossible to make progress as she did in the devotion and to participate in copious measure in the fruits and graces which flowed to her from it, if certain conditions are not fulfilled and certain means employed. If we do not possess the extraordinary horror of sin, even of the least and lightest, wherewith through the operation of God's grace she was inspired, yet we must have seriously broken off our sins; if we have not completely eradicated from our hearts all attachment to the world, we must at least by habitual practice of mortification detach our hearts more and more from earthly things; and if we have not advanced so far as to desire suffering and rejoice in the cross, we must at any rate bear the contrarieties of life with patience, and not shrink from the self-conquest and sacrifice which a Christian and religious life, the faithful and constant fulfilment of duty, requires of us.

First Condition: Abhorrence of Sin.—Nothing is more utterly incompatible with devotion to the Heart of Jesus than sin; him whom one loves one does not offend. The cultus of the Heart of Jesus is intended to awaken and to augment love to Jesus, Our Saviour and Redeemer; consequently it is a moral impossibility that true devotion to His Sacred Heart can exist, flourish, and bear fruit in the soul where sin reigns, where there remains a single sinful passion not wholly overcome. It is not as if the sinner were excluded from the Heart of Jesus; he can, he ought to turn to that most merciful Heart with pious confidence, and the result of this will be his true, sincere conversion; but no one who cherishes any attachment whatever to sin will ever penetrate into the depths of Jesus' Heart; the treasures of that divine Heart will never be opened to him who takes pleasure in the gratification of any sinful desire.

Nay, even attachment to venial sin, if conscious and voluntary, cannot coexist with true veneration of the divine Heart. The cultus of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, being an act of love, necessitates ever-increasing, intimate connection with Our Saviour and Redeemer, who bestows the riches of His Heart upon His friends

with divine munificence. Now how can Our Lord make him the trusted friend of His Heart who does not care in the least for His friendship? And must it not be acknowledged that he is quite indifferent to Our Lord's friendship who has no scruple in committing venial sin, and that perhaps frequently? Any one who has a sincere and warm affection for one of his fellow men endeavors with the utmost solicitude to avoid everything that might be in the least degree displeasing to him; nay, more, he rather strives by a thousand attentions and proofs of love and attachment to make sure of his good will; whereas if any one can resolve determinately to offend another even in the least matter, and willingly and wittingly cause him annoyance, he shows plainly enough that he sets no value on the friendship of that individual. And truly he who knowingly and voluntarily commits venial sin trifles with Our Lord's friendship. Therefore whosoever desires to acquire and practice real devotion to the Heart of Jesus must not only thoroughly and forever break off from mortal sin, but must also wage war in earnest with venial sin. Absolute sinlessness is, it is true, out of our reach here on earth, but what the adorer of the Sacred Heart can and should aim at is a sincere intention

never again by venial sin consciously to offend his Lord and God, his Saviour and Redeemer, who is to him all in all and to whom he owes everything. And if, in spite of this, he still transgresses in lesser matters, it is more through frailty and want of thought than through malice and perversity of will, and he will endeavor at once to make his peace with the Lord whom he has offended, be it in ever so slight a degree. In this case our innate and ineradicable tendency to sin forms no obstacle to our continual advance in the practice of the devotion to the Heart of Jesus.

Second Condition: Practice of Mortification.
—Christ and the world are diametrically opposed to each other. There is scarcely anything that Our Lord has expressed more clearly, decidedly, and emphatically than His hatred and detestation of the world; scarcely anything which He enjoined so frequently and so stringently on His disciples both by precept and example as the necessity of holding aloof from the world. The whole world, we are told, is seated in wickedness;¹ the prince of this world is the devil;² Our Lord declares that the works of the world are evil;³ that it cannot

¹ L. John v. 19.

² John xii. 31.

³ Ib. iii. 19.

receive the Spirit of truth.¹ He says that the world knows Him not;² He prays not for it,³ but denounces it: Woe to the world;⁴ the world hateth Him,⁵ and as it hateth Him so it hateth His disciples and friends because they are not of the world even as He also is not of the world. And His disciples echo the teaching of their Lord and Master; the Apostle of Charity exhorts the Christian converts in accents of paternal gentleness: "Children, love not the world, nor the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him."⁶ And Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, with his characteristic force and energy declares: "The world is crucified to me, and I to the world;"⁷ again, "If I yet pleased men I should not be the servant of Christ."⁸

But what is the world which Our Lord abhors, and from which we are commanded to hold ourselves aloof and which we are to despise? "All that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes and the pride of life."⁹ The world offers many things to its votaries: wealth and property,

¹ John xiv. 17.

² Ib. i. 10.

³ Ib. xvii. 9.

⁴ Matt. xviii. 7.

⁵ John xv. 18; xvii. 14; viii. 23.

⁶ I. John ii. 15.

⁷ Gal. vi. 14.

⁸ Ib. i. 10.

⁹ I. John ii. 16.

ease and enjoyment, honor and distinctions; and with these things she entices and seduces the human heart and holds it captive to herself. And the proneness of our heart to evil, a proneness which we bring into the world with us, consists in this, that with the whole force of our nature we are drawn towards the things of the world. By nature we are true children of the world, who prize and love the riches of the world, the pleasures of the world, the honors of the world, and strive eagerly to obtain them.

Now the main point of the devotion to the Heart of Jesus consists in this, that, trained in the school of our divine Saviour, who during His earthly existence manifested the utmost contempt for the world, we should, out of love for Him, make ourselves more and more conformable to His Heart. It is therefore obviously impossible truly to venerate and love the Heart of Jesus while every fibre of our heart clings to earth, and we strain every nerve in eager search after what the world offers, its riches, its pleasures, its honors. Only in proportion as we detach our heart from the things of earth and banish from it the love of the world, can we increase and make progress in devotion to the Heart of Jesus. And this can be accomplished in no other way than by the

practice of mortification; consequently this is one of the primary conditions for the practice of the cultus of the Sacred Heart.

He who is really desirous of attaining a true veneration and love for the Heart of Jesus must above and before all exercise a strict vigilance over the desires and inclinations of his heart, and carefully test those which have the things of the world for their object. Herein consists the difference between the children of the world and the disciples of Our Lord, who crucify the flesh with its lusts; the efforts and exertions of the former are altogether directed to the gratification, as far as possible, of their wishes and cravings, even though they offend Our Lord thereby; whereas the latter strive first of all to renounce every indulgence and possession that would be displeasing to Our Lord, and furthermore deny themselves many things the possession of which would be by no means sinful, yet would render them unlike to the Heart of Jesus, the object of their worship and their love.

Third Condition: Fidelity and Perseverance in the Fulfilment of Duty.—The cultus of the Sacred Heart of Jesus contains in itself, as the divine Saviour Himself asserts, graces of salvation and sanctification for every one who

seeks them in His divine Heart; and this devotion is inseparable from the endeavor to increase continually more and more in the knowledge and love of Our Lord. He who truly reverences the Heart of Jesus must infallibly feel himself urged to strive after ever higher perfection, after ever greater holiness. Our efforts to attain inward sanctity will, however, be fruitless unless we begin by doing our duty conscientiously and perseveringly in our daily life. If the devotion to the Heart of Jesus is to strike deep root in our heart, the first thing we have to do is to shape our course of conduct in exact accordance with the circumstances in which God has placed us, and the duties of the state of life to which He has called us. Nor must we content ourselves with merely recognizing that to be our duty which we cannot omit doing without actual sin; we must rather strive to accomplish to the utmost of our power all that almighty God desires and requires of us. And if it is a question of candidates for the priesthood, there can be no doubt that the study of the divine science and the life of religion hold the first and foremost place in their daily round of duties, by which they are to sanctify themselves and prepare themselves for their future work.

The more they abandon occupations and diversions of another kind in order to give themselves up in tranquillity and seclusion to the study of theology and to spiritual exercises, the more perfectly will they fulfil their duty, the more excellently will they prepare themselves for the high calling for which God in His goodness destines them.

There is, however, in this life no discharge of duty, above all no faithful, constant discharge of duty, without many sacrifices and frequent self-conquest. Therefore one of the necessary conditions prior to the practice of this devotion is the unshakable resolution to make sacrifices ungrudgingly, to conquer one's self willingly and cheerfully whenever these sacrifices, this conquest are required, as they surely will be of one who determines to fulfil faithfully and unwaveringly every duty which it is incumbent on him to fulfil.

If, thus prepared, we enter upon this devotion and continue to practise it assiduously, we may rest assured that we shall experience in our own person the fruits of that devotion, the blessings which Our Lord bestows so liberally on all those who venerate His Sacred Heart.

III. THE OBJECT OF THE DEVOTION.

THE word devotion signifies primarily a certain inclination and readiness of the heart for all that concerns the worship of God, or, in the present case, for all that appertains to the honor and glory of the divine Heart. In this sense, for instance, we say: B. Canisius had a great devotion to the Heart of Jesus. And since this frame of mind and disposition of heart gave rise to many and multiform acts, prayers, and religious exercises by which the interior devotion is expressed and formulated, we are accustomed also to give the name of devotion to these external manifestations of the inward sentiment. Thus, e.g., we say: This book contains devotions to the Heart of Jesus; or, Devotions to the Sacred Heart are held in the Church. The question now before us is this: What is the actual object to which the aforesaid inward attitude of the will, as well as the acts and pious exercises proceeding from it, refer?

It may appear strange that not even as yet

are the opinions of theologians and ascetic writers fully agreed as to the object of the devotion to the Heart of Jesus. The devotion of which we speak is, however, one upon which thousands of books and pamphlets have been written, which has been a favorite one with the children of the Church for two hundred years, and has been more fruitful in graces and blessings than perhaps any other. A glance at the most recent works on the subject will afford ample proof that the theologians and ascetic writers of the present day are increasingly inclined to adopt the views set forth in the following pages in the most comprehensive manner possible.

The object of the devotion, as its name announces, is the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The word heart is employed in a twofold sense. In the literal sense it denotes that organ of the human body which regulates the circulation of the blood, the most important, therefore, and the most indispensable to the physical life of man, the corporal, sensible heart. In the figurative sense it signifies, in all languages and among all nations, firstly, the rational faculty of desire, the will; or, to speak more correctly, the whole of man's desiderative faculty both sensible and rational, in a word his

mind; and secondly, the acts of that same faculty, the entire interior moral life, especially love, in which all the rest has its foundation.¹ Thus, for instance, we say: My heart loves thee, longs for thee; and again, Give me thy heart, I only desire thy heart.

The object of the devotion is the Heart of Jesus in the twofold meaning of the word; it virtually comprises two things: the corporal, sensible heart, and the divine and human will of the God-Man Jesus Christ with all His acts, but preeminently the acts of His divine charity as both God and Man.

The corporal heart and the love of Our Lord, which together compose the object of our devotion, are not to be apprehended as constituting two several and separate objects of worship, of which we may choose sometimes the one, sometimes the other as the recipient of our homage, but both together form in their union one single object, that is, the Heart of Jesus in the twofold signification of the word. For this is precisely Our Lord's will which He made known to us through B. Margaret, that in the worship He desired to be paid Him, not merely His love, but His love under the symbol of His Heart, and

¹ "Omnes affectiones causantur ex amore." S. August., *De civ. Dei*, I. 14. c. 7.

not merely His Heart, but His Heart as the symbol of love, should be venerated by the faithful.

It is undoubtedly permissible to regard the Heart of Our Lord in the metaphorical sense of the word, and indeed to take it singly as the object of our adoration and our cultus; a hundred passages in Holy Scripture prove that this is so. And when, in the writings of the Fathers and of the mystics and ascetics of the Middle Ages up to the seventeenth century, mention is made of the Heart of Jesus, and veneration is paid, praise and glory ascribed to the Heart of the Saviour, it is almost invariably the supersensible heart, the charity of Our Lord, that is meant. And if in the present day some devout soul were to take the whole interior life of Our Lord for the constant subject of her meditations and pious exercises, it would most assuredly be an excellent practice of great practical utility; but it would not be the devotion to the Sacred Heart revealed by Our Lord and approved and recommended to the faithful by the Church, for this includes in its object both the corporal and the spiritual Heart of Our Lord. In like manner one may revere and adore the material heart of Our Lord for its own sake, apart from His infinite love; it is worthy of veneration, and

whoso pays it homage does a good work pleasing to God, and performs an act of divine worship; yet he does not practise the devotion recommended and propagated by B. Margaret, for that has for its object the heart as the natural symbol of love.

What has just been said must not be understood as implying that in practising the devotion either the material heart or the charity of Our Lord may be lost sight of. Both must be ever present to the mind. Just as one may honor and revere the corporal heart of the Saviour and meditate upon its excellences without every time expressly raising one's thoughts to the charity of Our Lord, so in prayer one may fix one's mind on the latter without invariably keeping the former before one's thoughts. But when it is a question of definitely stating the object of the devotion both of these must be united, and in practising the devotion the fact must not be overlooked that as a general rule the unbounded charity of our divine Lord must be venerated under the symbol of His material heart.¹

¹ This view of the subject gave rise to the declaration issued by the Congregation of Rites, Jan. 12, 1878. By a rescript of Jan. 2, 1792, Pope Pius VI. granted to all who should visit a picture or image of the Sacred

It will not be without utility if we acquaint ourselves to a certain extent at least with the principal sources whence we in the first instance derive information concerning the nature and object of this devotion. We shall find prominence now given to the material heart, and again the charity of Our Lord will be placed in the foreground; but, however this may be, one fact remains certain, that the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus which has received the authoritative sanction of the Church does not venerate the material heart to the exclusion of the charity of Our Lord, nor His divine charity apart from the corporal heart, but in venerating the latter the love of Our Lord is at the same time adored; and thus the material heart and

Heart of Jesus in any church or chapel where it was exposed for veneration, and pray before it for a short time, an indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines. Now, according to the aforesaid declaration, this indulgence cannot be gained before any picture of the Saviour in which He is represented, e.g., as pointing to His breast, or to the spot where the heart is located, for the purpose of calling to mind His love for man. No pictorial representation of Our Lord in which the heart is not distinctly visible is considered as an image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus by the Congregation of Rites. (*Decreta authentica*, n. 436.)

the love of Our Lord are the two parts which conjointly form the object of our devotion.

From the history of the devotion, of which a brief outline was given above, we gather the assured fact that Christ our Lord willed to introduce into His Church, through the instrumentality of B. Margaret, a devotion which till then had been revealed only to individual, highly-favored souls, and which was to the faithful in general new and unfamiliar. There is no doubt that we can learn the nature and object of this devotion, which until that time had not been practised in the Church, most easily and accurately from the revelations made by Our Lord to B. Margaret. From the most important of the revelations she received, of which an account has already been given (pp. 16 and 17), it is clearly evident that Christ required reverence and devotion to be paid to His material heart. Of this heart He speaks, this heart He discovers and shows to His servant; this heart Margaret herself made the object of her devotion, and this she urged and incited others to venerate, yet never independently of or apart from the charity of Our Lord: "Behold the Heart which has so loved men." However these words may be interpreted, so much is certain, that Our Lord here speaks of His Heart not

in a figurative, but a true and real sense, and proposes His corporal heart as the object of the new devotion to be introduced into the Church; but that it is not to be separated from the love of which the heart is a symbol.

This interpretation, this view recurs again and again in the writings of B. Margaret Mary; it is invariably the visible, sensible Heart together with the charity of Our Lord which she herself venerates and proposes to others for their veneration. "He disclosed to me," she writes in her autobiography, "His Heart burning with love and worthy of all love." And in one of her letters she says that Our Lord assured her "that He took a singular pleasure in being honored under the form of His heart of flesh, and desired that the representation of it should be exposed for public veneration, in order to touch the insensible hearts of men." If the sight of a picture of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is to touch and kindle the cold, insensible hearts of men, this must obviously be because it recalls to their minds the sufferings and the charity of their Redeemer. In the same letter she describes the picture which is to be exposed for veneration; it fully answers the proposed end. "The divine Heart was represented to me as on a

throne of fire and flames, shedding rays on every side; it was brighter than the sun and transparent as crystal. The wound which He received upon the cross appeared there visibly; a crown of thorns encircled the divine Heart, and it was surmounted by a cross. These instruments of His Passion signified, my divine Master gave me to understand, that it was the unbounded love which He had for men that had been the source of all the sufferings and humiliations which He had vouchsafed to endure for us."

Such was the conception B. Margaret formed of the devotion, such the view taken of it both by her and by those who derived their knowledge of it from her. She had foretold that the devotion would be made widely known through a book which Fr. Croiset of the Society of Jesus would write. Croiset became acquainted with the devotion from Fr. Colombière's Diary. His work on the Sacred Heart of Jesus was the first published on this subject. In explaining the nature and object, he says: "The immediate object of this devotion is the infinite charity of the Son of God which induced Him to undergo death for our sakes, and furthermore to give Himself wholly to us in the adorable Sacrament of the Altar." And after other amplifications

he concludes: "The devotion to the Heart of Jesus does not in anywise tend, as some might be led to imagine from the name, to the veneration and love of the material heart of Jesus in a special and exclusive manner. The material heart of the Redeemer merely constitutes the sensible object of the devotion—the principal and primary one is His unbounded love for us. Only because the latter is spiritual and invisible, some symbol for the exercise of the devotion was necessary; and what more suitable and natural symbol of love is there than the heart?"

Fully in keeping with this view is the petition presented to the Sacred Congregation of Rites by the Advocate Frigidianus Castagnori in the year 1697 for the institution of a feast in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus with a proper Mass and Office: "The principal object of this devotion," such are the words of the petition, "is the unbounded love of the Son of God, which induced Him to deliver Himself up to death as a sacrifice for mankind, and to give Himself to them for their spiritual sustenance in the Blessed Sacrament. But inasmuch as, on account of the frailty of his nature, man stands in need of a sensible, visible object, certainly for the purpose of awakening and stimulating sentiments of love towards Christ our

Lord no more suitable, appropriate, and efficacious object could be chosen than His Heart."

On occasion of the renewal of the proceedings, some thirty years later, under the pontificate of Benedict XIII., for the introduction of a feast in honor of the Heart of Jesus, the Postulator was Fr. de Galliffet, S.J., a zealous worshipper of the Sacred Heart. In order to accelerate the proceedings and assure a favorable response, he laid before the Congregation of Rites his famous work, "On the Worship of the Sacred Heart of Our God and Lord Jesus Christ;"¹ in which he endeavored to meet and remove beforehand the objections that might be raised. The reader is aware that the result did not correspond to his anticipations. The office of Promoter in these negotiations was discharged by Prosper Lambertini, afterwards Benedict XIV. The objections urged by him induced Galliffet to draw up another memorial, which

¹ This book, *De cultu Sacrosancti Cordis Dei et Domini nostri Jesu Christi*, published in Rome in the year 1726, was dedicated to Pope Benedict XIII.; the second part contains B. Margaret's autobiography, translated into Latin. Later on Fr. Galliffet published this work in French. Many subsequent writers who have treated at considerable length of the devotion to the Sacred Heart have drawn freely from this source.

was printed at Rome under the title *Novæ observationes pro concessione officii et Missæ SS. Cordis*.

From what has been said it will be clearly seen that Castagnori gives the greatest prominence in his observations to "the unbounded love of the Son of God;" whereas Galliffet in his writings lays more stress on the material heart, without, however, departing from the view held by his predecessors concerning the object of the devotion.

Of all the ecclesiastical documents bearing on this subject, the memorial of the Polish bishops is unquestionably the most important. They petitioned for the granting of a proper Office and Mass in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, for the confirmation and propagation of the cultus, which had already extended through nearly every part of the Catholic world; and the devotion, for the confirmation of which they petitioned, was approved by Rome. In this document the utterances of the Right Reverend petitioners are in perfect agreement with Galliffet: "The object of the festival of the Heart of Jesus," they say, "is not the physical heart in itself alone, regarded as something apart and purely material, but it consists in that wondrous divinely appointed union of things

composed both of the corporal, pierced Heart of Jesus . . . and also of the immeasurable charity wherewith that Heart is inflamed, the virtues whereof it is the emblem or seal, the pains and anguish which it endured for the sake of man."

No sooner had this devotion received ecclesiastical approbation, which was the means of widely extending it, than the Jansenists attacked it with fresh animosity and poured out all the acrimony of their biting scorn and sarcasm upon those who practised it, terming them Alacoquists and worshippers of a heart. Bishop Ricci of Pistoja in his famous pastoral letter of June 4, 1781, so far forgot himself as to sharply censure those who adopted this devotion and accuse them of superstition and materialism, as if they adored the Heart of Our Lord for itself alone, thus separating the human nature of Our Lord from the divine. The Synod of Pistoja repeated these accusations. Pius VI. in the well-known Bull *Auctorem fidei* condemned the pronouncements of the Synod, and gave fresh confirmation to the devotion by an authoritative statement of its nature and object.

Hence it will awaken no surprise to find this same view of the subject in the liturgical books, and particularly in the Office, approved by the

Church, which at the present time is to be recited on the feast of the Sacred Heart, unless some special privilege creates an exception. The approved formulary of the Mass and the ecclesiastical hymns extol sometimes the love of Our Lord, sometimes His physical heart, and in the sixth section the nature and object of the devotion are thus spoken of: "This charity which moved the Son of God to suffer and die for us, and in commemoration of His death to institute the Sacrament of His body and blood, is symbolized by His Sacred Heart; and in order to give fresh incitement to the faithful to venerate it more assiduously under this symbol and participate more abundantly in its fruits, Clement XIII., at the request of several churches, granted them permission to celebrate this feast."

When the object of the devotion to the Heart of Jesus is expounded for the benefit of readers who are versed in theology, the use of the terminology of the schools cannot altogether be avoided; in fact many differences of opinion on this point have perhaps originated in an imperfect apprehension of the language of the schoolmen. If it is a question of defining or determining the material and formal object, it is of paramount importance to distinguish

the formal object or motive of the devotion, as such, from the formal object of the acts and exercises by which that devotion is manifested. For if that which is denominated the formal object, or, more correctly, the motive of the devotion, can be one and undivided, this cannot be the case with the formal object of the acts. Several acts of various kinds may, it is true, be directed to one and the selfsame material object, but each one singly must have its own formal object or motive, according to which they are distinguished from one another. An act of adoration and an act of the love of God have indeed one and the same material object, that is God, but they differ specifically from each other, inasmuch as the former has the divine majesty and sublimity, and the latter the divine goodness and beauty, as its formal object. Hence it is clearly evident that the Sacred Heart of Jesus may constitute the single, immediate material object of the devotion in its entirety, but the formal object of the homage paid must necessarily be manifold, as the devotion comprises a whole number of different acts.

One fact, moreover, embodied in a remark made by Suarez,¹ cannot have too much stress

¹ "Proximum objectum cultus est persona, seu res

laid on it in this place: "The material and the formal object are not to be considered as two distinct objects, but as two elements of the same thing which form the undivided object of an act of homage."

The material object, or that which we venerate in our devotion, is the Heart of Jesus in the twofold sense of the word, i.e., the physical heart and the divine charity of Our Lord as God and God-incarnate, which, in consequence of the intimate relation wherein they stand to one another, we are accustomed to regard and represent to ourselves as one sensible object, much in the same way as, when venerating the five sacred wounds, we call to mind, and think upon, the cruel pains Our Lord endured, as well as upon the wounds themselves. After all that has been already said, no further evidence is necessary on this point.

The formal object, or the attribute for the sake of which the Heart of Jesus is revered, varies according to the acts in which the veneration is formulated. In general it is the dig-

adorabilis, in qua duo distinguere oportet: aliud est res adorata, quæ dici potest materia adorationis; aliud est ratio, propter quam adoratur, quæ semper est aliqua excellentia vel dignitas." In 3. part. disp. 51, sect. 1. n. 8.

nity and majesty of the Sacred Heart, its properties and excellences, which cause the material object to appear worthy of special veneration in our eyes, and on account of which we pay homage to it. Now the corporal heart, the divine charity, all the interior sentiments of Our Lord, the individual elements of which the object of our devotion is composed, has each its particular excellence; and all these constitute the spiritual object of the various acts whereby we venerate the Heart of Jesus. We love that Heart on account of its bounty and its beauty, we worship it because of its divine grandeur and sublimity, we laud and magnify it because of its attributes and excellences, we give thanks to it for the sake of the benefits we receive from it, we compassionate it on account of the pains which it endured, and so on.

The greatest, most important excellence on account of which we pay homage to it is, and ever will be, the infinite majesty and dignity belonging to it as the Heart of the Second Person of the Godhead. And since the act of worship is the best and highest act, the one which gives to the devotion to the Heart of Jesus its specific character, and elevates it to the highest cultus, the *cultus latriæ*, the formal object of this particular act is usually indicated as that of all

other acts and exercises of devotion, because it is the highest and worthiest of all.¹

Now, however, the charity of Our Lord is usually put forward as the formal object of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This is the reason why a distinction was made in the preceding pages between the formal object of the devotion itself, and that of the acts of the devotion, a point on which a few words of explanation are needed.

