

FROM THE WRITINGS
OF FR. HANNIBAL DI FRANCIA

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ROGATIONIST ANTHOLOGY

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FROM THE WRITINGS
OF
FATHER HANNIBAL
DI FRANCIA

For the Rogationists of the Heart of Jesus
and the Daughters of Divine Zeal

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PREFACE

The unforgettable Fr. Vitale wrote the precious biography of our padre, the main source for those future authors who will write his story. However, this biography does not contain the whole padre. As Fr. Vitale has pointed out, we perceive the spirit of our padre equally and perhaps prevalently in his own writings. Because his writings are a precious guide to the, Rogationists and the Daughters of Divine Zeal's spiritual life, as well as to their government and to the efficient development of the Rogationist apostolate, Fr. Vitae hoped that they would be published.

Our communities feel the need of reading and meditating on our padre's writings; but the superior general, even more so, feels such a need; and urges that they be published since he has the responsibility of keeping the spirit of our padre alive in the institutions. To meet his urgent solicitude we have made this Anthology - a collection of flowers - flowers plucked from the garden of our padre's writings.

It is well known that our padre was a prolific writer, but due to lack of time he did not finish any work. Not even the dossier « Spirit of the Daughters of Divine Zeal » () is complete; in fact, the treatise about the*

(*) Our padre addressed the work to the Daughters of Divine Zeal because they were more numerous than the Rogationists; however, our padre repeatedly said that he fixed the spirit of the whole institute in this work and that he had a mind to add what was peculiar to the Rogationists.

Rogate that he had promised does not exist! What a pity!

However, we have voluminous notes of speeches, circulars, confidential letters, numerous outlines of rules such as the rules or the plain prescriptions which he wrote for the use of various male and female communities; these writings are not mere outlines, on the contrary some paragraphs of rules resemble true treatises on the spiritual life, which reflect the spirit and the personality of the person who is our padre.

Our padre's records are a vast treasure; by picking up spangles, nuggets, and golden streams we can easily gather riches. Getting out of the metaphor we say that the wealth of our padre's teaching springs from his records, outlines, and directions; if we gather them with love, follow them with wisdom, and are generously faithful to the grace of our vocation, we Rogationists and Daughters of Divine Zeal will become children worthy of our padre.

As a scheme of this work we have chosen the « Forty Declarations and Promises » our founder wrote for the priests in August 1910, in St. Pier Niceto. Around that time, Fr. Vitale had already entered the order, while Canon Celona was also willing to enter. Through this work, our padre expounded the spirit of the order briefly. The « Forty Declarations and Promises » form the forty chapters of this book: each declaration is a somewhat broad topic, around which we have gathered our padre's writings we felt to be appropriate.

This work is not meant to be a rule for changing or substituting the rules in force in the communities; in these writings we find the whole padre with his spirit, ideals, teaching, charity, and zeal along with references to usages of time and places sometimes superseded.

Especially the repetitions we have not removed because of the nature of the work. They show our padre alive and working, always busy to sanctify his children, as well as to strengthen the foundation in the way of the Lord. This was his only aim, the program of his life. This must be ours for the greatest consolation of the heart of Jesus!

Rome, July 5, 1960

Fr. Tusino, R.C.J.

INTRODUCTION

by His Eminence Cardinal

ARCADIO MARIA LARRAONA

To the Rogationists of the Heart of Jesus and to the Daughters of Divine Zeal

My dear children of Padre Di Francia:

Your venerable and beloved padre could rightly tell you the sweet, strong words that St. Paul said to the Corinthians (I. Cor. 4, 15): « Even if you have ten thousand guardians in your life in Christ, you have only one father. For in your life in Christ Jesus I have become your father by bringing the Good News to you.» With easy, ample, deep application your padre tells you: « Through the grace of God, source of any fatherhood, I have begotten you to the religious life, spirit, and apostolate of the Rogationists by giving you the constitutions, the treasure of my teaching, and fecund abundance of heroic, continuous, practical examples as well as by immolating myself for the foundation of the order and for each one of you. » This complete, generous, effective, spiritual fatherhood of your Padre founder continues « until Christ's nature is formed in you,» until each of you reproduces Jesus in himself according to his vocation, following the perfect, lovable, close model of Padre Di Francia, who says to you: « Imitate me, just as I imitate Christ» (I. Cor. 4,16; 11, 1).

It is fortunate for the children of Padre Mary Hannibal Di Francia to have preserved such a great treasure of documents, exhortations, counsels and criteria that deal with so many standpoints of ascetism, discipline, formation, apostolate, and government of the orders. This fatherly heritage could not be hidden or scattered. We heartily praise the superior general for having disposed with wise perception the collection and the arrangement of the fatherly treasure and for having entrusted sedulous, clever, and filial hearted people with this responsibility.

A man's honor derives from the respect he showed to his father (Eccl. 3, 11). Since this blessed book will be the fecund root which is going to infuse new blood into so many works, booklets, and editions of any kind, it will be the conductor of the strengthening, sweetest, continuous blessing of your padre; an the other hand, by explaining and applying the new blood they will draw from this anthology, the works will form the Rogationists' sound literature.

While presenting my warmest congratulations, I pray to obtain elect blessings on the two orders and I encourage them to follow such a great, lovable father founder with the most generous, happy loyalty.

Rome, Aug. 22, 1960

Sincerely yours,
Arcadio Maria Card. Larraona, C.M.F.

SOURCES

- C.D.D.Z. Constitutions of the Daughters of Divine Zeal.
- C.P. Community of the Poor of Jesus' Heart.
- C.R. Rules of the Rogationist Congregation.
- D.P. Nineteen Declarations and Promises.
- D.S.C. Daughters of the Sacred Side.
- F.R. Rules for Women.
- H.S.E. For the House of St. Euphemia.
- P.D.P. Primal Declarations and Promises for the Priests.
- P.R.P. Primal Rules for Probationers.
- R.A. Rules for Aspirants.
- R.L.P. Rules of the Little Poor of Jesus' Heart.
- R.P. Points of Rules for Probationers.
- R.P.A. Rules for the Prefect of the Little Artisans.
- R.R.C. Rules for the Religious Congregation.
- R.S. Rules for Superiors.
- S.D.D.Z. The Spirit of the Daughters of Divine Zeal.
- S.I.G. For the Sisters Running the Institute for Girls.
- S.R.S. Summary Rules for Students.

Letters, speeches, and particular quotations are mentioned at their place. « *The Forty Declarations and Promises* » are printed with heavy type. The abbreviations that are not found in the sources are quoted as in the original.

P.S. The Old Testament quotations are usually from *The Jerusalem Bible* of 1966. The New Testament quotations are from *Good News for Modern Man... in today's English Version*. American Bible Society 1966, 1971.

CHAPTER I

RELIGIOUS VOCATION

Following the call I felt in my heart I entered this community to serve God more closely, to seek a greater personal sanctification, and to affect a greater good for souls through the regular observance, discipline, practice of religious virtues, and the sacred bond of the religious profession without any ulterior motive of personal convenience.

I intend to accomplish all this with God's help and my own good will.

1. PURE INTENTION

The Little Refuge of St. Joseph novices will keep in mind the holy aim they had when they humbly applied for admittance in the Little Refuge. The aim is: to want only Jesus and to belong to him only... By belonging totally to Jesus and by rejecting totally the corrupt deceiving world; by striving for a virtuous life, overcoming defects and bad habits; to achieve the happy state of divine union (R.L.P.).

The Little Poor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus will be detached from worldly goods in order to find and possess Jesus only, he who is the hidden treasure of faith. Having no concern with worldly matters, they will seek the glory of God and the salvation of souls, which are the interests of the most holy heart of Jesus (R.L.P.).

They will attentively beware of the lightest voluntary

defect, also avoiding the unintentional ones, as much as they can (D.S.S.).

The Little Retreat probationers will have the pure intention to enter the religious status in order to belong totally to God, to promote the greater consolation of the most holy Heart of Jesus, and to devote themselves to the service of the poor (R.P.).

I declare that I entered this institute because I felt myself moved by pure intention of achieving my own sanctification and of giving up myself to God, living the religious life through the perfect observance of this institute's rules without any perspective of a personal position or any ulterior motive. Since I have renounced worldly matters I enter the institute as a new creature, keeping in my mind and heart nothing of the world; therefore, I will never think of it nor will I speak of my past life in the world or in my family with anyone in the institute (D.P.).

« The eyes are like a lamp for the body. If your eyes are clear, your whole body will be full of light; but if your eyes are bad, your body will be in darkness » (Mt. 6, 22).

The eyes stand as a symbol for pure intention to accomplish everything for God, for his glory, and for the greater consolation of the most holy Heart of Jesus. Pure intention will make the actions of the probationer upright and good, while lack of pure intention will make them obscure.

The probationer who does not purely work for Jesus will never achieve the spiritual life. For him, the virtues will be like an external practice whose performance will lead him to a spirit of simulation and hypocrisy, which makes him undeserving to live in the house of the Lord (P.R.P.).

2. POSTULATE

The probationers who aim at entering the religious community for the greatest consolation of the Heart of Jesus, must form their spirit according to Christian perfection. During the postulate they shall aim at destroying the desires of the natural self, or better yet, at putting to death their old being (Rom. 6, 6) in order that they may live a new life with Christ. They must aim at becoming men of God, with the Lord's help (P.R.P.).

Before the taking of the garb the candidates for religious life are to be tested accurately. The master of piety and experience will train them in Christian perfection, teaching the religious virtues and the order's rules. If the candidates for religious life have no disposition to piety or recollection, but have attachment to themselves or to their relatives or are mendacious and false or gluttonous or wrathful, they must be sent home, unless they amend since the beginning (C.R.).

(Talking to the Lord): Postulate is the time when our vocation is tested in order that we may see whether we really want to answer the divine call. Now is the time when the strongest proofs will rigorously test our intentions in order to see whether they are right or wrong, sincere or false. Now is the time when the test is going to discard those who have no good will! O adorable Lord Jesus Christ, give us holy will, pure, good intention so that we may accept any test, mortification, and contradiction, heartily and humbly. Please give us a loving grace to become fond of all virtues, but mainly of you, God of the virtues, and of Immaculate Mary, your mother, our teacher, owner, and superior. Jesus, our goodness, let us grow in our holy vocation, let us be yours and persevere in your call till our last breath (From a primal rite and prayer for admittance to postulate)!

Since I am going to take the garb of the Rogationist novices of the heart of Jesus:

1. I assert that I am unworthy of such a great grace, because my admittance to the novitiate is due to God and to my superiors' kindness;

2. I formally assert that the entrance into the novitiate along with the taking of the sacred garb is the beginning of the true test which will help me to develop religious virtues. Henceforth I acknowledge that from now on I cannot be excused for my faults, which will be more serious owing to the religious garb, which binds me both to give good example and to practice the virtues.

Likewise I acknowledge that the novitiate requires a humble, penitential life, which needs to be tested by mortifications, humiliations, and penances that my superiors deem to give me; therefore I will humbly accept them without reply or excuse, even though I think or I am sure of not being at fault.

I recognize that the constitutions are the rules of my behavior. I promise to observe them exactly and to accept any penance in case of infringement.

At last, I declare that if these promises are hard for me or the life of the novitiate is too severe for me, I am free to refuse the taking of the garb; but if I take it, by doing so I confirm the promises and declarations, putting myself in the hands of holy obedience as an unworthy slave of the most holy Virgin, in order that I may uncomplainingly accept the suffering and the humiliations that are part of my spiritual formation. The life that destroys my natural self to let me live with Jesus Christ my Lord begins with the taking of the garb (Promises before the taking of the habit, March 17, 1907).

I solemnly promise that when God's will has been discerned by my superiors and I am permitted to take

the garb I will not deceive myself by thinking that the probation time is over or that I may live as I like; on the contrary, I will acknowledge that the true test of religious life (mortification, humility, obedience, practice of divine love, charity toward neighbor, patience, and perfect execution of my duties) begins with the entrance in the novitiate.

The duties of the novitiate are the following: prayer, penance, humiliation for Jesus, renunciation of my opinion and will, perfect observance of the rules, pure zeal and holy wishes for divine glory and salvation of souls, fervent prayer to obtain good workers for the Church, practice of holy poverty, detachment, true service to our divine owner and mother, of whom I am a faithful slave of love, and the acquisition of interior virtues.

This is my opinion about the novitiate; therefore, when holy obedience calls me, I will enter the novitiate with holy fear in order to begin the destruction of my natural self and to transform myself in the crucified Jesus.

As an aspirant, as a probationer, and above all as a novice, with the Lord's help and my own good will I promise to accept any test and mortification the superiors will ask of me, knowing that without fruits of penance, mortification, and humiliation I will be unable to subdue my own pride in order to become a perfect bride of the crucified Jesus (D.P.).

3. TAKING OF THE GARB

You have taken the garb to your great satisfaction as it usually happens to those who take it. Take care, however: your fervor must not be superficial and fleeting, but serious and lasting. You must understand the garb's significance in your life.

The meaning is: renunciation of the world. In fact, is

there any likeness between the worldly habits and the religious ones? Not at all. On the contrary, they are quite the reverse. The worldly habits are made of good fabric, the religious ones of poor material; the former are dazzling, the latter dark; the worldly habits have fringes and lace, the religious ones are simple; the first are tight or open, the second, roomy and closed; the first appear vainglorious, the last modest and humble; the mundane habits are the uniform of the world, the religious garbs signify belonging to Jesus Christ!

How very precious is the religious garb! The saints loved it so much that they wanted to die wearing it.

The religious garb is precious because it represents the religious virtues, while impatience, disobedience, pride, immodesty are at loggerheads with it.

Take care: the cowl does not make the monk! How many laymen, who bear no religious garb, will appear better dressed with virtues and spirit on the judgment day! Therefore, follow your holy vocation faithfully, complying with the duties the religious garb requires of you (Speech, May 18, 1915).

To the amazement of the angels, God clothed you with the precious religious garb, at whose comparison the most costly worldly clothing are rags. Before you took the religious garb, it was blessed with these words: « Garb which the Saint Fathers considered to be a symbol of innocence and humility for those who renounce the world. »

By celestial enlightenment the holy Fathers felt that those who renounce the world wear a garb as a symbol of innocence and humility; therefore, you must be innocent and humble: innocent by keeping yourselves free from any sin and by purifying yourselves of past faults,

because by taking the sacred garb you die to the world and are born to a new life. Humble, because the religious garb has nothing to do with worldly pride... Your garb obliges you to answer God's call and to Lift up your heart and soul in foretaste of the heavenly happiness... (Speech, Aug. 24, 1809).

Dearest children, the Lord called! you to religious life through a special grace. By answering the divine call you leave the world, where everything is risky for the soul, where God is often forgotten, and where predominate bad example, pernicious sayings and happenings, human respect, disregard for the sacraments and for eternal salvation.

By entering the order you enter a haven of salvation, you enter the house of God.

In the religious community everything leads the soul to Christian perfection, assuring eternal salvation. Religion is the rule of life, is continuous merit of holy obedience, worship of God and honor to the most holy Mary, to the angels and the saints. Religion demands devotion to holy prayer and spiritual readings, exercises of virtue and mortification, care of preaching, good example, reception of the sacraments, and mutual charity. The Religious live in the presence of God, meditate on the truths of faith, stay with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, pray, serve God, performing good works and taking care of their own eternal salvation as well as that of others. They enjoy peace of conscience and divine providence, which never fails those who are at the service of God living in his grace. At last, they die in a holy manner sharing the life of the unintelligible, eternal happiness.

Dearest children, to achieve these goods you have to enter religion with purest intention, With a fullness of faith, and with determined will to persevere until death.

Pure intention requires of you to seek God, his glory, and your sanctification: it requires of you to enter the community in order that you may belong to God totally.

The fullness of faith requires of you to be aware of the special grace God gave you as well as of the preeminence of religious life in order that you may consecrate yourself with your whole heart, being ready for any sacrifice in order to achieve the great goods of so celestial a status.

Determined will to persevere must be the base and the unshakable foundation of the holy status you choose. It is better not to start than to go back after the start. No one compels, you to take the sacred garb; however, once you take it, never will you put it off, not even at your death; it must go with you to the grave. You will never back temptations of the hellish enemy, personal passions, false suggestions and snares of the world which will try to lure you back. But you will fortify yourselves by renewing your determined resolution to persevere. Arm yourselves with constancy and courage. Prepare yourselves for the battle against the contrary powers, natural fickleness, and boredom. Be aware of the apostle's saying: « An athlete who runs in a race cannot win the prize unless he obeys the rules » (2 Tim. 2, 5), as well as the word of Jesus Christ: « Whoever holds out to the end will be saved » (Mc. 13, 13). (From a primal rite of the taking of the Rogationist garb).

4. HAPPINESS IN THE RELIGIOUS LIFE

Dear youth, you have entered the house of God; please consider the following goods you find.

Peace. What is it? The most precious thing which includes sweetness of heart, stillness of passions, quiet

of the soul in God. Jesus Christ said: Peace with you! You find this peace in religious life.

Cheerfulness. It is the outcome of the Holy Spirit, the fountain of holiness. Owing to the comfort of faith, a true Religious is always cheerful, even in the midst of opposition; therefore you must devote yourself to the service of God with cheerfulness.

Holiness. If you follow your vocation, you will be holy. You entered the religious house, which is the fertile field of God's grace paying 30, 60, 100 per cent. In this place you find every means for your sanctification such as prayer, the sacraments, preaching, rules, exercise, care. Do you find these in the world? You know that the world is full of risks, sins, scandals, and that those who live in it are seldom able to attend to religious life!

Most affectionate parents. Jesus Christ said: « Every one who has left... father or mother... will receive a hundred times more » (Mt. 19, 29). You find the priests, who are both fathers and elder brothers, the superiors, who are fathers, the fellows, who are brothers. Is there any family more joyous, lovely, and dear than the religious one? Where do you find more union, love, and fidelity?

You are also provided with the temporal goods, by divine providence. I assure you that 'the necessities of life will never fail the house of the Lord. Bread fails so many tables, never those of the good Religious: the rich have wanted and suffered, those, however, who search for the Lord shall not be deprived of any good (Ps. 33, 11). « We seem to have nothing, yet, we really possess everything» (2 Cor. 6, 10). Jesus Christ said: «Be concerned above everything else with his, kingdom and with what he requires, and he will provide you with all these other things» (Mt. 6, 33). The Lord will endow you with spiritual goods, also providing the temporal ones you

need. O lucky youth, what else will you find in the house of God? When I told you what you will find, I began with the lesser: now I will go on to the greater.

You are lucky! You will find... Jesus, the bridegroom of loving souls!

He is beautiful, and no one can compete with him. He is rich, and we find everything in him because he has all riches in his hands. He is noble for his eternal generation and kingship! He is powerful, for he moves heaven and earth, and the universe obeys him. He is loyal, and he never fails, as men do. He is God, and he makes a sister consecrated to him a queen on earth and in heaven (Speech, Jan. 18, 1903).

Happiness springs from peace, but only Jesus gives it. You find this peace abundantly in religious life. Here the passions are mortified and subdued to reason through observance of rules and obedience. Here the soul lives in the grace of God, feels His presence, feels herself united with Him, finds peace, and rests in Him.

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Christian hope is a fountain of great happiness. In the world, people hope vainly, looking after phantoms, but hope often comes to disappointment, and disappointment to desperation. Religious life is unlike mundane life. The great hope of the soul consecrated to Jesus is God, who makes her happy, or better yet, very happy! While growing in holiness in religious life, the soul looks at heaven expecting to be united with God for ever.