The greatest and highest excellence which renders the Heart of Jesus worthy of reverence and adoration, the divine majesty and sublimity, is not proper to the heart exclusively, but belongs equally to all other portions of Our Lord's sacred humanity. There must therefore have been some particular reason why the Church proposed the heart rather than any other part of His sacred body as the object of special veneration. Many reasons and motives may indeed be adduced for this decision; as, for

¹ Many ascetical writers speak of a sensible and a spiritual object of the devotion, e.g., St. Alphonsus of Liguori in his *Novena del Cuore di Gesù*. To prevent misapprehension one must observe whether they intend by these terms to designate the material and formal objects or the two component parts of the material object, that which is within the ken of the senses and that which is supersensual.

instance, because Christ our Lord expressly desired and required it to be so; because the veneration of the heart is the means best suited to inspire the faithful with the love of Jesus; because the heart stands in the closest relationship to the charity of Christ, and so on. The last of these motives is the most weighty and decisive; Our Lord's physical heart is made the object of a particular devotion on account of its very special and intimate connection with love. Hence love is with all justice said to be the motive (the formal motive) of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, and as such the formal object in that devotion, exactly in the same way as the sufferings of Jesus Christ are said to be the motive and formal object in the devotion to the five sacred wounds. To say that the charity of Our Lord is the formal object in the devotion to His Sacred Heart is equivalent to saying: Charity, or more accurately the close connection of the heart with charity, constitutes the real reason why the corporal heart was made the object of a special devotion in preference to any other part of the sacred humanity.

If it is simply a question of the object of the devotion without any further amplifications, one naturally and as a matter of course thinks of the material and the formal objects united

together as the adequate object of the devotion. It is the same when the immediate and the mediate, indirect object is in question. Our Lord's Heart is venerated in a direct, immediate manner, and the sacred person of the Redeemer in an indirect and mediate manner, as is the case with all devotions which are paid to one or other of the mysteries of Our Lord, or to some part of His sacred humanity. For the homage paid in the first place to one particular portion of the person is not confined to it, but extends to the whole person of him to whom that part belongs, and who is honored in it. If a child kisses his father's hand, he shows respect primarily and immediately to the hand through which he receives pledges of affection and benefits from his father, but it is in reality his father whom he reveres by the respect shown to his hand. In the same way when a loyal Catholic kisses the Pope's foot, he consequently honors the person of the Pope whose foot he reverently kisses.

One question yet remains to be solved: In what relation do the natural heart and the charity of Our Lord, which together constitute the material object of the devotion, stand to one another? That both the component parts are equally real, equally essential, is evident from what has been already said; that, however, does

not prevent one from being called chief and primary, the other subordinate and secondary. The answer to the question will differ according to the aspect under which we make a comparison between them. If we look at the interior dignity and sublimity of the object, the love of Our Lord will plainly be the chief and primary object, the corporal heart the subordinate and secondary. And since the decision and wish of the Church, and consequently of all the faithful, is determined by the nature of the subject and the dignity of the object, the Church herself considers love as the superior and primary object, and decrees that as such it shall be venerated by the faithful. But if one merely looks at that which is immediate and calls in the first place for veneration, which comes within the perception of the senses and therefore attracts to itself and holds the attention to a greater extent, forming as it were a stepping-stone to the invisible, then the natural, sensible heart must be said to be the primary and principal object.

Hence we may conclude that the corporal heart is of great importance and no slight significance for the practice of the devotion. Apart from the fact that Our Lord declared that it is most agreeable to Him that His

charity should be adored under the symbol of His physical heart, it is the most appropriate and most efficacious means of elevating mankind, who are slaves to their senses, to the knowledge and adoration of the charity of Christ. In proportion as homage is paid to the corporal heart the devotion to Our Lord's charity will increase; and should a time come when the corporal heart is no longer venerated, the devotion to the Sacred Heart will cease to be a popular devotion. Therefore it was nothing short of a diabolical instinct that induced the Jansenists and Illuminati to direct their attack against the veneration of the corporal heart; and in those attacks we find the reason why the earliest propagators and defenders of the devotion laid so great emphasis precisely on the veneration to be paid to the corporal, visible heart.

a. THE CORPORAL HEART.

Thus what we in the first place adore in this devotion is the corporal heart of the Redeemer, the heart of flesh and blood, that for thirty-three years here on earth beat in the breast of our divine Lord, and was pierced by a lance after its vital functions were ended; the heart that still lives in heaven in Our Lord's glorified

body, and still is present on earth in every tabernacle under the appearance of bread. This heart is not the object of our veneration precisely in itself, for its own sake alone, separate from Our Lord's person, but only as it is a real and living heart united to the other parts of the sacred humanity and to the divinity of Our Lord.

It is of great importance for the practice of the devotion that we should as far as possible form an adequate conception of the grandeur and dignity of its object. For this end, therefore, five excellences peculiar to the natural heart of Our Lord will receive our closer consideration.

1. It is one of the noblest, most honorable portions of Christ's adorable body. In many respects the heart is the best, the noblest part of the human body. When the great men of this world die, their remains are placed in a costly coffin, but the heart is frequently taken out of the breast to be embalmed with special care and preserved in a golden or silver casket. This custom is based on the universal persuasion of all nations that in a certain sense the heart is the noblest part of the human body.¹ The

¹ What is said here is corroborated by the fact that scarcely any part of the human body is ever pre-

heart which we revere is therefore one of the most honorable parts of Our Lord's body; and what a body that is! Conceived by the operation of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, and formed out of her pure, virginal blood, it was endowed with miraculous powers. We read in the Gospel that when the sick woman touched the hem of Our Lord's garment and was instantly healed, He said: "Somebody hath touched Me, for I know that virtue is gone out from Me."¹ It was the miraculous virtue of His sacred body which restored health to the woman. And when the Evangelist states that all "the multitude sought to touch Him, for virtue went out from Him and healed all,"² he evidently refers to the miraculous powers possessed by the body of the incarnate God. Again, when Our Lord touched the bier on which the widow of Naim's son was being carried out for burial, saying: "Young man, I say to thee, arise,"³ the wonder-working

served from corruption in so marvellous a manner as is the case with the heart of eminent saints. The hearts of St. Teresa, of St. Francis of Sales, of St. Joseph Calasanctius, of St. Charles Borromeo, are still in a state of perfect preservation, and objects of veneration to the faithful.

¹ Luke viii. 46. ² Ibid. vi. 19. ³ Ibid. vii. 14.

virtue that emanated from the Lord's body restored the youth to life. What else do we adore in the Blessed Sacrament and receive in holy communion but the most holy body of the Lord? And do not the effects of holy communion bear testimony to the great and marvellous powers of His sacred body? Holy communion is to the soul what food and drink are to the body; it has power to sustain, to promote, to augment the supernatural life of the soul. This virtue proceeds from the Lord's body: "My flesh," He says, "is meat indeed."¹ He does not say, My Godhead, My human soul, but My flesh, in order to indicate that the power to produce these wondrous effects is imparted to His sacred body. Furthermore, holy communion implants the germ of a future resurrection in the body of the Christian. If he has but once received worthily Our Lord's body, he may die and be laid in the grave, he may moulder in the grave; but if he has departed this life in a state of grace, he will not remain for ever in the grave, he must come forth from the grave, rise again to a new life, rise a glorified body, and that because he received Our Lord's body: "He that eateth My flesh and drinketh

¹ John vi. 56.

My blood hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up in the last day.”¹ The object of our devotion is therefore the sacred body of the Lord, and moreover one of the noblest, most honorable parts of that sacred, wonder-working body.

It is, furthermore, the pure body, free from all taint of sin, which the heavenly Father prepared for His Son² in order that through the sacrifice that Son offered of Himself the justly offended majesty of the Most High might be satisfied, and the salvation and sanctification of the guilty human race might be accomplished. For what the sacrifices of the Old Dispensation could not effect, manifold and multiform though they were, namely, satisfaction for sin and true, inward sanctification of the soul, this Christ our Lord was to accomplish by the oblation of His sacred body and by His life on earth as God-Man.³ Thus the heart which we venerate is, to borrow an expression from Blessed Peter Canisius, the *instrumentum nobilissimum*,⁴ the no-

¹ John vi. 55.

² “*Ingrediens mundum dicit: hostiam et oblationem noluit: corpus autem aptasti mihi.*” Heb. x. 5.

³ “*In qua voluntate (Dei) sanctificati sumus per oblationem corporis Jesus Christi semel.*” Ibid. x. 10.

⁴ *Beati Petri Canisii exhortationes domesticæ. Ruremundæ, 1876, page 453.*

blest organ and instrument of Christ's sacrificial body, by the oblation of which we are redeemed.

2. It is the centre of the circulation of the blood, and the vessel which contains the precious blood. The heart is the principal blood-vessel in the human organism, and by its pulsations and its action causes the blood to circulate through every part of the body, thereby sustaining the life of the body. The moment the heart stops beating and the blood no longer courses through the various members of the body, life is at an end. Therefore the heart which we venerate caused the precious blood to flow through the veins of Our Lord's sacred body for thirty-three years, and thereby it maintained the life of most transcendent greatness, the most precious life that earth ever knew; a life devoted entirely to us from the first instant that the divine Victim was born into the world, until He breathed His last upon the cross. And on the day of the Resurrection the Sacred Heart, then glorified, once more became the receptacle of the precious blood shed in the Passion, in order that it might continue its action in Our Lord's resplendent body without intermission throughout eternity.

We are redeemed by the precious blood of Christ. There is a great mystery in the fact

that almighty God willed to redeem us by the precious blood of His only-begotten Son. He could have redeemed us without the incarnation of His divine Son, and even if it was His will that our redemption should be wrought by His Son, there was no necessity for the shedding of His blood. One single tear, one prayer, one upward glance of entreaty to the throne of His heavenly Father would have been all-sufficient, had God almighty so willed it. Yet it was decreed that the world should not be redeemed otherwise than by His blood, the blood shed in His death upon the cross.¹ Just as the institution of the Most Holy Sacrament and the death upon the cross were ordained by divine Love, so it was ordained that the precious blood should be the ransom of our sins, the price paid for our redemption. How much this reveals to us of the attributes of the triune God! "How adorable must be the rigor of His justice, how inconceivable the measure of His sanctity, how unfathomable the abyss of His uncreated purity, if the precious blood alone was an adequate ransom for our sinful race, the only satisfaction appointed by God to appease His outraged majesty!" The Sacred Heart was, as it were, the sacrificial chalice

¹ I. Pet. i. 19; Eph. i. 7.

whence the precious blood was, in the Passion, poured out as an expiatory libation for the sins of the world. And thence it ever continues to flow forth upon the redeemed in the holy sacraments, it is offered up day by day to the Eternal Father in the holy sacrifice of the Mass, and, as the wine "which springeth forth virgins" and gives strength to martyrs, will be received to the end of time in holy communion. Worthy indeed of all adoration must the Heart of Jesus appear to us through this one fact alone, that it stands in such close and intimate connection with the precious blood, which is itself the object of a wide-spread devotion.

3. Our Lord's heart is in closest sympathy with the whole of His interior spiritual life. It is a fact taught us by experience and acknowledged by all philosophers and physiologists that no part of the human body is as much affected by the mental emotions and sympathizes with them to so great an extent as does the heart. Apprehension and terror, anxiety and grief weigh upon the heart and check and slacken its pulsations; whereas hope and joy, eagerness and anger dilate it, and accelerate and strengthen its beating. Whoever has felt true love knows that it causes the heart to glow, and the heat thus occasioned sometimes reaches

such a pitch as to become almost intolerable; for instance, St. Stanislas, one of the most innocent of saints, was frequently compelled in mid-winter to hasten to the spring, in order to cool his burning breast by the application of wet cloths; he could not bear the intense ardor wherewith the love of God filled his breast.

The Heart which we venerate was never profaned by any unworthy impulse; it was never animated by any but the holiest and purest, the profoundest and truest emotions; it bore the most intimate part in the whole of Our Lord's interior, most perfect life. It swelled with joy when the lowly shepherds and the royal sages from the East knelt before the crib to adore the newly-born Messiah; it beat high and fast when Our Lord in holy indignation drove the buyers and sellers out of the Temple and administered a forcible rebuke to the hypocritical Pharisees; it was contracted with anguish and dread on the Mount of Olives, and so powerful was the contraction that it caused the blood to exude from the pores of the skin and fall in large drops to the ground; it was consumed with charity towards God and man. What is St. Stanislas' love in comparison with Christ's? How intense must have been the heat wherewith it inflamed His Sacred Heart!

B. Margaret Mary in her visions saw Our Lord's heart as a furnace whence flames of fire proceeded, and our divine Lord told her that His Heart was so full of love for man that it could no longer contain within itself the flames of charity.

4. It is the natural emblem and memento of the infinite charity of Christ, and of His whole interior life.¹

There is no better, more suitable symbol of the mind, with its passive and active emotions, particularly love, than the heart. At all times and among all peoples it has been the recognized symbol of love. So truly is this so that kings and princes not unfrequently have at their death bequeathed their hearts to the nation whom they loved in token of their kind feelings. This idea and form of speech, common to all races and all tongues, is explained and justified by reasons of universal acceptation. First and foremost it is the natural similarity between what love effects and what the heart effects which makes it the natural symbol of love.

¹ This explains the expression "symbolical heart." The symbolical heart is not the supersensual, invisible heart, the heart in the figurative sense, but the material, sensible heart, inasmuch as it is an emblem and memento of love.

For what the heart is to the physical life of man, that love is to his moral life.

The heart is, as has been said, the centre of the circulation of the blood. The nourishment, the growth, the preservation of the human frame are all due to, dependent on the blood. Hence the heart with its regular pulsations is like a mainspring, the propelling force whereby the blood is unceasingly set in motion and by its means the physical life of man is sustained and promoted.

In the moral life of man, also, a common mainspring of all his individual actions is not wanting; this mainspring, or motive, is love. As is the nature of a man's love, so is his moral being. "If thou lovest the earth," says St. Augustine, "thou art earthly-minded; if thou lovest heaven, thou art heavenly-minded; if thou lovest God, I venture to say thou wilt partake of the divine nature." And St. Thomas asserts: "The chief motive which has power to move the will and every other appetitive faculty is love."

It is, then, the close sympathy of the heart with all the operations and conditions of the moral being, and the participation in them peculiar to it alone, of which we have spoken above. All the actions and operations of the

will, especially those of greatest intensity and force, act upon the heart, and produce in it conditions not dissimilar to the mental conditions. Just as a cheerful, joyous temper has the effect of heightening and promoting the life of the mind, so does it quicken and promote the action of the heart; and as grief and care hamper and check the life of the mind so do they impede and slacken the pulsations of the heart. And the more the inner life reproduces itself and is reflected in the material heart, the more suitable does that organ appear to be to represent and recall the emotions of the mind as their natural symbol. And this symbolism has received such universal acceptance and become so popular that the mention of the heart serves to remind every one naturally of love, of which it is as it were an image.

This it is which makes the Sacred Heart of Jesus worthy of our special devotion. It has very justly been asked why the heart should be made the object of a special devotion, rather than the thorn-crowned head, or the hands pierced upon the cross by cruel nails. The principal and most weighty reason is the symbolical character peculiar to the heart; it is the natural symbol and memento of the unbounded love of Our Lord, and as such it is

the most appropriate means of kindling the love of Jesus in the cold, indifferent hearts of men. Who indeed could gaze upon His Sacred Heart without some movement of gratitude, without wishing to make some return for love so great? Who but must at the sight of it involuntarily think of the infinite love of Him who loved us with an everlasting love;¹ who loved us and delivered Himself for us;² who, having loved His own who were in the world, loved them unto the end.³

5. It is most intimately united to the second Person of the Godhead. This proposition belongs to Catholic dogmatic theology, which proves that the whole human nature of Christ our Lord, body and soul, is hypostatically united to the second Person of the Godhead. Hence we draw the inference which is of importance for our argument. Our heart belongs to us, it is part of our human person, it is a human heart; is it deserving of veneration? The heart is entitled to the honor due to the person whose heart it is, and the nobler, the higher, the purer, the holier that person is, the more is his heart worthy of veneration. If almighty God had been pleased to preserve the

¹ Jer. xxxi. 3.

² Gal. ii. 20.

³ John xiii. 1.

heart of St. Aloysius incorrupt in some place or other, to which we could go in pilgrimage, how reverently, how devoutly we should venerate it because of its being the heart of St. Aloysius, that angelic youth, the model of innocence. God has really vouchsafed to preserve St. Teresa's heart incorrupt; it is an object of profound veneration in Spain, and thither pilgrims journey from all parts to pay homage to that heart, the heart of the heroic, saintly virgin, who was consumed by divine love. What is St. Aloysius' heart, what is St. Teresa's heart in comparison with the heart of Jesus? It belongs not to a mere man, but to the second Person of the Holy Trinity; it is the heart of God, a divine heart, hence it is entitled to the worship which is due to God Himself. By virtue of its inseparable union with the divinity it is raised to an infinite dignity, and is worthy in the highest degree of our homage and adoration.

b. THE SUPERSENSUAL HEART.

The other component part of the object of our cultus is the heart of Our Lord in the figurative, metaphorical sense of the word; the invisible, immaterial heart, the will with all the acts and faculties of which it is the seat and centre. But since in Christ two natures are

united, the divine and the human, so there exists in Him a twofold will and a twofold manner of manifesting His will, the divine will and a human will, with the actions answering to each. Thus the invisible heart which we worship comprises both the divine will and also the will of Our Lord in His character of man, together with His life of virtue and charity. Therefore in practising the devotion to the Sacred Heart, we do not venerate the corporeal heart alone, but with it all that it symbolizes and naturally suggests to our thoughts, the interior life and will of Our Lord and all the treasures of holiness and virtue which dwell in Our Lord and Redeemer in their utmost plenitude.

It will assist us to a better understanding of the devotion if we consider somewhat more closely three characteristics of the immaterial heart: It is the holiest of hearts, the most loving of hearts, and yet it is the most misunderstood, the most unappreciated of hearts.

It is scarcely necessary to observe that the chief superiority of the material heart, its actual union with the Godhead, is also proper to the immaterial heart, rendering it a divine heart. For if by the supersensual heart we understand the divine will and the divine charity, it is equivalent to the Godhead itself; and if we

understand it to mean the human will of the God-Man, and the manifestations of that will, it is then, as is the whole of Our Lord's sacred humanity, hypostatically united to the Godhead, and in virtue of that union deserving of the veneration and worship due to the Deity.

1. The Heart of Jesus is the holiest of hearts. We must before all things remember that the union of our human nature with the second Person of the Godhead, whereby it became the nature of the Son of God, is the reason of all the excellences of the Sacred Heart. Just as the reason why God the Father bestowed such great graces upon Mary was that she was raised to the dignity of Mother of God, so the hypostatic union is the reason why human nature was so highly exalted in Christ, and endowed with such wondrous excellences. Mary would not have been worthy to be the Mother of God if she had not been conceived without sin, if she had not been free from the slightest shadow even of venial sin, if she had not been full of grace. Thus Our Lord's human nature, His human heart, would not have been worthy to exist in such close union with the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, unless it had been enriched with extraordinary graces. The excellence now before us for our consideration is the

plenitude of holiness which dwells within it: it is the holiest of hearts.

It is an acknowledged fact that three things are essential to holiness of heart, as it is manifested in this life. The heart must be free from all sin, it must shine in unsullied purity; it must be adorned with the fair ornament of every virtue which is needed under all circumstances that may arise; it must live in constant union with God and love Him above all things. In Our Lord's Heart these three notes of sanctity appear in their greatest perfection and brilliancy.

How pure, how blameless Our Lord's life on earth must have been in the sight of all men, if He could Himself confront His most bitter and crafty enemies, the Pharisees, with the question: "Which of you shall convince Me of sin?"¹ How beauteous, how immaculate must His inner life also have been, since Holy Scripture describes Him as the High Priest whom it was fitting that we should have "holy, innocent, undefiled, separate from sinners, who needeth not daily as the other priests to offer sacrifices first for His own sins and then for the people's"²; and His heavenly Father could say of Him: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased"³; and this was undoubtedly

¹ John viii. 46. ² Heb. vii. 26. ³ Matt. iii. 17.

on account of the fulness of the sanctity that dwelt within Him.

St. John, speaking of Christ, says: "He is full of grace and truth, and of His fulness we have all received, and grace for grace."¹ Holy Scripture does, it is true, say of St. Stephen that he was "a man full of the Holy Ghost," and the Blessed Virgin preëminently was declared to be "full of grace"; but this only signifies that they possessed that measure of grace which was necessary to fit them for their vocation and the place they occupied in the order of grace, and which answered to the designs of God in their regard. It is, indeed, in the case of the Blessed Virgin, above all, a copious measure of grace and holiness of which they were the recipients, but Jesus Christ possesses all the fulness of grace and holiness, in the greatest measure which God has appointed to be bestowed under the present dispensation. In fact, the mission given Him by God, that of exhibiting to the world the loftiest example of sanctity, and of being Himself the fountain-head and source of all graces, required that He should possess those graces not in any limited measure or degree, but to the fullest extent possible in the present order of things, the

¹ John i. 16.

plenitude of holiness. It is said of Him: He was full of grace and truth. And with the plenitude of sanctifying grace all the fair fruits of virtue which it produces were conferred on Him. Great and signal are the virtue and sanctity exhibited in the just who lived on earth and now are glorified in heaven: what unwavering faith, what fervent prayer, what continence and what austere penance in the holy confessors, what patience and meekness, what zest for souls in the holy bishops and priests, what innocence and purity, what a spirit of renunciation in the holy virgins, what courageous self-sacrifice, what burning love in the holy martyrs; above all, what treasures of every virtue in the Blessed Virgin! All this is but a faint reflection, a shadow of the sanctity of the divine Heart: in it dwells all the fulness of virtue and sanctity, for He whose Heart it is is "full of grace and truth."

Humble obedience is the test of true sanctity, and all virtues are comprised in it. If we glance at the obedience practised by Our Lord, we at once gather from it His intense love of God, for in the practice of virtue, and especially of obedience, the love of God is made manifest. Very little concerning Our Lord's life on earth has been handed down to us by the holy apostles

and evangelists, but one thing they have not omitted to mention: His first mental act on coming into the world; it was a prayer, an act of submission and of obedience to His heavenly Father: "Behold, I come to do Thy will, O God."¹

The will of His heavenly Father was throughout His whole life His first, His supreme law: whether He hid Himself from His adversaries or showed Himself openly, whether He tarried upon the mountain or descended into the plain, whether He prayed, or fasted, or worked miracles, or preached in the synagogue, it was by His heavenly Father's will that He was always and everywhere guided and governed. When His holy Mother addressed to Him what sounded like a gentle reproach for having stayed so long in the Temple at Jerusalem, what excuse did He allege for having done so but that it was the will of His heavenly Father: "Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?"² So exclusively was He actuated by obedience to His heavenly Father's will, that He declares it to be His food: "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me."³ In order to obey His Father's will He was subject to His earthly parents. He determined not

¹ Heb. x. 9.

² Luke ii. 49.

³ John iv. 34.

to make any external use of His divine power and wisdom, but to allow Himself to be directed and governed by His parents; and never was there a child who obeyed his parents so promptly and implicitly, with such perfect submission, as Christ did. And He led this life of obedience until His thirtieth year, an age at which, according to the ordinary laws of nature, a man is his own master.

But in order to obtain a complete and perfect view of the life of obedience of the divine Heart, we must direct our gaze on the last days of Our Lord's life, for in them it shines forth more clearly, more brilliantly, in yet greater perfection. For then it is no longer the best, the holiest individuals upon earth whose commands He obeys; it is His enemies, His persecutors, His executioners to whom He yields unquestioning obedience. When He was arraigned before the judge, to be interrogated concerning His conduct, and the governor before whom He stood asserted his magisterial power, Our Lord did not call in question his authority, but simply reminded him that he would have had no power against Him had it not been given him by God, and He offered no resistance to the terrible and agonizing treatment to which He was subjected. He gave His innocent body to

the cruel blows of the scourge and His head to be crowned with sharp thorns. When the cross was to be laid on Him, He silently bent His shoulders under the heavy burden, and bore it with tottering steps, until it weighed Him to the ground; and when He was to be stretched upon the cross, He willingly yielded His hands and feet to the awful torture, and all this He did out of obedience. The first word He uttered on His entrance into the world was an act of obedience, and the last word He spoke upon the cross before His departure out of the world was likewise an act of obedience. Suspended between heaven and earth, hanging upon the cross in excruciating agony, the dying Saviour casts a scrutinizing glance upon the task which His Father gave Him to accomplish. Is it fully, perfectly fulfilled? One iota yet remains, then all is done, it is consummated. Out of obedience He exclaims: "I thirst," and out of obedience allows vinegar to be given Him to drink; then out of obedience He bows His head and yields up His spirit: *Factus obediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis*.¹ Thus ended the life of the God-Man upon earth, His life of obedience. It was one that cost Him dear; it was a life of unspeakable

¹ Phil. ii. 8.

love and infinite sanctity. And as His Sacred Heart is the seat, so it is the source of all virtue and holiness: "Of His fulness we have all received, and grace for grace." Whence did the Church's saints derive their heroic virtues? Whence did St. Aloysius derive his angelic purity and innocence, St. Stanislas his piety and fervor in prayer, St. Paul his burning zeal for the salvation of souls, St. Augustine, St. Francis Xavier their ardent charity, the holy martyrs their heroic spirit of sacrifice, the Blessed Virgin all her rich treasures of virtue and holiness? They all drew them from the Redeemer's Heart, for it is the fount and source of all virtue and holiness: "He is full of grace and truth, and of His fulness we have all received, and grace for grace." Listen to the ecstatic words of B. Margaret Mary on this point: "If thou art an abyss of aridity and impotence, immerse thyself in the Heart of Jesus; it is an abyss of power and charity. If thou art an abyss of wretchedness, the divine Heart is an abyss of comfort; yet beware of craving too eagerly for the sweetness of divine consolations. If thou art an abyss of poverty and destitution, hide thyself in the Heart of Jesus; it abounds in riches and will enrich thee also, provided only thou offerest no opposition thereto. If thou

art an abyss of infirmity, of misery and proneness to relapse into thy old faults, go to the Heart of Jesus; it is an abyss of mercy and of might, and thou shalt be raised up and strengthened. If thou perceivest pride in thyself and a vain, undue estimation of thyself, immerse thyself immediately in the profound self-humiliation of the Heart of Jesus, that abyss of humility. If thou dost lie prostrate in the depths of ignorance and darkness, the Heart of Jesus will afford thee understanding and light. Learn above all to love that Heart and always to act so as to please it. If thou feelest thyself to be nothing but unfaithfulness and instability, the Heart of Jesus is an embodiment of fidelity and constancy. If thou findest thyself to have, as it were, fallen headlong into the abyss of death, go to the Heart of Jesus; there thou wilt find a perennial fount of life. Dost thou perceive within thyself an unfathomable depth of ingratitude, draw from the Heart of Jesus, which is an abyss of gratitude, in order that thou mayst give thanks to the Lord thy God for all His benefits, and beseech Our Lord to supply thy deficiencies out of His abundance."