Joy. In this world, entertainment bores! But how much the consolations given by Jesus outdo the worldly amusement! The soul consecrated to the Lord renounced earthly recreation, amusing conversations, theaters, movies, walks, utilities; she renounced everything for Jesus' sake... Do you think that our Lord does not know how to recompense her? He does. He visits her in prayer, in

Holy Communion; he makes her savor a thousand spiritual joys such as the religious feasts, liturgies, devotions, preaching, spiritual readings, elating her with a sweetest happiness. She shares these celestial entertainments with Jesus, Mary, and the angels as a thrilling anticipation of the heavenly joy (Speech, April 6, 1919).

I do not deny that even in the world and among married people there are elect souls, Who achieve eternal salvation with divine help. But almost all of them live unhappily because of troubles, responsibility, works, mishaps, and a thousand pains. Most of them exclaim: « Oh! If I had devoted myself to God in my youth! If I had foreseen what I was going to suffer, I Would have decided otherwise! Happy the Religious who live without worldly thoughts attending to their sanctification only! » The complaints of those who live in the world ' are too late!

Quite the opposite is the fate of a youth who answers the call of divine mercy, leaving the World to consecrate himself in a religious order. I will show you what this youth is like. He is like a small boat that the stormy waves rock in the open sea along with other boats, but an invisible hand draws and thrusts it to the harbor: the lucky boat is safe, but the others are still; running the risks. O lucky boat, enter the harbor. You are safe from the storm of the world. Now you are in peace (Speech, Jan. 18, 1903).

5. THE NOVITIATE

You are entering the novitiate. Just as recruits are put under military training to become experts in discipline and strategy, the novices are trained 'in religious practices to became true servants of Jesus Christ. Exercises of prayer and of ready, blind, joyous obedience as well as of charity, patience, and sacrifice's will transform the

novice into a Religious who will found himself upon humility, obedience, love of God, and zeal for his own sanctification and salvation. This is what the novitiate is all about (Speech, Oct. 20, 1909).

The novices will be aware of the novitiate as a time of preparation to become true servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, the king of eternal glory. Consequently, they will make use of the novitiate far putting their inner self to death. The novices entered the novitiate in order to die to their self, to be corrected, humiliated, to be poor and to be crucified with Jesus Christ all their life long. They will offer themselves, therefore, as victims of the divine love of Jesus' Heart beginning from their entrance in the novitiate (Rules for Novices. Oct. 4, 1909).

A pious priest of the Lord will be the novices' master. He will take care of the novices, training them in the holy virtues of humility, obedience, and meekness as well as in prayer and daily meditation on the Passion of our Lord. He will accustom them to mortification, penance, and self denial and to grow in their love of Jesus and the most holy Virgin Mary. He will give proper lectures, forming the novices in the specific zeal of the institute, which is the zeal for the great command of Jesus: « Pray, therefore... » He will correct the novices when they fall into defects and by infusing a holy fear of the little faults as a probable cause of relaxation he will prepare them for the vows (R.R.C.).

The Daughters of Divine Zeal novices of the Heart of Jesus will consider the novitiate as the preparation time to reach a perfect union with Jesus, who is the divine groom of souls, and will strive to become perfect brides and faithful servants of this king of eternal glory, who will make them share in his everlasting happiness in heaven. But he wants them to be brides of sacrifice, suffering,

love, and zeal on earth: the bides of a suffering, poor, humiliated God, crucified and immolated for the glory of the Father and the salvation,, of souls.

To prepare themselves for the mystical wedding of religious profession, the novices of I this least institute will consider the novitiate as the time qualified for putting their inner self to death. May they enter the novitiate as sentenced to death, as guided to the gallows of justice Where their passions wil9 be put to death in the midst of tears, mortification, and suffering. For them, the most holy cross of their beloved crucified spouse represents the mystical gallows; upon this cross they will find both death for their inner self according to the flesh as well as our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the resurrection and the life.

The new Daughters of Divine Zeal of Jesus' Heart must understand that their religious exercises and virtues begin with the novitiate and must grew with the profession till the end of life, when they Will be already true copies of the divine groom. They will be poor, humiliated, fond of contempt, dead in the hands] of holy obedience, pure in the melting-pot of suffering as well as mortified penitent, detached from everything end everybody, exhausted by work and sacrifice, lighted and blazing with the love for Jesus and his most holy mother, full of pure zeal for divine glory and salvation of souls as well as zealous for the most holy Heart of Jesus' interests.

For their august name of Daughters of Divine Zeal of the Heart of Jesus and for the sublime mission of the Evangelical Rogation the sisters of this least institute must be just as we have described above. The novices will be just as the sisters through the divine help which never fails the souls of good will. Jesus, the sweetest over and groom, wants them to be perfect.

To achieve this goal, the sisters will be hungry and thirsty for suffering with Jesus and for Jesus, for being humiliated, mortified, and held in contempt. They will do everything to please the divine Heart of Jesus and to destroy their pride, anger, attachment, spirit of simulation, and laziness of nature as well as bad passions, the results of past sins, and the natural ignorance of the mind. May they be fulfilled with divine light and wisdom (From the beginning of « Rules for the Novices of Oria »).

6. INNER DISPOSITIONS

« You must be perfect - just as your Father in heaven is perfect » (Mt. 5, 48).

Our Lord did not say these words to the apostles only nor to all the people without discrimination, because these words must agree with the following tremendous saying: «Many are called, but few chosen » (Mt. 20, 16). To the chosen ones he said these words: « You must be perfect... » You that I choose from the thousand to follow me, « be perfect just as your Father is perfect ». Where it not the Son of God speaking, these words would be absurd! And yet, Jesus spoke so to the elect, preparing the necessary grace to reach such a perfection (Speech, 1901).

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Because divine mercy let me yield to the strong, gentle impulse to leave the world and enter the Evangelical Rogation's institute in order to better attend to my sanctification and to the salvation of souls, I want to specify my resolves as soon as I enter the order. Since the call to religious life is a call to sanctification, I declare that I enter this institute with a steady mind of persevering and sanctifying myself. By destroying my old self and mortifying my bad habits I will live a new life with Jesus Christ.

Even though I am an unworthy priest, I recognize

that the sanctification I have to aspire is higher than the most pious and holy laymen's sanctification, and I have to long for it, making continuous effort to achieve it.

To reach this perfection with the Lord's help, I will train myself in the virtues as a true Christian, a true priest, and a true Religious (Declarations of 1907).

Besides facing troubles and torment, not answering the divine call faces the risk of getting lost. St. Alphonsus, who is a doctor of the Church, suggests that you should be cautious about speaking of your vocation, even with your confessor. Because any delay may expose the divine call to risk, he recommends that you follow it quickly. He quotes a holy father's saying: « To be quick, instead of loosing the rope fastening the boat to the beach, cut it ». In other words he is saying: answer the call quickly, and leave the world.

This is the duty of those who are called. On the other hand, the people who are responsible for receiving them have the right to look into the matter, to delay, etc. For that reason, before making the formal request for admittance to the order I strongly suggest you to make an inner steady decision of embracing religious life along with its rules and sacrifices. To belong totally to God and to be victim of his love, you need to enter religious life with pure intention as well as without ulterior motives, you must be convinced that being a true Religious means dying to your self in the midst of contradictions, inner and external mortifications, and self denial, it also means love of the cross, humiliation, and even being put off, neglected, and not loved.

Do you think that these sacrifices along with dying to your self are not the beginning of a true life and happiness? Do you think that the Lord does not know how to recompense his faithful servants and brides?

By entering the institute you have to leave off the « my character, » the « I cannot stand injustice, » the « I would break rather than yielding, » and the like, belonging to the world and to vanity.

If there is no sin, you shall yield to and through everyone; you shall be silent, approving of what your superior says, ever though you think that what he is saying is inexact; you must become like a humble, malleable child.

What a vast field you have for battling and winning with the divine help land your good will! What a difference between these battles and the worldly battles and victories for which the world praise you! And yet, you perhaps feared of idling by entering the institute! It is written: « Better... a man master of himself than one who takes a city » (Prov. 16, 32).

In this great battle you will be helped by exhortations, warnings, prayers, good examples, as well as by mortification and penance, that you will receive and accept as a tender child does.

28

In the presence of the new way of living, of the rules and of religious discipline, your miseries, defects, bad habits, anger, pride, vanity, attachment, over-confidence, etc. will stir, rise up, driving you to distrust, to react, to condemn, and to turn back. Besides; something more horrible will happen: the devil will battle tremendously, will stir your passions, breaking into your imagination, bringing sadness and boredom in your innermost self, filling you up with doubts; he will make your life in the institute painful by exciting your pride and by trying to overcome you by all means! Perhaps, he will make use of an unobservant fellow! What will you do in such situations? Don't you think that this battle will be harder than those you would have faced in the world?

I am foretelling such things to you because I aim at helping your good will, not at disheartening you. You will overcome these tremendous battles by being completely prepared, humble of heart, determined,, and fond of Jesus. Oh! how many things the love of Jesus teaches!

As to food and its quality, do not mind, because we take care of the youths' health; on the other hand, you will do your best to get used to the community food, and God will help you. If special card is needed in some circumstances, it will be taken with pleasure and charity, as we do for all the needy. Besides, you have to surrender yourself to divine Providence! Be sure that our dearest daughters do not take as much care of themselves as we do in order not to let them decay (Letter, Oct. 13, 1909)!

If you want to become a sister, I warn you, because I feel that your call is not a true vocation. Indeed, true vocation consists of being fond of humiliation, contempt, last position, under the rule of obedience; these things are sweet, beautiful, and a fountain of great consolation to those who are truly called; on the contrary, they are disgusting to those who have an imperfect vocation to religious life. If you were truly called to a life of self-denial, to a life of destruction of your will and mind, in a few words, to true religious life, you wouldn't have taken my words amiss, you would not get discouraged, you would have replied in the affirmative instead, accepting my words and saying that you were ready to everything, etc.

Blessed, dear daughter, God knows how dearly I paid for having distressed you with my previous letter, but your admittance in the religious community, without true signs of perfect vocation, would have hurt you and my community.

It may be that grace will overcome you later, and

the Lord will strongly call you to religious life through love for Jesus as a poor, humiliated, despised person, and longing to imitate him. As a matter of fact, this is the essence of religious life (Letter, Feb. 14, 1910).

7. DIVINE PREDILECTION

The predestination mystery is the most inscrutable among God's mysteries. The human mind gets lost in considering both the mysterious ways through which God leads his creatures and the hidden reasons for which he raises some people from the dust, while bringing others down from their thrones. No created mind is able to fathom it (Par. XXI, 96). St. Augustine said: « Why me and not others? » Why did God single me out to be an object of his grace and mercy? And yet, the predestination mystery is as profound and inscrutable as certain. Putting aside the school questions whether predestination occurs before or after the foreseen merits, we see that God humiliates some, while lifting up others; raises some, bringing others down; afflicts some, consoling others; impoverishes some, but making others rich; calls some to glory, singling others out from the thousand to destine them to a greater, sublime glory without depriving human will of its rights nor contravening his unfailing justice (Speech, April 27, 1888).

30

What a grace is religious vocation! It is a sign of predestination, which is not given to everyone! After the grace of baptism, the greatest grace God gives a soul in his mercy is the call to religious life. He could have chosen others, not you. How many youths in the world are better than you, but he did not call them! The Lord preferred you (Speech, April 25, 1920).

Religious vocation is a priceless grace not only because it offers great benefits and goods, but also because

it brings about a special predilection of God: it is the outcome of a particular, immense love that moves God toward a person calling her to perfection in the religious life. When God calls a person to religious life, such a person is an elect among the thousand (Song 5, 10). This predilection also includes a particular predestination; God, invites the person as He did with the apostles and disciples when He said, « Follow me » (Speech, April 21, 1907).

The holy gospel speaks of two Women (Mt. 24, 40) who were busy with grinding grain: one of them was taken away, the other was left behind. A great truth is concealed under the obscure words of this brief parable.

In its general meaning the parable shows that some people are assumed for eternal salvation, but others are abandoned to eternal perdition. The mill grinding meal represents the ceaseless work of the people Who earn their living in order to meet their physical, moral, and intellectual needs: it is the work which earns material and spiritual bread.

The gospel uses the singular for the plural, the individual for the collective in this parable. Two women, one is taken away, the other is abandoned; they represent those who are saved, and those who are lost. The former is assumed by God in his happy kingdom, the latter is abandoned to the power of Satan in the hellish abyss.

In the particular meaning, this parable makes reference to the liturgy we have just performed. Here, the two women represent two different groups: the laywomen and the Religious. The woman God assumed is the youth God called to religious life; the one left behind is the woman who remained in the world. God calls, draws, takes, and places the former in his peaceful, rich house severing her from the Babylon of the world: one is assumed.

The latter does not enjoy this predilection. She is left behind in the world, as abandoned to the stormy human fortunes: one is left behind.

My dear, you see how lucky you are for having been called by God to religious life, whose sacred garb you took today. So many youths, perhaps worthier than you, are not so lucky, for God did not call them; but He called you, a poor creature, to such a singular favor... You were in the world as a little boat in the open sea, exposed to the worldly risks, in the midst of a thousand distractions, useless talks, dissipation of spirit, unavoidable occasions of sin and defects. You were working in the mill, busy with earning your material and spiritual bread. As the mill goes around grinding the meal, so did your thoughts, because the powers of your soul had no point of concentration and peace.

Lo and behold! The merciful eyes of your Creator, who redeemed you, with his precious blood, perched on you... He who sees, the humble things in heaven and on earth (Ps. 112, 6) looked on you mercifully, even though you were unworthy, of so a great honor. He made you feel the strong call of vocation saying: « Follow me! My dear, come in the clefts of the rock, in the coverts of the cliff (Song. 2, 14), I will marry you on faith. »

Oh call, oh vocation, oh singular divine wedding! Let the luckiest woman in the world come here to see whether she may compare her luck with yours! Let the prettiest, richest, noblest, the most powerful married couples, either princes or kings or emperors come here to see whether they may compare their groom with the groom who called you, offering his love to you and inviting you to his wedding. The bride of the Song replies to this: « As an apple tree among the trees of the orchard, so is my Beloved among the young men » (Song of Solomon 2, 3).

Compared with the celestial groom, Jesus, the terrestrial grooms are wild, fruitless tries good for nothing but to burn to ashes. In the words of the prophet Jesus is the most beautiful among men; his beauty is unbeatable, because it is infinite; his voice is more melodious than the angels', and one intonation, one of his word makes the soul melt: « my soul melted when he spoke » (Song of Solomon 5, 6). He is the richest, the most powerful groom because heaven and earth are made by his word.

Jesus is the most faithful groom: the Lord has sworn, and he will not repent (Heb. 7, 21). When he gives himself to a soul, when he chooses a soul as his bride, he never leaves her, but he fills her to overflowing with new favors and new gifts, on condition that the soul remains faithful. Dearest daughter, please meditate on your good fortune, continue looking at this picture. Today you got married to Jesus, who is the king of 'eternal glory. Here we have not the splendor, the riches, the superb coaches and palaces, the visits of ladies anti gentlemen, as it happens when a noble woman gets married in the world. We have quite the opposite! Legions of angels, brightest spirits, witnessed your mystical wedding, singing the Idyll of this divine wedding and playing the golden harps, While the celestial Jerusalem was rejoicing. The happy spirits of the celestial court kept company with the divine groom, who told you in the shadow of faith: come, my bride.

The Queen of Angels and Saints, the mother of your divine groom attended the celestial meting. If any bride becomes somehow daughter of the groom's mother, you, who were daughter of the most holy Virgin for so many reasons, become her daughter for an additional, particular, intimate reason: now she regards you along with

Jesus, her divine Son and your groom, as though you formed one person!

Gifts, golden or silver jewels or diamonds shining for a short time, precede the terrestrial weddings; later they are kept in a coffer at mercy of time, rust, and perhaps thieves. Your celestial groom's gifts are unlike these. You can number them from the words of the virgin St. Agnes, who was enraptured by joy for the mystical wedding with the Immaculate Lamb and exclaimed: « He girded my right hand and my neck with jewels, adding priceless pearls to my ears. He put the faith ring in my finger adorning me with so many necklaces. »

Dearest daughter, these are the gifts you are adorned with by your celestial groom. The groom's friends... the angels, the saints, and their Queen Mary also offer their gifts. If you could see this mystery with your eyes, you would see the saints, the angels, the Patriarch St. Joseph, and Mary busy with your good; some of them praying, others obtaining graces, some others getting more favors, and your guardian angel whispering at the ears of your soul his best congratulations for your good fortune!

34

Now you are so rich, so beautiful, and so noble that the beauty, the nobility, and the power of the woman who was left behind in the world, at the mercy of the mundane wealth, are dust and mud compared with your good luck (Speech, St. Joseph, 1908)!

(1) Prayer to the most holy Virgin. O most loving mother, please help us take the holy garb with your consent and blessing as well as with the powerful grace of the most holy Heart of Jesus in the Sacrament. We are going to put on the holy garb with profound humility and holy fervor. Please help us wear it till our last breath in order to grow in your divine love, in holy observance, and in pure zeal for the most holy Heart of Jesus' interests (May 6, 1917).

CHAPTER II

ROGATIONIST VOCATION

I declare that I felt a particular devotion to this pious institute and that I chose it not only for my own upright reasons but also for the following ones: because it commits itself to the finest works of spiritual and temporal charity such as the rescue of abandoned orphans, evangelization and assistance to the unprivileged classes, and because this institute is perhaps the only one in the Church which is committed to the sublime mission of carrying out the command of Jesus: « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest. »

Through the vow obedience to this divine command of the Heart of Jesus' divine zeal, the institute commits itself to pray in order to win good workers to the holy Church and to continuously spread all over the word the vocation prayer, which is called Evangelical Rogation of the Heart of Jesus.

35

I recognize that a great deal of good for the Church and for the people may come from the faithful obedience to this divine command and from the propagation of the Evangelical Rogation. Such a prayer may, incline the merciful God to look favorably on this least institute, on condition that its members answer this particular vocation, with the help of grace and with good will.

I also acknowledge and declare that both my vocation to this institute and the benign admittance the superiors have conceded to me depend on a particular, merciful, undeserved grace of the Lord; therefore I am grateful to divine goodness and to my superiors' charity.

1. THE ROGATIONIST IDEA

At the beginning of his spiritual life and before knowing these divine words of Jesus: « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest, » a youth was immersed in the predominant thought of increasing elect priests, hdlg and apostolic men according to the Heart of Jesus by winning them from God through an insistent prayer. He felt that such a prayer was the best means to work a greater good in the holy Church, to save many souls, and to expand the kingdom of God on earth as it happened in the times of St. Dominic, St. Francis, St. Ignatius, St. Alphonsus, etc.

For this youth, this idea was clear and unquestionable.

Later he was amazed and absorbed after reading these divine words in the gospel: « There is a large harvest, but few workers to gather it in. Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest » (Mt. 9, 37). When he became a priest, he deemed that the foundation of a male and a female order that would commit themselves by vow of obedience to the command of Jesus: « Pray, therefore... », would please the Heart of Jesus and the most holy Virgin, besides being a fountain of great benefits.

36

The Orders should be committed to the following three concerns:

1. To pray every day to the adorable Heart of Jesus, the most holy Virgin Mary, St. Joseph, the angels, and the saints to win numerous holy priests and workers (1) for the holy Church, for the people and the nations of the world, and to win extraordinary holy vocations for the seminaries, the religious orders, and the dioceses.

2. To widely spread the spirit of this prayer all over the world in honor and in compliance with the divine command.

3. To be workers of the mystical harvest for the spiritual and temporal good of the people within the sphere of their activity.

Following this fixed idea the poor priest examined the religious communities and the religious orders existing in the Church, as well as those that were being formed; he was amazed that no religious order had picked up that divine word from the mouth of our Lord Jesus Christ; that command had almost passed unnoticed.

After reflecting on the gospel he reasoned that these words are words of Jesus Christ and of supreme importance, and they are a command of his divine Heart's zeal and are proposed as an infallible remedy for the salvation of the Church and society. Consequently that priest - may God forgive his daring, - began forming the two religious orders that are bound by vow to carry out the divine command through the three concerns mentioned above.

37

Several years have passed since' he began forming these orders.

The male order consists of a few priests, brothers, and young students who are candidates for the priesthood or religious life. They are called Rogationists of the Heart of Jesus; this name originates from the Latin word Rogate, which means to pray.

The female order consists of sisters who are called Daughters of Divine Zeal of the Heart of Jesus, because the divine command to pray for vocations originated from the Heart of Jesus' zeal.

These Religious wear a badge with a red heart printed

on it reading, « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest » (2) (Rules for founders, etc.).

You have picked up from the adorable mouth of Jesus Christ and from his divine Heart these words, which hold the secret of the peoples' and the nations' salvation: « Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest. » Two Evangelists have registered these words in the gospel. Thousand of religious orders have devoutly studied the divine book singling out a verse, a saying, a command, a counsel, choosing them as the foundation stone of their rules, but it seems as though our Lord Jesus had concealed that sublime word, that command under his hand, and no one noticed it until our adorable Savior revealed it to the poorest among his creatures. He showed it, made it resound in your ears, had it printed in your heart and on your chest along with his wounded, blazing heart.

Oh! Please profit by such a great and inexpressible predilection. Make use of it incessantly; lift up your implorant hands to heaven and wail so that heaven unfold; pour out the just, and let the earth blossom the saviors. Wave this sacred banner; the more you raise to the owner of the mystical harvest this prayer that our Lord Jesus Christ commanded, preserved for our times, and entrusted to you, the more the good evangelical workers will increase on earth and the mystical harvest of souls will be saved.

Sublime, divine is the mission that the free distributor of his gifts entrusted to you. If you are faithful, it will draw the blessings of God and of humankind upon you (Speech, St. Joseph, 1908).

2. THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES

Living together under a rule of holy charity, in obedience, poverty, and chastity as our Lord Jesus Christ counseled, the saints practiced, and the Church ratified, is a great means of sanctification. This union brings many benefits: it helps us to carry out God's aim, to fulfill His divine will, to do good for ourselves and others, to be holy and to attain salvation.

The world understood both this truth and need, and invented the saying, « union is strength. » Hence societies, administrations, companies, and factories... developed. If the world forms these associations in order to attain a temporal goal, with greater reason those having more important goals are bound in duty to reach them by forming community.

Applying the saying, « union is strength » , we say: union of souls living together with religious vows and mutual love in the service of God is a great, powerful, spiritual, invincible strength. A community of faithful followers of the rule is a strength, a bastion, a company which battles with spiritual weapon, gaining plenty of victories!

39

This spiritual power is based on Jesus' saying: « Where two or three gather together in my name, I am there with them » (Mt. 18, 20). If Jesus Christ is with us, does it matter that we are few? Not at all. This kind of fortress does not depend on numbers. Jesus Christ said that two or three persons who gather in his name, who are strict followers of his word, who are lovers of him, are enough! He is with them!

Oh! What a great consolation this statement brings to us! We are a little, an insignificant flock, but Christ is saying to us, « Do not be afraid, little flock (Lc. 12, 32; as long as you are with me, I am with you! » And if God

is with us, who can be against (Ram. 8. 31)? (Speech, April 21, 1925).

By committing ourselves to the service of our Lord, by pleasing him in everything, by glorifying him through our sanctification and the sanctification of our neighbor, we draw God's continuous blessings upon the institute and the communities, which will grow from nothing, becoming fruitful trees in the holy Church. To be specific, with all my heart I exhort you to beware of any sin, even the least one! If by human weakness or by surprise, a person happens to sin or to be at fault, she must not become disheartened or lose confidence, following the devil's suggestion; on the contrary, with quiet humility and pious confidence she must rise, beg pardon from the adorable Heart of Jesus, whose mercy is infinite, apply a remedy (if it is necessary), go to confession, and recommence the practice of virtues with renewed energy, always imploring God's help. Thus, the soul groves in the holy fear of God, who is the foundation of all wisdom, since no wisdom is better than the one that prevents us from offending God, even in the least (Letter, Feb. 13, 1922).

40

Blessed daughters, you see how many small trees are rising in the Church of our Lord; they take different shapes, but all of them are beautiful. They give new fruits for Jesus and souls... Who knows whether divine mercy wants to bless this seed, this little grain, making it grow in the holy Church's garden! Due to my sins and defects, I am unworthy of so much; you, however, pray the Lord to continue giving you the means of sanctification that he has granted until now.

If you zealously practice holy virtues, especially the daily little ones; if you love your rule, your name, and

your emblem, we have ground to hope that the little seed will fructify.

Pray to the Lord of the harvest: this is your emblem. Persevere praying to him, letting the spirit of this prayer grow in you, for it is fecund, and will produce much good. Those who win good workers to the holy Church will be rewarded (Letter, May 13, 1889).

3. RULE BOTH FLEXIBLE... AND RIGOROUS

I accept the two postulants you proposed... However, I let you know that I am going to put them to the test, with your approval, because we must be sure that they are apt and have the vocation for the regular discipline. A person may be a pious, good, devout, excellent woman, and at the same time she may be unqualified for a religious community, still less for a nascent community, Where the sacrifices are double. Likewise double are the merits of the first members, who are like the foundresses.

41

Even though my institute's rule is not rigorous, we are seriously concerned about obedience, respect and subjection to the superior, education and mutual fine manners, and exact fulfillment of one's own duty. We require that the youths be detached from everything, even from personal devotions, being ready for self-denial. In short, the rule is moderate in its external penance, but it is severe about the formation of interior virtues. We inform the candidates for religious life about it beforehand, because being dismissed for lack of observance is painful for a postulant who has entered the institute with fervor: furthermore, their leaving often results in prejudice to the institute, because the former candidates say that they were not to blame for their leaving (of course!), but it was the fault of the institute, Which made it impossible to remain. Thus, vocations are discouraged.

Experience has taught me all this; so, when the postulants request admission into the order I meet with them and question them so as to form an idea from the whole. I am not appeased by their so many declarations and promises. It is obvious that we can be mistaken; for this reason we receive the petitioners for one year as aspirants, another year as postulants, and two more years as novices (Letter, Aug. 28, 1902).

4. ROGATIONIST VOW

This year, Jesus in the Holy Sacrament will teach you another thing. Last year he taught you how to live as faithful subjects in his little kingdom, giving you the gift of persevering in his service, when others abandoned it. His title being the Highest Pontiff (3) this year, he will teach you how to fulfill the great mission of winning good workers for the holy Church. Our Lord Jesus Christ is so kind and merciful that he entrusts you, who are humble and poor creatures, with this sacred, sublime task. Really, it is a divine mission! The point is that a miserable little poor creature becomes a mother of innumerable souls; furthermore, she reaches a greater glory by spiritually begetting priests to the holy Church!

42

I feel myself confused, full of admiration toward divine goodness! It has been since yesterday that I am being enlightened about your vocation. Our Lord Jesus Christ's command: « Pray, therefore » , etc., which adorns your poor garb of Little Poor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, shows the aim of your vocation. You must pray to win the good workers for the holy Church, and work to win them... We will not be satisfied by prayer alone, so we will combine work with prayer: we will combine prayer with an active life, always aiming at winning good workers for the holy Church.

My dear daughters, the most beautiful field of perfect, charitable works is open before you. If the good Jesus does not look at my sins, but blesses you, your vocation is formed and the zeal is heady, the zeal for the interests of Jesus' Heart who demands prayer to win good workers for the holy Church, which fulfills the fourth vow. « The zeal of your house, God, burns in me like a fire » (John 2, 17).

Whether contemplating or working, the Little Poor of the Heart of Jesus will be always aware of this aim. In the choir she will implore God to send out good workers to the hilly Church; in her teaching the orphans, she will teach the prayer for winning the good workers; in her begging she will wear on her chest the badge reading, « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest »; and when people ask the meaning of the reading, she will explain it and spread the vocation prayer.

The Little Poor of the Heart of Jesus will do more: taking from her collection of alms and from her work only what is necessary to live a really poor life, she will use the surplus to help the needy clerics and to form the sacred patrimonies for them. (4) Really, this is a divine mission and a great revelation that the most holy Heart of Jesus has given to four or five prior creatures in his mercy and charity.

Blessed daughters, this is the enlightenment about your vocation that the Lord gave me yesterday, after so many years of darkness, while we were dedicating the title Highest Pontiff to him, who is the eternal chief of the priests.

Now I have nothing else to say to you but to exhort you to pray always so that we may Meet the divine will perfectly (Letter, July 2, 1888).

5. BUILDING STONES, NOT ROOM FURNITURE

The divine Hearts of Jesus and Mary long for generous souls.

Forming a religious community is an effective means to foster God's glory and the salvation of souls. Because union is strength, the formation of a religious community makes hell shudder, but the angels rejoice. When a religious community is formed, the first vocations are like the building stones, and the first members are, neither more nor less, the foundresses of the religious institute, sharing in the goad the institute will accomplish in the future (Letter, March 25, 1913).

Unfortunately, vocations usually happen to be opposed; but when it concerns a nascent institute, opposition is more passionate and more arrogant through various pretexts such as saying that the institute is not yet formed, that its future is uncertain, and the like. The people arguing in such a way forget that no institute is perfectly formed at its beginning, that the institute needs good vocations to be formed, and that they are working against the formation of the institute by opposing vocations. Joining a nascent religious institute sometimes is more deserving than joining a formed one; indeed, the first members are like the first building stones. They are the founders of the order; they beforehand prepare the institute's future glory. Through their work and sacrifice they lay the foundation stones, preparing the treasure of grace for the following members! Oh, if the people pondered on this matter, many candidates for religious life would prefer a nascent institute to a formed one, provided that good dedication and holy aim are sure (On Fr. Bonarrigo's death; « God and Neighbor », March 1910).

The people who joined a nascent community in the

period of its foundation are the building stones, not the room furniture. Since their sacrifice is nobler, their merit is double before the Lord; in fact, they prepare the salvation-home for the future members by building the ship that will save so many people. Any community which is formed had this beginning and these foundresses. At its starting each institute had generous persons who did not say that the community was unworthy of their trust because it was a nascent one, or that it was better for them to choose a formed community. I Had the first vocations reasoned so, the community would be never formed. Therefore those who had faith and courage to love, and who joined the unknown or perhaps despised community, were the foundresses; their name an memory will last as a blessing in the institute.

Now then, here is the nascent, new-born community that comes forth in the Church with this name: Daughters of Divine Zeal. The institute already enjoys the most elect blessings from the sacred prelates of the holy Church. But the community needs vocations: to grow! It needs generous, intelligent people who understand not only the sacred mission of charity toward their neighbor, but also the divine word that makes the institute unique and singular: « Pray, therefore... » (Letter, without date.

Let us remember the institution at its very beginning, the long period of work, want, and sacrifices as it is common at the beginning of such enterprises. More than ever it is at its beginning that the institute needs generous people who are willing to immolate themselves for divine glory, with faith and courage, daring to be the foundation stones of the building that the omnipotent arm of God wants to raise. Devoting oneself to the Lord in a religious order that is already formed is easy; but asking for admittance to a nascent order that is

nothing but an effort, an impulse of faith, a longing for, and an interlacing of hard difficulties, is hard. Only a singular, generous, priceless vocation does that. The first vocations are not fellows, but foundresses. How marvelous are the ways of Providence! Such souls are needed at the beginning of an institute, when nearly all the vocations shun and avoid it (Speech, Aug. 16, 1926). (5)

6. I AM BLACK BUT BEAUTIFUL

Our least institute lacks the saint founder (6) - mystery of God! - However, our Lord himself seems to have accomplished everything from the time he printed the divine word. « Pray, therefore! » - hidden in the gospel for so many centuries - on the forehead of this nascent institute, by a flash of his infinite goodness.

This least institute can say: I am black but beautiful. I am black because of the starter who hindered my progress and because of the contradictions surrounding me; but I am beautiful because of the shining reflection of the command of Jesus' divine zeal, the ceaseless wail of the prayer that I am spreading widely everywhere, and the most holy longing for seeing the holy Church rich with workers according to the heart of God. I am beautiful for the Sacred Alliance of so many prelates of the holy Church, who bless me copiously, offering me to God during the sacrifice of the mass; at last I am beautiful because of the orphans I am rescuing, and the poor I am feeding and evangelizing.

But so that the fire may continue burning, it needs fire (Letter, March 25, 1913)!

I am black, because of the contradictions... Everyone knows the serious difficulties opposing the Lord's works; humanly speaking, these difficulties sometimes seem insuperable.

The person who starts such institutions has to fight four battles:

1. He has to fight against those who oppose him, and the external oppositions such as censures, persecutions, and disapprovals sometimes coming from good people. Some of them say that the person starting such institutions is mad; others say that the work will come to nothing with his death, while the lack of resources, want, defections, ingratitude, a hundred difficulties, and vicissitudes make matters worse.

2. The starter has to fight with himself. He grows feeble, seems to fail, sees the enterprise as though it were unattainable owing to his spiritual weakness. On the other hand, the enterprise requires, strength, sacrifice, perseverance, faith, confidence, sacred enthusiasm, want, tolerance, prudence, longanimity, and dissimulation; in short, self-denial is to be practiced at any moment.

3. Meanwhile one fighter is battling by day and by night, extrinsically and intrinsically, by means of other human beings and our own passions: he is Satan! The battle against the power of darkness is so hard and tremendous that the apostle St. Paul said: « For we are not fighting against human beings, but against the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world, the rulers, authorities, and cosmic powers of this dark age » (Eph. 6, 12).

Satan fears nothing else as much as the foundation of a charitable or religious institution which aims at God's glory and salvation of souls. Such a foundation for him, is like the foundation of the Church: the anger and the fury which blinded him at the Church's birth return. What doesn't hell try to preclude the foundation of such institutes? To resist and overcome the hellish powers, people need to provide themselves with God's help, the

weapons of faith, Christian wisdom, prayer, pure intention, honest conscience, and wise counsels.

4. But a very surprising battle defies the institute's starter: it is the battle Jacob fought with the angel, with God. Even though the founder is nothing else but a weak, useless tool, since only God is the author of any good work, still God works on with this tool! But He wants immolation, and Jesus wants us to imitate him. Our Savior fought with the justice of his eternal Father when « he made his prayers and requests with loud cries and tears to God » (Heb. 5, 7). He did so all his life long, on the mountains and in the graves, immolating himself on the altar of his divine heart. In his terrible agonies, he prayed even more fervently (Lc. 22, 43); so did he while combining his blood with his burning tears until his last breath. The prophet had foretold: « Would anyone plead his cause? Yes, he was torn away from the land of the living » (Is. 53, 8).

God shapes the institute and its members through privation, wails, sobs, and sacrifice; with one hand he sustains the feeble tool, with the other he trains the tool for the fight; with one hand he gives the necessary help, with the other he bars additional help, often blocking the way with cut stones as the prophet Jeremiah complained: « He has blacked my ways with cut stones, he has obstructed my paths » (Jer. Lam. 3, 9).

In the midst of these troubles man comes to know his inability, his nothingness; he begins to distrust, to humiliate, and debase himself; he realizes that he is an obstacle to any good, and as Moses, he perhaps implores, « Lord, send anyone you will » (Ex. 4, 13). All paths seem closed. Heaven seems defiant, a thousand doubts call in question the work, as an output of foolhardiness and over-confidence, even prayer seems useless.

God seems to have withdrawn himself in order to punish infidelity, interposing a cloud so that prayer may not reach him. According to the prophet Jeremiah's saying: « You have wrapped yourself in a cloud too thick for prayer to pierce » (Jer. Lam. 3, 44). And yet, that is the proper time to wail and sob before divine mercy from the profound abyss of one's own misery, « for we do not know how we ought to pray; the Spirit himself pleads with God for us, in groans that words cannot express » (Rom. 8, 26).

That is the time to uphold God's wise delays: « Cling to him and do not leave him » (Eccl. 2, 3); this is the proper time to endure the mysterious battle for self annihilation, the time of wails, sobs, petitions, and any sacrifice so that these words of the Psalmist, « put your hope in Yahweh, be strong, let your heart be bold » (Ps. 27, 14) may come true.

At last, the fight with the angel finds with a strong embrace, but Jacob states, « I will not let you go, unless you bless me » (Gen. 32, 26). The event comes to terms with copious, divine blessings, which re as much abundant as long and hard is the mysterious fight.

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It was God who was planting, not people (Precious Adhesions, pages 6-8).

The four difficulties, which surrounded this little charitable institute since its start, have been growing, always with more complication of things and the interlacing of circumstances. The institute has been surrounded by a vortex of tribulations which brought it at the point of death a hundred times before being completely born. How many times I felt myself exclaiming, « the waters went over my head; I said: I am lost » (Jer. Lam. 3, 54)... We continued sailing in the open sea in the midst of light and darkness when, in a few years, besides lack of resources,

desertions, and misunderstanding, the tide of the torments, oppositions, and difficulties climbed so high that the shipwreck seemed impending and unavoidable. I said with the prophet: « have stepped into deep water and the waves are washing over me » (Ps. 69, 2). (Precious Adhesions, 1903, pages 6-8).

By grace of God, faith began to prevail. I said: if we seek God and immolate ourselves for the good of souls, for good results, for sanctification, and salvation, the Lord will provide for everything. Piety, prayer, meditation, work, special and effective devotions, which we label devout, new, singular, fecund industries, were the pious institute's great resources in those events. We hope that they will continue (Precious Adhesions, page 6).

When everything in our enterprises seems to be upside down, the only comfort is submission to divine will, which guides everything to good results, even though we do not understand. The people who have experienced it know how dearly one pays for being submissive. In my case a circumstance made the cup more bitter; I had to submit myself to the idea of losing the aim of an institute which is committed to the most holy, celestial command: « Pray, therefore »; I had to refold the sacred banner which makes the most holy Heart of Jesus' tender utterance shine and to which the salvation of souls is very likely connected through the shortest, surest way (Preface to Precious Adhesions, 1903).

If this community along with the whole institute did not go to ruin; if the little plant tossed by the storm still exists, it is mostly due to some faithful people who practiced holy virtues with perseverance, giving assistance and obeying for Jesus' sake. The Lord requires many sacrifices in this pious institute's foundation, owing perhaps to its great destiny!

Blessed daughters, meantime you rouse your spirit, attend to your sanctification, be zealous for divine glory and salvation of souls, praying fervently to win the good workers to the holy Church and being sure that Jesus Christ will comfort and console you (Letter, Sept. 9, 1888).

NOTES

¹ « Asking God for sending out workers to the holy Church means imploring that he send priests according to his heart as well as male and female Religious, lay people full of God's spirit and zealous for the salvation of souls. For instance, it is obvious that the following people are holy workers in the mystical harvest: the educators of youth; parents taking care of their children's Christian and civil education, wealthy persons investing money for God's glory and the goad of souls, Catholic journalists fighting for holy religion within proper limits, any one cooperating with funds or prayer or individual holiness for Gads glory and the goad of souls. »

² Here our padre is simplifying and synthesizing; in fact, we know how many sorrows he endured and how many tears he shed for the foundation of the twin orders; even their names were the outcome of long reflections and prayers (See VITALE, « Fr. M. Hannibal Di Francia etc. », pages 154-155).