2. The Heart of Jesus is the most loving of hearts. Although this subject offers the widest field for our meditation and devotion, we must

content ourselves with a few brief remarks; for if voluminous works do not suffice to portray the height and depth of the charity of the divine Heart, what can be said in a few pages? We will, however, allow ourselves some glimpses which will enable us at least to form a certain conception of its magnitude and infinity.

True charity does not display itself in fair words nor in tender emotions, but in deeds. "My little children," St. John writes, "let us not love in word nor in tongue, but in deed and in truth."¹ And if sacrifice is involved in the acts whereby love is manifested, then indeed does it shine forth with its brightest radiance; the charity that sacrifices itself is the highest and at the same time the most touching form of charity. The life of Jesus Christ is an unbroken display of the noblest, most magnanimous charity.

In the book of the Exercises St. Ignatius has written a splendid meditation on the Incarnation of Our Lord. He represents the three divine Persons of the Trinity taking counsel together concerning the fallen, sinful human race. From the throne of their majesty they behold the wickedness, the corruption of mankind, the affronts, the blasphemies that rise

¹ John iii. 18.

up to heaven like a thick black cloud of smoke. The unhappy human race! Their understanding is darkened by error and obscurity, their heart is full of malice and perversity, their actions are governed by the concupiscence of the eyes, the concupiscence of the flesh and the pride of life, and at the close of a life of misery and trouble comes a death of uncertainty and despair, followed by everlasting damnation. Out of this pitiable condition they cannot rescue themselves. The divine Heart is moved to compassion at the sight of such misery, and considers how a remedy for it can be found: "The thoughts that I think toward you are thoughts of peace and not of affliction."¹ The three divine Persons decide upon man's redemption. As in the beginning they said: "Let us make man to our image and likeness,"² so now they say: "Let us restore man to our image and likeness."

But how is that to be accomplished? In the divine counsels it has been irrevocably decreed that without full and complete satisfaction there is no forgiveness of sin. But this no created being is competent to give, not even by the greatest of all sacrifices, the sacrifice of his life. There is therefore only one alternative,

¹ Jer. xxix. 11.

² Gen. i. 26.

that God Himself should become man to make atonement for the human race. The Son of God is willing to undertake the work of redemption. It will indeed be one of no mean cost to Himself: it will involve entire self-annihilation in assuming the form of a servant, a life of the most abject poverty and abasement, arduous toil and perpetual obedience, contempt and persecution, and finally an ignominious death amid cruel torture; yet He does not shrink from it. The glory of His Father is at stake, the rescue of the fallen human race is dependent on it; all shall be accomplished. He offers Himself to His Father; His Father consents to give Him up. "He loved me and delivered Himself for me."¹ *O mira circa nos pietatis dignatio! O inestimabilis dilectio caritatis, ut servum redimeres, filium tradedisti* (Cantic. Exultet.).

When, therefore, the fulness of time was come, the Redeemer of mankind came into the world as man. Where do we find Him? "You shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling-clothes and laid in a manger."² The desire of all nations, the newly-born Saviour of the world, is laid in the manger in Bethlehem, a poor, weak, helpless infant. This is the first

¹ Gal. ii. 20.

² Luke ii. 12.

manifestation of Our Lord's self-sacrificing charity, the first act wherewith He begins a life abounding in self-sacrifice. He is of a truth the eternal, infinite God, the Lord of heaven and of earth, whose throne is above the cherubim, God of God, Light of light, true God of true God, He whose name shall be called Wonderful, the Prince of peace, the Father of the world to come; yet He comes as a Saviour and Redeemer to seek and to save that which was lost; and therefore He wills to come into the world not otherwise than as man, as the second Adam, and not even as a man in the prime of manhood, as Adam was created, but as a poor, helpless, feeble infant. His power, His wisdom, His immensity, the use of speech, all His mental faculties and physical powers are kept in abeyance, concealed from view, sacrificed to His love for man; "emptying Himself," He took the form of a child and outwardly appeared in all things as a child. The folly of the world, the science of the world, blinded by pride, standing by the crib where the Saviour is laid, takes scandal at the self-annihilation of the Lord, and says as did the heretic Marcion: "Do away with the degrading swaddling-clothes and the manger, they ill befit the God whom I worship;" whereas the humble

faith of the Christian, standing beside the Saviour's crib, is touched and edified by the self-sacrificing charity of his God, and says in the words of St. Bernard: *Quanto pro me vilior, tanto mihi carior*. True, in the abasement of the manger, a vast, an infinite charity is displayed, which shines with all the brighter lustre because immediately upon its entrance into the world suffering and woe have to be encountered. The infant Christ is born in a stable, wrapped in poor swaddling-clothes, laid in a manger; the wind is cold, the manger is hard, the rough straw hurts His tender limbs, tears fall from His eyes; all this tells us that out of love to us Our God in the form of a child weeps from cold and pain.

From Bethlehem we pass on to Nazareth; there we find Our Lord, until His thirtieth year is reached, laboring in His foster-father's workshop, occupied in providing for the maintenance of the holy Family. "Is not this the Carpenter?" and "the carpenter's son?"¹ What great, what wondrous things might He not have accomplished during this long period! The only-begotten Son of the omnipotent God, the Wisdom of the eternal Father, the Lord of heaven and earth, He might have made the world re-

¹ Mark vi. 3; Matt. xiii. 55.

sound with the might, the magnitude of His miracles; He might have transformed the hearts of men by the force of His words and the impulse of His grace, and led them to receive His doctrine; He might have erected the structure of His Church upon the ruins of paganism, and renewed the face of the earth; He might have made Himself the beloved, the admired of all nations; yet what does He do? Renouncing all this, He buries Himself in a remote corner of the earth and toils in the workshop of an artisan. No sight can the world offer so affecting as this: Jesus, when some sixteen or eighteen years of age, holds in His hand some rough tool and works until drops of sweat stand on His brow; He is tired and sits down to rest upon a pile of planks for a moment; then He resumes His work, or helps His Mother in her domestic employments. Our mind almost revolts against this thought, and yet what is here described was of common, every-day occurrence. He is, moreover, sent to different houses on errands pertaining to His handicraft; some people are never satisfied, and by them He is blamed; others again are kind-hearted and good-natured, and offer Him some broken meats from their table; He condescends to accept the alms. My God, what a humiliation! The Lord

works for His servant, and the Creator of all things receives alms from His creature! "He, being in the form of God, emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant;"¹ "being rich, He became poor for your sakes, that through His poverty you might be rich."²

During His public life He appears before us in the character of the Good Shepherd, seeking the lost and wandering sheep, and when He hath found it, laying it on His shoulders rejoicing, to carry it back to the fold. No finite intelligence is capable of understanding, no words are capable of expressing, the greatness of the loss a man sustains when he separates himself from God by sin. God on the other hand loses nothing through our forsaking Him; the terrible misfortune, the injury, is all on our side. And yet He goes after us to seek us, as if He had lost His all, as if He could enjoy no happiness without us. Sorrow and dismay fill the shepherd's heart whose lamb has strayed; mountain and forest reecho his call to the wanderer; he seeks it over hill and dale, inquiring of every one whom he meets if he has seen it, and asking him to assist in the search. He takes no rest until he has found it, and when he has found it, he carries it back with gladness to the fold, and

¹ Phil. ii. 6, 7.² II. Cor. viii. 9.

tells all his friends the happy news. In like manner Jesus seeks the sinner, and when the erring soul returns from her wandering, His Sacred Heart overflows with joy, as if He had gained a brilliant victory or conquered a vast kingdom. "Rejoice with Me because this My son was lost and is found."¹ Such is the charity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. "Give praise to the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever."²

At the time when the world was plotting schemes of the blackest ingratitude against Him, He gave to it the greatest proof of love. On the eve of His Passion and death He instituted the adorable Sacrament of the Altar, the Sacrament of love. When a good and loving father, sinking under a fatal malady, thinks upon his approaching end, the thought that weighs most heavily upon his heart is that he must leave his children orphans. How often these or similar words are heard from the lips of a dying father, a mother sick unto death: "I am quite willing to die, but my children—who will care for my children?" But the parent must depart this life, and he can do nothing more than commend his children with his last breath to the charity, the care of others. Jesus

¹ Luke xv. 24.

² Ps. cxvii. 1.

Christ is the Father of us all, and what is the love of the best of fathers in comparison with the love of His divine Heart? He knew that His hour was come to die, and it grieved Him to leave His disciples; for their sake He would willingly have remained a while on earth. But He is God and can work miracles; He could die and yet remain amongst His own. This He did; He worked the miracle and instituted the adorable Sacrament of the Altar, and thus He remained and still remains truly and really and actually with us all days until the consummation of the world. "Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end."

And what a sacrifice that love cost Him! In the Incarnation He emptied Himself in so far as to assume the form of a child; here He empties Himself so far as to take the form of bread. Then He hid His divinity under the veil of humanity; now He conceals both His divinity and His humanity under the veil of the eucharistic bread. Then He chose to forego all exercise of His divine wisdom and might; now He even renounces the mode of existence natural to man, and refrains from the natural use of the senses. He willed to work a series of miracles in order to reduce Himself to a state of

self-annihilation such as no created intelligence could have devised, no created power could ever have brought about. The Heart of Jesus is the most loving of hearts.

A few hours later behold Him hanging, expiring upon the cross. The whole weight of His body is suspended from four nails. He thus passes three hours of torture without a moment's rest or relief. If He hangs from His hands, the wounds in them are forcibly dragged open; if He endeavors to support Himself on his feet, the wounds in His feet are torn asunder and widened; if He leans His sacred head against the beams which form the cross, the thorns are driven deeper into His aching temples. If a lion happens, whilst traversing the forest glades, accidentally to run a thorn into his foot, the wood resounds with his roaring, so acute is the pain he feels. Not one but many thorns were forced into Our Lord's sacred head, His hands and feet were pierced with large nails. To this torture a burning thirst was added. Since the Thursday evening not a drop of water had moistened His parched lips, and what had He not undergone in the intervening period? The agony and sweat of blood, the arrest by the soldiers; being dragged from one tribunal to another, and tormented

by questions from the judges; then the terrible night before the day of execution, with all the barbarous ill-treatment, the scourging, crowning with thorns, the weary way to Calvary, the agony of the crucifixion. The heat of fever consumed His frame; His throat was parched, His tongue dried up. He exclaims: "I thirst," and yet not a drop of water is given to Him. When Samson was consumed with thirst after his conflict with the Philistines, God provided him with water to drink in a miraculous manner, and when the people of Israel suffered from thirst in the desert, Moses struck the rock with his staff and a copious stream gushed out; yet when the Son of God expiring upon the cross longs for a drop of water, it is denied Him. This He chose to endure to atone for our licentiousness. Finally He endured the uttermost dereliction. When the martyrs were tortured to death, almighty God ordained that either they should feel no pain or that they should be strengthened to bear it by superabundant spiritual consolations. Yet He allowed His Son to feel pain in all its intensity and withdrew all interior consolation from Him. Whithersoever the dying Saviour turned His eyes there was something to aggravate His suffering: His Mother standing beneath the

cross, compassion for whom rent His Heart; the multitude upon Calvary who mocked Him; His Father in heaven, who seemingly had abandoned Him. So intense was the sense of loneliness that He exclaims in piteous accents: "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" And after three long hours of agony He bows His head and breathes His last. "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends."¹ And what return is made to Him for this love?

3. The Heart of Jesus is the least known, the least appreciated of hearts. It is indeed a sorrowful picture which now presents itself to our view: Jesus and the world. It is one which must be an infinite grief to His Heart. The human beings who inhabit the world number more than a thousand millions; of these six hundred millions are heathens. They do not know their Lord and Redeemer, who loves them, and of His love gave His life for them to snatch them from the awful fate awaiting them, eternal death; they have not a word of gratitude for Him, their greatest benefactor; they show Him no mark of reverence, more often they treat Him with contumely, scorn; they offer Him outrage and insult. The consciousness

¹ John xv. 13.

that the work of redemption which He accomplished at so great a cost, that His bitter Passion and death are all in vain for countless multitudes, occasions Him the deepest, keenest grief. Some two hundred millions are heretics and schismatics. They do indeed know their Lord and Saviour, but they will not believe in Him, they will not yield Him humble submission. Nothing wounds a generous heart more than ingratitude for benefits freely conferred; but when contempt is added to ingratitude the pain is doubly great, and it becomes yet more acute if the benefit is not only despised but not even acknowledged to be a benefit at all. That is the case with heretics and schismatics; they have the effrontery to deny that Christ has bestowed such blessings upon them. Must not that cause Him bitter grief? Then there are two hundred million Catholics; what treatment does Our Lord receive from them? "In return for My love (such are His own words) I receive from the majority only ingratitude, through the contempt, the irreverence, the sacrileges and coldness which I meet with in the Sacrament of love." It cannot be denied that the ingratitude of Catholics for Our Lord's love is indeed great.

Only think of the astonishing forgetfulness of

Our Lord which is met with among Catholics. By how many is He virtually ignored? As the yearly festivals recur in their order, the Church celebrates the mysteries of Our Lord's life and Passion, but how many of those who call themselves her children commemorate the goodness and love of the Redeemer with thankful hearts? Three times a day the Angelus bell reminds us of the greatest proof of His mercy and His grace, the sublime mystery of the Incarnation, but on the ear of many it falls unheeded. The mystery of the Redemption ought never to be absent from our thoughts. In the ages of faith it was customary to set up crosses everywhere, the sign of our redemption, for the purpose of recalling it from time to time to the minds of the faithful. Now, in many lands, one could hardly venture to erect a cross in a public place, and if it were erected it would probably be pulled down immediately; or, were it left standing the unconcerned passer-by would pay no heed to it.

Then think of the great indifference shown towards Him. In the excess of His charity Our Lord wills to dwell amongst us in the adorable Sacrament of the Altar to be to us a Father, a friend, a comforter, and from the tabernacle, as from a throne of grace, to succor and solace

us in our need; yet how few visit Him there! He vouchsafes to be our nourishment for the sustenance of the supernatural life of the soul; yet how few receive Him! They run to and fro in hot pursuit of business or pleasure all the day long; they are careful and troubled about many things, but from one week's end to another they hardly give a thought to Jesus, as if He were not present with them. They can be eager and enthusiastic about all manner of things, but to Jesus they scarce can give a few forced words of thanksgiving, a perfunctory act of reverence. Justly indeed may He lament: *Extraneus factus sum fratribus meis*, "I am become a stranger to My brethren."¹

Furthermore, consider the monstrous neglect observable in some churches, where about the altar and tabernacle all is shabby and poverty-stricken, just where all ought to be rich and magnificent; often, too, one sees dust and untidiness where at least perfect cleanliness ought to be. Then think of all the tepid, indevout communions, which are abhorrent to Our Lord, in the hearts of those who ought to be pleasing to Him by their ardor, their devotion, their love. Nay, more; ingratitude goes even further, for in unworthy communions Christ is

¹ Ps. lxxviii. 9.

forced to enter a heart of which Satan is already in possession. To these may be added the many irreverences offered to the Blessed Sacrament when exposed, the innumerable indignities, impieties, sacrileges committed against His sacred majesty. Can all this fail to wound His Heart most deeply? The heathen are His enemies, the heretics and schismatics His enemies; by an adversary no one expects to be well treated. But Catholics are His friends, His brethren, on whom He has lavished His favors, and that they should conduct themselves in such a manner towards Him is what grieves Him by far the most. Would that Our Lord never had occasion to lament thus concerning priests and Religious! "What causes Me most grief," He said to B. Margaret, "is that even souls who are consecrated to Me treat Me thus." The Heart of Jesus is surely the most misunderstood, the least appreciated of hearts.

IV. THE PRACTICE OF THE DEVOTION.

No sooner was the devotion to the Heart of Jesus known to the Church and understood by the faithful, than it was formulated in a number of prayers and religious exercises. Many books were published accounting for and justifying the piety of those who venerated the Sacred Heart, and giving expression to their sentiments. The devotion to the Heart of Jesus resembled a fertile soil, wherein numerous and pious exercises of the most varied description germinated and sprang up. There are now works of love, a guard of honor, the devotion of the Holy Hour, a scapular, a rosary; there is the league of the communion of reparation, an Apostleship of prayer, a confraternity; there are litanies, novenas, a greater Office and Little Hours, and prayers innumerable. Several of these pious exercises were revealed and commended to B. Margaret by Our Lord Himself; many have received the sanction of the Church, being enriched by her with indulgences; yet

we must not conclude that all are equally suitable to every person. Besides the great number of these exercises, which in itself is enough to confuse and bewilder the individual Christian, most of them have both in form and nature the individuality of those who composed and introduced them too strongly stamped on them; what coincides with the feelings of one does not necessarily awaken any response in another. For the orisons of the warm-hearted, impetuous Southerner differ from those of the more deliberate, sober-minded Northerner; the man who has God's glory at heart, who is penetrated and inflamed with the love of Jesus, does not pray in the same manner as one who has not yet wholly cast off the shackles of self-seeking and worldliness. Thus it may well be that the fervid, impassioned supplications of St. Augustine, St. Bernard, or St. Alphonsus Liguori appear extravagant and exaggerated to hearts that still cling to the world; and it is no unlikely thing that prayers and exercises which to us personally are uncongenial may be used by thousands with spiritual pleasure and profit. Let each choose for himself the religious exercises which appear to him best suited to kindle his devotion and further his sanctification, and which harmonize best with his idiosyncrasies

and inclination; meanwhile he must, however, beware lest he censure those who give the preference to others. In this respect the Church takes a wide, comprehensive view, tolerating all, consenting to all, provided only they are in accordance with truth and calculated to lead men to God and unite them more closely to Him.

All this offers no difficulty if we do but understand how to distinguish between what is essential and what is non-essential. Four things are essential to this devotion: Adoration, because it is a divine heart; imitation, because it is the holiest of hearts; a return of love, because it is the most loving of hearts; and reparation, because it the least known, the least appreciated of hearts. The manner in which these sentiments are formulated, the words and prayers by which they are expressed, are mere accessories and left to the option of the individual. We subjoin a few more general remarks concerning these exercises, and hints as to the selection to be made of them in particular.

a. GENERAL REMARKS.

1. The veneration which we owe to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is worship in the true and proper sense, the worship which is due to the Lord our

God Himself and to Him alone, on account of His infinite majesty and sovereignty, and which is known in the schools as *cultus latricæ*. That the Heart of Jesus, in as far as we understand under the expression the divine will and the divine charity, is entitled to this supreme worship needs no explanation, since it is identical with the Godhead. We are, however, now concerned more particularly with Our Lord's corporal heart, and the immaterial heart, in as far as it signifies the human will and actions of God incarnate. To them also belongs the supreme worship spoken of above.

The Heart of Jesus must, however, assuredly not be regarded and adored precisely for its own sake, as if it existed for itself, independent of and separate from Our Lord's humanity, of which it is an integral part, but as united indivisibly to it. And the human nature in Christ itself must be viewed in its union with the divinity of the Son of God, apart from which it never did and never can exist. The reason of the homage paid to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is found in the hypostatic union, by virtue of which it becomes the Heart of the Eternal Word, as intimately and truly united to His person as is His material body, His humanity in its integrity. Just as we only worship the

human nature of Our Lord because through the mystery of the Incarnation it has become the nature of the Son of God, so we only adore the Heart of Jesus because through the hypostatic union it is the Heart of the Son of God. Thus the divinity of the Son and His human heart constitute the one material object of our veneration and adoration; but only the Godhead to which it is united is the formal object of adoration. The Godhead of Our Lord is to be worshipped on account of its inherent majesty and sublimity, whereas the Heart of Jesus is to be adored on account of the dignity and divine excellences communicated to it by union with the Godhead.

It is a dogma of our holy faith which is discussed and proved in every manual of Catholic dogmatic theology, that the sacred humanity of Our Lord is entitled to that veneration which in the actual meaning of the word is divine worship. Now whether the cultus of this Sacred Heart is dogmatically justifiable depends on this: whether it is permissible to make a part of the sacred humanity in itself the special object of veneration and adoration. On this point no doubt can be entertained, that with the same right and reason wherewith Our Lord's humanity as a whole is adored

every part of it may be venerated and adored, if the same grounds for adoration exist for the part as for the whole, and if there is besides some special reason for paying singular devotion to one particular part of that humanity, as is the case with Corpus Christi, the five sacred wounds, the precious blood, which are actually proposed as objects of a special devotion. Both of these points in reference to the Sacred Heart of Jesus have already been sufficiently proved. Consequently the Jansenists were unorthodox when they maintained that the Heart of Our Lord was not to be adored, and even dared to apply contemptuous and opprobrious epithets to those who practised the devotion. The hypostatic union with the second Person of the Godhead is therefore the dogmatic ground for the homage and adoration paid to the Heart of Jesus.

Hence this devotion has found expression in the most various forms: Mass, Offices, litanies, acts of consecration, and other exercises and prayers almost without number.

2. It is impossible to doubt that it was Our Lord's intention that the devotion to His Sacred Heart should fulfil a lofty mission in the Church of God. It will not be necessary to do more than merely indicate this here; it is destined

to deliver the world from the evils that afflict it. This end can only be attained by imitation and by a return of love. The disease of which the Christian world lies sick is due to its falling away from Christ the Redeemer. The world imagines that it can do quite well without Christ, that it can live, that it can die without Christ, that it can regulate all the relations of public and private life, that it can be happy both in time and eternity without Christ. Thus Christ is banished not merely from social life, but to a great extent from the hearts of men as well, and where this is so, there the Christian virtues, truth, fidelity, justice, charity, patience, humility, purity, obedience, no longer hold a place in their daily life. The task which the Sacred Heart of Jesus has to perform is to reconquer for God the world that has thrown off His yoke, that is, to be the means of leading mankind back to Him whom to their own hurt and misery they have forsaken, and in whom alone they can find rest and felicity. For this end, therefore, He shows to them His Heart, and calls to them: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of Heart, I am pure and obedient and patient of Heart."

The world has grown cold towards its Saviour,

frigid and indifferent. In regard to many things its votaries can be rapturous and enthusiastic, they can be lost in admiration of mere puerilities and all aflame for them, but there is no room in their heart for Christ. He is their only Deliverer, their Comforter, their Helper; when other helpers fail and they are alone and forsaken, His love suffers no diminution, His care for them does not grow weary; "He is yesterday and to-day, and the same forever."¹ As He loved mankind a thousand years ago, so He loves them now; we can scarcely form the faintest conception of the vastness, the reality, the unalterable fidelity of His love. "Behold My Heart," He said to B. Margaret; "it burns so ardently with love for men that it can no longer contain within itself the flame of charity." What is it that a lover desires, what does he claim from his beloved? He can dispense with everything, he can renounce everything, love only excepted. On the other hand, it is only quite natural that love should kindle love. That must indeed be a brutal, insensible nature which, wrapt in a cloak of cold indifference, can resist the genial warmth which emanates from a loving heart. Therefore Our Lord

¹ Heb. xiii. 8.

exhibits to the unloving world His Heart consumed with charity, and reminds them how great is His love in order that under the influence of that love their ice-bound hearts may be melted, and, warmed by love, they may turn to Him and love Him in return for His love.

Thus on the foundation of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart, so rich in blessings, and the now widespread League of the Apostleship of Prayer have arisen, whose members are pledged to the service of God and the pious veneration of His Sacred Heart; and in union with Our Lord's intentions, they are bound to pray constantly that all men may come to the knowledge and love of their divine Redeemer.

3. Nothing is more clearly and emphatically expressed in the revelations made by Our Lord to B. Margaret than the call for atonement and satisfaction to be made for the ingratitude shown Him and the offences committed against Him, in the Sacrament of His love preeminently. He appeared to her generally as the *Ecce Homo*, or laden with the cross, in a most pitiable condition. It was on one of these occasions that He thus complained to her: "See how sinners ill-treat and despise Me. Is there no one who will take pity on Me, show some sympathy with

Me in the wretched condition to which sinners have reduced me, particularly in these days?" (of carnival.) Truly no sight is calculated to demonstrate more plainly the way ungrateful man behaves towards his sovereign Lord and greatest benefactor than that of Jesus on the terrace before Pilate's house. And what He requires from us are compassion and reparation.