³ This Is the Eucharistic title of 1888; in 1887 the title was King.

⁴ Our padre was writing in 1888, when the Rogationists order was not yet born.

⁵ Obviously, now our orders are not at their start any longer, but if we are faithful and generous, the grace of the beginning will be also granted to us. Let us read St. Theresa's idea on this topic: « I often hear some people say that at the religious orders' beginning God granted more graces to the saints founders. That is true; however, we cannot help realizing that the living are the foundation of the new generations. If we and our successors will imitate the fervor of the previous Religious, the institute will always stand firm. Does the predecessors' holiness matter to me, if I am so miserable as to ruin the house through my bad habits? It is obvious that the new comers follow more the pattern of those who are living than the pattern of those who are dead. It's odd putting the blame on the

fact that I am not one of the first! Why don't I think of my life and virtues as being very far from the life and virtues of those who received such graces? » (Foundations, chapter IV, n. 6).

(6) No one will have himself deceived by our padre's own testimony. He is speaking of himself, but... no one is a judge for himself!

(7) You can imagine how much the enemy of any good was displeased by seeing the great word picked up from the gospel and submitted to the attention of the Christian people as well as by seeing two religious orders committed to the most holy mission of spreading it and making the people know, love, and obey the divine command. Furthermore, to fulfill this divine command these Religious take a specific vow, praying fervently every day in order to win from divine mercy copious and holy priests to the Church! Satan sees the beginning of his kingdom's destruction in the spreading of this divine prayer commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the why he hurled himself on these humble institutions! Persecutions fell upon us from everywhere! Countless tricks and hellish snares tried to impede, and to trouble our vocations, to present us in a bad light, to estrange friendship from us, and make us fail in our undertaking through a thousand gloomy purposes, always aiming at destroying the institutes! Such a hellish fight is continuing! » (Rules for Confounders).

CHAPTER III

LOVE FOR JESUS AND MARY

To reciprocate the great divine mercy, with the help of grace and my own good will, I declare that I will devote myself to the practice of the religious virtues, especially the ones forming « inner life », such as:

1. Humility of heart. Through the practice of this virtue I will be always aware of being nothing, and the last among the order's fellow-members.

2. Constant practice of divine presence and love. The only aim in my actions and life will be Jesus: loving Jesus as much as he deserves, sighing for him, pleasing him in everything, and belonging to Jesus with the most fervent love, and with the perfect union of his and my will. Through lively faith I will contemplate Jesus in the Innermost depth of my heart where he dwells, urges me to love him, asks for love, attracts me, longs for being one with me, and grieves so much every time I do not make up for my faults.

I will listen to him talking in my spirit, asking for souls, and for sacrifice out of love for him and for souls. By only pronouncing the name of Jesus I will be aware of his presence. It will revive my motives to love him by recalling to mind the following: that he created, redeemed, and called me; that he has granted me so many favors; that I belong to him as a priest. While pronouncing or hearing the sweetest name of Jesus, I will also bow my head.

3. After Jesus and in Jesus I will love his most holy mother, whose devotion forms a particular characteristic of this pious Institute, to my great consolation.

1. INTERIOR VIRTUE

The rules are norms governing the external actions; but unless they are joined by interior life, external actions alone are of little avail.

The aspirant must have an upright, pure intention of achieving his own sanctification for God's glory and the salvation of souls. He will be living in the presence of God, having Jesus Christ in his mind, in his heart, in his actions, in his words, and in his desires. Belonging totally to Jesus will be the only aim of the aspirant's life.

To achieve this goal, the aspirant must carefully beware of any sin, hating either the mortal or venial one in order to avoid causing grief to the most holy Heart of Jesus (R.A.).

Because external observance of the rules cannot endure without internal virtue, each congregant will seek to attain spiritual union with God. They will endeavor to be always in his presence and to please him entirely by doing everything for Jesus, and by seeking God alone with virtue and pure intention. It is necessary to be a person of prayer and penance, meditating on the adorable Lord Jesus Christ every day, mortifying the senses especially those of gluttony and hearing, keeping external and internal silence, and being detached from everything and everybody; even from oneself (C.R.).

To faithfully fulfill the Rogate's divine command and to become worthy of propagating it, we must work toward our own sanctification by practicing evangelical and priestly virtues, by regular observance and discipline, and by prayer and spiritual reading. To become spiritual persons we must mortify our sensual self sedulously, doing our utmost to achieve internal virtue and the pure intention of pleasing God alone, to be detached from any earthly

affection, and to devote ourselves entirely to the love of Jesus. Love for Jesus must be our alpha and omega.

While asking the Lord to send out good workers to the holy Church, we first must be good workers in the mystical harvest by looking after our sanctification, the sanctification of the people, and their goodness. As the elect priesthood of Jesus Christ in the world wish God's glory and the good of all the people, so also shall we do (R.R.C.).

Dearest daughters, I recommend you to answer the grace of the Lord, who is calling you to holiness. He is calling you to belong totally to Jesus, and to become the first stones of the building that he is raising. Because God makes use of poor, weak tools, He chose you, the poor; but if someone does not answer the call faithfully and humbly, He will reject her, choosing a faithful one. Please live in the holy fear of God: be submissive to all, all of you be submissive to the superiors as representatives of the most holy Virgin by loving and trusting them, by being united in perfect charity and sympathy, each one accomplishing her own duty. Read and observe the rules, leaving out no prayer nor spiritual reading. No one will live according to her own will, but according to obedience. Daughters in Jesus Christ, I recommend growth in the spiritual life and union with Jesus by humiliating yourselves, obeying, and working for his sake. Love our most holy mother Mary to the utmost, and appeal to the angels and the saints with faith and love (D.S.S.).

I bless these dear daughters each by each, recommending perfect observance to the rule, love for Jesus and Mary, mutual charity and religious virtues on the whole. May they be simple and sincere, avoiding any lie, which is the souls' ruin. Let them involve themselves in winning souls to Jesus through meekness, great zeal,

and sacrifice, being aware that they are victims for Jesus (D.S.S.).

The Daughters of Divine Zeal novices will diligently adorn their soul with holy virtues.

Considering how precious the virtues are, they will meditate on the examples that our Lord, his most holy mother, and the saints have given us. They will long far and struggle hard to become humble, for holy humility is the foundation of the virtues, and to achieve perfect obedience, the short and sure way to holiness, and meekness, which edifies and sanctifies.

They will be patient, silent, recollected, modest, fond of prayer and spiritual reading, finding their spiritual nourishment in confident, humble prayer. Disposed to accepting correction, they will be able to accuse and despise themselves, and to long for the last place and things as humble servants of the community. Always aware of God's presence, they will do everything with the pure intention of seeking God and Jesus alone, and of pleasing Jesus and his mother. They will be active, vigilant, diligent, and industrious.

While performing their religious duties, the novices will be recollected in the presence of God (From the beginning of the Rules for the novices of Oria).

Religious virtues and the practice of divine love will be the rules for the novices. To grow in the love of Jesus, supreme goodness, they will do and suffer everything for his sake. They will think of him, meditate on his life, his Passion, his death, and on the mysteries of his infinite love. Always keeping in mind the adorable, divine Savior they will meditate especially on the pain of his divine Heart. They must be loving souls. If they are, love will make them strong in their suffering, in their work, and in their immolation, leading them to the divine union,

which is the aim of their suffering and work. (1) They must always ask the most holy Heart of Jesus for his love, the love of the most holy Virgin, and other holy loves. The perfection of law is love. Happy is the silent, humble, meek, industrious, and diligent novice who burns with love for Jesus and sighs with love for him. Out of love for Jesus, and to grow in it, she humiliates herself, she obeys, she suffers, she does penance, she prays, and she works. She is aware of the least defect, is devoted to the perfect observance of the rules, as well as to the practice of the holy virtues. The celestial groom invites her saying, « Come my beloved, my dove, you shall be crowned » (R.N.).

Spiritual life includes works that are invisible to the human sight, but they are the secret of the priestly, episcopal, and apostolical action; they are the efficient cause of the most charitable institutions, the fire, which produces the energy, and the driving power which moves all things. Ah! Without the interior fire, which we call spiritual life, neither prayer nor penance, nor any relationship between creature and Creator, nor a loving union of the soul with God may be achieved. No redeeming word can be said to conquer the hearts, no truly useful, lasting beneficence can be accomplished. Without this fire, any struggle can be summed in this statement of the apostle: « I have become like one beating the air, like an instrument, whose sound makes a vanishing noise » (Speech, April 17, 1915).

What does it mean to be holy? God wants it, and the apostle put it in these terms: « This is God's will for you: he wants you to be holy » (1 Thes. 4, 3).

In the shallow view of some people, true holiness is always surrounded by severe penances, great manifestation of transcendental happenings, and first rate miracles,

but they are mistaken, True holiness is perfect union of our will with God's will out of love and with pure intention of pleasing Him. When a person reaches this happiest state, he longs only to remain hidden in God, and sometimes he reaches this goal without being aware of it.

To work miracles by halting natural laws is unnecessary for this person, because he has worked the greatest miracle by giving himself up to God. People can say that his glory is from inside (Ps. 44, 13), and he can answer: « My life is hidden with Christ in God » (Col. 3, 3).

Jesus has said, « every tree is known by the fruit it bears, and a healthy tree bears good fruit. » It follows that simple and hidden as a person's holiness may be, it is unavoidable that its clearest signs are perceived by people in the long run, and in some circumstances. Recollection, mind always fixed on God, human will always standing fast in the divine will, purest intention, chastity, and hidden holiness cannot help transpiring outside. The people perceive it in his modest look, in his gentle words and actions, in his upright, wise, prudent talking, in his constant patience and uniformity in the midst of the human events. The people perceive it always more in his loving, sincere, effusive charity, especially in his charity toward the offenders. If this person lives under a rule, the hidden treasure transpires through his perfect, scrupulous observance and in the prompt, faithful obedience to the superiors. Despite whatever effort, the burning fire of divine love cannot be hidden.

Elect and lucky people of any state and condition who are holding the fire of divine love in your heart, the Church says of you: « May your charity burn with fire and your ardor kindle your neighbor » (Speech, Nov. 5, 1907).

2. HUMILITY

Indispensable means to obtain divine grace and eternal salvation is the virtue or disposition we call humility.

A definition of this great virtue is as clear as it is simple: humility is quite the reverse of pride. Since no one likes to appear haughty, everyone blames pride. Pride inflates the person's heart; it makes us believe that we are so great and so endowed with understanding, and with so many moral and natural gifts, that we can do without teachers, and even without God! On the contrary, humility makes us believe that God is the supreme being to whom we must be subject, that our natural, moral, and intellectual gifts depend on God, who can, deprive us of them. The Apostle St. Paul wrote: « Didn't God give you everything you have? Well, then, how can you brag, as if what you have were not a gift? » (1. Cor. 4, 7).

Humility makes us depend on God, his holy laws, and somehow on those who represent Jesus Christ in civil and ecclesiastical societies.

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Jesus taught us this great virtue with words and examples. In spite of being and remaining God, he became a man submitting himself to Mary and Joseph, who were his creatures: « He was obedient to them, » says the evangelist. Later, he let his enemies take him to the tribunals, suffering affronts, derision, slaps, and even the infamous death on the cross in the middle of two thieves. He had said to his disciples: « Learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit » (Mt. 11, 29).

Divine grace, which is granted through humility, is indispensable to reach eternal salvation.

If our divine Savior degraded and humiliated himself for our sake up to the death on the cross in order to sweep away the pride that Lucifer introduced in human

hearts, and to convince us to be humble, how can he introduce in his kingdom those who do not want to be subject to his law, and to his divine will?

What are we, compared with the Creator of heaven and earth, but an imperceptible atom? What madness it is to set ourselves up above God!

My Lord, we humiliate ourselves before you with loving humility. I said with loving humility, because love often has the power to subdue the lover to the beloved with free, joyous humility, as we experience in the world. I said with loving humility, because Jesus Christ is our father and we are his children; he is so loving, indulgent, and benign with those who love him and are subjected to him as children are to their father!

Thinking of the times we have sinned against God through words and actions is a great motive for humiliating ourselves before Him. How many times we forgot, ignored, and neglected God despite the fact that he endows our soul and our body with so many gifts, and loves us immensely!

If we happen to offend a person who loves and helps us, we feel we have to apologize and beg pardon.

As for me, my Lord and friend, whom I love so much, I glory in being lovingly subject to my Lord Jesus Christ, to his law, and, relatively, to the ecclesiastical or lay people who have power over me. I think of myself as of a sinner needing and begging divine forgiveness from the loving God; kneeling at his feet I think of being nothing and in need of divine help, which I implore with clasped hands. I feel myself truly longing for eternal salvation, which I beg from my Lord Jesus Christ for myself, for you, and for all people with the most ardent sighs of my heart.

My lord and brother in Jesus Christ, do not dislike kneeling before the loving, sweet Jesus, who is our brother

in human nature, but eternal, infinite, omnipotent God in divinity.

You may consider how many personalities and how many highnesses did not dislike bending toward the dishonor of Golgotha, who practiced the religious devotions that so many people flee from as though they were suitable only to simple women and weak souls (Letter to the Friends)!

The preciousness of this virtue was unknown before our Lord Jesus Christ's coming. But when God-man washed the apostles' feet and died with shame as a criminal on the infamous cross in the middle of two thieves, humility became a precious virtue.

Some people think of humility as dejection, while it is quite the reverse: humility makes us grow and lifts us up to God. Besides being the death of pride, ambition, and arrogance, the passions that vilify the person, humility makes us kind, prudent, and agreeable. While arrogance makes us odious, humility wins everyone's esteem for us by making us restrain from boasting and despising, because it is mother of modesty and prudence.

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Since « God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble » (1 Pt. 5, 5), it is impossible to obtain graces from God without humility (Letter to the friends).

Even though we do not take a vow of humility, - it is included in obedience and poverty and it is the foundation of the religious virtues - even so, we Rogationists have to cultivate it in a special way. We must endeavor to be interiorly humble by acknowledging our nothingness and by attributing everything we do to God. Because our failures waste everything, we are always debtors to God for any good we accomplish, and we must show our gratitude to Him in humble words and behavior. Each one will love the last place, the humblest things, and the

vilest jobs according to the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ. When someone is reproached or admonished, he will not excuse himself but will humbly accept everything and amend; if necessary, he may explain his motives once. Each fellow-member will meditate, or at least be aware of the shame and infamy our Lord Jesus Christ endured in his Passion for our sins and will accustom himself to love infamy and contempt as the greatest spiritual goods. Submission of one's own will to the superior, and detachment from one's own opinion belong to the virtue of holy humility (C.R.).

Humility contest. (2) Even though this sublime contest is concerned with exterior behavior, still it fosters the community's edification and one's own sanctification.

To foster good external behavior, the people must combine it with the internal attitude of humility, mortifying themselves interiorly, acknowledging their weakness, and punishing their selfishness with acts of external humility with our Lord Jesus Christ's divine humility, practicing them in perfect union with the most holy Virgin Mary, and trying to imitate the great mother of God's attitude, she who is the humblest among the creatures. Till the end of the contest, every day they will ask the adorable heart of Jesus, the most holy Virgin Mary, the angels and the saints for a particular grace so that they may properly train themselves in this sublime virtue, which pleases the Hearts of Jesus and Mary as much as it disheartens and puts down the devil.

During the time contest, the people will direct the religious practices, the actions in common, the exercises of piety and charity to the holy aim of improving themselves through humility in order to please the most holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary as much as they can.

The sisters must be told that the aim of the contest

is to be humiliated, not glorified before others; therefore, the slaves of the queen of heaven and earth will make use of the holy industries to humiliate themselves, and to remain the humblest among all.

Advises:

1. During the time of the virtue contest, the spiritual reading in common or in private will be appropriate to the specific virtue of the contest.

2. The contest is not under pain of sin, and the winner is the person who accomplishes everything with more virtue, not the one who does more.

3. THE SPIRIT OF THE INSTITUTE

The spirit of the Evangelical Rogation's institute is the spirit of charity, zeal, and sacrifice as our Lord Jesus Christ manifested it in his earthly life and, as the holy gospels report. Charity, zeal, and sacrifice, however, must be founded on humility and meekness of the most holy Heart of Jesus, who invites us to imitate these virtues.

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We have to make continuous efforts to love God, our Lord and Creator, with a predominant, strong, tender, constant, fervent, active, compassionate, effective, and uniting love. Love of Jesus must be the beginning, the object, the end, and the mover of our intentions, actions, and observance: Jesus, everything in Jesus, through Jesus, for Jesus, and from Jesus. Through Jesus and his divine love we have to nurture the holy affections in our heart, along with love for the most holy Virgin Mary, who is the creature predestined from among all the others, the mother of God and ours, the mystical city of God, the masterpiece of his omnipotence; also the Patriarch

St. Joseph, who is Immaculate Mary's Virgin spouse and the Son of God's putative father; as well as the dearest angels and the saints, whose happy company we hope to enjoy for ever.

At last, in Jesus along with his pure love, we have to love our neighbor as ourselves with passionate, brotherly affection, because our neighbor is image of God, our fellow, and touch stone of our love for Jesus; love for God and neighbor became one precept including the law and the prophets as well. This precept sums up the Old and the New Testament, the holy Church's laws, the Fathers, Doctors, and ecclesiastical writers' works as well as the word that the apostles, the martyrs, and the confessors preached in all times; in short, everything depends on love of God and love of neighbor as of ourselves': this is charity, charity is God, and God is charity (Points of Rules).

4. LET US LOVE GOD

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God is infinite goodness, and we must love Him. He holds all perfections, beauties, treasures, which we are unable to understand. If we look at nature, we see a faintest image of the divine properties. Let us look at space: it is so immense that the human mind cannot compute it; still, God is more. Look at the stars: they are millions and millions and many of them are greater than earth a hundred thousand times; suspended in the empty space, they orbit with admirable order, still they cannot express how powerful God is, because he created there with a word and He is able to create as many of them as he wants. Look at nature: how many beauties it has! Beautiful is spring, fragrant the flowers, majestic the mountains, pretty the creeks, pleasant the fields, mysterious the graves, terrible the oceans: how much beauty and variety the author of them holds!

The virtues of the saints come from God, who is infinite goodness. He shows Himself to the blessed ones who see Him face to face, experiencing a loving happiness that differs from one another. Without lessening Himself, He rewards the merits of the elect by making them contemplate Himself for ever as eternally new, despite His being all the same. They love Him because He is worthy of being loved, not because they take pleasure in loving the infinite goodness. Even though He would make them suffer eternally, they would continue loving Him.

Now, then, if God is infinite goodness holding the wholeness of beauty and greatness, does He not deserve our love (Speech on the love of God, June 21, 1877)?

When we consider that God loved us with eternal charity, our mind is moved, our heart is touched. We were not yet born nor our parents nor our forefathers, and God was loving us. Neither earth nor the sky nor the stars existed, and God was loving us.

Do you think God was in need of us, poor creatures? wasn't He fully happy without us? Being all the same fully happy, God did not need us, nor was He obliged to love or create us; and yet, He loved our souls so much that He not only created, but also redeemed us. He made us in His image and when we lost His image because of sin, He sent His only son on earth to redeem us. What does this most benign Lord demand of us for his love? Nothing else but love!

Which merciless heart will deny love to God? Poor creatures! They love everything but God! And yet, earthly loves are vain, are nothing. Look at the, world and show me what God's creature love. Some love money, others clothing; some food, others property and wealth; some conversation, others glory and honor; some love creatures;

and with what profane love, transport, and passion they love them! Ah! The main loves blinding human beings are loves of self-interest and of creatures. How do they sacrifice themselves for the sake of self-interest and of creatures! They spend nights, face risks, struggle for a living, swear, work, and endanger their life! They declare to live for each other, to share the days, the pains, the sufferings of their life! People go so far as to idolize creatures!

But happy is the person who is penetrated by the sparkle of divine love; happy is the person that out of love lives with great transport, loving the Creator in creatures: instead of loving self-interest, he loves the king of all treasures, instead of loving vanity, he loves the eternal truth! Happy is the person who says to the world: « Treacherous world, you do not suit me! You have nothing else but tribulation and bitterness; I have drunk from your cup experiencing how bitter it is; I do not love you, I do not surrender my heart to you; on the contrary, I love Jesus, I want to surrender my heart to Jesus » (Speech on God's love for us).

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God! The eternal, infinite being that gave existence to all things; the pure holiness, pure goodness, pure beauty holding all things without being held, seeing and knowing everything without being totally known; the light, life, splendor, glory, truth, and eternal love! If a son must love his father because he is the begetter, with greater reason the people must love God, who created them from nothing and redeemed them from eternal death. For this reason God said: « You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind » (Lk. 10, 27). (Speech, June 13, 1898) .

5. LOVE FOR JESUS

Dearest children, I exhort you to expand your heart in the most holy love of the adorable, most loving Jesus our Lord. Oh! What results may youths achieve, if they do not feel love for Jesus (Letter, Feb. 13, 1922)?

Jesus dislikes cold hearts, but likes intimate, tender, effusive, strong, calm, constant love. Please love Jesus with great transport of will and mind, with all the interior powers and the feelings of your soul; be always fully aware of his adorable person and of the mysteries of his most holy life. May the holy tabernacle, which is the loving nest where his divine body gathers the eagles, attract you (Speech, 1906).

If you can do a favor to Jesus, the best you can do is to say « I love you. » He longs for and wants love from us. Let us say it, therefore, over and over again; when unable to speak, we will say it by heart! So that no moment of our life be without pronouncing such a saying, we declare that we intend to repeat « Jesus, I love you! » at each beat of our heart. Jesus deserves our love; why shouldn't we heartily reciprocate his infinite love by loving him with our little love? We say, therefore, over and over again with all our heart: « Jesus, I love you. » (3)

Daughters in Jesus Christ, let us endeavor to sanctify ourselves, because all else is vanity. The Holy Spirit said: « Where there is no science of the soul, there is no good. » Let us love Jesus, our supreme goodness, attend to him with one heart, one soul, one mind; let us look at Jesus, work for Jesus, zeal for the interests of his heart, worry for what worries him, and rejoice for what pleases him. Let us have no thought but Jesus, because we find happiness in Jesus only.

It is true that we face Opposition, contradiction, straightness, and troubles, but all these things are means of sanctification. Daughters, be sure of this: if you were in the world, you would be suffering tribulation and labor much more serious and bitter than the ones you endure in the religious life, but without merit. Therefore, let us be pleased with suffering some pain together with Jesus, our supreme goodness, who suffered so much for our sake! Besides, he knows how to reward even in this life those who suffer for him (Letter, May 13, 1889).

Today is the feast of the most holy Heart of Jesus; I do not know whether you applied and concentrated your thoughts on the importance of Jesus and his divine heart for a while.

If this precious sparkle of love for Jesus does not get a light in our hearts, everything is useless. The apostle said: « I may have all the faith needed to move mountains... I may give away everything I have, and even give up my body to be burned, but if I have not love, it does me no good » (1 Cor. 13, 2-3).

We must consider what Jesus is, his love for the people, and the happiness in loving him. But, pay attention! Loving Jesus does not mean to feel some sensible devotion or the pleasure of doing nothing else but staying in the Church; on the contrary, it means mortification, submission to obedience, avoiding sins, even the least ones, carrying the cross of labor, privation, contradiction, and suffering. Divine love, which brings consolation, is kindled in the soul this way.

You see how very important your cultivation of daily virtues is. The people striving for perfection are greatly rewarded even in this life because Jesus likes taking humble, pure, fervent souls as his brides. The tepid, negligent, stubborn souls are unsuitable.

The people willing to belong totally to the Lord will help themselves by prayer and by appealing to the most holy Virgin, because without her protection we achieve no good. Since the foundation of religious life is the most perfect subjection, respect, and confidence toward superiors, I recommend these virtues to you.

I bless you all; I intend to give a particular blessing from the Heart of Jesus to the one who, after reading this letter, will make the best resolves, putting them into practice (Letter, June 19, 1903).

6. THE MOST PRECIOUS BLOOD

By the Lord's grace, in our institutes we have always been devout to the most holy Heart of Jesus, to his most Holy Name, and to his most Holy Face.

For a long time I have been having a mind to combine the three devotions, which are related to our Lord Jesus Christ, with the great devotion to the most Precious Blood, in whose honor we say this beautiful ejaculatory prayer: « We salute Man-God's immaculate blood, precious money for the sinners' ransom. »

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On purpose I sent this booklet of the Most Precious Blood to this house; please take note in the calendar so that this devotion may be practiced in July, every year. (4)

In these gloomy times we can present our regards and homages of atonement to the most Precious Blood that the divine Savior of our souls shed for sinners with such great suffering; we can also present this great price of our ransom to the eternal divine Father for the salvation of the holy Church and of the world through plenty of holy workers (Circ., July 24, 1919).

7. THE MOST HOLY NAME OF JESUS

Feb. 22, 1921

Since Jan. 1888, about 34 years ago, we have been attributing a great importance to the petition we present on Jan. 31, a day consecrated to the feast of Jesus' holy name in our houses; this importance should never decrease.

Such an importance is based on our Lord Jesus Christ's divine promises, who said to his disciples, the apostles, and all the Christians till the end of the world: « I tell you the truth: the Father will give you whatever you ask of Him in my name » (Jn. 16, 23). On another occasion he said: « And I will do whatever you ask for in my name » (Jn. 14, 13). He also added: « Till now you have not asked for anything in my name; ask and you will receive, so that your happiness may be complete » (Jn. 16, 24).

Not believing these divine promises is not believing in Jesus Christ's divinity. Asking in the name of our Lord means asking through his divine merits, which can obtain everything from the eternal Father. By praying in the name of Jesus we join his earthly, perfect prayers which the eternal Father could not help granting; now, Jesus repeats his divine petition from the tabernacle, and we join them every time we pray in his name, firmly trusting that God will deny nothing owing to Jesus' promise. If we have to pray so in any time, with greater reason we have to do so on the day dedicated to his most Holy Name.

The feast in honor of the Holy Name falls twice: on New Year's Day, Circumcision of the Lord, when he was given the sweetest name Jesus, and in the first days

of January when the liturgy specifically celebrates the Name of Jesus. Owing to this, January is usually dedicated to the most holy name, which is above all names, in which we find safety, before which heaven, earth, and hell kneel.

This beautiful, beneficial devotion is among the main ones in our institute. During the mass we read from a booklet on the most holy name of Jesus, say its litany, and sing a song of the most holy name after the benediction. The solemn novena to the holy name begins on Jan. 22 before the Blessed Sacrament solemnly exposed, and the novena is preached wherever it is possible.

We celebrate the feast on Jan. 31 saying two masses of the most holy name, one low, the other high by permission of the Holy See. A most special petition is presented to the eternal Father on that day following the custom we began 34 years ago. The petition along with 34 requests concerning the best spiritual goods is conveniently prepared in January; through this petition we implore from the eternal Father spiritual good for ourselves and our houses in the name of Jesus; we also implore the temporal goods that are related to the sanctification and improvement of our communities.

The petitions we have already made, especially the printed ones, show how the new petitions are going to be formed. To comply with the precept of the Apostle Paul: « In all prayers ask God for what you need, always asking him with a thankful heart » (Ph. 4, 6), each request will be preceded by a tender thanksgiving for the graces we have already obtained. Every year we add or take away something from the previous petitions, according to the circumstances; by so doing we diversify them; sometimes, however, we had no need to make changes.

The Daughters of Divine Zeal must know that this great devotion to the most holy, adorable name of Jesus must be in force and fervor in our institute forever, dedicating January to his name, celebrating the feast on Jan. 31, and presenting the petition along with the 34 requests to the Father in the name of Jesus.

8. HOW TO PRESENT THE PETITION

The private petition we present in our semi-public oratories or in our houses or in our churches may use different para-liturgies.

In the oratories, after the mass we expose the Holy Sacrament for the adoration we do until midday. At noon, the communities gather in the oratory at the foot of Jesus, and a priest of ours reads the petition. AM follow the reading with their mind and heart, saying with contrition « Gloria Patri » after each request. At the end, the priest places the petition behind the altar-card and ends the para-liturgy with the blessing of the Holy Sacrament. « Te Deum » may precede the benediction..

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In default of our priests, we invite another one for the benediction. Should be this the case, the mother superior or an older sister will read the petition.

Presenting the petition to the eternal divine Father in the most holy name of Jesus contemporaneously in our houses is beautiful, pleasant, and of greater effectiveness. If the community has only a public church, the petition will follow this pattern:

Before noon the community gathers in the closed church to present the petition. If a priest happens to be available he will open the tabernacle shortly before the reading. If no priest is available, the tabernacle will remain closed, but the lights will be on.

If the church is open to the faithful, the priest will prepare the people in order to present a public petition, which may be one of those we have published in the booklets of the most Holy Name of Jesus, but he may adapt it to circumstances of time and place (S.D.D.Z.).

The following day we begin offering 34 masses to have the requests granted; the offering of these masses is private (Circ. Jan. 25, 1920).

9. MARY! THE MOTHER!

Here is the stormy sea's mystic star of our life: Mary!

The infinite wisdom of God met the inner needs of human nature by giving us the most holy Mary as mother!

The name mother is sweet, dear to the sensitive heart. Everyone feels a tender affection for his mother, because she conceived him, carried him, begot him in labor pains, hugged him in her motherly arms, warmed him with kisses, raised him, and raised him with the irresistible, effusive love of motherhood.

Besides giving us such a natural mother, God also gave us a more tender, loving mother in the supernatural order. This mother is the ideal of any beauty, grace, holiness, and love! By gathering in her the highest degree of beauty and goodness, God made her creation's masterpiece.

The Evangelist St. Luke (1. 46-55) reports the Magnificat, the inspired hymn Mary spoke extempore to exalt God for the gifts and privileges He had endowed her with: « My heart is glad because of God... because of the great things the Mighty has done for me. »

The most holy Mary's highest claim of glory and greatness resides in the divine Word's incarnation in her

purest womb by the work of the Holy Spirit. She conceived Jesus Christ, God and man, in her immaculate womb, and begot the divine child in a grotto at Bethlehem without lessening her virginity, but remaining always a Virgin. A virgin mother! Virginity and maternity combined together! What a supernatural beauty!

Virgin-Mother of God! Such a maternity's sublime glory exalts Mary above the angels, giving her a throne near the most holy Trinity. Furthermore, by becoming mother of Jesus Christ Mary also became our mother, mother of humankind.

Please check the holy gospel. Because of his human nature descending from Adam, Jesus Christ called himself our brother; we are, therefore, children of the most holy Mary through Jesus. The evangelist John reports the touching event of Jesus that, being at the point of death and making signs with his head to his mother in sorrow at the foot of the cross, pointed to John and said, « Woman, here is your son » (Jn. 19, 26). The sacred writers explain that our Lord bequeathed humankind and all the people as children to the most holy Mary in the disciple John.

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What an inexpressible testament of love! Showing the mother Jesus also said to John, « Here is your mother » (Jn. 19, 26). What a loving, lucky filiation is this one! While Mary is bound to take care of us as her children, we are bound to love and respect her as our mother! We are unable to fully understand how much the most holy Mary loves each of us. Standing before God she prays and obtains so many graces for us!

My dearest lord, if you happened to be saved from a danger or if you recovered from illness or succeeded in any enterprise or received benefits, all this depended on our celestial mother's love, even though you did not

appeal to her! Probably you happened to suffer because of God's plan. That suffering made you wish to lead a better life, owing to human events; however it may be, suffering cannot be avoided on earth; and yet, the cure of illness as well as patience and submission to suffering, are due to the most holy Mary's intercession (Letter to the Friends).

My dearest lord, do you want any flavor from heaven? Do you want to be sure of your eternal salvation? Love and entreat the most holy Mary. She is the Star of the Sea of our life. The Church greets her « Star of the Sea. » She is the rising dawn, the Morning Star, the Ark of salvation!

The Church's Fathers and Doctors affirm that devotion to the most holy Mary or even a sparkle of love toward this great mother or a tender look far her sorrows at the foot of the cross is a sign of predestination.

My lord, do you know what Mary begins to do when you endeavor to love her, to invoke her, and to pray to her? She draws you up to God, letting love for Jesus spring in your heart for your salvation; she enlightens your mind about the mysteries of faith, infuses humility and docility, lets you know and long for divine grace and for God's friendship. There arises in you a sweet impulse to practice our holy Catholic religion; in short, she gently leads you to eternal salvation (Ibidem).

It is a general opinion of the sacred writers, the Fathers, the Doctors of the Church, and of Catholic doctrine that love and devotion to the most holy Virgin is a great sign of predestination to eternal life.

The reason is that the most holy Virgin has been elected by God to be our mother and mediatrix before His throne. Oh! If we fully understood the most holy Virgin's motherly love toward each soul; how she longs

for the salvation of all; how she prays before God for the eternal salvation of each of us!

Her motherly love notwithstanding, our cooperation is necessary for we have to believe, love, hope, avoid sin, and observe divine law. My dearest lord, I exhort you to love intensely this great, purest, beautiful, immaculate mother. She is the reflection of God's splendor, the purest mirror of divine perfections, the powerful mediatrix, the benign, merciful lady, the queen of heaven and earth. God extolled her above the saints and the angels in the celestial glory for she is related to the most holy Trinity, is the first-born daughter of God the Father, the always virgin mother of God the Son, the immaculate bride of God the Holy Spirit.

Please put your eternal salvation in the hands of this great mother (Ibidem).

10. ALL GRACES THROUGH MARY

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« Out of the fullness of his grace he has blessed us all » (Jn. 1, 16). When St. Bernard the doctor ascribed this saying to the most holy Mary he did not limit her beneficent, universal action to the sphere of our earthly life. The most holy Mary's beneficent action transcends the boundaries of this world, reaching the happy souls of heaven as well as those who are in purgatory, making the triumphant, the militant, and the purifying Church enjoy streams of her grace and glory: « of her fullness we all have received » (Jn. 1, 16).

Besides perceiving that their salvation depended on Mary, the blessed of heaven feel themselves overpaid because they see and share in the celestial beauties, the sublime dignity, the virtues, and the incomparable glory of the great Queen of Angels and Saints. Their predestination

to glory is bound to the eternal predestination of God's first-born daughter; they, therefore, enjoy God through Mary. As to the militant Church, who can explain how all the people have received and are receiving from her fullness? Always and everywhere the most holy Mary's beneficent, celestial action represents the continuous, unfolding fecundity coming from Jesus' merits. From over 20 centuries the most holy Mary's beneficent action wonderfully displays her favor on the souls in purgatory: she enters into the dark prison and the tremendous fire to relieve and set free those afflicted prisoners. The sacred writers, many Fathers and Doctors of the Church as well as many revelations to the saints show identical opinions on this matter (Speech, Dec. 1, 1918).

11. THE SACRED HEART OF MARY

I would like to submit two reasons that show why the Heart of Mary is the most perfect.

1. The Heart of Mary is immaculate.

Adam's corrupt blood carrying the germs of the passions, as well as any passion coming from Adam's blood never took effect in the purest Heart of Mary: no feeling of anger, no throb of grudge, no move of wrath, no envy, not any passion ever defiled the finest delicate fiber of that Heart that came out of God's hands so pure and beautiful. Since the Word's most hilly human body was going to be farmed through Mary's blood, only immaculate blood ran through her Heart. Likewise since the Heart of Mary was immaculate, free from any breath of passion, pure, candid, innocent, it was also tender, noble, sensitive, and generous beyond all hearts.

2. The Heart of Mary was full of all graces and burning with the flames of divine love.

Human mind can hardly reach the full understanding of the abundance of grace that God put in the Heart of Mary when He created it: how many lovely touches, gentle charms God exerted on that Heart, how many tender plays, how many games God worked in the Heart of Mary. It is not possible to fully understand the flames of divine love burning in her sacred heart, nor can we comprehend the meaning of that burning, at whose comparison the angels' love is a sparkle. It is well known that when grace makes nature perfect, it regenerates it. Under the work of grace the roughest souls and the most indelicate natures became tender and sensitive; once entered into the heart (rough and insensible as it may be), the fire of divine love purifies from any earthly affection, elevates, deifies, and transforms the heart into a new one. What grace and divine love operated in the Immaculate Heart of Mary so filled as it was with God's love? To what degree did they make perfect the nature that God created perfect and endowed with the finest qualities?

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The bride of the Songs says: « My Beloved has spoken unto me and my soul has melted with love. » The Beloved not only made the Heart of Mary hear his voice, but he also entered it to gather lilies. « My Beloved, » says Mary, « went dawn to his garden... to gather lilies » (Songs 6, 1-2). The garden of the Beloved is the Heart of Mary, where Jesus entered for the incarnation, where he rested with his divine complacency pasturing spices and lilies, which represent the virtues, especially holy purity.

Created pure and immaculate, full of grace, and burning with divine love, the Heart of Mary was chosen for the dwelling of the eternal king; God could not help creating

it as the best, the most sensible, tender, generous, noble, perfect among all hearts (Speech, without date).

The novices will foster devotion... toward the most holy Virgin Mary holding her as their mother; they will honor her Immaculate Heart along with the Heart of Jesus, and will pray to her for the conversion of sinners (5) (R.L.P.).

12. TWO HEARTS FORM ONE HEART

Yes, two hearts form one heart: the heart of God and the heart of a creature, that is, the Heart of God-Man and the Heart of Immaculate Mary form one heart. We wonder how this divine unification appeared in the Son of God's actions on earth! If the Heart of Jesus pulsated with a perfect adoration of God from the time that it was formed, it did so not alone, but together with the Immaculate Heart of Mary. If the most holy Heart of Jesus made a continuous offering of itself to God during the nine months he was developing in Mary's immaculate womb, it did so not alone, but together with the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The most holy Heart of Jesus did not wail alone while lying on the straw of Bethlehem's grotto, because the mystical dove Mary was wailing together with him in her heart. Not only the Heart of Jesus attracted the simple-minded shepherds and the three lucky kings of the East to the grotto, but also the Immaculate Heart of Mary exerted that attraction. When our Lord Jesus Christ was in the carpenter's shop or praying in the mountains during his private life of about 30 years, the Heart of Immaculate Mary was spiritually joined together with the Heart of Jesus, working, praying, and sighing with him. When the time of his manifestation in Jerusalem came to pass, the most adorable Heart of

Jesus worked the wonders of his mercy teaching for three years; in all these manifestations the Heart of Mary was associated to his intentions. We cannot imagine Jesus and Mary's way of living as simply natural; when one of them was far from the other, both of them were sharing their life by communicating their thoughts. A proof of this strict union of hearts is found in the miracle at the wedding in Cana; but it is in the mysteries of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ that we find the Hearts of Jesus and Mary in perfect union of love (Speech, July 29, 1890).

13. THE MOST HOLY MARY: MASTERPIECE OF THE CREATION

All creatures somehow carry the image of God Creator, enjoying the manifestation of his infinite love..., but the most holy Virgin Mary among all creatures enjoys the divine love beyond all description because God created her more beautiful, more lovable, and richer with gifts and privileges than all creatures joined together.