Our Lord can, it is true, no longer feel pain, but the sins of which He now complains really caused Him in His lifetime the pain, the grief which He now manifests in His apparitions; for it was in order to atone for them that He had to undergo that anguish. And in as far as is in their power, transgressors would actually maltreat Our Lord in this manner were He now capable of suffering. It is in this sense that St. Paul speaks when He says that those who apostatize from the faith, "crucify again to themselves the Son of God, making Him a mockery,"¹ that sinners "have trodden under foot the Son of God;"² and the same Apostle warns the Ephesians thus: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God."³ Moreover Our Lord Himself declares that the lukewarm soul causes Him such disgust that He will vomit it out of His mouth.⁴

¹ Heb. vi. 6. ² *Ibid.* x. 29. ³ Eph. iv. 30. ⁴ Apoc. iii. 16.

In one respect indeed the sinner even now really does God wrong and injury. The only thing which God, who is supremely happy in Himself, can receive from His creatures, which they are in duty bound to yield Him, is external honor, recognition, homage, and love. If these are withheld from Him, or not given in full, an actual wrong, an injury, is done Him; He is dishonored, offended. And when He complains of this He does so with entire justice and right, even though the insult offered Him is incapable of causing Him pain. When, however, He bewails our conduct towards Him, to us who are cut to the heart by injuries and insults, He is forced to employ terms borrowed from the language of our daily life. For these offences He demands commiseration and reparation. He repeats to B. Margaret what He has already expressed by the mouth of His prophets: "My heart hath expected reproach and misery, and I looked for one that would grieve together with Me, but there was none; and for one that would comfort Me and I found none"¹ On one occasion when He showed Himself to B. Margaret under the woful form of the *Ecce Homo*, He said the same: "I have found no one who will afford Me a place of rest in this My painful,

¹ Ps. lxxviii. 21.

agonizing state." Then He required His faithful handmaid to console Him in His pain and make amends for the impieties committed against Him.

This principle is deeply rooted in human nature. If a father has been offended by one of his children, the others endeavor to please him by some extra attention; and if a man hears that an injury has been done to his friend, or that some grief has befallen him, he feels urged to try and soothe his grief or alleviate his pain by special proof of affection. In like manner love for Our Saviour and Redeemer stimulates us to please Him by actions which are acceptable in His sight, to appease Him for the outrages committed against Him and make reparation for them.

All our good works which we perform in a state of grace and offer to Him with this intention possess this expiatory value and this power of satisfaction before Him. Just as sin grieves and offends Him, so our propitiatory oblation affords Him satisfaction and pleasure; and just as sin interferes with and detracts from His glory, so is it promoted and advanced by our good works; and as sins committed at the present time caused Him distress and bitter anguish at the time of His Passion, when atonement had to be made for them, so the good

works which we now perform afforded Him solace and pleasure then, as in fact they do at present. For although our divine Lord can no longer experience pain and suffering, His Heart is not insensible to gratification and joy. But our works and actions are yet more effectual as a means of satisfaction and reparation, and acquire an added value in His sight, if they are offered up in union with His merits. He gives us His whole Heart, with all its merits and treasures of grace, with them enriching our poverty; out of the fulness of His own Sacred Heart He gives us the means of consoling Him, of rejoicing Him, of propitiating Him in the manner that is most pleasing to Him and most profitable to ourselves. "What hast Thou not done, my adored Redeemer," B. Margaret said to Him once when He appeared to her; "what hast Thou not done to gain the hearts of men, and yet they refuse them to Thee, and oftentimes drive Thee from them!" "It is true, My daughter," He replied, "My love has made Me sacrifice Myself wholly for them, and they make Me no return; but I wish thee to supply for their ingratitude by the merits of My divine Heart. I will give thee My Heart." This point of making reparation and satisfaction is so essential to the devotion to the Sacred Heart

of Jesus, that were it omitted, the devotion practised would not be that which Christ the Lord desired to be introduced into the Church by the instrumentality of B. Margaret; and on this account the services held publicly in the churches on the first Friday or Sunday of every month are an act of reparation, and the feast itself is celebrated with the special intention of imploring pardon for and repairing the affronts offered to the Saviour in the Blessed Sacrament. The devotion to the Sacred Heart has also given rise to the Association of the Communion of Reparation, the members of which pledge themselves on a fixed day of the week or of the month to receive holy communion in reparation and satisfaction; and many devout persons by their prayers, works, and sufferings lead a life of atonement out of love to the suffering and neglected Heart of the Redeemer.

b. PARTICULAR REMARKS.

There yet remains for us to mention some exercises in particular by which the devotion to the Heart of Jesus may find expression in exterior acts. A few preliminary observations must first be made.

Whosoever desires to obtain true devotion

and reverence to the Sacred Heart of Jesus must first of all make himself thoroughly acquainted and familiar with the devotion; he must, in as far as is possible, gain a complete knowledge of its nature, its object, its value, its devotional practices, in short of all that is connected with it. All that has been said on the preceding pages has been with a view to supply him with the required elucidation, and impart the necessary information. He must also frequently and earnestly implore of God, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, the grace of a true devotion to and love for the Sacred Heart of Jesus.¹ It is indeed a great matter to acquire the knowledge and love of Our Lord, and God "will give this good spirit to them that ask Him;"² it is no slight privilege to contribute in some measure towards spreading this knowledge and increasing that

¹ The saintly Fr. Alvarez de Paz, a man of no slight experience in the spiritual life, was accustomed to make use of the following prayer in order to obtain this grace: "*O salvator hominum, Christe Jesu, cujus opus redemptio nostra est, cujus imitatio tota perfectio est; aperi mihi obsecro sanctissimum Cor tuum, januam vitæ et fontem aquæ vitæ, ut per illud ad tui notitiam ingrediar et aquam veræ virtutis omnem sitim rerum temporalium extinguentem bibam.*"

² Luke xi. 13.

love among our fellow men, to be permitted to cooperate in the extension of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It is in the tranquil seclusion of the seminary that this favor should be besought and obtained.

Whosoever desires to practise the devotion to the Heart of Jesus fruitfully and profitably must fix upon some prayers to be recited either daily, weekly, or it may be once a month or once a year. A general resolution to be devout to the Heart of Jesus is of little use, unless at the same time the manner in which the devotion shall be practised is definitely determined upon. In doing this it is well to bear in mind the golden maxim of St. John Berchmans: *Non multum, sed constanter*. Let only a few practices be chosen which can be performed with recollection, without haste; but what is once begun must not lightly be given up. It is not the number and length of our petitions which render them acceptable to God, but the fervor, the fidelity, the perseverance of the suppliant.

Finally, too much stress cannot be laid on the fact that all devotional exercises are not alike suited for all persons. Any particular one is therefore not to be condemned and rejected because it does not commend itself to or suit the feelings of one individual. Just as all

musical instruments are not tuned to the same key, nor do all the strings of the same instrument give out one and the selfsame sound, so all Christians do not pray in the same manner; nay, the same soul is wont to frame his petitions in a different form at different times. And only when each prays and sings in his own way does the voice of prayer ascend from the Church of God to the throne of the Most High as the melodious notes of the organ, or a part-song of exquisite harmony.

The following are some of the many methods of prayer or devotional exercises in use among the adorers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

1. They join the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart. Whoever becomes a member of this association declares his desire to be numbered amongst those who pay special honor to the divine Heart, who render homage and adoration to it, and who, by engaging to recite a short prayer daily, become entitled to a share in many graces and blessings. B. Margaret Mary exerted herself to the utmost to promote the formation of associations which proposed as their object the veneration of the Heart of Jesus, more especially a public and solemn veneration. "It is my belief," she wrote to Father Croiset, "that it would be highly agree-

able to the divine Heart if an association could be formed of which the members agreed to have their spiritual property in common." Just as the angelic hosts in heaven offer unceasing worship to the adorable Heart of Our Lord in acts of adoration, love, and praise, and as it is the special duty of angels continually to adore, to magnify, and to love His divine Heart in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, so, by the union of those who have a particular devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, perpetual adoration, homage, praise, and love ought to be rendered to that adorable Heart by man on earth. Such was the beautiful idea that was present to the mind of the favored nun, and which she longed to see realized to the glory of her beloved and loving Lord. When towards the close of her life she was told that confraternities were being erected with the title of the Sacred Heart, she exclaimed with holy delight: "It is truly a great consolation to be an eye-witness of the manner in which this devotion so evidently is developed through its own innate vitality, and is spreading on all sides."

2. They regard pictures and images of the Sacred Heart of Jesus with devout reverence. In regard to these pictures B. Margaret writes

thus: "Our divine Lord assured me that it was especially pleasing to Him to be adored under the symbol of the natural heart, and that He desired representations of it to be publicly exposed, in order, He added, thereby to touch the insensible hearts of men. He also promised me to pour into the hearts of all who should venerate such pictures the superabundance of His gifts and graces, and to grant to all places where they should be exposed for special veneration, all manner of rich blessings." Hence it has become customary among those who have a devotion to the Heart of Jesus, to put up in their houses, their own rooms, or even on their desk or work-table, a picture of the Sacred Heart, to which they pay devout reverence.

Although during B. Margaret's lifetime pictorial representations of the heart of Jesus were not entirely unknown, yet they were not common, and but rarely formed the object of particular veneration. It was only through the persistent exertions of B. Margaret, who on her part acted, as we have said, in accordance with Our Lord's expressed desire, that pictures of the Sacred Heart were printed and distributed for veneration in any considerable number. They represented the corporal, natural heart, surrounded and surmounted by the emblems

of the Passion as she saw Our Lord's heart in a vision, and described in the well-known letter to Fr. Rolin. At the outset this was the only representation in use among the adorers of the Heart of Jesus. Not until some time after B. Margaret's death were pictures produced in which the figure of Our Lord was portrayed, pointing with His hand to His heart, distinctly visible in or on His breast, from which rays of light radiated; and these are still principally, though by no means exclusively, in use.

One sometimes hears it asserted that delineations of the former description are forbidden by the Church; but this is not so. Nearly two hundred years had elapsed, and hundreds and thousands of pictures of the Sacred Heart had been in circulation and employed for public or private devotion with the tacit sanction of the bishops, before the ecclesiastical authorities were called upon to pronounce a verdict respecting them. Pictures of the former kind had then become so rare, that some persons began to doubt whether they were allowed, and consequently an inquiry to this purport was laid before the Congregation of Rites. On the 12th September, 1857, the following decision was issued: *Ad Episcopum servata forma decretorum Concilii Tridentini et Urbani VIII.*

The use of the pictures in question is not forbidden, but left to the discretion and decision of the bishops.

Formal authorization was given to the later representations, without, however, any disapproval of the earlier ones being expressed. When, in the year 1877, a Belgian sculptor submitted a design for two statues, one of the Heart of Jesus and the other of the heart of Mary, for the approval of the Congregation of Rites, the answer given him (11th August, 1877) was this: *Nihil obstat*. There appears to be no further pronouncement of the ecclesiastical authorities touching pictures of the Heart of Jesus, besides those which were cited in a former part of this book (p. 71).

Thus it may be judged best for those who practise the devotion to the Sacred Heart, whether in meditation or prayers, to make use of pictures representing the person of Our Lord with the heart visible on His breast, in preference to those which represent the heart only, as it was depicted frequently in earlier times.

3. They keep the feast of the Sacred Heart with fervor and devotion. This festal day, which Our Lord Himself desired and appointed to be kept as the crown of the devotion, affords

those who adore His Sacred Heart a welcome opportunity to give their Saviour and Redeemer a proof of special love in accordance with His own behest. Therefore they earnestly endeavor to prepare themselves for the worthy celebration of the feast by a novena, or at least a triduum, and by a sincere and contrite confession. On the day itself they are scrupulously careful to avoid everything which may in the slightest degree be displeasing to the loving Heart of their Lord. They make a meditation on this subject and prepare themselves to the best of their power to receive holy communion with all devotion, offering it in reparation for the offences committed against Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament. They strive to pass the day in recollection of heart and interior devotion, often dwelling in thought with Him whose love for them is infinite, and who has done such great things for them; renewing from time to time acts of love and adoration, of atonement and reparation, of consecration and oblation; desiring and praying that on that day the Heart of Our Lord may be honored and worshipped by all mankind throughout the world. They make frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament in the intention of the festival, and at night they ask pardon,

kneeling if possible before the tabernacle, or else before a picture of the divine Heart, for the coldness and indevotion with which they have kept the day, and renew their resolution to love Our Lord truly and constantly unto the end of their lives. Nor do they omit to do their utmost in contributing to the celebration of the feast with due splendor and solemnity; for we owe it to Our Lord to make honorable amends to Him for the ingratitude and irreverence shown Him.

4. They practise special devotions on the first Friday of every month. The first Friday of the month is observed in a special manner because Our Lord enjoined upon B. Margaret to receive holy communion on the first Friday of every month in order to repair the irreverences committed during the month in presence of the Blessed Sacrament, and also because He indicated to her certain devotional exercises to be practised on the first Friday of the month for the purpose of obtaining the grace of final perseverance. Accordingly, following her example, it is their wont, besides receiving holy communion, to offer some additional prayers, such as acts of adoration, of love, of propitiation, of oblation, etc. Throughout the day they are careful to preserve greater recollection of

heart and to perform all their duties more diligently, in order to testify their love to Our Lord and obtain the grace they desire. In accordance with the instructions concerning the observance of the day which B. Margaret received from Our Lord's lips, at eventide they weave out of all the devotions practised during the day, as it were, a mystic wreath, which they offer to Him for His solace and to make atonement for the pain inflicted on Him by the sharp points of the crown of thorns which He wore on account of their sins.

5. They offer some prayer or pious exercise daily in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. As the clients of Our Lady do not allow a day to pass without invoking the intercession of the Mother of God and offering some devotion in her honor, so the adorers of the Sacred Heart do not permit a day to pass without showing some mark of their veneration and love to the Heart of Jesus.

The following short act of consecration is enriched with an indulgence of 100 days to be gained once daily if recited with a contrite heart before a picture of the Sacred Heart:

"O my most amiable Jesus! in token of my gratitude to Thee, and in order to make some amends for my many acts of unfaithfulness to

Thee, I give Thee my heart! I consecrate myself wholly to Thee, and I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, never more to sin against Thee."

For priests and candidates for the priesthood the following act of consecration is peculiarly suited: "*Dulcissime Jesu, qui caritate perpetua dilexisti nos, suppliciter Te rogamus, ut in sacramentum Cordis Tui nos admittere digneris. In Te, Domine Jesu, et pro Te solo vivere desideramus summoque devotionis affectu nos totos Tibi offerimus et consecramus. Fac nos, quæsumus ab omni peccati labe purgatos a sæculi vanitatibus abhorre, ss. Cordis Tui virtutibus indui et affectibus inflammari, ut digni altaris ministri effici mereamur. Concede propitius, ut promovendæ gloriæ Tuæ, semper intenti cultum ss. Cordis Tui, quantum pro nostra tenuitate licuerit, propageamus, Tibi caritate in dies magis uniamur et a Tuo servitio nunquam cessemus. Amen.*"

6. They are assiduous in paying frequent visits to the Blessed Sacrament, and often approach the holy table. There indeed they find the Heart which they love and adore not merely under a symbol, but really, truly, and actually present. There Our Lord and Redeemer is, as it were, upon His throne of grace, ready to bestow on all who draw near to Him,

who receive Him, "grace for grace." Accordingly they come and offer petitions for themselves and for the Church and all the faithful in Christ, particularly for those who are or who will be committed to their care.

There He abides among us as our Father, our Friend, our Comforter, as our Light and our Strength; He waits for us and admits us to intercourse with Himself. Never do we seek His presence without being enlightened, fortified, and invigorated; never does He let us depart without His grace and His benediction.

How often does He dwell in the tabernacle as a hermit in a strange land, nay, even as a prisoner amidst His enemies. In the Sacrament of the Altar He has willed to place Himself entirely in the hands of His priests; it is for them to watch over and safeguard Him, to carry Him about and elevate Him in benediction, to administer Him to the faithful as their spiritual sustenance and to offer Him up as a sacrifice to the Most High; He surrenders Himself entirely to them. Every Christian who loves Our Lord is bound to visit Him as often as possible in His loneliness in the tabernacle. The duties of our calling do not permit of prolonged orisons; but a short visit to the Blessed Sacrament will not interfere with our daily

avocations, especially if we live under the same roof with Him; on the contrary, it will be useful and profitable to us. St. Francis Borgia was in the habit of visiting the Blessed Sacrament seven times a day, in honor of the seven times when the precious blood was shed: at the circumcision, in the Garden of Olives, at the scourging, the crowning with thorns, the nailing of the hands, the nailing of the feet to the cross, and the piercing of His sacred side. At each visit he besought for himself one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The following is a remarkably beautiful and appropriate formula of prayer for a short visit to the adorable Sacrament: "Behold, O most loving Jesus, to what an excess Thy love has gone. Of Thine own flesh and blood Thou hast prepared for me a divine banquet in which Thou givest me Thine own self. What could have moved Thee to such an excess of love? Nothing else, surely, than Thy most loving Heart. O adorable Heart of my Jesus, furnace of divine love, receive my soul into thy sacred wound, that I may learn in that school of charity how to love my God who has given me such wonderful proof of His love." (Indulgence of 100 days once a day.)

"May the Heart of Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament be praised, adored, and loved with

grateful affection, at every moment in all the tabernacles of the world, even to the end of time." (Indulgence of 100 days once a day. —Pius IX., Feb. 29, 1868.)

The most intimate union possible with Our Lord is what those who venerate His Sacred Heart above all things desire and strive after, and Our Lord's intention in instituting the Most Holy Sacrament was to unite Himself to us as closely as is possible on earth. This union is consummated when we receive holy communion, therefore they frequently approach the holy table. There is no doubt that no good work, no act of devout worship is so pleasing to Our Lord; there is none which He so willingly accepts in reparation for the indignities offered Him, as a communion made with careful preparation and profound devotion. He laid the injunction upon B. Margaret to receive holy communion as frequently as she was permitted to do so. It is an excellent plan always to go to communion with some definite intention, for some special object; for instance, in thanksgiving for benefits received from God; to obtain some particular grace for ourselves or for others; to increase in the knowledge of self and the love of God; in obedience to the will of God, who desires that we should receive

holy communion; or in order to acquire a greater likeness to Our Lord. In any case, it is only right, whether one joins the Association of the Communion of Reparation or no, to habituate one's self to offer one's communion in reparation and satisfaction for the offences committed against Our Lord in the Sacrament of His love, and to do this in union with the thousands of communions received and offered daily with this intention by the members of the aforesaid association.

7. They place all their trust in the Heart of Jesus and consequently to it they have recourse in all their necessities. Above all, when assaulted by temptation they seek strength, help, and protection from the divine Heart. No heart loves us so truly, so fondly, no heart throbs with such profound compassion for us as that of Our Lord. When He saw any one in affliction He was "moved with mercy;"¹ after His death He caused His Heart to be opened, and after His Resurrection He was pleased to retain His sacred wounds that we might find in them a sure refuge. In the season of temptation hide thyself, O Christian, in the divine Heart, and the tempter will no longer dare to assault or persecute thee.

¹ Luke vii. 13.

In all sufferings and vexations they fly to the Heart of Jesus. It is the Heart of Him who said: "Come to Me all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you."¹ In fact the grief of those who, with all confidence, lay before Him their sorrows and sufferings loses all its poignancy. Therefore commit to the care of the divine Heart whatever troubles and oppresses you, whatever disquiets and perplexes you, and you will experience His consolations and your soul will be filled with strength and courage, with patience and hopeful endurance.

In all the difficulties, in all the vicissitudes of life they turn at once to the divine Heart. Either they make a novena, or a triduum, or they pay a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, or practise some other devotion, in order to obtain enlightenment and strength, to implore that some undertaking may prosper, some work meet with success, that a danger or misfortune threatening them may be averted, a sick friend or acquaintance be restored to health, a sinner be converted, etc. The *Messenger of the Sacred Heart* affords striking proof of the unbounded confidence wherewith the faithful in all lands have recourse in all their necessities to the Heart of Jesus, and the favors and blessings

¹ Matt. xi. 28.

with which Our Lord rewards their faith, in fulfilment of His gracious promise.

8. They raise their heart to Jesus by frequent ejaculatory prayers. They do not wait until temptations and adversities compel them to turn to Him, they hold frequent intercourse with Him in the midst of their work and occupations. Now it is an act of love and thanksgiving which they breathe forth; now an ~~ascrip-~~
~~tion~~ of praise or act of adoration, now an act of petition or propitiation, by which they venerate the Sacred Heart; and these tokens of reverence and affection are redoubled on days and in seasons that are specially dedicated to the honor of that Heart. They keep a picture of it before them in order to be more often reminded of it, and incited to pray that they may be kindled by the flames which consume that Heart, and illumined by the light of grace; that they may be stimulated by the sight of the cross and wound and thorns to renewed zeal, inspired with fresh courage to sacrifice all and bear all for Christ's sake, who bore so much and sacrificed so much for them.

9. They often send up heartfelt entreaties for pardon, in order to make some amends to Our Lord for the irreverences and impieties committed against Him. Not one of all our pious

exercises is so pleasing to Our Lord and so essential a part of our devotion as the work of propitiation and reparation. The worshippers of the Sacred Heart are therefore not satisfied with avoiding everything that may grieve it; on the contrary, they strive by propitiation and reparation to afford it consolation and joy; these acts they renew and redouble the more they are impressed with the ingratitude of men towards their Lord and Redeemer, the more certainly they are convinced that these acts are what Our Lord desires above all and enjoins on us to perform. They will not give Him cause to lament, as of old, saying: "I looked for one that would grieve together with Me, but there was none; and for one that would comfort Me, and I found none." They pray that they may ever feel more and more sorrow and pain at the ingratitude of men, that Our Lord will give them a share in the grief which He experienced in the Garden of Olives on account of their affronts. They implore pardon for those affronts, and in reparation for them they offer Him their voluntary mortifications and acts of self-denial; they offer Him the adoration, the glory rendered to Him by the just of earth, by the angels and saints in heaven; they offer Him the holy and immacu-

late heart of His blessed Mother, in which He takes delight. This reparation is a consolation to Our Lord and a source of great graces to ourselves. Particulars concerning the Communion of Reparation will be found in the Appendix.

10. They make it their earnest endeavor to live, to labor, to pray, to suffer in constant union with the Heart of Jesus. The Sacred Heart of Jesus is our own, our riches in our poverty. Would that we understood how to employ the treasure which Christ our Lord has given us in His Heart to our spiritual profit and advantage! All our prayers, our actions, if united to the Heart of Jesus and to His supplications, acquire a resemblance to those He offers, and consequently are agreeable in God's sight. For inasmuch as nothing is so well-pleasing to God as the Heart of His Son, nothing is more acceptable in His eyes than the soul which is united to that Heart: "He hath graced us in His beloved Son;" *Gratificavit nos in dilecto Filio suo*.¹ Therefore they are wont to offer all their actions, prayers, and sufferings with the same intention with which Christ Himself prayed, labored, and suffered during His life on earth. This was B. Margaret's constant practice; she learned it

¹ Eph. i. 6.

from Our Lord Himself, and the Church instructs her priests to pray for the same intention.¹

And as the Heart of Jesus perfects all our actions, prayers, and sufferings, and renders them pleasing to God, so by Our Lord's virtues and merits He makes amends for all negligences, infidelities, and faults of which we are guilty. Accordingly the adorers of His Heart do not fail to offer all their works and prayers to that Sacred Heart, in order that it may supply the deficiencies and remove all the imperfections to be found in them. Such was the practice of the devout Fr. Luis da Ponte; and Ven. Blosius the Benedictine has recorded the formula he employed in the same intention; it is this: "*Pater cælestis, ego pro frigida et misera cordis mei ariditate offero tibi fervida desideria ardentissimumque amorem Cordis dilecti filii tui Jesu Christi.*" B. Margaret, too, recommends this practice in a letter, as follows: "In regard to the trouble you feel in leading a languishing life in the service of God, what He seems to suggest to me to say to you is that you should not make yourself uneasy;

¹ *Domine, in unione illius divinæ intentionis, qua ipse in terris laudes Deo persolvisti, has tibi horas persolvo.*

but in order to satisfy Him in this respect all you have to do is to unite all your actions to the Sacred Heart of Our Lord at the beginning of what you do in order to direct your intention at the end to make satisfaction for your defects. For example, if you find you cannot pray as you wish, be satisfied with offering the prayer which Our Lord is offering to God the Father for us in the adorable Sacrament of the Altar, and present His ardent supplications to make amends for your tepidity. Say in each of your actions: "My God, I wish to do or suffer this in the Sacred Heart of Thy Son and according to His holy intentions. I offer Thee His Heart in reparation for all my failings and imperfections." And the divine Saviour Himself repeatedly recommended SS. Gertrude and Mechtilde to make this act of oblation. When the former, despite all her efforts, could not prevent distractions from troubling her, she was greatly distressed, for she feared that prayers so full of distractions could be of no profit. There upon He showed her His Heart, saying: "Behold My Heart, in which the Most Holy Trinity takes delight. I give it to thee, that thou mayst therewith supply all thy shortcomings. Commend all thy actions to it; it will render them perfect in My sight."