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The most holy Mary's creation surpasses that of all beings because when God created the universe along with the reasonable beings, He was keeping in mind the most holy Virgin as His masterpiece. For this reason the Church applies the words of Wisdom to the most holy Mary, in the reading:

Yahweh created me when his purpose first unfolded,
before the oldest of his works.
From everlasting I was firmly set,
from the beginning, before earth came into being.
The deep was not, when I was born,
there were no springs to gush with water.

Before the mountains were settled,
before the hills, I came to birth;
before he made the earth, the countryside, or the first
grains of the world's dust.

When he fixed the heavens firm, I was there,
when he drew a ring on the surface of the deep,
when he thickened the clouds above,
when he fixed fast the springs of the deep,
when he assigned the sea its boundaries
- and the waters will not invade the shore -
when he laid down the foundations of the earth,
I was by his side, a master craftsman...

For the man who finds me finds life,
he will win favor from Yahweh.

(Prov. 8, 22-30, 35).

The holy Church puts these scriptural sublime expressions in the most holy Virgin's mouth, and we draw from it that she is the masterpiece of creation. When God created heaven and earth He was keeping in mind the most holy Mary, who was going to gather in herself the beauties of nature, grace, and glory.

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The beauties of nature are wonderfully contained in Mary. Beautiful is the sun shooting forward streams of light on earth; but more beautiful is Mary dressed with the Sun of eternal light, as St. John saw her in the Revelation: « a woman, whose dress was the sun » (Rev. 12, 1). Beautiful is the moon brightening with silver light in the dark nights; but the moon is the most holy Mary's footrest, « who had the moon under her feet » (Ibidem). Beautiful are the stars twinkling in the immense dome of the firmament; but the stars are the crown for the virginal head of Mary: and « a crown of 12 stars on her head » (Ibidem). Beautiful are the spring flowers, more beautifully clothed than Solomon; but the Virgin Mary is Jericho's mystical

rose surpassing all roses with the gentle fragrance of her divine virtues. She is the most holy Trinity's mystical white lily which appeared before the eyes of God purer than the angels. The beauty we see in the universe is a faint reflection compared with the beauty, majesty, and decorum of Immaculate Mary!

All the beauty of nature is contained in Mary, that is the least of her attributes, for she enshrines the marvels of grace, surpassing in holiness all saints and angels together. Many sacred writers are so assured of this truth that St. Alphonsus coils it « common and certain knowledge. » For that reason St. Bonaventure explains the words of Eccl. (24, 16): « I have taken root in a privileged people », this way: Mary has the fullness of holiness, the saints partake of.

Based on this certain doctrine St. Alphonsus says that Mary was probably endowed with such a holiness from the time of her Immaculate Conception, because she was destined to be Mother of God; to substantiate this idea he quotes St. Vincent Ferreri: « The Virgin was sanctified in her mother's womb beyond the saints and the angels. » The prophet David said that the foundation of God's mystical city, that is Mary, should be laid on the holy mountain top: « His city founded on the holy mountain » (Ps. 87, 1). St. Alphonsus explains: « The beginning of the most holy Mary's life should be higher than that of all the saints. » The prophet Isaiah expressed the same idea when he said that the house of Gad should be founded on the highest mountain top. St. Gregory explains: « The summit of the mountains is Mary's lofty position, shining over all the saints. » . What next? Talking with Mary God said, « many women have done admirable things, but you surpass them all » (Prov. 31, 29). Please note that all refers to the elects together, not one by one.

If the most holy Mary has surpassed all creatures in the gifts of nature and grace, it follows that she surpassed them all in the glory in such a degree that she is more glorious in heaven than the angels and the saints all together; I would say that the angels and saints' beatitude does not reach a millionth of that of the most holy Mary. We state the reason for that: the most holy Mary's relationship with the most holy Trinity is so intimate that she shares in the infinite glory. She is the Father's firstborn daughter, and he gladdens her with his eternal happiness; the Son has her as his most beloved mother, and in his infinite wisdom he shares with her the inconceivable joy that he enjoys in his Father; the Holy Spirit has taken her as his most privileged bride, and bestows on her the everlasting fire of sanctifying love which forms his beatitude in the procession from the Father and the Son. The most hidden, elating mysteries of highest glory are fully communicated to the sublime Lady of heaven and earth; to make a comparison, we state that the angels and the saints are like a drink from a creek of glory, while Mary, eternal beatitude, fills and gives joy to God's mystical city, like an impetuous river: There is a river whose streams refresh the city of God (Ps. 46, 4). (Speech, 1899).

14. OUR LOVE FOR THE MADONNA

The flame of love, forming the saints, is their tender, profound, gentle love for the great Mother of God, the most holy Mary! Such a love is in full accord with the love of God who gives all graces through Immaculate Mary, making her the love of all the predestined (Speech, May 17, 1915).

This little community's rule proposes devotion to the most holy Virgin as an effective means to reach sanctification

and any good success. May love for the great Mother of God and devotion to her form a chief point of this little order's spirit! Probationers, when the love for the most holy Mary enters our hearts, love of Jesus will reign among us (There).

What about a probationer whose love of the most holy Virgin is indifferent? Not only will he not persevere in his vocation, but he will also run the risk of going off course.

This little community will honor the most holy Mary as Lady, mother, and protectress, paying attention to celebrating her novenas and feasts, especially the Immaculate Conception, the Nativity, Our Lady of Sorrows, and her maternity, patronage, and Assumption. As to those of us who are citizens of Messina, the feast of the Sacred Letter will be at heart (P.R.P.).

The Rogationists of the Heart of Jesus will glory in the greatest devotion and transport of love for the great Mother of God, the most holy Mary, who is the patroness of the order. As much as they can, the congregants will endeavor to make the people come to know and to love the Virgin Mary, propagating her devotion and celebrating her novenas and feasts with greatest fervor (C.R.).

We must bear in mind that the eternal Father gave us our Lord Jesus through the most holy Virgin Mary; that Jesus gave himself up to us through Mary, and the Holy Spirit brought about the Incarnation of the Word by agreement with Mary.

Referring to what was said neither patriarchs nor prophets nor upright men obtained the Redeemer in 40 centuries, but the most holy Mary obtained him in 15 years. She was endowed with full understanding, wisdom, and the most elect virtues since her Immaculate Conception. She knew the situation of mankind, in need of

the Redeemer, ardently petitioning God to send forth the Messiah. From the time of her nativity until the Annunciation, she increased her longing and ardent petitions for the Messiah to come, unaware that she herself, should be his mother.

Now, then, if the most holy Trinity gave us Jesus through the most holy Mary, should we not obtain graces through her?

Sanctification means acquiring the virtues that our Lord Jesus Christ taught us, since these virtues increase sanctifying grace, and make us holy. St. Paul stated: « This is God's will for you: he wants you to be holy » (Thes. 4, 3). Earlier our Lord had said: « You must be perfect just as your Father in heaven is perfect. » Let us endeavor to sanctify ourselves, gaining great treasures of grace, which lead to eternal glory.

Mary is standing before the divine treasure of grace. Whoever loves, trusts, invokes, and honors Mary will grow rich with abundant graces by God's will, but whoever stands aloof has no hope, because the other exercises of devotion will fail, and perseverance will totter.

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St. Ignatius of Loyola once visited a college; to guess the youths' future he asked them about their devotion to the most holy Virgin Mary and from their answers the Saint found the fervid and the indifferent. Later, talking with the rector in secret he said: « The fervid will succeed, the indifferent will not: » History confirmed his word.

Dearest children, I know that you love the Virgin Mary, and I delight in it; still I exhort you to love her always more. St. Bonaventure called the Virgin Mary « entire reason of my hope.» In the « Hail, holy Queen », we too call her: « Life, sweetness, and our hope! »

May devotion to the Virgin Mary be a characteristic of the Rogationists, drawing upon them a special love

from the Mother of God. When Jesus reigns among the youth of a religious institute Mary loves them, but she loves more a community of dear children who besides devoting themselves to charitable institutions also promote the divine command of our Lord Jesus Christ: « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest. » Of course, Our Lady takes delight in it because she knows how this prayer fosters the greatest glory of God and the good of souls; therefore, she looks with particular favor on this community which is the only one having such a mission in the Church.

The little seed, however, needs to grow rich with holy virtues, especially with elating love for Jesus!

It has been many years since the hellish enemy is trying to destroy the best part of this pious institute of the interests of Jesus' Heart. How many times the institute has suffocated! But now the little plant of the ROGATE, which is more pregnant for the Rogationists than the Daughters of Divine Zeal, displays its little branches, grows greener every year, and stretches its roots underneath the soil. But which is the fecund soil, where the mats of the tree stretch and strengthen, making the tree rise?

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My children, the fecund soil is holy humility, and the perfect model, as well as divine teacher, is the most holy Virgin Mary... (Letter, April 1, 1922).

15. THE MOST HOLY NAME OF MARY (6)

Messina, Dec. 7, 1907

1. I have received your request for bearing the most holy name of Mary, august Mother of God, before the name you providentially received in the taking of the

garb. We are delighted in your pious wish, because we have nothing so much at heart as to put our dearest daughters in Jesus Christ under his most holy mother's special protection, as well as to see them adorned and protected by such a dear name. This is more desirable than any other, after the sweetest name of our Lord Jesus. We are sure that devotion to the most holy Virgin Mary, with her powerful protection is a sure and necessary approach to our Lord Jesus.

After obtaining information about your religious behavior and your work of charity and zeal, it has come to my knowledge that you fulfilled your religious duties, improved in humility and obedience, and worked for the good of souls with zeal and prudence.

That you may always strive to amend your life, improve -in humility and obedience, and be a more tender lover of the great Mother of God in order to attain Jesus, who is our last aim, by the authority of the spiritual directors of religious institutes we grant you the privilege of bearing the most holy name of MARY.

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From now on, you may place this name before your religious name in word and writing and you may ask the Daughters of Divine Zeal to call you Mary... in word and writing.

However, we reserve to ourselves the right to withdraw this august, holy name, in case you become unworthy of it, but we hope that will never happen.

Messina, Purification of 1917

2. I have favorably accepted your request to bear the sweetest name of the most holy Virgin Mary before your religious name...

May the sweetest name of our Mother Mary, who is our divine superior, foster your love for our supreme goodness Jesus, along with his most holy name, improve the holy virtues for a full sanctification, and be a shield of defense against the assaults of the devil and the human bad will.

Messina, April 7, 1922

3. With great pleasure I meet your request by granting the favor of bearing the most holy, sweet name of MARY before the religious name you have been given in the taking of the garb.

Dearest daughters, I exhort you to answer this grace as though you were receiving it from the most holy Virgin Mary. Please strive to make yourselves worthy of bearing it by imitating perfectly the most holy Mother's virtues.

Dearest daughters, please notice that this celestial name is granted to you today, April 7, when we are celebrating the feast of Our Lady in sorrow in the Passion week. It reminds you of Mary's faithfulness and love and of the disciple John, standing on Calvary at the foot of the cross near the great Mother in sorrow while the apostles were absent.

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Through this consideration our Lord and the most holy Virgin invite you to meditate every day on their suffering with great love and compassion. Only by so doing will you grow in divine grace, receive Holy Communion devoutly, observe your rules faithfully, practice the religious virtues, and become holy.

NOTES

¹ From our padre's spiritual notes that are called « My Lord Jesus Christ's Imitation » we deduce how much he strove to imitate our Lord:

Trani, Sept. 10, 1910

MY LORD JESUS CHRIST'S IMITATION

My Lord Jesus prayed incessantly with recollection during his tremendous suffering.

My Lord Jesus Christ sympathized, looked for, and loved sinners.

My Lord Jesus Christ laved, forgave, excused, and prayed for his enemies, returning good for evil, immolating himself, and rescuing many of them!

My Lord Jesus Christ was meek and humble in heart.

My Lord Jesus Christ was subject and obedient to the most holy Mary and St. Joseph.

My Lord Jesus Christ loved and honored his holy Mother very much.

My Lord Jesus Christ not only loved suffering and dying for me, but he suffered and died for me!

My Lord Jesus Christ longed and sought untiringly his Father's glory, the highest sanctification of souls, and their salvation.

My Lord Jesus Christ not only did not excuse himself when he was strongly charged, but he kept silent.

My Lord Jesus Christ loved the poor and consoled the afflicted.

My Lord Jesus Christ loved and exalted children very much.

My Lord Jesus gave himself for us.

My Lord Jesus was most frugal to drinking and eating, enduring hunger and thirst.

My Lord Jesus spent the nights in prayer.

My Lord Jesus wailed and prayed for the apostles' vocations and for the saints of all times.

My Jesus Christ was just with everyone.

My Lord Jesus Christ taught the truth without regard for human respect.

My Lord Jesus Christ was always composed and modest even during his incredible suffering.

My Jesus Christ kept even Judas' reputation jealously.

My Jesus Christ always humbled himself before his Father; he also humbled himself before the apostles by washing their feet.

My Jesus Christ spent no moment without suffering, praying, and working.

My Jesus Christ was poor, always loving, and practicing poverty.

My Jesus Christ was always gentle, tender, and attractive.

My Jesus Christ said only holy and perfect words.
 My Jesus Christ alternated active with contemplative life.
 My Jesus Christ observed the whole law, even the civil one, paying the taxes to Caesar.
 My Jesus Christ avoided honors and faced contempt.
 My Jesus Christ was strong, fearless, and constant in suffering.
 My Jesus Christ loved and longed for the crass life long; he was crucified and was immolated on it for my sake.
 My Jesus Christ was available to everyone; he gave himself up for me and for all people by his life, death, and resurrection; and in the most Holy Sacrament.
 My Jesus Christ did not reveal his innermost to the Jews, but he answered their questions properly.
 My Jesus Christ concealed his infinite suffering under silence.
 My Jesus Christ faced contempt with meekness.
 My Jesus Christ prayed to his eternal Father, bending deeply on his knees.
 My Jesus Christ endured and endures the elects' and the sinners' unfaithfulness and their misery with unlimited patience.

² To foster holy emulation among the Religious our padre devised the virtue contest. A poster announced the coming with one of these notices: Holy humility contest - Obedience contest - Meekness contest - Gently speaking contest - and so on. The congregants had to emulate each other in a specific virtue for a period of time following the poster's indications; Later the mother superior reported the results to our padre, who used to make the proper remarks to the Religious.

³ Let us make a copy of this beautiful love prayer: Jesus, I love you! I love you, because I long to love you; I love you to satisfy your Heart's desires; I love you to atone for the sins of the whole world; I love you to atone for the sins I dared to commit; I love you and beg your love for my poor heart; I love you and beg your love for all hearts; I love you for all the hearts that do not know you; I love you for all the hearts that are unwilling to love you; I love you for the coldest hearts; I love you in union with the most fervent hearts; I love you for the pitiable sinners; I love you with all the just on earth; I love and long for you together with the holy souls that are in purgatory; I love you with all the dwellers of heaven; I love you with Immaculate Mary always virgin; I love you because I have firmly decided to do so until my last breath; I love you because I desire to love you and enjoy you in paradise for ever and ever. Amen!

⁴ These sound devotions are being always recommended by the holy Church; for instance, His Holiness John XXIII talking of devotions said: « His first year's experience in the pastoral care has given the new bishop of Rome, the universal shepherd of the Church, the feeling that same devout, pious souls desire to start new devotions, new

titles, and worship under inspiration of local custom, which give much opportunity to imagination, but little chance for the spirit's concentration. We like inviting you to be familiar with simpler and older devotions... To enlighten and foster the adoration to Jesus nothing is more suitable than meditating and invoking him in the triple light of his Name, his Heart, and his Blood... Touching upon various topics, we have come to the Calvary where the name of Jesus is written over the Crucified's head in three languages. Jesus' Heart is palpitating in his chest, longing for the supreme sacrifice: Jesus' blood is bursting out of the opened wound, as out of a source unexhausted and inexhaustible for life and for universal redemption. At the foot of the cross we find two witnesses: the mother of Jesus and his beloved disciple » (Papal pronouncement at the end of the Diocese's Synod, Jan. 31, 1960).

(5) As a matter of fact, our padre erected The Confraternity of Immaculate Mary's Heart in Avignone's chapel and joined it to the primary one in Paris, and he ordered that a prayer to Immaculate Mary's Heart be said every Saturday, for the conversion of sinners.

(6) Our padre wanted the sisters professed in perpetual vows to join the name Mary to their religious name, but he granted it only after regular, repeated requests, to foster their desire; he also worded a decree of special privilege which stated that it was granted by the founder. The sisters were told to keep the concession as a great gift and to imitate the most holy Mary's virtues.» (VITALE: « Fr. Mary Hannibal Di Francia » etc., page 287). The Padre modified the decree according to circumstances as it appears from the above concessions. -

CHAPTER IV

VARIOUS DEVOTIONS

I will endeavor to be interiorly pious and devout, avoiding to appear so only exteriorly.

Celebrating the feast and novenas of our Lord, the most holy Virgin, and the saints, as we do in our Institutes, I will be recollected.

I will be affectionate and devout to the angels and the saints, especially to the Patriarch St. Joseph, St. John the Baptist, St. Michael the archangel, the holy guardian angels, St. Anne, St. Joachim, the apostles, the martyrs, the patron saints, the Celestial Rogationists, and the saints our Institutes honor, especially St. Anthony of Padua.

To my great pleasure I have learned that this Institute nurtures a particular compassion and devotion toward the souls who are in purgatory; I will foster such devotion by often praying for them.

I have also become aware of this Institute's pious and beneficial customs to join pious unions of our Lord, the most holy Virgin, the angels, and to affiliate with various religious orders to win celestial protection and spiritual benefits. While appreciating this divine mercy by giving thanks to the Lord and to the superiors' charity, I will join the most holy Virgin's slavery of love according to the spirit of St. Louis M. Grignon.

1. PIETY

What is an aspirant worth if he has no piety? He is a useless, unfruitful tree-trunk.

Without piety the aspirant is unable to develop religious

status, and is unable to become a good Christian. It is a pity to see youths who are cold and indifferent in the practices of religion, who have no disposition to devotion toward God and the saints, and who have no particular love for the most holy Virgin. These aspirants leave no hope for success.

Young aspirants, if you feel cold and indifferent to piety, please practice the religious observances, asking the Lord for grace, enlightenment, and fervor. (R.A.).

Remember that an apostle said: « Spiritual exercise is valuable in every way » (1 Tim. 4, 8). Piety not only includes the strict union of hearts in the common devotion to God, but also the practices that foster and maintains such a devotion to God, the most holy Virgin, and the saints (P.R.P.).

The congregants will endeavor to be sincerely and interiorly pious and devout while worshipping God and when honoring the most holy Virgin and the saints. They will nurture the most tender love toward the adorable Lord Jesus Christ, meditating on his love and his suffering for us every day. They will celebrate with devotion, with an intimate feeling of faith, reverence, and love the mysteries and the feasts, which the holy Church celebrates (C.R.).

The novices will practice simple, sincere, and fervent piety without affectation, scruples, and illusions, and cultivate the substance of piety more than its forms. Specifically, they will cultivate the following:

1. Devotion to our Lord Jesus Christ. - Because the novices are consecrated to the Divine Heart, they will honor it by meditating on its Passion and by fostering its interests. They will also nurture particular devotion to our Lord Jesus Christ in the mysteries of his Infancy, Passion, and Holy Sacrament.

2. Devotion to the most holy Virgin Mary. - They will honor and hold her as mother, specifically praying to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, which forms one Heart with the most holy Heart of Jesus, for the conversion of sinners (R.L.P.).

By faith, they will always see the guardian angel on their side giving him the precedence, and will be particularly devout to the Patriarch St. Joseph, founder of the Little Retreat, and special patron of the pious institute, invoking him in the morning and at night (R.L.P.).

Both superiors and subjects must be diligent to constantly improve the observance of the religious practices, beginning with the meditation on the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ in the morning, and the Last Things or divine benefits in the evening, and consider the inner pains of our Lord every day. We also must be attentive to celebrate the ecclesiastical feasts and ours such as the first-fruits, July first, the vigils, the monthly devotions, the most holy name of Jesus along with the presentation of our petition, etc.; as well as the virtue contest about humility, obedience, and mutual charity (Resolves, June 17, 1920) .

The Rogationists will foster devotion to the saints, giving the preference to the ones who are nearest to our Lord Jesus Christ and the most holy Virgin. Because the Rogationist institute's aim is obedience to the command of Jesus: « Pray, therefore,... », the congregants will be particularly devout to the apostle saints, especially Peter, Paul, and the evangelist John, saying a specific prayer to each of them on their feast.

The least congregation of the Rogationists must never forget that it is greatly indebted to the glorious St. Anthony of Padua for its economical existence as well as for many spiritual gifts; therefore, it will foster in particular,

a special particular devotion to this great saint, honoring him during the year, especially on Feb. 15 and on June 13 (R.R.C.).

So that worship to God and devotion to the saints may proceed regularly and effectively, we are obliged to observe the liturgical rules, making use of statues and sacred images. So that the Rogationists and their employees may enjoy abundantly spiritual benefits and a more effective protection of our Lord Jesus Christ, the most holy Virgin, the angels, and the saints they will join many pious unions in the Church without obligation of conscience.

2. MEDITATION

Christian, religious life cannot exist without meditation and prayer; both are indispensable for attaining enlightenment and help from heaven.

The Daughters of Divine Zeal will be fond of prayer, knowing that without it they will be unable to do anything good, nor will they be capable to improve holy virtues. By neglecting prayer they will lose any good, their vocation, and their own soul as well.

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a) Meditation and Communion

I heartily exhort the Daughters of Divine Zeal to be fond of meditation, because it is the main preparation to receive Communion worthily, and because it nurtures the spirit of effective prayer to win any grace from God; furthermore, meditation prompts the soul to reach the highest perfection.

The Daughters of Divine Zeal must be convinced that they will never receive a profitable Communion without prayer, that their existence as a religious institute

is tied to Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, and that if the spirit of prayer is lacking everything will come to nothing.

My daughters in Jesus Christ, you must understand that your individual spirituality and growth in holiness as well as the institute's temporal existence and improvement depend on your receiving the Eucharistic Communion frequently and worthily through prayer; otherwise Jesus will become greatly disgusted and will stop giving spiritual and temporal graces. Remember that your name is Daughters of Divine Zeal. But, can you be zealous for the Heart of Jesus' interests if you wound him with your receiving Communion unworthily? By doing so everything will end such as the spirit of prayer to win good workers to the holy Church, your holy zeal for winning souls, and you yourselves, will no longer be good educators of the girls who are entrusted to you. Oh, what a ruin the Communion you receive unworthily will bring about! If you neglect meditation, prayer will fail and sterility will result. (1)

b) Meditation and Prayer

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Both philosophers and experience teach that our will keeps still if the mind does not know its own good. In other terms, O soul, if you do not know how desirable and beneficial the virtue is, you will not ask God for it; neither will you endeavor to achieve it through your own cooperation.

We are pointing out that the effort of prayer and cooperation in achieving a virtue or a grace is always relative and proportionate to the mind's spiritual knowledge or enlightenment about that virtue or grace. If the mind knows nothing about the beauty, excellence, and usefulness of such a virtue or grace, it will never be moved to pray and cooperate. If the mind's knowledge about a virtue or grace is weak and only speculative and

superficial, but is not at all acquired by the gift of the intellect, the will shall move weakly and superficially to pray and cooperate. On the contrary, if enlightenment and knowledge of faith and the Holy Spirit make the mind fully aware of the beauty, excellence, and usefulness of such a virtue or grace, the whole will shall move entirely and effectively to pray and cooperate in order to acquire that virtue or that grace.

The mind's enlightenment and knowledge must not be a simple, natural, speculative knowledge as the following statement, for instance - virtue is desirable - because no one is moved to achieve the virtue by such knowledge. In fact, many people who stand aloof from God know that God may punish them in this life and after death for their sins, but that does not matter, they continue sinning.

Now, prayer or meditation is the indispensable condition to achieve this enlightenment and knowledge about grace and faith.

Daughters in Jesus Christ, please pay careful attention to the great importance of the connection between meditation, prayer, and cooperation in order to achieve grace, good, and sanctification from God. (2)

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As to the connection between effective prayer and cooperation in the spiritual order, please note: on one hand the grace sets the will in motion, and the good will moves along with the grace; on the other hand, meditation impels the will always to greater activity through the enlightenment of the mind; once the will is moved, it determines a way, with all its strength, to attain the spiritual objectives, through prayer and cooperation.

Prayer without cooperation, however, is as imperfect as it is ineffective. For instance, if a person meditates on the humiliations our Lord suffered for our sake, resolving

to acquire holy humility at any cost, and prays for it, such a prayer, to be effective, needs the cooperation of the person who wishes holy humility and prays for it. In other terms, this person has to accomplish what is necessary to achieve humility, such as humiliating himself in case of warning, choosing the last place, practicing the humblest jobs through obedience, loving and practicing poverty, begging pardon and penance for his faults, and the like.

This spiritual order is the same for any virtue.

By adding our cooperation we make the prayer effective, while our meditation moves us to pray and to cooperate (S.D.D.Z.).

c) Meditation and Perfection

The daily meditation is the first means which increases our awareness of the divine presence making it visible to the mysterious view of faith. It is the source from whence we derive both the principle for any action and the ignition for the enlivening flame of charity and zeal (Speech, April 17, 1915).

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To form the interior spirit and to perform everything for the sake of our adorable Lord Jesus, nothing is more efficacious than holy prayer. It unveils our defects and bad inclinations, makes the soul hate them and long for evangelical perfection, and for the kingdom of God, which is given to those who long and strive to reach it. May the probationers be fond of prayer, without allowing boredom, due to their weak nature, or temptation during the prayer prevails over. Jesus Christ said: « Keep watch and pray so that you will not fail into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak » (Mt. 26, 41). (P.R.P.).

My dear, we must be convinced of eternity, which is

waiting for us with a new order beyond the time and the boundaries of this mortal life! We are pilgrims in this world. God placed us here for a short time, to test and make us worthy of an eternal prize. Here nothing lasts, everything comes to an end, time flies rapidly; today you are children, tomorrow youths, the day after tomorrow old, at last eternity comes!

Millions and millions of human beings, who dwelt on earth long ago, took this course; they came to life, lived, and died. We are on the same run.

Who may exactly value the importance and the necessity of meditation on eternal truths? Meditation should be the daily bread of our spirit! If we did it, we would become like the just in the words of the prophet: « Happy the man who... finds his pleasure in the law of Yahweh, and murmurs his law day and night. He is like a tree planted by water streams, yielding its fruit in season, its leaves never fading! » (Ps. 1, 1-3).

If meditation is necessary to everyone, how much more necessary it is for you, O clerics. You need to grow in grace and wisdom as the adorable Savior did, gaining favor with God and with people. You need to sanctify yourselves and now is the time! While you are young, while in training, you can strive to root out the nascent passions, in order to become obedient to the grace working in you. Please starts the work of your sanctification... start it through meditation an eternal truths.

If we often meditated an the truths of faith, if we were often in the divine presence, if we were fond of prayer, if we prayed for hours, if we were fully aware of the mysteries of faith in our actions all day long, what mutations would happen in us! Bit by bit, a ray of God's infinite splendor would enter us, our mind would be filled with divine light; and darkness would be driven away.

through divine light we would know how to abhor evil, how to embrace good, while a celestial fire would inflame our heart and move our will effectively. If we persevered in the exercise of meditation, we would become holy; on the contrary, if we are cool and attached to many things, if our passions are alive, if our mind is dull, if we are lacking virtues, all this is due to our lack of meditation. We do not nurture our spirit, and it becomes exhausted; we deny ourselves the bread of life, and it is always remains as faint as dying; the spirit's eyes are blind, its ears are deaf, its palate does savor the taste of the celestial things any longer. Thus, while the starving spirit declines, the body boldly takes over. In short, if we do not become spiritual, it is because of our lack of meditation (Speech, Oct. 1891).

3.THE FRUIT OF MEDITATION

The morning meditation must be on the most holy passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. While meditating, the soul will imagine the scene or the picture of the meditation event, such as the garden, the arrest, the courts, the insults, the scourging, the way of the Calvary, etc.

After doing so, the soul reflects, discusses things, considers.

Sentiments, prayers, and resolves are the three items on which the fruit of meditation rests. Specifically they are the exercise of loving feelings toward the suffering Jesus, the petition to know, love, and serve him with humility and fervor, the determined resolves to never offend him, to amend, and the like.

SENTIMENTS. To excite the sentiments, you need to consider two main factors:

1. Jesus suffered for you in a particular way what he suffered for all, as if you were the only person to be redeemed.

2. To redeem you, the shedding of a single drop of his blood, or enduring the lightest annoyance, or uttering a simple prayer to his eternal Father would have been enough. Why, during his whole life, beginning with his incarnation, did he want to suffer so many spiritual; infinite pains? Why the hardship, discomfort, continuous want, and the Passion of incredible torments in his most delicate members, the agonies of his loving Heart, all of which, the human mind cannot understand? Why did he want to be wholly ruined and consumed with so many pains, each one more terrible than the other, and he suffered everything for you, when, in fact, he could have saved you without the suffering? You must know it: he did so in order to oblige you to love him!

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You will meditate on the adorable Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ with these ideas as well as with those that your love will excite; when the Lord brings into evidence to you the sufferings he endured for your sake, and you find one of them overcoming and winning you to his Heart, then you will say with great affection: « My love, it is enough, stop suffering: I surrender myself to your love; see to it that I endure the remnant of your Passion, dying for you. » Then, if you are truly humble, penitent, and loving, you will add what the Lord inspires you to say. (3)

PRAYERS. Besides the sentiments, the prayers are also the result of meditation. We need to profit by the

precious time of meditation, when the soul is in union with God, to ask the graces and mercies of which we are in need (the prayer itself will show us). We have to ask the divine lover for forgiveness of our sins, holy per-severance, and holy virtues praying ardently for the adorable Heart of Jesus' interests, for sending out good workers to the holy Church, and for the conversion of sinners.

RESOLVES. Because the resolves are the outcome of meditation, they must never be neglected. When a person during the meditation is moved and afflicted for the most holy Passion of Jesus Christ, she will promise to never grieve him again, to amend from the defects in which she usually falls, and to practice specific virtues; as well as to overcome the predominant passion, to control herself when she is humiliated, to observe the rules of the institute, and the like.

When a person practices meditation in such a way, she will rapidly grow in holiness (S.D.D.Z.).

4. ETERNAL TRUTHS

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The probationers will meditate together every day, in the morning and in the evening, making use of some book. The topics of their meditation will be the Last Things, the mysteries of our Lord Jesus Christ and his divine mother, the divine perfections, and the divine benefits, either general or particular. Their favorite topic, how-ever, will be the meditation on the inner pains of the most holy Heart of Jesus (P.R.P.).

The sisters will meditate together three times: in the morning before the mass, for at least half an hour, in the afternoon for fifteen minutes on the Heart of Jesus' inner

pains, in the evening for fifteen minutes alternatively on the eternal truths and the divine benefits.

Since meditation on the eternal truths pervades the soul with holy fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom, it is of great importance. This meditation instills the beneficial fear of sin in the soul as the Holy Spirit, said: « In everything you do, remember your end, and you will never sin » (Eccl. 7, 40). Hence no sister will consider the meditation an death, particular or universal judgment of God, hell and its eternal suffering, abomination of sin, and punishment of God on earth and after death as it were unnecessary. The Eternal Truths and The Way to Salvation by St. Alphonsus M. Liguori are of help to meditating (S.D.D.Z.).

5. THE DIVINE BENEFITS

The Daughters of Divine Zeal are bound in duty to meditate on the divine benefits of natural and supernatural order that each and all of them received generously from God.

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Nurturing in their heart an intimate gratitude toward the divine, eternal benefactor God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit for the creation, redemption, and the means of sanctification, the sisters will never neglect the meditation on the divine benefits in order to excite their intimate feelings of thanksgiving, praise, and blessings toward God, the most holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary, the angels and the saints.

To foster gratitude and to frequently thank the Lord, the booklet by Sarnelli on the Divine Benefits is of great help.

A breath or a bit of bread or a little useful object cannot be underestimated, because it is a grace coming

from the Lord. We have to get used to consider everything as a great gift of the Lord, as it really is. For instance, if you get a pin you need, please say in your inner-most, a thanks, God; how great your goodness is! » or the like. No gift is a little one when it comes from God, or from the divine Heart of Jesus that shelters the infinite, eternal love of God for human beings. If we have faith, we will not think of finding a pin by chance, by coincidence; on the contrary we will see Jesus as handing it to us! If we do that, no thing will be underestimated. If we had the spirit of the saints, we would be enraptured by the consideration of God's goodness who prompts the object we need. Let us acquire at least the spirit of meditation through our efforts and the divine grace in order that we may thank the divine goodness for anything, without underestimating even the small things. If we happen to marvel at the consideration of what a pin or a bit of bread is in God, who created them through so many causes, our marveling will be the result of our meditation.

For instance, let us pick up a bit of bread. Made of flour and water, it is cooked in the oven. Flour comes from the harvest's seeds of wheat. But the harvest, on its turn, is produced by other seeds of previous harvests, and so on back through sixty centuries since the creation of the world. Providence kept fructifying the harvest, which gave those seeds of wheat, which made the bit of bread, which you are about to eat. If it is possible, let us number the millions of people who worked through the centuries to produce these harvests, considering how many times the sun, the earth, and the rain fecundated them; how many wooden or iron tools, which imply millions of people and minds working to form them, were used! Flour, which made the bit of bread that you swallow and consume

in a moment, was produced in the mill. How many things are needed to form the mill? Iron was taken from the bowels of earth; linen was produced by the plants that bred on earth along the centuries, wood... etc. Forming a bit of bread implies millions of people and minds! Please make your point: along the centuries God preserved millions of people to form that bit of bread that only you are eating; in fact, only you are eating the bit of bread God gave you. We could reason the same way of the water which was used to work into dough; of how it came down from the clouds, went to the sea, and went back to the clouds by evaporation over and over again by millions of times. We could say the same thing of how that bit of bread was cooked: we would number more millions of people and minds who worked for the linen, bricks, coal, transfer of stuff, linen, and so on... to form that bit of bread!

We cannot consider this bit of bread a least benefit of God; we cannot swallow it without at least saying: «O infinite goodness of God who thought of me through so many centuries and engaged innumerable human beings, as well as elements from the natural world with continuous loving care, to prepare this bit of bread for me! For me, when I was not yet born!

The Lord provided us with innumerable kinds of food, linen, clothing, houses, and comforts of life; and each of these objects we could reason, contemplate, and find out more millions of creatures and minds that worked for us, for each of us under the Providence's guide!

Can we say, then, that the pin we found, when we were in need of it, is a thing of little value, instead of saying that it is a divine benefit? We could reason in the same way for a sip of water or for whatsoever little object.

The Lord said that the hairs of our head have been all counted and no one of them falls without divine disposition. This saying teaches that even the lightest or the most irrelevant happening as, for instance, the timely recovery of a pin, is grace and kindness of our loving God and a proof of his continuous care for each creature.

If departing from the marvels of the divine omnipotence and his goodness in forming a bit of bread or some-thing useful, we proceed to the reign of grace, we will discover greater and sublime marvels by considering what the Lord did, operated, and suffered to give each one of us even the least grace! Each person would say: « The divine Word became man for me, suffered 34 years for me... is dwelling in the Holy Sacrament for me; He created the angels, his most holy mother, and the saints for me; He formed the holy Church, the doctors, the preachers, the confessors, the pontiffs, the bishops, the priests, the temples, the religious orders, etc., for me.

The point of fact is that Christians share in everything because they belong to God's family through the communion of the saints. A word or an enlightenment of the mind leading to goodness holds the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ as well as the prayers and works of the most holy Virgin, the angels, the saints, the Church, and the just all over the world!

O soul, please see how each person is bound in duty to always thank God, the most holy august Trinity, for the benefits he receives as though he were alone on earth!

While traveling and thirsty, St. Teresa was given a cup of water by a charitable person, whom she never forgot in her prayer to the Lord. Because any good comes from God, we are not afraid of making a mistake by saying that the saint thanked the Lord for that cup of water all her life long.

Following this example, we have to remember any good encounter in order to thank the Lord either with a simple thought or an internal act by saying for instance, « My Jesus, I thank you for that factor event or preservation or encounter. » Even though these things seem to be trifling matter, really they are not because they were disposed by divine wisdom.

We also add that the events or things or apposition or suffering that are unpleasant to the senses or to the spirit are worth our thanksgiving, because everything, even God's punishment, depends on Him and is for our good. Owing to these considerations, we must thank God.

Happy the person who goes deeply into the science of gratitude we owe to God for everything, great or small, prosperous or unpleasant thanking Him not only when they come to pass, but also when she remembers them (S.D.D.Z.).

6. IMPEDIMENTS TO MEDITATION

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1. *Distractions.* We have voluntary and involuntary distractions. The voluntary distractions are sins more or less grave depending on our awareness and consent of our will to them. Because they destroy the fruit of the prayer, making matters worse, the person has to battle vigorously against them. The involuntary distractions are those that are opposed, rejected, and disliked.

As long as one strives hard to dispel the distractions in order to remain in the divine presence and to meditate with affection, prayer, and resolves, the involuntary distractions are not at all sins. The fathers of spirit hold that meditation is beneficial even when all of the time is spent in dispelling distractions.

However, the people must know that they may be responsible for the distractions that enter. No one can

say, « I am not responsible. » In fact, distractions mainly come in because we are not mortified nor dead to ourselves.

It is worse when distractions arise because of our previous dissipation, which originate from talking vainly, having attachments, and the like. Usually the chief cause of distractions during meditation is attachment, because the object or the people to whom we are attached come to our mind. If opposed and rejected, these distractions are involuntary in act, but voluntary in cause, but dispelling them is harder, however, because of their voluntary cause. A mortified, diligent person seldom undergoes distractions during meditation, and when it does hap-pen she dispels them easily.

Hence, everyone will deduce how much she must humiliate herself before God because of the distractions which interfere with meditation; and even though there is no sin in act when she regrets, retracts, and condemns the causes, still she must plead guilty before God. Retracting the cause of distractions is truly sincere when the soul amends her attachments and the daily dissipations as well as devotes herself to mortification and exercise of holy humility.

Besides doing so, the soul has to spray fervently to the Lord in order to win over distractions, or better yet, to impede them from oppressing during the meditation, and the Lord's help will not fail, because he said: « Without me you can do nothing » (Jan. 15, 5).

2. *Temptations.* To impede the soul to take advantage from the meditation, the never sleeping hellish enemy is always on guard fostering distractions and causing temptations by exploiting the human failings of the soul.

As to the temptations, we emphasize that having a way of living which gives the enemy the opportunity of

tempting us during the meditation is like giving weapons to our enemy. To win the temptations we must be mortified.