11. They maintain an intimate intercourse with Jesus Christ. Familiar intercourse with Our Lord is the choicest, the sweetest fruit of the devotion to His Sacred Heart; for this all the saints longed, this was the object of their aspirations. It consists in consulting Him about all our affairs, both those that relate to time and to eternity. The work, the cares of our state and calling in life furnish abundant matter for constant and familiar converse with Our Lord. We may confide to Him all our joys and sorrows, all our difficulties and struggles. Our very indigence and weakness, our faults and transgressions are so many motives urging us to betake ourselves to Him. In Him, as in the heart of a true friend, we shall find sympathy, solace, and succor; for He wishes us to go to Him and unite ourselves to Him. At the same time let us not forget that unrepented sin is the one, the only hindrance to intercourse and union with Jesus. Every step that takes us farther from some sin and brings us nearer to some virtue, binds us more closely to Him; and perfect justice is identical with perfect friendship, perfect union with Him.

12. They strive to make their heart more and more like to the Heart of Jesus. If the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Our Lord is

to be productive of those fruits, those benefits for time and for eternity which are promised in such abundant measure, it must be understood and practised as our divine Lord revealed it, and as B. Margaret made it known in His name. To perform some external devotional exercise in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to offer it some tribute or other of reverence and love, is undoubtedly a laudable act which will not go unrewarded; but the interior devotion is and ever will be the main point. It only brings with it its full blessing when the inward devotion is united to the outward act of veneration, that inward devotion which consists in profound reverence and love for the person of the Saviour and His divine Heart, in an unremitting endeavor to make one's own heart ever more and more like to His Heart. Accordingly they strive to become purer, more mortified, more humble, more gentle, more patient, more obedient, more forbearing, more yielding, more recollected, more zealous, to cultivate likeness to Our Lord in all their thoughts, affections, actions, in a word, to form their heart after the pattern, the example of His divine Heart. In order to attain this end, it is essentially necessary to acquaint ourselves more closely, more accurately with the Heart

of Our Lord and Master. In Holy Scripture He manifests Himself to us by the words He spoke, the actions He performed; and by meditation we penetrate more deeply into His Heart and acquire a knowledge of the most lofty dispositions, of the various virtues, in their highest perfection: "Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of Heart."

13. They consecrate themselves wholly and irrevocably to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We know that in accordance with Our Lord's command, B. Margaret was for many years in the habit of writing letters to priests, Religious, and the laity for the purpose of commending to them and spreading the devotion she had so much at heart. That to which she gives the greatest prominence, and of which she speaks most emphatically in her letters, is consecration and oblation of one's self to the Sacred Heart. "The Redeemer," she writes, "generally requires complete self-abandonment from His friends." She puts forward different arguments to induce those whom she addresses to make this act of oblation. "It would give Our Lord singular pleasure," she writes on one occasion, "if you frequently renewed the entire sacrifice of yourself to Him, and practised it faithfully." And she adds: "Would that you only

knew what a recompense our adorable Redeemer will give to those who, after consecrating themselves wholly to His Heart, seek solely to honor it." Writing to her brother, the priest, she says: "He who consecrates himself to the Heart of Jesus will not be lost eternally." In another letter she repeats this assertion and explains it thus: "It is my firm belief that those who have dedicated themselves to the Sacred Heart of Jesus will not be lost, and that they will never fall under the dominion of Satan through mortal sin; provided, that is, that after the complete surrender of themselves they strive to honor, to love, to glorify it to the utmost of their power, by conforming themselves in all things to its sacred teaching. That holy man, Fr. de la Colombière, desired and aimed at this alone, and it was this which raised him to such a height of perfection in so short a time."

Two things chiefly are comprised in this act of consecration. First, complete forgetfulness of self, i.e., giving up entirely our own interest, profit, advantage, our own glory, and our own ease. It is the penalty of original sin, from which we all suffer more or less, that we are by far too self-occupied, too self-seeking, that we think too highly of ourselves. And since by

nature two strong tendencies predominate within us, our self-seeking manifests itself in a twofold direction: in the earthly, sensual pleasures we procure for ourselves, and the praise, honor, and distinction which we desire and expect from others. Therefore oblivion of self and the relinquishment of our own interest consist in the renunciation of worldly and carnal pleasures, of earthly honor, and human applause; in the mortification of sensuality and pride. B. Margaret remarks on this subject: "If Christ is to live in our heart by His grace and His love, we must die to self, to our concupiscences, our passions, our self-indulgences, to all, in short, that belongs to our unmortified nature."

In the second place this consecration consists in living entirely for Our Lord, i.e., striving to love Him, to glorify and magnify Him to the utmost of our power and in as far as our circumstances permit. Consequently, abandoning all care of self to Him who cares for us, we must think only how to do our duty, our daily work as well as possible to the glory of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and to promote the interests of that Heart to the best of our knowledge and ability. Thus when about to undertake anything we ought first to implore counsel

and assistance from Our Lord, to enable us to accomplish it to His glory alone; and when our task is finished we must give Him thanks with all our heart, whether it be crowned with success or result in failure. Such is the plan of action, such the frame of mind of one who has dedicated himself entirely to the Heart of Jesus, and desires to live only for God. "It appears to me," writes B. Margaret, "that this single intention will render our actions more meritorious and more acceptable in God's sight than all that may be done without that intention."

This sublime, this generous disposition is most beautifully expressed in the well-known formula of consecration, beginning with the words: *Dulcissime Jesu, fons amoris*, etc., which will be found on the last page. It was composed by Fr. Roethaan and gives, in a more concise form, Fr. de la Colombière's lengthy act of consecration. Fully to realize this act of consecration and to carry it out practically in one's daily life supposes, as is apparent from the explanation given above, a high degree of sanctity and perfection, which, however, every one does not, by making the act, pledge himself to attain. Yet he who does not regard the act merely as the expression of a pious desire

or as a prayer, but considers it to be a serious promise and solemn vow, binds himself thereby to assist in the propagation of the devotion to the Heart of Jesus. This obligation is sufficiently fulfilled if the act of consecration is not revoked or the purpose of spreading the devotion abandoned, and some interior acts in honor of the Heart of Jesus are awakened in the course of the year. Those who promote the aforesaid end by exterior acts, by their prayers, by their writings, by distributing pictures of the Sacred Heart, or by exhorting others to adopt the devotion, preaching on the subject, etc., do more than enough to fulfil the obligation they took upon themselves. The same applies to acts of consecration to the Blessed Virgin. Yet it is advisable, for the sake of avoiding scruples of conscience, to consult one's confessor on the subject and ask his opinion. In order to share more abundantly in the blessings attached to this consecration, it may be renewed on the first Friday of every month, and particularly on the feasts of the Sacred Heart and of the Immaculate Conception.

V. MOTIVES FOR THE PRACTICE OF THIS DEVOTION.

I.

THERE are still many individuals, and among them priests, who cannot take kindly to this devotion. Although it shines as brightly as the sun at midday, warming the Church with its genial beams, they yet hold aloof from its beneficent influence. What can be the objection which deters them from embracing it, from practising it lovingly and fervently? One would have thought nothing more could be needed than to place it before a loyal Christian in its true light, in order to attract him to it and inspire him with enthusiasm for it.

In fact the history of its rise and extension bears such unmistakable signs of the divine influence and divine operation that no one can fail to recognize it as the work, the ordinance of the Most High; and the blessings it diffuses on all sides are so great, so wondrous, that it

must be reckoned among those of the Church's devotions to which God vouchsafes to attach the richest rewards.

The object of this devotion is the most grand, the most holy, the most sublime, and at the same time the most beautiful and attractive that the heart of man can conceive; it is Our Lord's all-merciful love, the love which was the motive, the mainspring of the work of redemption, of all the mysteries of His life, His Passion, and His death; the source of all the gifts and graces bestowed upon poor, sinful mortals; and which is presented to our view under a symbol most worthy of our adoration and reverence, His most Sacred Heart. If the name of Jesus exercises so powerful, so irresistible an influence on the heart of the devout Christian that St. Bernard could say there was no sweeter, more delightful sound than the name of Jesus; if the martyrs were inspired with courage and fortitude to endure a cruel death by the invocation of that holy name, will not the Heart of Jesus, which illumines all the mysteries of Our Lord with the bright light of His love, and exhibits them thus to the soul, produce an effect at any rate as powerful?

The exercises of this devotion are the highest, most exalted acts of virtue and worship: faith,

adoration, confidence, love, thanksgiving, reparation, oblation; they are of all pious practices the easiest, most pleasing, most consoling; they never fail at one and the same time to further the spiritual life, to sanctify the soul and advance it in perfection. If our intention in our devotional exercises is, as indeed it ought to be, to glorify God and make our salvation sure, by no other means can we attain this twofold end more completely and satisfactorily than by this devotion, the practice of which is above all acceptable to God and profitable to ourselves.

The intention of this devotion is a holy and exalted one, supremely worthy of the soul that loves her Lord and Master; namely, to return love for love, and to repair by her homage the irreverence, the contempt wherewith our all-merciful Redeemer is treated. If the value, the efficacy of a devotion is proportioned to the unselfishness and generosity of its intention, this devotion, whose chief, most important exercises are acts of generous, unalloyed charity, can be surpassed by no other.

The fruits of this devotion are unequalled by those of any other in excellence, abundance, and splendor. First of all we will mention the one which is essentially its offspring, and

ripens under its shade, the love of Jesus Christ, Our Lord and King, our eternal High Priest. Where is the good, the true priest who does not crave with all his heart for that most precious of all gifts, who does not make it the object of his constant supplications? Now this devotion furnishes us with the easiest, most certain means of reaching the goal of our desire and our prayers in a short time. The way is twofold, says Fr. Galliffet, whereby we attain to the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ. First, by the liberality and bounty of God; that is to say, when, either in answer to our prayers or to reward us for some work undertaken for His glory, of His mercy He freely bestows on us the inestimable gift of His love. Secondly, through our own action under the guidance and with the assistance of divine grace; that is, when we make use of the means which are especially calculated to kindle the love of Our Lord within our hearts. To this appertains primarily meditation on His most lovable attributes and perfections, and the remembrance of the love He feels for us, the benefits He bestows on us so lavishly. Now it is evident that no pious practices combine these two means of attaining love for Jesus in so high a degree as the devotion to His Sacred

Heart. For there is no grace for which the adorers of the divine Heart long so ardently, so earnestly, as true and real love for Christ their Redeemer. In fact to ponder and meditate upon the love of the divine Heart and the benefits we receive from it is one of the special exercises of this devotion. Finally there is no other so pleasing to God, or one the practice of which He has promised to reward so munificently as the devotion to the Sacred Heart of His Son.

2.

If we were to see a prince go out into the gardens of his palace, and there plant a sapling with his own hand, and if we noticed that he went daily to look at it, to water it, to prune it, to tend it, should we not think that that must be a valuable tree, that the prince must care very much for it? Now it is just the same in respect to the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Christ our Lord has planted it Himself in the garden of His Church, and has tended it and watched over its growth. He Himself appeared to B. Margaret and revealed to her the object, the motives, the practice, and the aim of the devotion; He appeared to her again and again, teaching and instructing her in every detail

connected with it. Through His omnipotent protection, in spite of its many and powerful antagonists, it has spread far and wide and become a favorite and popular devotion among Catholics; it must therefore be very dear to Our Lord.

He has, moreover, made His wishes and commands known to us in the most clear and explicit manner. He repeatedly told B. Margaret that it was His expressed will that His love should be venerated under the symbol of His Sacred Heart, and that He desired this devotion to be practised by all Christians throughout the world. The knowledge that such was Our Lord's will decided the ecclesiastical authorities to sanction the introduction of the devotion in the Church. For a long time they hesitated to give their approval to it, since they could not see clearly what was the will of God in this regard; but no sooner were they convinced that it was the divine will than they promoted the devotion by the most powerful and effectual means. In the brief of the beatification of B. Margaret, the favored disciple of the Sacred Heart, we read these words: "The Author and Finisher of faith willed that veneration and devotion to His divine Heart should be introduced into the Church."

What more is needed to kindle within us love, zeal, enthusiasm for a devotion than the certitude that Our Lord desires and expects this from us? Is He not our all in all, and have we not to thank Him for all that we possess or hope for? Is it not due to Him that we should fulfil the wish of His Heart? "Oh, that I could tell all the world," B. Margaret exclaims, "all that I know of this beautiful devotion! I say with confidence that if it were only known how pleasing this devotion is to Our Lord, there is not a Christian, however slight may be his love for Christ, who would not at once adopt its practice."

In order more effectually to prevail upon us to practise this devotion, our divine Redeemer has made greater, more comprehensive promises to those who venerate His Sacred Heart than He ever made in regard to any other devotion.

These promises are twelve in number.

1. I will give them all the graces necessary to their state in life.
2. I will give them peace in their families.
3. I will comfort them in all their afflictions.
4. I will be their secure refuge during life, and above all in death.

5. I will bestow abundant blessings on all their undertakings.

6. Sinners shall find in My Heart the source and the infinite ocean of mercy.

7. Tepid souls shall grow fervent.

8. Fervent souls shall advance rapidly to high perfection.

9. I will bless every dwelling in which an image of My Heart shall be set up and honored.

10. I will give to priests the gift of touching the most hardened hearts.

11. The persons who spread this devotion shall have their names written in My Heart, never to be effaced.

12. Proclaim this, and let it be published throughout the world: I will assign no measure and no limit to the gifts and graces which I will bestow on all who seek them in My Heart.

Christ our Lord promises to give blessings and graces during their life, and still more at the decisive moment of their death, to those who seek them in His Sacred Heart; and as if He deemed that all too little, He adds the assurance that He will set no measure or limit to His favors. He has not failed to fulfil these promises. Thirty-one periodicals month by month publish hundreds and thousands of thanksgivings in various languages and

various forms, all so many proofs of faith being rewarded, and affording evidence of the fidelity wherewith Christ accomplishes the promises made to His servants. Would that His Heart were known and loved by all men!

3.

One revelation which B. Margaret records in her letters affords us a deep insight into the nature of the devotion of the Sacred Heart and the designs of Our Lord. It was His desire, she relates, that Louis XIV., king of France, should consecrate himself to the adorable Heart of Jesus, in order that Christ the Lord might hold supreme sway over the heart of the king, and through his instrumentality over the hearts of the magnates of the realm. He desired that a church should be erected and a picture of the Sacred Heart set up in it, that the king and all the court might pay homage to it, and finally that the king should procure from the Holy See the institution of a Mass in honor of the Heart of Jesus.

Père de la Chaise, a Jesuit, who had great influence with Louis XIV., was commissioned by our divine Lord to acquaint him with His wishes and designs, and prevail upon him to carry them into execution. This was intended

as an admonitory call to the king to turn to God and make use of his power for the welfare of the Church. The promises Our Lord made to him provided he would comply with His wishes were magnificent and wonderful. One would have thought the king would surely be induced to amend his ways, and devote himself to the service of the divine Heart. Unhappily it was not so; he did not comply with Our Lord's demands, and the royal house of France has had bitterly to atone for his rejection and neglect of grace.

For us, however, the reason why Our Lord desired to have homage paid to Him by the king and court of France has a deep and important signification. He declared it to be His wish to be honored in the dwellings of princes and monarchs to the same extent that He was dishonored and humiliated in them at the time of His Passion; and that He would experience as much gratification on seeing the great ones of the earth humbling and abasing themselves before Him, as He did pain when He stood in their presence an object of their supreme contempt. The homage of the king and his courtiers would have been a reparation for the insults which the Son of God met with in the dwellings of rulers, during His Passion more especially.

In fact the ignominy heaped upon Him was something terrible. Think of Our Lord in that hour of His Passion when He was led from Pilate's house to Herod's palace, and arraigned as a criminal before that monarch who was attended by all the dignitaries of his court! Think of Herod judging Jesus! Herod, who had taken his own brother's wife, who had caused John the Baptist to be beheaded, who was himself so cunning and deceitful that Our Lord spoke of him as that fox; Herod the voluptuary and libertine, noted for his effeminacy, inquisitiveness, and insolence—such is the man by whom Jesus, the personification of purity and innocence, the incarnate Truth, allows Himself to be judged! *Interrogabat eum multis sermonibus*, "he questioned Him in many words," Holy Scripture tells us; and when Our Lord preserved a persistent silence, answering nothing to the king's inquisitive questions, *sprevit illum Herodes cum exercitu suo*, "Herod with all his army set Him at naught and mocked Him."¹ He caused a white robe, the garment of scorn, to be put on Him, and ordered Him to be led, arrayed in this fool's fashion, through the streets of the city back to Pilate's house. By this act he intended to say: "This man,

¹ Luke xxiii. 6-11.

who has attracted so much attention and been the talk of the whole town, is 'after all only a half-witted, weak-minded fool, without sense or education; there is nothing to be feared from Him. Nothing cuts more deeply, nothing wounds a man's heart more acutely than having such a verdict passed on him. Such was the contumely which Our Lord, the eternal Wisdom of the Father, was obliged to endure at the monarch's court; and God alone knows how often in the course of centuries similar affronts have been offered to Him in the palaces of princes. The king of France and his court were called upon to repair that ignominy, those insults, by a public act of homage. Had he but known the grace Our Lord held out to him!

But do we not see in this an admonition to all priests and candidates for the priesthood to honor and adore the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and pay Him homage in atonement for the affronts He received in the dwellings of priests, during His Passion more especially? If kings and princes owe Our Lord reparation because at the time of His Passion He was treated so shamefully in their palaces, can it be said that He was treated any better in the houses of the Jewish priests?

He was arraigned before four several tribunals,

and by each one in succession He was condemned. The most prominent and influential personages in the land, both ecclesiastical and secular, concurred in rejecting and condemning Him, God permitting it to be so for the greater disgrace and humiliation of their innocent Victim. He was led first of all to Annas, the former high priest, then to Caiphas, who had succeeded him in that office, and at whose house the chief council, or, as the Evangelist states, the scribes and ancients, had assembled to hold counsel with the chief priests. There we behold Our Lord as an accused prisoner in the house of the Jewish priests, who were one and all His enemies, inflated with pride and conceit on account of their fancied learning. The heart of the Christian is filled with horror at the remembrance of all that occurred, as related in the Gospel. In Annas' dwelling one of the servants out of sheer hatred, but ostensibly because of Our Lord's supposed want of respect towards the aged high priest, struck Him a blow with his heavy hand on His sacred countenance. What cruel, shameful treatment! And when the chief council in Caiphas' house had sentenced the most guiltless and holiest of beings to death, a scene was enacted so brutal and scandalous, so revolting and impious, that

the pen shrinks from recording what happened. "Then," the Evangelist tells us, "did they spit in His face and buffeted Him, and others struck Him with the palms of their hands."¹ Can it be possible! The Lord's priests, transported with rage and anger, presume to lay sacrilegious hands on the most sacred person of their eternal High Priest! And would to God that it could be said with truth that He had never in later times suffered such usage from many of His own priests! Verily, priests owe no slight debt of reparation to their Lord and Redeemer. There is no doubt that we fulfil His desire and intention in a great measure by venerating His Sacred Heart ourselves, and doing all in our power to cause it to be loved and honored by others.

4.

The devotion to the Sacred Heart is one of the best, the most efficacious means of acquiring, of maintaining and increasing the sacerdotal spirit. The spirit of the priesthood is the spirit of Jesus Christ, our eternal High Priest. It comprises in itself all the virtues befitting the priest, more especially the love of solitude, of seclusion, the spirit of recollection, of detachment from the world and union with

¹ Matt. xxvi. 67.

God, purity of heart, patience and meekness amid the trials of his state, zeal for God's glory and for the salvation of souls; the spirit of self-forgetfulness which lives, works, and suffers for God. Such are the most prominent and striking features of the model proposed for the imitation of the Catholic priests. There are two principal means whereby these essentially priestly virtues can be made one's own: these are the practice of mental prayer and spiritual reading, and frequent reception of holy communion. And just as these two means are pre-eminently calculated to facilitate the acquisition of the aforementioned virtues, so are they instrumental in maintaining and increasing them. The cleric who never omits mental prayer, who performs all the religious exercises prescribed in the seminary with fervor, and frequently receives holy communion will be well prepared for admission to Holy Orders; and the priest who does not discontinue the daily meditation and other spiritual exercises which were customary in the seminary, who lives as it behooves one to live who communicates, as he does, every day, will not lose the true spirit of the priesthood. Now these devotional practices are precisely what all true adorers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus particu-

larly prize, delight in, and perform with pious fervor.

By nature we are children of this world: our principles, our way of looking at things, our feelings, our wishes, inclinations, our aspirations are those of the world, the exact opposite of the maxims and aspirations of Christ. One of the first and most important duties of the candidate for the priesthood is to mortify the spirit of the world within himself and oust it from his heart, and to imbue his mind with the principles, the ideas of the Gospel. The more he conforms his mind to the mind of Christ and shapes his conduct accordingly, the more will his heart be pervaded by the spirit of the priesthood, and his life resemble that of his divine Exemplar.

The priest lives in the world, he holds constant, often friendly intercourse with the children of the world; his calling necessitates many distractions, which are apt to turn his thoughts from God and fix them on mundane things. In this there is no slight cause for fear lest the maxims and dispositions of Christ, which he has adopted as his own, should be weakened in their influence over him, and gradually be brought into agreement with the world's way of looking at things; lest the

spirit of recollection and mortification, of zeal and of prayer should grow faint; lest worldly pleasures, worldly honors should no longer be regarded with abhorrence, and the sacerdotal spirit of sacrifice be altogether lost; unless it be from time to time reawakened and renewed.

In mental prayer and spiritual reading the spirit of the Gospel penetrates and permeates the soul of the aspirant for the priesthood and moulds it after the divine pattern; by mental prayer and spiritual reading the priest renews within himself the spirit which he received at his ordination, to enable him to walk worthy of his high vocation. For contemplation and edifying reading sets before him daily the eternal High Priest, it reveals to him His virtues in the highest perfection, it permits him to look into the depths of the divine Heart, there to behold the centre and climax of sacerdotal thought and feeling. What a glorious, a divine model is proposed to us!

About Himself Our Lord speaks rarely and says little; even those whom He admitted to close fellowship with Himself, whom He treated familiarly and as friends, even His apostles and disciples seem to have learned the mystery of His Godhead not from His lips, but by infused knowledge, by an interior revelation from on

high. When Peter made a solemn confession of His divinity, He said to him: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father who is in heaven." ¹ On the other hand it is clear that He must have told them much that was grand and beautiful, much that was attractive and lovable concerning His Father, otherwise they would not have conceived an ardent desire to see Him: "Shew us the Father and it is enough for us." ²

Whenever it was proposed to show Him any honor, to confer some mark of distinction upon Him, He withdrew in a miraculous manner from the sight of the multitude and retired alone to a mountain solitude. His Father's glory is His one all-absorbing thought. The chief, the single aim which He set before Himself throughout His life on earth was the greater glory of His heavenly Father. He declares the task given Him to fulfil on earth, to accomplish which He labored for thirty-three long years, to be the restoration to His Father of the glory whereof man had deprived Him. At all times and in all places, whenever it was consistent with His mission, He turned the attention of His apostles and disciples away

¹ Matt. xvi. 17.

² John xiv 8.

from Himself and directed it to His Father. He is the way, He says, that leadeth to the Father; the true home of His disciples is His Father's house, where there are many mansions; the parables whereby He instructs His disciples and the common people all relate to the Father; He is the King, the Householder, the Giver of the feast; when He speaks of His departure He says that He is going to the Father; He will prepare a place for His own, but in His Father's house; when He shall have gone from them, He will ask the Father, and He shall give them another Paraclete; whatsoever we shall ask the Father in His name, that He promises He will do; and He bids us, when we pray, to say: Our Father, who art in heaven.

Every deed of His whole life; every act of His childhood; His vigils, His sleep, His tears, His trials and privations; every action of His youth, His labors, His prayers, His obedience; every action when He had grown to man's estate, His journeyings, His discourses, His intercourse with His apostles, His miracles, His bitter Passion, His death of ignominy—all this He did and suffered with full knowledge and consent for the greater glory of His heavenly Father, and in that intention He offered up all. Hence at the close of His life He could say to

His Father: "I have glorified Thee on earth, I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do."¹ That is the spirit of the Heart of Jesus, that is the true sacerdotal spirit, the spirit of the priest who forgets self and only lives, labors, and suffers for God.

We cannot imagine it possible that a priest or candidate for the priesthood, who by the diligent practice of mental prayer and reading often realizes to himself what that spirit, those dispositions are, will not with the help of divine grace gradually learn to love them and make them permanently his own. That is indeed a precious fruit of devotion to the Heart of Jesus!

Nothing contributes so powerfully and efficaciously to cleanse the soul from faults and implant in it the virtues befitting the priest, to enhance also and consolidate them, than frequent reception of holy communion; provided, that is, that at the same time a sincere effort is made to live as those ought to live who communicate often. The Council of Trent does, it is true, only prescribe monthly communion for candidates for the priesthood,² but they ought not to rest satisfied with that. As the layman who only approaches the sacraments

¹ John xvii. 4.

² Sess. 23, c. 18.

once a year fulfils the precept of the Church and of the Fourth Lateran Council, yet does not correspond to Our Lord's intention and satisfy the needs of his soul, so the aspirant to the priesthood by receiving the sacraments once a month complies with the precept of the council, but does not fulfil the object of the seminary and answer to the requirements of his vocation.

The Most Holy Sacrament is rightly termed the centre of the sacerdotal life. This indeed it ought to be for every priest, as it has been and ever will be for all good and true priests. The most sublime acts appertaining to the sacerdotal office, the most sacred duties of the priestly calling are immediately connected with the Blessed Sacrament. The priest ought to habituate himself in all his troubles and difficulties, whenever he is oppressed with grief and anxiety, to seek counsel, help, and strength at the foot of the altar, before the tabernacle; he will not find what he needs, he will only encounter disappointment and deception if he relies on man, if he trusts to human aid. He will have to communicate daily when he offers the holy sacrifice.

The years passed in the seminary are to prepare the student for life as a priest, and the more this life becomes to him, so to speak, a

second nature, the more perfectly will the training of the seminary have done its destined work. Therefore it is most important for the candidate for the priesthood oftentimes to visit the Blessed Sacrament, to communicate frequently, and this the more frequently as the time for his ordination approaches. It may undoubtedly be regarded as a great grace, and as a surety that a good spirit prevails there, if it has become customary in the seminary for the students to receive holy communion once or twice in the course of the week. Yet it cannot be expected that the virtues befitting the priest will be engendered and strengthened by frequent communion unless a man's life and aspirations are in keeping with what is to be looked for from one who communicates frequently.

What manner of life, then, must his be who often approaches the Holy Table? To put it briefly: He must so live that holy communion may conduce to his welfare and profit; or more exactly, he must live so as not in any way to impede or frustrate its operations, but rather to give free scope to its salutary action. Consequently, we must first of all acquaint ourselves with the effects of holy communion. And should a candidate for the priesthood be-

come aware that holy communion cannot produce its effect in him fully and wholly, let him beware of concluding that he will do well to communicate less often. Frequent communion is so completely an integral part in the aim and work of the seminary that he ought rather to think: I will order my life and direct my efforts so as to enable me to communicate more often. For when he is a priest, he cannot offer the holy sacrifice of the Mass less often; he ought to be worthy to celebrate daily. It is absolutely necessary that the seminarist should accustom himself to live in a manner becoming to one who often approaches the Lord's table, for if he does not venture to do so whilst in the seminary, how can he communicate daily at a later period?

According to the teaching of theologians, the effects of holy communion are many and diverse; for our purpose, however, it will be sufficient to consider three of these.

The first effect consists in the increase of sanctifying grace. This is a greater capability for knowing and loving God, for doing and suffering great things for Him. Nothing can prevent or frustrate this effect except mortal sin, for, in order to receive this increase of sanctifying grace, the only preparation that is

necessary is to be in a state of grace. The measure of grace conferred does indeed depend upon the disposition of the recipient; yet every one who is free from mortal sin receives a certain degree of augmentation, independently of any special preparation or amount of fervor at the time of communion. Even tepid souls, whose spiritual life is at a low ebb, nay, even those who allow their thoughts to wander at the moment of their communion, or who are guilty of venial sin, do not thereby forfeit this effect.

Sanctifying grace is increased, to some extent at least, by every communion, provided there is nothing else to render it unworthy; and there is no good work which serves to enhance it as much as holy communion. If we think how immeasurably precious a single degree of grace is, it appears as if it followed as a natural consequence that holy communion could not be received often enough; yet this is not so. In this regard the profit accruing to the soul must not alone be thought of, respect to the Sacrament must not be forgotten; the reverence we owe to it demands that those only should communicate frequently who experience within themselves the full extent of its operation.¹

¹ It may be remarked in passing that this is the

The second effect consists in the spiritual joy and delight caused by holy communion; in a supernatural strength afforded to the soul and a closer union with Our Lord. A complete analogy does in fact exist between material food and its effect on the body, and holy communion and its action upon the soul. Just as partaking of ordinary food is pleasant, and fortifies and strengthens the body, so holy communion produces a like effect within the soul.

It causes us no pleasure to be in the company of a person whom we do not like, but to hold intimate intercourse with a friend who is really dear is most agreeable; it is one of the greatest and purest pleasures earth can afford. This it is which constitutes the joy and sweetness experienced in holy communion, the presence of Our Lord, whom our soul loveth, close intercourse with the dearest friend of our heart. This intercourse is effected by means of acts of faith and charity, by meditation on the attributes and perfections of Christ. It is precisely on

right rule to be applied in admitting the faithful to holy communion; he whose life is such as to offer, at least in general, no obstacle to its action, may be allowed to approach the Lord's table frequently, or even daily.

account of this effect that the adorable Sacrament is likened to manna, and declared preferable to it; this is why it is spoken of as the Bread of heaven, containing in itself all sweetness, and why the Church applies to it these words of Scripture: "His bread shall be fat and he shall yield dainties to kings."¹ Forth from Our Lord's Heart flow abundant streams of grace into the soul of the communicant, particularly during His sacramental presence there, graces which incite him to and assist him in making acts of lively faith and fervent charity, in holding familiar converse with his celestial Guest. This intercourse creates within the soul more and more abhorrence of sin, distaste and aversion for the world and the pleasures of the world; it inspires her with fervor and delight in the service of God, with relish for whatever is heavenly and supernatural, in short, with the spirit and sentiments of Christ. The worthy communicant can say with St. Paul: "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me." This effect is the unfailing result, no less certain than the increase of sanctifying grace, of holy communion, especially while the sacred species remain uncon-

¹ Gen. xlix. 20.

sumed, provided no hindrance is offered on the part of the communicant.

This effect may be impeded and prevented, as is unhappily too often the case, by want of devotion, carelessness, and distraction in making one's thanksgiving immediately after receiving communion. He who through inattention and distraction fails to cooperate with the grace of God, who does not obey the inspiration to awaken acts of faith, of charity, of oblation, who does not apply himself to entertain the divine Guest whom he has received, cannot expect to experience in himself this effect of communion. Persons, too, who are worldly and earthly-minded, who cherish inordinate inclinations and attachments to creatures, who tolerate venial sin, making no serious effort to expel from their hearts these obstacles to grace, will feel little or nothing of this effect of holy communion; the distractions and vanities of the world, in which they take delight, the attachment to the things of time and sense which they indulge, form a sufficient hindrance to it.

The third effect consists in the right, the title to the actual graces which are needed in order to answer the purpose of the Sacrament. The adorable Sacrament of the Altar was

instituted to be the sustenance of the soul. Holy communion consequently gives the Christian a title to the graces that he needs in order to preserve, to strengthen, to promote the supernatural life of grace in the soul;¹ and since the life of grace is enhanced by the practice of virtue, in holy communion we obtain the right to claim those graces which are essential to enable us to practise virtue, to strive after perfection, to progress in the love of God and the way of sanctity. As often as in our daily life a temptation has to be overcome, a duty to be performed, or an occasion presents itself for the practice of some virtue, actual grace will be given to assist us, in virtue of the holy communion which we have received.

Can this third effect also be made void, and if so, by what means? If not completely rendered void, it is checked and diminished in a great measure by the cares and occupations and distractions of daily life, by the enjoyment

¹ Nothing, it may be incidentally observed, is calculated to impress us so deeply with the unspeakable nature of grace and the supernatural life of the soul, than the fact that Our Lord gave His own sacred body and precious blood for the purpose of maintaining it and promoting it. If the aliments are so rich, so sublime, what must the life be which they serve to sustain?

of the worldly pleasures that come in one's way, and which too often and too easily choke the divine seed sown in the heart by holy communion. All these things are apt to prevent us, amid the cares and distractions of life, from hearing the call of grace and listening to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit. It is, moreover, rendered almost void by tepidity or indifference in regard to venial sin. Luke-warm souls allow opportunities for the practice of virtue and sanctity, of mortification and self-conquest, to pass without making use of them; they do not resist temptation or struggle against venial sin, and through the negligence of their life incur the loss of all the graces which holy communion procures for them.¹

It is now made evident how the Christian ought to live who would receive holy communion frequently, or even daily. He must watch over himself and his interior impulses; he must seriously struggle against tepidity, against the tendency of his heart to cling to what is carnal and worldly; he must strive to subdue his passions, to withstand temptation, to avoid venial sin; he must avail himself of

¹ What is here said concerning the effects of holy communion is expounded theologically and at greater length in Lugo's "*De Eucharistia.*" Disp. xii.

every occasion that presents itself for the practice of mortification and self-conquest, especially for the exercise of virtue. By so doing he will not merely preserve his soul free from grievous sin and from venial sin wittingly and wilfully committed, but by constantly cultivating the inner and spiritual life he will by degrees make progress in all the virtues befitting the sacerdotal state.

This may perhaps appear an unattainable height of perfection to many priests, especially if they live amid the distractions, the dangers of the world, and are overburdened with work, occupation, and anxieties for themselves and for others; and the more deeply they are convinced that the lofty nature of their calling and the daily reception of holy communion require a high degree of virtue and holiness on their part, the more will they feel a certain anxious fear. Yet he who sincerely and honestly strives to do his duty, who is careful to recite his breviary daily, unless some grave obstacle prevents him from so doing, who never omits saying Mass, and fulfils his ministerial functions with a good purpose and intention; who makes such use of daily Mass and communion and the other means of grace within his reach as to enable him at least to keep pure

and free from grievous sin, and not to think lightly of venial sin; who, finally, approaches the Sacrament of Penance regularly and frequently, and at each confession firmly proposes to himself to correct some definite fault, he who thus acts may trust himself with full confidence to the mercy of God. He may perhaps stumble now and again, he may commit many faults; but he need not on that account be discouraged. God knows that He has entrusted this sacred office to man, He knows that He has not given us an angelic nature, but has endowed us with a body with its inherent sloth, its irascible temperament, its roving fancy, its innate sensuality and inconstancy; therefore He has for us more patience, forbearance, and compassion than we perhaps imagine: "As a Father hath compassion on His children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear Him; for He knoweth our frame, He remembereth that we are dust."¹

¹ Ps. cii. 13, 14.

VI. THE SPREAD OF THE DEVOTION.

I.

THERE is not one among the various devotions practised in the Catholic Church which does not owe its origin to the guidance of divine Providence, to the operation of the Holy Ghost, who governs the whole Church. They are all so many means for the betterment of morals, for the exaltation of religion, placed by God within the reach of the faithful in order that they may attain their last end more securely and certainly, more worthily and perfectly.

Whenever an extraordinary need arises in the Church, whenever some particular evil finds a footing in her fold, God in His loving care provides an extraordinary means to meet that exigency, to check the growth of that evil. As in the time of St. Dominic He introduced the rosary, and in the time of St. Bernardine of Sienna the devotion to the Holy Name of

Jesus, as a fitting remedy for the spiritual maladies of the age, so at a more recent date He gave us the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, for the purpose of rekindling the light of faith, the flame of charity in an unbelieving, unloving world. The devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is the devotion most needed in our own day.

Nearly four hundred years before the revelations vouchsafed to B. Margaret Mary, St. Gertrude, on St. John the Evangelist's day, had the famous vision which is of importance for the sake of estimating the devotion of which we speak at its true value.

We read, in the "Insinuations of Divine Piety," that upon Gertrude, who had a great love and devotion to the Heart of Jesus, asking St. John why it was that he, having lain on Our Lord's breast at the Last Supper, had not explained for the good of the Church the love of His divine Heart, the saint replied to her in these memorable words. "His task," he said, "was to record for the Church, as yet in her infancy, words from the lips of the uncreated word of the Father; whereas the treasures of the divine Heart were reserved to be revealed at a later time, when the world should be growing old and become tepid, that by the

remembrance of this mystery it might be re-kindled and reawakened to the love of God. All that the divine Saviour revealed to His privileged servant, B. Margaret, fully coincides with this statement. It was on occasion of the apparition already mentioned, on the Feast of St. John the Evangelist, that Our Lord told her His great desire for an increase of love on man's part had determined Him to disclose to them His Heart, and open to them all the treasures of charity, of mercy, of grace, of sanctification and salvation contained within it. Moreover, He added, this devotion was a final exertion of His charity, wherewith it was His will to favor the Christians of these last centuries, inasmuch as this devotion was at one and the same time the stimulating motive and the most efficacious means of stirring them up to love Him, to love Him fervently and truly.

That which is plainly apparent in the history of the origin of the devotion is no less evident if we consider the state of religion in the present day. The devotion to the Heart of Jesus is destined by God to fulfil a great mission; it is to be instrumental in renewing the face of the earth; and it may confidently be hoped that through its influence by the mercy and grace of God, Christian faith and practical piety will be

promoted and elevated throughout the Catholic world.

In the first centuries subsequent to her foundation, the Church stood in opposition to the heathen world. Paganism waged a fierce warfare against this divine institution, hoping, expecting to stamp it out and sweep it from the earth. Yet, as we know, the Church conquered the whole of heathendom, the weapon wherewith she won the victory being none other than the cross. The cross of the Redeemer, and the charity of the Redeemer which that cross revealed, vanquished the world and renewed the face of the earth. Now the Church once more stands confronted by a modern paganism and must engage in conflict with it, and the weapon she employs in the contest is the Heart of Jesus Christ. The Heart of the Redeemer, the love of which it is the symbol, is to overcome the world, to renew the world. This is no mere pious wish on the part of the Christian, it is the will of the Most High.

The crying evil of our day is that men fall away from Christ and from the Church He has founded, that they regard the Redeemer and His work with coldness and indifference; nay more, their attitude towards His sacred person

and His divinely revealed religion is too often one of hatred and contempt. These evils originate in and are strengthened by sensuality and pride; engendered by Protestantism, they have been fostered by Jansenism, until at length in these latter days they have attained gigantic, alarming proportions, even within the fold of the Catholic Church. The more accurate is the conception we form of the nature of these kindred sects, the more clearly and convincingly it is borne in upon us that in the devotion to His Sacred Heart Our Lord offers us a remedy for the ills of our day.¹ What in fact is Protestantism? It is a rigid, frigid heresy, a perpetual protest against the love of God, for it dares with bold effrontery to deny the very highest proofs He gives us of that love. It would have us believe that Christ the Lord, our

¹ Must not this be the reason why Our Lord has specially chosen the Society of Jesus to promote and propagate this devotion? Originally founded to combat Protestantism, should it not employ its forces not only against its first foe, but also against the offspring of that foe, hypocritical Jansenism and cold-blooded Rationalism?

Is it surprising, then, that under these circumstances the sons of St. Ignatius should be specially commissioned by God to apply the remedy He has revealed to cure the ills of which we speak?

God and at the same time our Father and our Friend, no longer dwells in the tabernacle of our churches; that the greatest proof of all of the charity of the God-Man, the holy sacrifice of the Mass, is a fable and a deceit; that the Sacrament of Penance, that wondrous testimony to the compassionate, the forgiving love of our God, is done away with; that the Church which Christ purchased with His blood totters to its fall. Can it surprise us that Our Lord should exhibit His Heart to a world which actually contests and disputes His love for mankind and call upon it to remember His infinite charity: "Behold My Heart, that has so loved man"?

The work Protestantism began, Jansenism carried on—a heresy so gloomy and dreary, so sinister, cold, and unattractive, that one is at a loss to understand how many superior and gifted persons could have been deluded by it. It depicts our heavenly Father as a tyrant who gives laws to men which it is impossible for them to keep, and yet for transgressing which they are damned; it divests God of His attribute of mercy by alleging that He is not always willing to pardon the repentant sinner, that He does not grant forgiveness to all who seek it; it detracts from the charity of Our Saviour and

Redeemer towards men even when displayed upon the cross, asserting that He did not shed His blood and sacrifice His life for all mankind. A terrible proposition this, calculated to drive men of good will to despair. If the awakened sinner, contrite and alarmed by the consciousness of his transgressions, casts himself at the feet of the Saviour and implores forgiveness through the mercy of His Sacred Heart, he cannot feel certain that the precious blood was shed for him personally; and when the dying Christian clasps the crucifix in a hand already damp with the dews of death, he can only press it to his lips with the agonizing doubt whether he too is among the number of those for whom Christ died. Can we wonder that, things being so, Our Lord should be induced to collect together, so to speak, the tokens of His great charity; to encircle His Heart with the crown of thorns, to open wide the gaping, bloodstained wound, to place the cross above it, to surround it with the flames of charity issuing from every portion of it, and show this Heart to mankind with the words: "Behold the Heart which has so loved man"? This twofold heresy has cast its fatal venom even into the sanctuary and wrought sad havoc in the Church of God. Scepticism, which uproots all faith in a Re-

deemer and a future life, coldness and indifference towards Christ and the Church. He founded, pride and sensuality, which delight in iniquity and unlawful pleasures, have gained ground to an alarming extent. In the age in which our lot is cast, mankind is so engrossed with material interests that men do not hesitate to renounce all hope of a blissful eternity, if they can but gain the world and enjoy all that it offers. On this account Our Lord continues to show us His Heart, consumed by the flames of charity: "Behold the Heart that has so loved man." The devotion to the Heart of Jesus is the devotion needed in our day, it is the divinely appointed means of remedying the evils, supplying the religious necessities of the present time; it is an antidote against the poison of pride and sensuality, a cure for coldness, indifference, unbelief.

The query now presents itself, has this devotion already fulfilled the end for which it was revealed and introduced into the Church? It has, it is true, in the course of the two centuries which have elapsed since it was first made known, spread throughout the Church; it has become in many places a popular and favorite devotion and has been fruitful in blessings; nevertheless those among the faithful who

have adopted it gladly and who practise it diligently are but few among the many. The world, the sphere in which it was destined to exercise the most potent influence, to produce the greatest regenerating effect, the world which is estranged from Christ and the Church, still stands aloof, refusing to be warmed and illumined by its light and heat. If Christ the Lord desires that this devotion shall ultimately produce the fruit for the sake of which He planted it in the garden of the Church, must it not be His wish that His priests above all shall appreciate the value of this devotion, shall delight in it and themselves practise it, and employ it as a means of gaining for Him the souls for whom He lived, suffered, and died?

We can certainly render no greater service to Our Lord than by making the devotion our own, and propagating it to the utmost of our power. Its history amply demonstrates that He has its extension much at heart; He would not have appeared so often to B. Margaret, He would not have instructed her Himself in every particular concerning it, He would not have made such great and glorious promises to those who should practise it, had He not regarded its adoption and extension as a matter of vital importance. And who is to spread it if

priests do not? Consequently two of the promises He makes are exclusively for priests. "Those who labor for the salvation of souls," Our Lord says, "shall receive a peculiar facility for touching the heart of the most hardened sinners, and shall in general meet with wonderful success in their work, if they have a profound devotion to the Heart of Jesus." Again, He promises that the names of all persons who take pains to spread this devotion shall be inscribed upon His Heart, never to be effaced. One would think this first promise would be sufficient to inspire us with ardent zeal for the devotion, yet Our Lord adds no less a promise than this, the grace of final perseverance, predestination to eternal felicity, to those who practise it faithfully and spread it diligently. A precious privilege indeed!

When the apostles returned from their first missionary expedition they told Our Lord with joy that they had worked miracles and in His name had cast out devils: "Lord, the devils also are subject to us in Thy name."¹ Then Our Lord answered them, saying: "Rejoice not in this, that spirits are subject unto you; but rejoice in this, that your names are written in heaven."² And this very privilege which Christ

¹ Luke x. 17.

² *Ibid.* 20.

declared to be the chief cause wherefore His disciples should rejoice, the grace of being numbered among the elect, He promises to those who promote the devotion to His Sacred Heart: "Their names shall be inscribed in My Heart, never to be effaced." We must never forget that neither priests nor religious can have full certitude of eternal salvation; it is by no means impossible for a priest, a religious, to incur that most awful doom, eternal perdition. The more we feel the paramount importance of escaping so appalling a calamity, the more assiduously shall we seek for marks of predestination and election. The saints teach us that devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary is one such sign, and we learn from Our Lord's promise that zeal in the propagation of the devotion to His Sacred Heart is another.

The seminarist who looks forward to cooperate later on in the work of improving morals and raising the tone of religious life and Christian practice; whose ambition, moreover, is to please Our Lord and render Him an acceptable service; who, finally, is desirous to make his own salvation sure, will therefore cherish a deep reverence and love for the Sacred Heart of Jesus. And after he has, in the tranquil seclusion of the seminary, stood by this furnace of charity

till his own heart has felt its heat and caught its glow, he will go forth, and, in the sphere of action assigned to him, will diffuse its genial warmth in order to kindle a cold, unfeeling world. Thus he will fulfil the earnest desire of Him who said: "I am come to cast fire on the earth, and what will I but that it be kindled?"¹

2.

In order to establish and promote the devotion to the Sacred Heart in his parish, the priest can pursue no better method than to introduce and do his utmost to cultivate the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart. Those who have the cure of souls and have established it in their parishes and themselves acted as director, all concur in asserting it to be a real blessing to their flocks. More frequent communions, better attendance at divine worship, peace in families, and in general a more diligent fulfilling of the duties of the Christian, are the happy results it has everywhere produced. In most parishes, it is true, some confraternity or other has for a long time existed. However profitable these sodalities undoubtedly are for the maintenance and furtherance of faith and piety in the community, yet to increase their

¹ Luke xii. 49.

number to any great extent would certainly not be advantageous. If such pious associations are multiplied indefinitely the obligations they impose will only be fulfilled in a superficial and perfunctory manner, or they will be given up altogether; it is only their faithful and fervent performance which renders them profitable for the sanctification of the soul.

If flourishing and prosperous confraternities already exist in any parish, and fulfil satisfactorily the object for which they were instituted, it would be advisable not to erect the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart, but to content one's self with introducing the Apostleship of Prayer, of which we shall speak presently. Or if confraternities already exist, but have lost much of their influence and usefulness, without, however, having lost all vitality or being unsuited to the exigencies of the day, such as the Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament or of the Rosary, it would be better to awaken them to fresh life and activity rather than introduce others. Now, the Apostleship of Prayer is an excellent means of revivifying what has become torpid, since not being itself a confraternity it in nowise interferes with or supplants such associations, but will serve to promote and encourage their growth.

Finally, if there should exist confraternities that have become antiquated and no longer fulfil the end for which they were instituted or meet the needs of the times, as for instance the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, established at one period in many places, they had better be dissolved and others substituted in their place. In fact it is the same with confraternities as with the devotions of the Church; some have a general import and are suited for all times and all places, as, for example, the confraternity of a good death, besides the two already mentioned. Others are called into existence to meet the circumstances of the time being, which change with the passing years. Divine Providence has appointed for our own day among others the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and that of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Daily experience proves that these more recent confraternities meet with a more favorable reception from the faithful than one ventured to hope for, and flourish to a greater extent than was anticipated.

The priest who contemplates establishing the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart in his parish ought in the first place to pray fervently and offer the holy sacrifice of the Mass in order

to obtain the blessing of God on the proposed undertaking; and he will do well to follow B. Peter Faber's example and invoke the aid of the guardian angels of his parishioners, praying them to inspire the souls committed to their charge with love and veneration for the Heart of Jesus.

In the erection of the confraternity care must be taken not to omit any formality which has been declared essential; so that the members may really participate in the spiritual privileges and the indulgences attached thereto. An omission of this nature cannot be repaired; it would be necessary either to erect the confraternity over again or obtain a remedy (*sanatio*) from the Holy See.¹

If this confraternity is to produce the looked-for results in the congregation, it is all important that vitality should be given to it and its vigor maintained by the discretion and zeal of their pastor. Accordingly he must see that his flock are, by means of a suitable discourse, made thoroughly acquainted with the Sacred Heart and the veneration due to it; that they should appreciate and value the confraternity

¹ The method of procedure to be pursued in regard to the canonical erection of the confraternity will be found in the Appendix.

and deem it a privilege and a pleasure to be received into it, and take part in its devotional exercises gladly and regularly. If there is an evening service held in the church every day, an act of reparation or some other short devotion in honor of the Sacred Heart might be added to the usual devotions on the first Friday of the month. It is indispensable for the welfare of the confraternity that once a month regularly, if possible on the first Sunday, a service should be held, at which, besides devotions to the Sacred Heart, a short sermon should be preached, and in addition to the usual act of reparation, prayers should be offered for the members of the confraternity, both living and dead. If a sermon cannot well be delivered on the subject, at any rate a few earnest impressive words concerning the Sacred Heart might be spoken at the close of the usual catechetical lecture. A zealous priest will not experience much difficulty in making the Sunday in question a day of general communion for the greater part of his flock. On the first Friday of the month he can have the picture or statue on the altar of the confraternity suitably decorated and say Mass there. At the children's Mass the prayer of the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart and the daily oblation of the

Apostleship of Prayer may be recited aloud. He can lend the *Messenger of the Sacred Heart* to his parishioners and recommend others to read it. He can give, or advise newly married people to purchase, a good-sized picture of the Sacred Heart, in order that by degrees these pictures may find their way into every house, and at his suggestion the night prayers of the family will be said before them. When giving the religious instruction in the school, he may take the opportunity, thus offered, of making the children acquainted with the devotion; and the day on which they make their first communion would be a suitable occasion for receiving them into the confraternity or into the Apostleship of Prayer, if they have not already become members of it. At all events no effort should be spared to celebrate the feast of the Sacred Heart with the utmost solemnity and splendor. It is advisable, if this be feasible, to make a novena or triduum before the feast, and to deliver a discourse on the subject, exhorting the people to keep the feast worthily, and above all to approach the sacraments on that day. A Mass should also be said, if not on the feast itself, yet within the octave, in behalf of all the members who have been regular in attending the services of the

confraternity, who have in any way contributed to promote it, or who have helped in the due solemnization of the feast. If this be done the priest may be assured that the zeal and interest displayed by his flock in the celebration of the feast will afford him no slight joy and consolation.

Who, finally, is, more often than the priest, in a position to gauge the depths of human misery, to learn and feel compassion for its extent and gravity? Who has better opportunities to bid the tortured, burdened heart turn to the Heart of Him who said: "I have mercy upon the multitude;" and again: "Come unto Me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you." In the confessional, at the sick-bed, when visiting the sorely afflicted, he is able to exhort the tempted, the sufferer, to seek refuge in the Heart of Jesus. If some heavy calamity befalls a family he can invite them to join in some devotion, a triduum, a novena, in honor of the Sacred Heart, or to receive the sacraments with that intention. Or if any danger threatens to fall upon the whole community, an infectious disease, drought, inundation, famine or the like, let him not fail to have public prayers in honor of the Sacred Heart, that the danger may be

averted, the dreaded calamity may not occur. A hundred other occasions will present themselves, of which a zealous and wise priest may avail himself, to recommend the practice of the devotion which he holds so dear, and thus cause the Heart of Jesus, to whom he owes so much, to be venerated and loved by the flock whose pastor he is. Whoever has recourse to the Heart of Jesus, with devout confidence may be certain that his prayer will be heard; and each favor and blessing obtained, each gracious answer given to prayer, will serve to enhance the devotion and increase the confidence of the whole congregation.

VII. THE APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER.

THE association of prayer, which has of late spread rapidly under the title of the "Apostleship of Prayer," will be explained in these pages and recommended to the reader, because it constitutes one of the simplest and most excellent means of practising the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, because it has its true home in the seminary for priests, and because its design and work make it specially suitable for priests. In fact, it was in the seclusion of a seminary that it took its rise.

Origin of the Apostleship of Prayer. On the feast of St. Francis Xavier in the year 1844, Fr. Gautrelet, the Superior of the House of Scholastics at Vals, near Puy, in the south of France, delivered an address to the young religious in which he invited them to commence the work of the apostolate at once by offering their prayers, their studies, and all their actions for the conversion of unbelievers and for the needs of the Church. The proposal was received

with pious enthusiasm; and in order to give the matter a definite form and permanent organization the members of the association grouped themselves in bands of twelve, and had leaflets printed on which an intention was given for which they were to offer their prayers, work, and studies. Fr. Gautrelet had not contemplated anything more than suggesting to the young men under his charge during the period of preparation for their future apostolic calling a means of exercising their zeal for souls in union with the Sacred Heart of Our Lord, who in the solitude of the tabernacle continually intercedes and offers Himself for the world's salvation. But this league, so insignificant in its origin, soon spread beyond the walls of the Jesuits' house, and was actively taken up by both clergy and laity. A powerful impulse was given to it when the Bishop of Puy granted his sanction to it, and when, later on, it was enriched with indulgences by Pius IX., who also approved the statutes. Furthermore, the General of the Society of Jesus granted to the members of the league a share in all the merits, prayers, and good works of the members of his Order; and almost all religious orders and congregations have since accorded to it the same favor. The development of the

league and its extension throughout the world was astonishingly rapid; its members may now be counted by millions.¹ This is due to the action of the Holy Ghost Himself, who in an age in which faith and morals are more imperilled than ever, awakens the spirit of prayer in the hearts of the faithful and stimulates it to fresh vigor and energy. This association has since been confirmed in its substance and perfected in its form by new statutes approved by Leo XIII. in 1896, when its relation to the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was definitely determined.

STATUTES OF THE APOSTLESHIP.

1. The Apostleship of Prayer is a pious association which exercises the apostolic office of promoting the glory of God and the salvation of souls by prayer, both mental and vocal, and also by other pious works in so far as they are impetratory and can unite us with the Sacred Heart of Jesus in attaining the end proposed. Wherefore, although the Apostleship of Prayer may seem to have certain things in common

¹ It is impossible to give more than a proximate estimate of the number of the members. To judge by the certificates of admission issued by the director-general it must amount to over twelve millions.

with other pious associations, such as those of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Living Rosary, still it is wholly distinct from them all both in its end, which is altogether universal, and in the special means which it uses.

2. There are three degrees in this apostleship according to the different works which it undertakes to practise; hence there are three degrees of associates.

The first degree (essential and common to all the associates) is composed of those who daily offer to God in some approved form of words all their prayers, works, and sufferings in union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and for all those intentions for which Our Lord is continually interceding and offering Himself for us in sacrifice. Hence love and devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus are very proper for all associates enrolled in the Apostleship of Prayer. For, although this devotion does not constitute the *end* of the association, still it is the chief and most powerful *means* of inciting all the associates, moved by the example of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, to a more diligent practice of prayer, and of making that very prayer, performed in union with the Sacred Heart, more efficacious in attaining the end proposed, which is the glory of God.

The Apostleship of Prayer, therefore, is an association quite distinct from the Archconfraternity of the Sacred Heart, and therefore the societies, churches, and all the faithful enrolled in the pious work of the apostleship are in no way to be considered in the future as enrolled also in the Archconfraternity of the Sacred Heart, erected in Rome in the Church of St. Mary of Peace, unless they shall have been duly received into the same archconfraternity by its director.

3. The second degree is composed of those who to the practices of the first degree—that is to say, to the prayer by which they unite themselves to the Sacred Heart interceding with the Father for the advancement of the divine glory—add other prayers to the Blessed Virgin Mary, to implore the aid of so powerful a mother, and obtain for themselves her assistance in this pious work of procuring the salvation of souls. These associates recite once a day one Our Father and ten Hail Marys for the intention which is proposed to them, with the approbation of the Roman Pontiff, at the beginning of each month. They must not, however, on this account be considered as enrolled in the pious work of the Living Rosary, nor bound by the laws that govern it, and which

require its members while praying to meditate upon some mystery assigned to them by lot, and to be distributed into bands composed of fifteen members.

4. The third degree is composed of those who, performing at least the duties of the first degree, endeavor besides to remove the obstacles which might prevent our prayers to God for the salvation of souls from being fruitful. For this end, every month or every week, according to the tenor of the brief dated Feb. 10, 1882, they make the communion of reparation, by which they strive to appease the Sacred Heart of Jesus, provoked to wrath by the sins of men, and to render Him propitious to our prayers. Therefore all those who are enrolled in this third degree and make the aforesaid communion according to the rules of the pious work of the Communion of Reparation, are constituted *members* of this association and gain its indulgences.

5. Likewise, although the pious confraternity called the "Holy Hour" is distinct from the pious association of the Apostleship of Prayer, all the associates of the Apostleship of Prayer who practise aright the pious exercises of the Holy Hour, in order to appease the Sacred Heart of Jesus outraged by the

injuries of men, and to render Him favorable to our prayers, have a right to all the spiritual graces which are granted to those who perform this pious exercise by the rescript of Pius IX., May 13, 1875, and the brief of Leo XIII., March 30, 1886. But it is not lawful for any one to add other pious works to the apostleship, although the faculties which the ordinaries of places possess, each for his own diocese, remain intact.

6. Those of the faithful admitted into this association who are distinguished by their piety and burning zeal for souls, being therefore named promoters, should endeavor by every means to advance daily more and more the glory of God, the salvation of souls, and the worship of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, according to the statutes of the apostleship. Wherefore let them meet together at stated times to determine on all those things which may seem most suitable to obtain this end.

7. The principal seat or centre of the association is established at Toulouse. The director-general, however, is the Father-General of the Society of Jesus for the time being, who can delegate his office to another selected by him, who is to reside at Toulouse.

8. Besides the director-general there shall

be also diocesan directors and local directors for every centre of the apostleship. The diocesan directors, who are to be designated by the ordinaries within their own dioceses, shall be appointed either by the then Father-General of the Society of Jesus, or by the director-general whom the father-general has delegated at Toulouse. The local directors of every centre shall be appointed, with the approbation of the ordinary, by the diocesan director. Both the diocesan directors and the local directors shall also be subject to the ordinary in all that concerns the aforesaid works, those things only excepted which come under the statutes approved by the Holy See.

9. For the enrolment of associates it is sufficient that local directors inscribe their names in the register of the church or religious institution where the apostleship is established, and give them certificates without the necessity of transmitting the list to the principal centre.

10. The indulgences and other graces hitherto granted or extended by the Sovereign Pontiffs in favor of the aforesaid practices of the apostleship are to remain in vigor.

Organization of the Apostleship. An association, particularly if it is widespread and counts many among its members, has no stability or

permanence unless it is properly organized. The external organization of the Apostleship of Prayer is very simple. It is not a sodality or congregation, nor a confraternity in the strict sense, it is rather an association, the members of which are leagued together to offer their prayers, work, and sufferings in the spirit and with the intention of the divine Heart of Our Lord. The General of the Society of Jesus is at its head as director-general, and he can delegate his office to any other priest of the society whom he may select. The diocesan directors appointed with the bishop's approbation to act as directors of all the centres established within his diocese are subject to the director-general.

The diocesan directors are authorized by a diploma from the director-general to exercise their office and transmit diplomas of affiliation to parishes, communities, or associations, and to appoint local directors in the respective centres thus affiliated to the apostleship. The local directors are authorized to receive new members and enter their names in the local registers. They can also appoint promoters, who are entirely subject to them and whose office it is, as the instruments of the local directors, to advance the interior welfare of

the league and extend it externally as much as possible. Any Catholic may become an associate by applying for admission into the league either personally or through another to the local, or the diocesan, or the general director.

The organ of the Apostleship of Prayer is the *Messenger of the Sacred Heart*, the object of which is to promote the apostleship and the devotion to the Sacred Heart in general; and since the power and efficacy of the apostolate consists in union, a general intention is given every month in the *Messenger*, besides particular intentions, for which all the members are to offer their prayers and works. The general intention is determined each month by the Holy Father, who recommends it with his blessing to the members; the particular intentions for each day are published in the several editions of the *Messenger*.

The Object of the Apostleship. The mission of holy Church is to carry on until the end of time the work of redemption, the purification and sanctification of the souls of men which Christ our Lord began on earth and perfected by the merits of His grace. In order to attain this end, the regeneration of mankind, He makes use of two means. In accordance with the command of her Master and Founder, she pro-

claims the gospel of salvation to all nations of the earth, that is, the apostolate of the Word. But the preaching of the Gospel is in itself alone powerless to convert the sinner without the interior enlightenment and impulse of divine grace; and since under the present dispensation the graces Our Lord imparts are, as a rule, the fruit of instant and fervent prayer, she unites the Apostleship of Prayer to the preaching of the faith. In this respect, as indeed in all others, she is the faithful imitator of her Lord and Master, whose life it is her task to continue on earth since His Ascension into heaven. During the first thirty years of His life, His hidden life at Nazareth, He confined His apostolate exclusively to that of prayer; from the commencement of His public ministry He united the apostolate of the Word to that of prayer; and since His ascension to His Father He still continues His apostolate of prayer, both in His glorified existence in heaven and in His sacramental life on earth. For Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Redeemer, has never ceased since His Ascension into heaven to exercise His function of Mediator between God and man: "He is at the right hand of God who also maketh intercession for us;"¹ He "is always living to make interces-

¹ Rom. viii. 34.

sion for us."¹ Thus He offers supplication and propitiation, praise and thanksgiving, inasmuch as in the character of our Mediator and Advocate He exhibits His sacred humanity, His infinite merits, His sacred wounds to His heavenly Father, and giving expression to the desire of His heart, makes intercession for us. And the life which He leads in heaven at the right hand of the Father is the same as His life in the Blessed Sacrament on our altars; it is a life of perpetual prayer and oblation of Himself to His heavenly Father. His heart yearns for the glory of God, for the salvation of souls, for the exaltation of the Church which He calls His bride, and for the extension of His kingdom on earth in all directions.

The essential office of the Association of Prayer of which we are speaking is to pray, to labor, to suffer in union with the Heart of Jesus for the Church militant, for the conversion of unbelievers, heretics, and sinners, for the sanctification and final perseverance of the just. Its members ought to unite their petitions to the supplications of the Heart of Jesus, to enter into His desires and intentions, to make them their own; in union with Him to intercede for others, to offer their works and

¹ Heb. vii. 25.

sufferings for the greater glory of God and the salvation of souls, for whatever, in short, may be suitable to extend and perfect the kingdom of God upon earth.

The essential exercise of the association, therefore, is intercessory prayer, to promote whatever may advance the interests of the divine Heart of Jesus. Thus it realizes one of Our Lord's chief intentions and fulfils one of the most ardent desires of His Heart. As it is by an inscrutable decree of the divine counsels that almighty God permits the evil enemy to interfere by his temptations with the work of redemption and the sanctification of the souls of men, so it is by an inscrutable decree of the divine counsels that He vouchsafes to allow us to take part—a part, too, so great and so momentous—in the accomplishment of the work of redemption and sanctification of the souls of men by intercessory prayer. It is His will that all Christians should in a certain sense be His apostles. As He as a rule makes the gift of faith to come by hearing the Gospel preached, so it is His will that the salvation of souls in many instances may depend upon the prayers of the faithful. The Apostle's exhortation refers to this truth when he says: "First of all that supplications, prayers, intercession, and

thanksgiving be made for all men; for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.”¹ Also St. James’s admonition: “Pray for one another that you may be saved; for the continual prayer of a just man availeth much.”²

Practice of the Apostleship. In the Apostleship of Prayer there are three distinct degrees, each of which has its own particular indulgences and spiritual advantages. In order to obtain the indulgences and spiritual advantages of one degree it is not necessary to perform the exercises of the other degrees.

The practice of the *first degree* consists in this, that the associates should, in a certain definite form of oblation, daily offer up at their morning prayers all the prayers, works, and sufferings of the day in union with the intentions of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the holy sacrifice of the Mass. The following is the morning offering and intention which the members recite: “O adorable Jesus, through the most pure heart of Mary, I offer Thee all the prayers, works, and sufferings of this day in union with the intentions of Thy divine Heart in the holy Mass, and the prayers of my fellow associates.” Beyond the daily renewal of this intention and offering at one’s morning

¹ 1 Tim. ii. 1, 3.

² James v. 16.

prayers no other duty or good work is required of the associates.

The practice of the *second degree* consists in the offering to Our Lady one Our Father and one decade of the rosary for the intention of the Supreme Pontiff, approved by him and notified monthly by the director-general to the members of the apostleship.

The practice of the *third degree* consists in receiving the communion of reparation, of which more particulars will presently be given. The members of the Apostleship of Prayer form groups either of seven, who undertake to receive communion in turn on successive days of the week, or of thirty, who are to communicate in turn on successive days of each month with the intention of making atonement to God for the many and grievous offences of mankind, and to avert His just wrath, as well as for the conversion of sinners and the propagation of our holy faith.

Advantages of the Apostleship. The Apostleship of Prayer is one of the most excellent means of practising the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and as such is attended with the rich blessings with which Our Lord is pleased to favor that devotion. It tends especially to inspire the members with the

spirit of Our Lord. It enables heart and mind to rise superior to the things of this world, and teaches us how to penetrate to the inmost depths of Our Lord's Heart, and to make that the object of our thoughts, our aspirations, our prayers, which is the object of His thoughts and prayers: the glory of God and the continual extension of His kingdom upon earth. This exercise is the noblest, most perfect practical exercise of charity towards God, whose greater glory it promotes, and towards our neighbor, whose salvation it aims at effecting; and for this reason it is the source of abundant merit. For if an act is meritorious in proportion as its supernatural motive is higher and more perfect, it follows that this practice must impart to all our works, even the most unimportant and insignificant, the highest value, since by means of it they are all performed out of pure love to God, the loftiest of all motives. Inasmuch as the aim of the apostleship is to make all Christians Christ's apostles, it ennobles and sanctifies all the works of the Christian, and imparts to them the greatest supernatural merit.

It is also productive of vast, immeasurable advantages for others through the graces elicited by its impetration. Its potency consists in

union, in the association of so many Christians in one common prayer, and the union of each and all to the divine Heart of Jesus. For if Our Lord ascribes so great power to united prayer, we know that there is no more widespread association for prayer than this apostleship; and if He has promised that prayer offered in His name shall not fail of its effect, certainly the petitions offered up in union with His petitions are made in His name. By this practice all orthodox Christians can in a certain sense become apostles, and all they do and suffer can acquire the nature of apostolic work. Through their prayers and good works, which they unite to the Heart of Jesus, they may help preachers, confessors, missionaries in their labors; by their supplications they may give force and efficacy to their words and obtain a blessing on their work. This apostleship is indeed unapparent and hidden, yet none the less powerful on that account and fruitful in results. It is the apostolate exercised by the Blessed Virgin, by St. Aloysius, and many interior souls whose life was hidden in God, and whereby they have a larger share than we perhaps imagine in the conversion of the world, the extirpation of heresy, and the spread of the kingdom of God. When the secrets of

grace are revealed in the Day of Judgment, it will be seen that many conversions, many blessed events in the order of grace are not due so much to the words of the priest, the preaching of the missionary, as to the prayers of pious, earnest souls who in their lifetime were unknown and unregarded. The prayers of a young slave-girl, St. Christina, were the means of effecting the conversion of the Iberian nation and obtaining for them the light of faith; and the splendid results of the labors of St. Peter Claver, the apostle of the negroes, were to a great extent to be ascribed to the devout prayers of the Jesuit lay-brother, St. Alphonsus; so in like manner many miracles of grace, many victories won by the Church, will be found to be owing to the prayers of the members of this association. And all these inestimable benefits for one's self and for others may be gained without trouble, nay, with the utmost facility, and without taking time from any other occupation. It is not within our power to go as missionaries to distant lands; we cannot write books in defence of the faith and of holy Church, nor extend the kingdom of God by preaching the Gospel. What we can actually do for the Lord our God is trifling and insignificant; yet here a means is afforded us

to effect great things for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

After all that has been said nothing further is necessary to prove that the Apostleship of Prayer is an association which must commend itself very strongly to priests and candidates for the priesthood. The priest is, the Fathers of the Church tell us, another Christ. If so, then when he enters upon his sphere of active work it behooves him to exercise, in accordance with Our Lord's example, the twofold apostolate of preaching and of prayer. And during the period of preparation for his future calling he must also imitate the example Our Lord gave in His hidden life in the holy house at Nazareth, and in the quiet seclusion of the seminary exercise the Apostleship of Prayer. "Nowhere," writes Fr. Ramière, "are the benefits derived from the apostleship more perceptible than in the institutions in which the servants of Jesus Christ, our spiritual Fathers, the chosen champions of holy Church, are trained for the work of the ministry. The secret of the priest's interior strength, the pledge of the permanence and efficacy of his sacred ministry, consists in union with the Heart of Jesus. Jesus Christ is the true High Priest and Father of souls; He alone con-

verts, strengthens, sustains, sanctifies the hearts of men. The end and aim of all training for the priesthood will only be attained if the future priest learns to identify all his thoughts, sentiments, desires, interests, with those of Jesus Christ and of the Church, His bride."

Establishment of the Apostleship. The same formalities are not required for the establishment of the apostleship as for the erection of a confraternity. The objections which may be raised, often with justice, to the introduction of a confraternity do not apply to the Apostleship of Prayer. Since it is not a confraternity or sodality in the strict sense of the word, it can be established in any parish or community however many the number of confraternities already existing there; and far from proving a hindrance to them in any way, it only serves to promote and stimulate their action. For, apart from the spirit of Jesus Christ and zeal in the performance of religious exercises which it is its mission preeminently to awaken and augment in the associates, all who make the morning offering may gain an indulgence of one hundred days for every prayer and action offered for the general intention notified in the organ of the league—a fact calculated to incite the members of the apostleship to per-

form the obligations of the different confraternities to which they may belong more faithfully and more zealously in the intentions of the apostleship.

The priest who is keenly alive to the evils and needs of the day, and is desirous to aid in curing them, will not fail to introduce the Apostleship of Prayer among his flock and do his utmost to propagate it. Both faith and experience teach us clearly and plainly enough that intercessory prayer exercises an almost incalculable influence over the course of events and the life of the Church at large. Instant, persevering prayer is indispensable if the religious indifferentism and the moral corruption which have gained ground even among Catholics are to be checked and eradicated. Of late the Church has been deprived of one of her most powerful weapons of defence against her foes, one of the most efficacious means of reviving the faith of her children, because in many parts of the Catholic world the contemplative Orders, Orders of prayer and penance, have been forcibly ejected from their peaceful dwellings. This may possibly be the reason why the Holy Spirit, as if in compensation for this loss, has awakened an extraordinary spirit of prayer in the Church of God. The devotion

to the Heart of Jesus, in union with the Apostleship of Prayer, is the antidote in the fullest sense of the word for the ills of the present day. For the last ten years the regenerating influence of the devotion has been strikingly manifested, and within that period, through the merciful, loving kindness of God, the Apostleship of Prayer has arisen and spread rapidly. It may confidently be affirmed that all that is elevating and cheering, all that we see to be grand and wonderful in the present fierce struggle waged by the Church in her severe trials, is in a great measure to be attributed to the devotion of the Sacred Heart and of the Apostleship of Prayer. And only by the increase of prayer can society be cured of its mortal malady, and health and vigor be restored to it.

APPENDIX.

I.

THE CANONICAL ERECTION OF THE CONFRATERNITY OF THE SACRED HEART.

1. Wisdom and prudence alike require that no steps should be taken for the erection of the confraternity in any parish, unless a certain number of the faithful interest themselves in it, and express their desire to become members of it and their readiness to observe the statutes. The number need not be a large one; in some dioceses the bishops will not sanction the canonical erection of the confraternity unless some twenty persons are prepared to join it.

2. The first thing to be done is to apply to the bishop of the diocese with the request that he will erect the confraternity, give his approval to the statutes and certificates of admission, appoint a director for the confraternity, and consent that it should be affiliated to the archconfraternity in St. Maria de Pace in Rome.

In this petition the name of the place must be given, also the title of the church and of the altar at which the confraternity is to be erected. It is, moreover, strictly necessary that at the same time the director for the time being should ask for authority to delegate his powers of admitting members to another priest. Without this authorization he could not depute another priest, his curate for instance, to receive fresh members.

3. Together with the petition for the erection of the confraternity, the statutes must be forwarded to the bishop for his approbation. These statutes need not be identical with those of the arch-confraternity in Rome; it is enough if they specify the principal object and the essential obligations of the confraternity. As every canonically erected confraternity is self-dependent, it can draw up for itself rules and statutes suited to the exigencies of the place and of the times.

4. The petition addressed to the bishop for the erection of the confraternity must be accompanied by a request for an official verification of the establishment of the confraternity, signed by the bishop, a certificate that is to be forwarded to Rome in order to obtain aggregation to the arch-confraternity.

5. Upon receipt of the application the bishop will erect the confraternity, the deed of erection being usually so worded as to make it apparent that the parish priest for the time being is appointed director, and that he possesses authority to delegate his powers of receiving members to another priest.

6. After the confraternity has been erected and the statutes approved by the bishop, the next step to be taken is aggregation to the arch-confraternity in Rome for the purpose of obtaining the indulgences and privileges and participation in the spiritual advantages attached to it. For this end a written request in Latin must be forwarded to the secretary of the arch-confraternity in Rome, enclosing the episcopal certificate and the customary fee of six francs. And when the diploma of aggregation is received, it must be laid before the bishop for his inspection.

7. These formalities having been gone through, the reception of the members may take place, the names being entered in a local register. Although any one may inscribe the names in the register, the new members can only be admitted by a priest who is empowered to receive them. Any one desiring to become a member must, if possible, make application in

person. No fee is to be taken for admission and inscription in the register of the confraternity, yet a voluntary offering may be made for defraying expenses, or for the services of the Church. It is not compulsory, but highly advisable, to give new associates a certificate of admission, so that they may always have a memento by them, as well as a list of the rules of the confraternity and the indulgences attached to it.

2.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER.

1. If the Apostleship of Prayer is to be introduced in a parish or community, such as a convent, seminary, or school, the first step to be taken is to obtain the permission of the bishop of the diocese for its establishment. If a general permission for the whole diocese has not been given, application must be made for it in each individual case.

2. When the episcopal sanction has been obtained, application must next be made to the diocesan director that the new centre may be aggregated to the apostleship. He gives (*gratis*) a diploma of affiliation and appoints a local director.

3. The diploma of affiliation confers the right to open a register of the association, and enroll as members not only persons belonging to the parish or community in question, but any orthodox Catholic who may desire it. No one has power to receive new members except the director-general, the diocesan and local directors. The local directors, or some priest empowered by them to do so, are they who ordinarily receive members whose names must be inscribed in the local register. It is necessary that they should apply personally for admission, unless prevented by some serious obstacle. It is also necessary that they should receive one of the printed certificates of membership issued by authority of the director-general and with his approbation. For admission and inscription in the register no fee is required; free-will offerings may be accepted.

4. The local directors can solicit for themselves and their successors in office the power to enroll new members in the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart. But as the local director, though empowered to admit persons into the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart, is not thereby constituted director of a canonically erected confraternity of that name, he is required from time to time—once a year per-

haps—to send in the names of those whom he has received into the confraternity to the director of some canonically erected Confraternity of the Sacred Heart, that they may be entered into the local register.

5. It belongs to the office of the local director to appoint “promoters,” of whom mention is made in the Statutes (Art. 6). Although the appointment of promoters is almost superfluous in the lesser centres, if the director devotes care and attention to the association, yet in larger parishes and communities it is not only highly useful, but practically indispensable. The welfare and extension of the league depend in a great measure on the zeal and activity of the promoters.

6. The director (*ordinarius*) of an association of the league is always the spiritual superior of the affiliated community. In parishes the parish priest for the time being is, as a matter of course, the director (*ordinarius*); in convents and congregations of women the ecclesiastical superior, and in affiliated schools, the rector, fills the post.

Every director (*ordinarius*) has power to appoint another priest residing in the place to undertake the direction of the local affiliation, and delegate to him all the authority of a

local director. He will keep the register, receive new members, and sign the certificates of admission. If this delegate should die, or resign his post, the authority will revert to the director, who will either take the office upon himself, or appoint another priest to fill it in his stead.

3.

THE COMMUNION OF REPARATION.

The associates of the third degree, who make the communion of reparation, propose to themselves especially the practice of atonement. This association originated in France about the year 1860, when several members of the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus divided themselves into bands or sections of either seven or thirty, of which each member undertook to go to communion with as much devotion as possible on a fixed day of the week or of the month, in order that by their fervent prayers and numerous communions they might both make amends for the tepidity and indifference of many Christians who rarely approach the holy table, and also offer reparation and satisfaction to the divine Heart of Jesus for the ingratitude and irreverence shown Him in the Sacrament of love. At the same time they en-

gaged to pray that our holy faith might be preserved intact and propagated on all sides, and that God would vouchsafe to keep and protect the Church from persecution. This association was approved and enriched with indulgences by Pius IX.

2. There is no work which tends more to compass the end proposed than holy communion. The more pleasing any good work is to Our Lord the more it is calculated to console and appease His Sacred Heart; now no good work is so pleasing and acceptable to Him as a communion made devoutly and with due preparation. On this account in one of the first times of His appearing to B. Margaret Mary, He ordered that favored individual to go to communion as often as she was allowed to do so, without heeding the mortifications and humiliations which this might bring on her. In addition He bade her receive holy communion on the first Friday of every month. On one occasion He said to her: "It gives Me so much joy to see any one desirous of receiving Me in the holy Sacrament, that I always look with complacency on those who arouse this desire within them." Another time He expressed the wish to rest in her heart to alleviate the pain which the vehemence of His love caused Him.

And the feast of the Sacred Heart, the chief object of which is to make atonement, was by Our Lord's command to be celebrated specially by the reception of holy communion.

3. Some observations relating to the organization and statutes of the association:

(a) Any member of the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart who will undertake to go to communion on a fixed day of every week or every month may be admitted to the Association of the Communion of Reparation.

(b) The members of the association are divided into two sections or classes, each section being seven or thirty in number, to each of whom is assigned a day every week or every month for approaching the holy table. A president may be appointed for each division.

(c) The persons empowered to enroll new members and to preside over this association are: 1. Every Superior of a Confraternity of the Sacred Heart; 2. Every local director of the apostleship; 3. In places where neither the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart nor the Apostleship of Prayer is established, any priest whomsoever who wishes to introduce the association into his parish; also the promoter of a division, provided he sends the list of those whom he has received to the director of the association.

(d) The only obligation of the association is that every member should receive holy communion once a week or month on the appointed day. In order to fulfil the obligation it is sufficient to renew the aforementioned intention before communion, and after communion to offer it to the divine Redeemer with the same intention.

Should any one have a sufficient reason for not going to communion on the day assigned, he can either ask another member to take his place, or it will do to go on any other day of the same week or month.

(e) Occasionally in the course of the year, say every three months, the director of the association should go through the list of names with the promoters of the different divisions and replace by fresh members any who may have fallen out.

4.

PRAYERS.

Adoration.

Angels and Archangels, Principalities and Powers, Virtues and Dominations, Thrones, Cherubim and Seraphim, unite with me in adoring the most loving Heart of Jesus.

Let all the angels of God adore Him.

1. Most loving Jesus, my Lord and my God, with deepest reverence and humility I adore Thy Sacred Heart, and in union with the Angels I offer to it a tribute of praise, honor, and glory as the miraculous work of the Most Holy Trinity, in which dwelleth the fulness of the Godhead.

Cor Jesu, flagrans amore hominum, Venite adoremus!

2. Most loving Jesus, my Lord and my God, with deepest reverence and humility I adore Thy Sacred Heart, and in union with the Arch-angels I offer to it a tribute of praise, honor, and glory as being the seat and centre of holy and pure charity, whereby the love of God is kindled in the hearts of men.

Cor Jesu, flagrans amore hominum, Venite adoremus!

3. Most loving Jesus, my Lord and my God, with deepest reverence and humility I adore Thy Sacred Heart, and in union with the Principalities I offer to it a tribute of praise, honor, and glory, as being an ocean of divine grace whence we may all draw grace for grace.

Cor Jesu, flagrans amore hominum, Venite adoremus!

4. Most loving Jesus, my Lord and my God, with deepest reverence and humility I adore

Thy Sacred Heart, and in union with the Powers I offer to it a tribute of praise, honor, and glory as being the embodiment of virtue and sanctity proposed to us for our imitation.

Cor Jesu, flagrans amore hominum, Venite adoremus!

5. Most loving Jesus, my Lord and my God, with deepest reverence and humility I adore Thy Sacred Heart, and in union with the Virtues I offer to it a tribute of praise, honor, and glory as being the altar of propitiation, the sacrifice by whose merits sinners obtain forgiveness.

Cor Jesu, flagrans amore hominum, Venite adoremus!

6. Most loving Jesus, my Lord and my God, with deepest reverence and humility I adore Thy Sacred Heart, and in union with the Dominations I offer to it a tribute of praise, honor, and glory as the object of the heavenly Father's good pleasure, and the source whence which we receive all blessings.

Cor Jesu, flagrans amore hominum, Venite adoremus!

7. Most loving Jesus, my Lord and my God, with deepest reverence and humility I adore Thy Sacred Heart, and in union with the Thrones I offer to it a tribute of praise, honor, and glory as being the sanctuary of the Eternal

Word, by whom all mankind are renewed and sanctified.

Cor Jesu, flagrans amore hominum, Venite adoremus!

8. Most loving Jesus, my Lord and my God, with deepest reverence and humility I adore Thy Sacred Heart, and in union with the Cherubim I offer to it a tribute of praise, honor, and glory as being the temple of the Holy Ghost, in which our prayers are graciously heard.

Cor Jesu, flagrans amore hominum, Venite adoremus!

9. Most loving Jesus, my Lord and my God, with deepest reverence and humility I adore Thy Sacred Heart, and in union with the Seraphim I offer to it a tribute of praise, honor, and glory as being the trophy of divine mercy in which God has manifested His omnipotence by showing mercy.

Cor Jesu, flagrans amore hominum, Venite adoremus!

Three Prayers of the Church.

May the Holy Ghost, we beseech Thee, O Lord, inflame us with that fire which Our Lord Jesus Christ sent upon earth out of His inmost Heart, and desired that it might be kindled exceedingly.

O Lord our God, we suppliantly beseech

Thee, who art meek and humble of heart, cleanse us from the stain of every vice and make us more ready to despise the proud vanities of the world.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, to adorn us with the virtues of Thy Sacred Heart and kindle its sentiments within us, so that we may attain likeness unto Thee, the pattern of all perfection, and may participate in Thy redemption. Who liveth and reignest forever and ever. Amen.

Act of Reparation.

Most loving Redeemer, my Lord Jesus Christ, who are truly and actually present in the adorable Sacrament of the Altar, prostrate before Thee, I adore Thee in deepest reverence and humility and beseech Thee to pardon the sins and impieties by which Thou hast been outraged both by me and by others in the Sacrament of love. In order to make amends for the great ingratitude wherewith Thy love has been repaid, I consecrate and offer to Thee, as Thou desirest, my heart with all its affections and aspirations; and I resolve that from henceforth I will seek nothing, desire nothing, love nothing but Thee only and Thy good pleasure.

But since my cold, sin-stained heart is utterly unworthy of Thy divine Majesty, I offer to

Thee the most pure and holy heart of Thy virginal Mother; accept it graciously in reparation and atonement for our coldness and ingratitude. Through the merits and intercession of Mary Immaculate, I beseech Thee to pour out the grace of Thy Sacred Heart upon me and all mankind; console the afflicted, convert the sinner, turn aside the chastisements which by our sins we have deserved, give us true love to Thee, and bring us to everlasting felicity. Amen.

Heart of Jesus, burning with love for us,
Inflame our hearts with love of thee.

May the Holy Ghost, we beseech Thee, O Lord, inflame us with that fire which Our Lord Jesus Christ sent upon earth out of His inmost heart, and desired that it might be kindled exceedingly.

Act of Adoration and Impetration.

I. Jesus Christ, my Saviour and Redeemer, prostrate before Thee, I adore Thee with deepest reverence and humility. Through Thy most Sacred Heart, which on account of its indissoluble union with the person of the Eternal Word is sanctified with the divine sanctity, and rendered a worthy temple of the Most

Holy Trinity, I beseech Thee to sanctify my heart and make it a worthy dwelling-place of God, who created it for Himself. Pater, Ave, Gloria.

O sweetest Heart of Jesus, I implore
That I may ever love Thee more and more.

2. Jesus Christ, my Saviour and Redeemer, who hast given to us Thy Sacred Heart as the pattern of every virtue, and preeminently of meekness and humility, grant me grace to imitate Thy divine virtues and to be, like Thee, meek and humble of heart. Pater, Ave, Gloria.

O sweetest Heart of Jesus, etc.

3. Jesus Christ, my Saviour and Redeemer, who, in the exceedingly great charity of Thy Heart, dost vouchsafe to be present in the adorable Sacrament of the Altar, there to offer Thyself to Thy heavenly Father as a perpetual sacrifice and to serve as food for the sustenance of my frailty, kindle in me, I beseech Thee, Thy holy love, that I may give myself wholly to Thee, as Thou hast given Thyself to me. Pater, Ave, Gloria.

O sweetest Heart of Jesus, etc.

4. Jesus Christ, my Saviour and Redeemer, who didst give Thy innocent and stainless Heart to suffer the bitterest pains on account

of my sins, grant me true and perfect contrition for my sins, so that I may bewail them from my heart and make satisfaction for them to Thine offended justice. Pater, Ave, Gloria.

O sweetest Heart of Jesus, etc.

5. Jesus Christ, my Saviour and Redeemer, who didst suffer Thy Sacred Heart to be pierced with a lance, I beseech Thee, through the precious blood which Thou didst shed for me upon the cross, receive me into Thy Heart, so that, being dead to myself and to the world, I may live for Thee alone and depart hence in Thy love. Pater, Ave, Gloria.

O sweetest Heart of Jesus, etc.

Grant, O Jesus, that my name may be inscribed on Thy Heart, never to be blotted out, and Thy love so deeply imprinted upon my heart that I may never forget Thee or be separated from Thee; for in Thy service I desire to live and die. Amen.

Prayers for a Novena.

Those who cherish a deep devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus are accustomed in their necessities to seek protection, help, and succor by means of a novena or triduum in honor of His Sacred Heart, and for this purpose they

practise certain devotions for the space of nine or of three days. They endeavor, therefore, to perform their usual devotional exercises, e.g., holy Mass, meditation, spiritual reading, examination of conscience, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, the Rosary, etc., with redoubled fervor in honor of the Sacred Heart; and daily, if possible, they pay a visit to the Blessed Sacrament, when they recite some one or other prayer to the Heart of Jesus. The following prayers will serve this purpose; they may be said, besides, on any other occasion in honor of the Sacred Heart. It is usual at the close of the novena to approach the sacraments.

Prayer to the Holy Trinity.

1. Blessed and praised be the Most Holy Trinity, who is adored by the divine Heart of Jesus in a manner worthy of His infinite majesty. Gloria Patri.

2. Blessed and praised be the Most Holy Trinity, who is loved by the divine Heart of Jesus in a manner worthy of His infinite goodness. Gloria Patri.

3. Blessed and praised be the Most Holy Trinity, to whom the divine Heart of Jesus offers satisfaction for the sins of the world in a manner worthy of His infinite justice. Gloria Patri.

Prayer to the Heart of Jesus.

1. Most loving Jesus, with deep humility I adore Thy Sacred Heart, which has loved us with an everlasting love, and I implore Thee, through Thy blessed Mother, who is also my Mother, that Thou wouldst grant me the grace for which I confidently hope from Thy charity. Ave Maria.

2. Most loving Jesus, with deep humility I adore Thy Sacred Heart, which abased itself for us and became obedient even to the death of the cross; I implore Thee, through Thy blessed Mother, who is also my Mother, that Thou wouldst grant me the blessings for which I confidently hope from Thy charity. Ave Maria.

3. Most loving Jesus, with deep humility I adore Thy Sacred Heart, which offered up prayers and supplications with a strong cry and tears to God the Father for us; I implore Thee, through Thy blessed Mother, who is also my Mother, that Thou wouldst grant me the blessings for which I confidently hope from Thy charity. Ave Maria.

4. Most loving Jesus, with deep humility I adore Thy Sacred Heart, which in the Sacrament of the Altar has poured forth all the treasures of its love for us; I implore Thee,

through Thy blessed Mother, who is also my Mother, that Thou wouldst grant me the blessing for which I confidently hope from Thy charity. Ave Maria.

5. Most loving Jesus, with deep humility I adore Thy Sacred Heart, which loved its own and loved them unto the end; I implore Thee, through Thy blessed Mother, who is also my Mother, that Thou wouldst grant me the blessing for which I confidently hope from Thy charity. Ave Maria.

6. Most loving Jesus, with deep humility I adore Thy Sacred Heart, whose delights are to be with the children of men; I implore Thee, through Thy blessed Mother, who is also my Mother, that Thou wouldst grant me the blessing for which I confidently hope from Thy charity. Ave Maria.

7. Most loving Jesus, with deep humility I adore Thy Sacred Heart, which receives in return for its love for men nothing but ingratitude and hatred; I implore Thee, through Thy blessed Mother, who is also my Mother, that Thou wouldst grant me the blessing for which I confidently hope from Thy charity. Ave Maria.

8. Most loving Jesus, with deep humility I adore Thy Sacred Heart, of whose mercies it is

that we are not consumed; I implore Thee through Thy blessed Mother, who is also my Mother, that Thou wouldst grant me the blessing for which I confidently hope from Thy charity. Ave Maria.

9. Most loving Jesus, with deep humility I adore Thy Sacred Heart, which is rich unto all that call upon it; I implore Thee through Thy blessed Mother, who is also my Mother, that Thou wouldst grant me the blessing for which I confidently hope from Thy charity. Ave Maria.

Act of Oblation.

Eternal Father, I offer up unto Thee the Sacred Heart of Thy well-beloved Son, even as He offered Himself up as a sacrifice to Thy justice. Accept on my behalf all the thoughts, sentiments, and desires of this Sacred Heart. They are mine because it immolated itself for me. Receive them in satisfaction for my sins and in thanksgiving for all the benefits conferred on me. Receive them, and for the sake of the merits of that Heart grant me all the graces I need, but especially the gift of final perseverance. Receive them as so many acts of love, adoration, and praise which I now offer to Thy divine Majesty, because by the

Sacred Heart of Jesus Thou canst alone be loved, honored, and glorified as Thou deservest.

Most holy triune God, I give Thee thanks for all the graces which Thou didst bestow upon Thy servant, B. Margaret Mary, and I beseech Thee to grant me through her intercession all the graces which I hope to obtain by this novena.

To Obtain some Particular Grace.

1. Most merciful Heart of Jesus, through the bitter anguish which Thou didst endure in the Garden of Olives for our sake, we beseech Thee, in union with Mary, Thy most holy Mother, have compassion upon us and grant us the grace we earnestly implore of Thee. Ave Maria.

2. Most merciful Jesus, through the distress and shame Thou didst feel when Thy garments were stripped off Thee, we beseech Thee, in union with Mary, Thy most holy Mother, have compassion upon us and grant us the grace we earnestly implore of Thee. Ave Maria.

3. Most merciful Jesus, through the bitterness and grief Thou didst experience when Thou wast scourged and crowned with thorns, we beseech Thee, in union with Mary, Thy most holy Mother, have compassion upon us and grant

us the grace we earnestly implore of Thee. Ave Maria.

4. Most merciful Jesus, through the agonizing pain Thou didst suffer when expiring upon the cross, we beseech Thee, in union with Mary, Thy most holy Mother, have compassion upon us and grant us the grace we earnestly implore of Thee. Ave Maria.

5. Most merciful Jesus, through the cruel wound made by the lance which pierced Thy side upon the cross, we beseech Thee, in union with Mary, Thy most holy Mother, have compassion upon us and grant us the grace we earnestly implore of Thee. Ave Maria.

Most sweet Jesus, who dost repel no one who comes to Thee, but dost receive even the greatest sinners with open arms, provided only they repent of their sins, have compassion upon those who call upon Thy holy name; graciously hear the prayers of those who worship Thee in spirit and in truth; grant that those who truly adore Thy Sacred Heart may, in accordance with Thy loving promise, find in it succor and peace, protection and strength, and fervent love of Thee for time and for eternity. Amen.

VENERATION OF A PICTURE OF THE SACRED
HEART.*Act of Consecration.*

My loving Jesus! I (N.N.) give Thee my heart, and I consecrate myself wholly to Thee, out of the grateful love I bear Thee, and as a reparation for all my unfaithfulness; and with Thy aid I purpose never to sin again.

Pius VII, June 9, 1807, granted to all the faithful, who, for a month with at least contrite heart and devotion, shall say this offering before a picture of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. A plenary indulgence once a month on any day, provided that, being truly penitent after confession and communion, they shall pray devoutly for the welfare of holy Mother the Church and for the intention of His Holiness. An indulgence of 100 days, once a day, to all who shall with at least contrite heart and devotion, make this offering before a picture of the Sacred Heart.

Various Devotions.

1. Most loving Jesus, with profound humility I adore Thee and venerate the sacred wound of Thy Heart which Thou didst receive for love of me. I give thanks to Thee for it in the name of all mankind, and as a token of my gratitude I offer to Thee the sufferings of all who love Thee from the bottom of their heart. Kindle, I beseech Thee, the fire of Thy divine charity

in the hearts of all men, that we, being dead to ourselves and to the whole world, may live for Thee alone and in Thy love may die. Gloria Patri, etc.

2. Most loving Jesus, with profound humility I adore Thee and venerate the precious blood of Thy Sacred Heart, which Thou didst shed for the whole world. I give Thee thanks for it in the name of all mankind, and as a token of my gratitude I offer Thee my body and my soul, my blood and my life, that there may be nothing left in me which is not completely and for ever consecrated to Thee. Gloria Patri, etc.

3. Most loving Jesus, with profound humility I adore Thee and venerate the flames of charity which consume Thy Sacred Heart. I give Thee thanks together with Thy blessed Mother and all the angels and saints of heaven for the unspeakable love wherewith Thou hast loved us from all eternity; and as a token of my gratitude I offer Thee the love of all Thy faithful servants, and beseech Thee to maintain and increase Thy love in all of us. Gloria Patri, etc.

4. Most loving Jesus, with profound humility I adore Thee and venerate the crown of thorns whose sharp points pierced Thy sacred head. I entreat Thy pardon for all the evil thoughts

and sinful desires with which Thou hast been offended, and in compensation for them I offer Thee whatever has been or will be done by Thy creatures in heaven and earth which is good and acceptable in Thy sight. I beseech Thee to preserve the innocent in their purity, to maintain the fervor of the just, to bring sinners to repentance, and to grant us all grace never more to sin against Thee. *Gloria Patri*, etc.

5. Most loving Jesus, with profound humility I adore Thee and venerate the holy cross, whereon in the charity of Thy Heart Thou didst offer Thyself a sacrifice for the salvation of the world. I give Thee thanks for it in the name of all mankind, and entreat Thy pardon for the deep shame and scorn which Thou didst endure upon the cross. In reparation I offer Thee the bitter sorrows which Mary bore when standing beneath the cross, and I beseech Thee to grant us grace to bear all crosses and afflictions patiently and unflinchingly in union with Thy cross. *Gloria Patri*, etc.

6. Most loving Jesus, with profound humility I adore Thee and venerate the representation of Thy Sacred Heart by which Thou art pleased to place before us Thine infinite charity in its full magnitude. I give Thee thanks for it in the name of all mankind and entreat of Thee grace

to make known far and wide the treasures of Thy Sacred Heart, and thus out of gratitude and love to comply with Thy desire and command. Grant, O Lord Jesus, that the wondrous mysteries of Thy Sacred Heart may be known, honored, loved, and glorified by all men, and in it all men may find salvation. Amen. Gloria Patri, etc.

Cor Jesu, protege me.

Lux Cordis Jesu, illumina me.

Flamma Cordis Jesu, accende me.

Corona spinea Cordis Jesu, compunge me.

Crux Cordis Jesu, roboram me.

Sanguis Cordis Jesu, inebria me.

Vulnus Cordis Jesu, accipe me,

Ut inhabitem in Te

In sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

Prayer of B. Margaret Mary.

O Sacred Heart of my Jesus, I choose thee as my only refuge. Be thou to me strength in conflict, the support of my weakness, a light and a guide in the darkness of this life, and finally an atonement for all my faults and the sanctification of all my desires and actions; I unite mine with thine and offer them to Thee, in order that Thou mayest come to me to unite me to Thyself. Amen.

Invocations.

Charity of the Heart of Jesus, inflame my heart.

Strength of the Heart of Jesus, fortify my heart.

Compassion of the Heart of Jesus, pardon my heart.

Patience of the Heart of Jesus, bear with my heart.

Dominion of the Heart of Jesus, reign in my heart.

Will of the Heart of Jesus, dispose of my heart.

Zeal of the Heart of Jesus, consume my heart.

Immaculate heart of Mary, intercede for us with the divine Heart of Jesus. Amen.

Prayer to God the Father.

Eternal Father, I come to Thee through the Heart of my Saviour and Redeemer, who is my way, my truth, and my life. Through this adorable Heart I worship Thee on behalf of all men who do not worship Thee; I love Thee on behalf of all who do not love Thee; I acknowledge Thee as God on behalf of all those who through wilful blindness will not acknowledge

Thee. Through this divine Heart I desire to satisfy all the obligations of mankind towards Thy sovereign Majesty. To Thee I present through the Heart of Jesus the souls redeemed by the precious blood of my Saviour; through this Heart I humbly beseech Thee to convert them to Thyself. Do not permit them, I pray, to remain any longer in ignorance of Jesus, their Saviour and Redeemer. Grant that they may begin to live for Him who died for them. Thou seest, O heavenly Father, that as yet they have not this life; Oh, grant, I earnestly entreat Thee, for the sake of the divine Heart of Jesus, that they may begin to live by this new life.

Together with this Sacred Heart I offer unto Thy divine Majesty the priests, Thy servants, beseeching Thee through Jesus Christ our Lord, that Thou wouldst fill them with Thy holy Spirit, so that, following the example of their eternal High Priest, they may live and labor for Thee in time and merit to dwell with Thee to all eternity. Amen. Pater noster.

Prayer to St. Joseph.

Holy Joseph, the foster-father of the Redeemer, I choose thee this day in the presence of the Most High God and the Blessed Virgin Mary, thy spouse and my Mother and Queen.

as the patron of my life; I beseech thee to take me under thy protection and to be my intercessor and advocate with my heavenly Father, with Jesus and with Mary.

To thee I commend my body and my soul, my life and my death, and all the contingencies of my whole life; watch over me and guard me from every misfortune both of soul and body.

Obtain for me from God by thy prayers the grace of a holy and happy death in the Heart of Jesus, and be with me in my last agony. Obtain for me the blessing of a lively faith, a practical faith, of a steadfast hope and generous love which is ready to sacrifice all for Christ, besides great recollection of heart which is not distracted by outward occupations; above all, obtain for me the spirit of prayer, the virtue of humility and mortification, that I may wholly die to the world, may delight in solitude and seclusion, and may follow Jesus on the way of the cross as His true priest (disciple and scholar), so as to live for Him alone in time and dwell with Him to all eternity. Amen.

Actus Consecrationis.

Dulcissime Jesu, fons amoris, pater misericordiarum et Deus totius consolationis, qui ineffabilis Cordis tui divitias nobis miseris et

indignis aperire dignatus es; ego N. in gratiarum actionem pro innumeris in me ceterosque homines collatis beneficiis, ac præsertim pro S.S. Eucharistiæ institutione, et ad reparandas injurias omnes a me et ab aliis quibuscunque in hoc infiniti amoris mysterio Cordi tuo amantissimo illatas, eidem sacratissimo Cordi tuo me totum et omnia mea devoveo cum omnibus bonis ac meritis ex gratia tua acquisitis vel acquirendis, promittens, me divini Cordis tui cultum, quantum pro mea tenuitate licuerit, propagaturum.

Insuper beatissimam Virginem Mariam in peculiarem matrem mihi eligo, huiusque purissimo Cordi me et omnia mea pariter trado ac devoveo, promittens me huius purissimæ matris cultum juxta Ecclesiæ mentem, quantum in me erit, propagaturum.

A tua ergo immensa bonitate et clementia peto suppliciter, ut hoc holocaustum in odorem suavitatis admittere digneris, et ut largitus es ad hoc desiderandum et offerendum, sic etiam ad explendum gratiam uberem largiaris. Amen.

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