Consenting to the enemy's temptations is a grave, mortal sin if the object to which we consent with full deliberation is grave. To easily repel the enemy's temptations at their rising as well as to become quick to repel them during the meditation, everyone must take diligent care to become mortified. Each one must beware of giving our enemy opportunity of perilous temptations by putting herself in the occasion; for instance, if someone complains with the people against the superior's orders, the enemy finds that, person inclined to insubordination and may urge her to disobey or to fight by pride: on the other hand, the person who is already inclined to disobey, may consent to it. Usually the temptation pattern is always the same, but the skillful enemy knows very well either the temptation he is going to use or the passions he is going to stir to make the soul fall into his snare.

To overcome distractions we must pray, but to conquer the temptations we must pray more. By combining mortification and the avoidance of occasions with fervent prayer to the adorable Hearts of Jesus and Mary we obtain the grace to overcome the temptations.

3. *Sleep.* Sleep is a great enemy to some people while meditating. St. John Climacus holds that sleep derives from the devil's temptation, exploiting the sours laziness or from a weak nature or from abundant food or from the habit of sleeping excessively. It may also derive from lack of sufficient sleep. Sleeping during the meditation is a great thief, since it steals the whole profit of meditation when the soul consents to it without striving to prevail over.

How to battle against sleep in order to prevail over it? By a determined will and by prayer. The people taking care of their spiritual good do their best to overcome sleep during the meditation. O soul, when you are troubled with sleep, hate it, moan, humiliate yourself, and pray over again to the adorable Heart of Jesus; Immaculate Mary, your patron angels and saints; do novenas and penance.

To dispel sleep during the meditation, you will use some practical means such as standing and kneeling alternatively, without leaning on the pew and without putting your hands before your eyes. It is also advisable that the superior entrust someone with awakening the lazy. In a community, those who slept during the meditation were ordered by the superior to plead guilty in public and to skip breakfast; this policy produced a quick improvement, making evident that good will is sometimes lacking, while appropriate, sensitive penance proves useful.

Should sleep derive from overwork or lack of sleep-time, the superior will remedy the situation.

4. *Aridity*. It may originate from present or past faults that are under punishment by the Lord. In this case, the person must humiliate herself remaining steady in the meditation by operating with a pure will. If she consents to aridity and surrenders to it, she loses the benefit of the .meditation and comes out of it worse.

When the person remains steady, operating with will and mind, even though without sensible pleasure, she loses nothing from meditation, on the contrary she makes a point by using aridity in order to purify herself and to improve firmness and virtue. After showing her faithfulness in this way, the divine groom will make her feel his presence in faith, while darkness of aridity will vanish, and the rays of the groom's face will shine.

7. SPIRITUAL READING

Since it is an important factor of sanctification, spiritual reading will be always in force in our houses. When the people listen to it in silence with interior and exterior quiet, they seem to be meditating. Spiritual reading may be public or private.

Successful spiritual reading is like a beneficial, gentle rain which irrigates the soul, penetrates the heart sweetly, and spreads wide inside the person to her great pleasure and profit. In the meditation one may not always be able or disposed to attract the stream of grace in a sensible way, or she has to make many efforts; in spiritual reading instead, the soul receives the sweet stream of grace passively and specifically. To profit by it, each one must be attentive, as if Jesus himself were speaking to her with the words of that book; in fact, any good spiritual reading is from God.

a) *Reading in common.* The superior will take care to appoint the readers by turns, choosing the ablest ones. Light, hoarse or unpleasant voices must not be considered. Even though they may be few, the people having sound, pleasant voices and an understanding of the reading, take turns, adapting the voice modulation. The superior will see to it that the reading is well timed, and the punctuation marks observed. If the readers will follow these rules exactly, reading clearly and contritely, the message will enter the hearers' soul sweetly and pleasantly. They will be like evangelical preachers proclaiming the word of God. Furthermore, if the readers have the intention of sharing the hearers' merits as well as the merits that the people lose for their fault, they will share in them. Everyone attending the reading will pay careful attention to it, dispelling any distraction as well as gathering and keeping the reading's divine teaching in their heart.

b) *Reading in private.* Private reading is also of great profit to the soul. By permission of the superior or the master each one may make use of a book she considers useful. If you happen to feel drawn to meditate on some specific passage while reading, please do it because it will be helpful.

c) *Books of spiritual reading.* Books of spiritual reading, either public or private, are allowed after having been previously examined. When a youth enters the community, her books must be examined in order to destroy those of unsound doctrine. Reading books written by saints are preferable to the works by modern authors about perfection. They may be used with permission along with the Rodriguez treatise. The book of books, however, is the Holy Gospel according to the four evangelists. Reading it frequently, especially in the month of June, which is dedicated to the most holy Heart of Jesus, is strongly suggested. You will also read the remnant books of the New Testament as word of God. Those of the Old Testament are also beautiful and of great profit, especially the Psalms by David, the books of Wisdom, and the Prophets: some others, however, are to be left out of your reading.

Books of passion, such as novels, must be absolutely avoided, even though they combine profane with sacred ideas. « Fabiola » only, by Card. Wiseman, may be admitted because of its edifying reading (S.D.D.Z.).

8. PRAYER

Interior life, union with God, zeal, charity, and thirst for souls give the people of God a great weapon to perform great things for the Lord and for souls, not through their personal work, sacrifices, money, and talent, but

through the invisible, or better yet, the visible help of the divine power. This weapon, which helps us prevail over everything, this golden key, which opens the treasure of divine grace, is prayer. A servant of God (14 said this impressive, unforgettable sentence in his preaching: « God is omnipotent, but prayer is the most omnipotent! » Just so! If we priests or those bound in duty to save souls used it always, the Church's mystical fields would blossom (Speech, April 17, ...)!)

God gave us prayer as the great means to win any grace and the probationers will pray every day considering it as the divine treasure's key. Please exhort the probationers to hold prayer in great esteem, and to implore from God the victory over themselves, as well as divine love, the spirit of holy virtues, the achievement of their aim, perseverance, a good death, and eternal life. Since the lovers of God desire the good of others as well as their own, the probationers of this little community, which is devoted to the adorable Heart of Jesus' consolation, will also pray for the interests of the divine Heart every day... basing their hope of improvement on the spirit of prayer. If they pray, everything will be well; if prayer is lacking, the source of grace will become dry, and everything will come to nothing. May God avoid that (P.R.P.)!

a) importance of prayer

Everyone will hold prayer in great esteem, dedicating himself to it all life long, because our Lord wanted all graces to depend on it. He said: « Ask, and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you » (Mt. 7, 7). Let us bring into focus two points: necessity and efficacy of the prayer.

1. *Necessity of prayer.* The theologians teach that

prayer is absolutely necessary for our eternal salvation, and without prayer no one can be saved. Our Lord Jesus Christ recommended it to us over and over again teaching us how to pray, especially through the Our Father, nearly compelling us to pray following his own example. Even though he needed no prayer to obtain graces, being himself omnipotent God like the Father and the Holy Spirit, still he always prayed to win graces from the eternal Father for the holy Church and for souls until the end of the time. All graces, the least and the greatest as well as the spiritual and temporal which are granted to the creatures on earth were obtained and prepared by Jesus, our supreme goodness, through his divine, continuous prayers.

But even though he obtained and prepared the graces for us, by divine decree no grace comes to us without the cooperation of our prayer. Prayer is the opening key of the infinite treasure of graces. No prayer, no grace. The souls that ask the adorable Heart of Jesus will receive. Both credited revelations and interpretations of many passages from the prophets say that even though our Lord Jesus Christ is the author of any grace, still he prayed for himself to win from his Father the help and strength his most holy humanity needed to work out our redemption.

If our Lord prayed to win grace for himself from God, and he had no need to do so, who can obtain graces from the Lord without praying? Just as our Lord Jesus Christ prayed, so did the most holy Immaculate Mary all her life long, in spite of being born holiest and unable to fall into the least imperfection. And yet, she prayed in every moment of her life for herself and for others; in union with the prayers of our Lord Jesus Christ she obtained and prepared the graces necessary for our salvation and

sanctification. She obtained and prepared them, but we are bound in absolute duty to ask for them through prayer.

The saints were wisest in profiting by this great means. To be saved, to improve heroic virtues, to conquer and throw down any inordinate passion, overcome any difficulty, prevail over wonders, the saints prayed continuously. They cooperated by hard work and sacrifices. Works and sacrifices, however, would have been of no value without fervent and continuous prayer: Both the uselessness of our efforts and the necessity of prayer for our sanctification are pointed out by these words of our Lord Jesus Christ: « You can do nothing without me » (Jn. 15, 5). It is obvious that we can do no good for ourselves and others without the help and the enlightenment of our Lord, but we can obtain this help and enlightenment by praying.

2. Efficacy of prayer. Prayer is necessary because our Lord grants no grace without prayer; the sacred writers say that prayer is as necessary for spiritual life as breath is for natural life because prayer is the breath of the soul. Prayer is also as necessary as it is effective. This is a consoling truth, because if we pray with faith, fervor, and due dispositions our prayer reaches God, obtaining what we ask for.

This certainty is based on this promise of our Lord Jesus Christ: « Ask, and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you » (Mt. 7, 7). He also narrated the parable of the friend knocking at a friend's door and asking for three loaves (Lk. 11, 5-8) as well as the parable of the widow who got justice from an unjust judge who was reluctant to do so (Lk. 18, 1-8). On another occasion he said: «Would any of you who are fathers give your son a snake when he asks

for fish? Or would you give him a scorpion when he asks for an egg? As bad as you are, you know how to give good things to your children. How much more, then, the Father in heaven will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him » (Lc. 11, 11-13)!

Besides, he solemnly said: « I tell you the truth: the Father will give you whatever you ask of Him in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name; ask and you will receive, so that your happiness may be complete (Jn. 16, 23-24). If you ask me for anything in my name, I will do in) (Jn. 14, 14). Given all these solemn promises, who can doubt about the prayer's divine efficacy? Who can doubt that the Lord hears us? Is there any excuse for those who get no graces for lack of prayer?

The power of prayer is also based on the fact that through his divine merits, and his suffering and prayer of 34 years our Lord has already acquired and Obtained everything we ask for from the Father. When we pray with good dispositions, we are praying with Jesus and in Jesus, and Jesus himself prays from within us to win the graces we need. Oh, how much we should thank the divine goodness for having given us prayer and for having annexed so powerful, a divine efficacy to it!

How did the saints sanctify themselves? Through prayer. How did they happen to enrich themselves with virtues, to prevail over the world, hell, passions, and become like celestial beings? How did they happen to be totally transformed in Jesus Christ becoming one with him? Through prayer; through a continuous miracle of prayer.

By considering the prayer of the saints we realize that it was no languid, submissive, dormant, scarce, and without the due dispositions as it unluckily happens to the

Religious who are little concerned both with their sanctification and with the glory of God and the good of their neighbor. Their prayer was associated with the due dispositions of the effective prayer.

b) *Means to make the prayer effective*

We are dealing with the prayer's efficacy regarding the Religious who are bound in duty to long for sanctification, to grow in it, to want the glory of God and the good of souls through the perfect unfolding of the institute's mission, to which they are committed. We are talking to you, Daughters of Divine Zeal, whose name Divine Zeal engages and compels you to seek with all effort the glory of God, your own sanctification, the sanctification of others, and the present and the future souls as well.

Which are the dispositions and the conditions required so that your prayer obtains anything you ask of Jesus for yourselves and for others?

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1. *Cooperation.* Continuous cooperation to attain what you are asking for represents the first disposition. For instance, suppose you are asking the Lord to make you perfect in holy obedience. Well, you must do your best to obey perfectly. Through prayer you receive grace, but grace needs your cooperation, which is your work. While cooperation makes grace fruitful, on the other hand grace increases the help and strength you need for praying. Prayer and cooperation increase each other. So that a person may achieve what she is asking for, she must be steady and perseverant in this double practice of prayer and cooperation, building up the good will that brings prayer and cooperation into action, since good will is the source of any good, whereas bad will is the source of any evil.

Daughters of Divine Zeal, the development of your

good will depends solely on you; while doing so, ask of the Lord the best graces for his glory, for you, for all, and for everything; cooperate with holy force in order to achieve what you are asking; if you bring into action the required conditions, you will obtain every-thing.

2. *Meditation.* That the prayer's efficacy depends on meditation is a truth to be taken into serious consideration. Meditation makes a person understand the necessity of grace and compels her to ask for it; it makes one understand how much God deserves worship and love, urging the person to stay in the divine presence in order to implore love, forgiveness, and graces; it makes the person understand her own nothingness and human failings, drawing her to implore mercy and salvation. The meditation on Jesus Christ's mysteries inflames the soul with holy wishes of seeking, loving, pleasing, and owing Jesus.

3. *Longing.* To be effective, the prayer and the cooperation must be combined by desire. Desire gives wings to the will, which makes it fly toward the object of its longing. Because of that, the prayer full of holy wishes and proper dispositions is very effective.

The more we know and feel ourselves in need of some good, the more we desire it; the more intense is the desire, the more the soul prays and cooperates to satisfy it. We say, pray and cooperate, because our prayer must be combined with our cooperation if we really want to achieve what we are asking for.

Prayer having imperfect or no cooperation implies imperfect wishes as we realize from the following saying of the Holy Spirit: « The idler's desires are the death of him, since his hands will do no work » (Prov. 21, 25). Therefore, prayer, meditation, cooperation, and striving

to form ardent desires to achieve the great, eternal goods is our duty.

4. *Fervor.* Ardent desires form the fervent prayer. Happy is the soul that prays with great; intense fervor reaching God, Jesus, his love, and his union of love! When prayer combines the dispositions we have mentioned above with the ones we are about to speak of, it pierces heaven and moves the Heart of Jesus, winning any grace. We should ask for this spirit of fervent, effective prayer, which the Lord does not deny to the simple, humble souls that meditate on how to love, serve, and glorify him.

The Apostle St. Paul wrote: « In the same way the Spirit also comes to help us, weak as we are. For we do not know how we ought to pray; the Spirit himself pleads with God for us, in groans that words cannot express» (Rom. 8, 26). This prayer combined with tears and sighs is the, prayer that formed saints, obtained resources and salvation to the Church, the sinners' conversion, God's glory, and the souls' good, because such a prayer continues the prayers of our Lord Jesus Christ.

For the most holy Heart of Jesus' interests we recommend this spirit of prayer to the Daughters of Divine Zeal, in compliance with the name they bear, as well as with the vow of obedience to the divine command: «Pray, therefore! », which urges them to ardently protect the interests of that divine Heart. This fervid prayer is the celestial, vivifying rain that waters the holy Church's fields, making spiritual vegetation appears in a barren soil.

If this spirit of prayer will be as constant as perseverant, the Daughters of Divine Zeal's institute will be not only durable and deep-seated, but will also improve for God's glory, sanctification, good of souls, and holy prosperity.

5. *Humility.* God opposes the proud, but gives the grace to the humble. So that our prayers may reach the presence of God and be welcomed by Him, they need to be born of a humble, contrite heart. The prayer of a sister, indifferent to being humble, who is attached to her own self-esteem, whose secret pride repels the admonitions and warnings of the superior, who nurtures grudges, and restrains from humiliating herself for her faults or from acknowledging them; the prayer of a sister disregarding to overcome her secret pride, who is rude to her sisters, quick to anger (pride is mother of it), and hardly obeys; the prayer of a sister who considers herself better than the others, who does not strive to be humble, who perhaps is not even humble in the sacrament of penance; the prayer of this sister, who is a Religious by name only because she is proud and rejected by the Lord; the prayer of such a sister does not move the Heart of Jesus; perhaps it rouses his indignation.

Oh! I wish no Daughter of Divine Zeal be so indisposed, full of the spirit of the pride's father, who is the devil; I wish instead that they be Daughters of Divine Zeal of the Heart of Jesus, the divine teacher who said: « Learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit » (Mt. 11, 29); if the sisters want their prayers to be welcomed and granted by the Lord, they must be humble.

When a Religious is praying in the divine presence, she must be fully aware of her indignity, being as a guilty, miserable person who is imploring mercy. She should annihilate herself in her heart, considering by faith that she is residing the presence of the infinite majesty of Jesus Christ who is our Lord and God, in whose presence heaven and earth yield and the angelical Powers shudder. She has to combine deep humility of heart with

a humble attitude of the whole person. While praying let us join ourselves to the humility of our Lord Jesus Christ, who threw himself face down while praying! Let us join the unequalled humility of the most holy Virgin Mary, who prayed lying down full length. Owing to our many failings and debts toward divine justice, where should we sink while praying? That the merciful eyes of the eternal charitable God look on us, so that he mercifully bend forward to hear our prayers, we need to humiliate ourselves interiorly and exteriorly in the presence of his divine majesty, imploring mercy for us and the people.

Happy is the person who brings a treasure of humility in her prayer in the divine presence! How many graces she will obtain for herself and others!

6. *Trust*. Since trust originates from humility, like humility it is an essential element of prayer. A proud person does not believe she will obtain anything by praying. But, what is trust all about? It is a gentle union with Jesus making us see him as our loving, benign, gentle, supreme goodness, who is longing to communicate his graces, and to make us see him as our father, friend, brother, spouse, and tender lover. This loving trust which remains constant despite contrary reasons, drives the humble, loving soul to hug the knees of the loving God and to look at him with eyes imploring mercy, even when Jesus seems unwilling to grant graces for just reasons; it makes the soul follow God when he seems far away, crying like the blind in the Jerico's street: « Jesus, my Jesus, hear my request; I will cry till you hear me for your mercy, for your divine meek heart, and for your glory! »

Oh! What a fervent, loving, humble, sweet, tender words a person will say to Jesus when she is full of holy trust; and how pleased Jesus is by such a humble prayer

full of trust. Such a soul may draw any grace from his divine hands! We find such a humble, confiding prayer in the Canaanite woman's mouth, which we must keep in mind (Mt. 15, 21-28).

We must also remember that such humility and trust cannot dwell in a soul nurturing malice, lacking sincerity, concealing some failings from the confessor, and having no filial trust in the superior. Such a great treasure of humility and trust in Jesus, our supreme goodness, is a gift of the soul loving simplicity, hating lies, striving to grow in divine love and holy perfection, praying, and being fond of mortification; a soul of pure intention seeking only God and her perfection in God and through God along with everything which concerns the most holy Heart of Jesus' interests. When a person strives fully, with humble, confident prayer, the Lord will fortify her with his grace.

7. *Perseverance.* In speaking about necessity and efficacy of prayer, we touched on perseverance, which means praying all one's life long.

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Prayer is the breath of the soul. We breathe continuously, and breath keeps us alive. Breath and life end together, so we must pray continuously if we are to maintain the spirituality of the soul alive. Prayer, however, cannot be always automatic as breath is; to remedy it, we must have a mind to always pray while performing our occupations, even in the night while sleeping. Perseverance in prayer also implies repeating the prayers all our life.

Our Lord Jesus Christ set the example of perseverance in prayer. Beginning from the incarnation up to his last breath on the cross, he prayed constantly. « Jesus again gave a loud cry, and breathed his last » (Mt. 27, 50). The divine Heart included all of his wishes in that

cry, the longings for his Father's glory, our salvation, and his divine prayers.

We read in the gospel: « Then Jesus told them this parable, to teach them that they should always pray and never become discouraged » (Lk. 18, 1). We have said that even the same prayers must be repeated until the end of our life, imitating Jesus who repeated his prayer: « Again Jesus left them, went away, and prayed the third time, saying the same words » (Mt. 26, 44).

The holy Church orders the priests to say the divine office every day, repeating the psalms of the holy prophet David. While saying novenas or a special course of prayers in order to obtain graces, we have to say them uninterruptedly, and observing the same schedule. While hoping for a special grace for the Lord's glory or for our sanctification or for the good of souls or the like, we must persevere in prayer always seeking the fulfillment of the compassionate Heart of Jesus' merciful will.

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We must keep in mind the divine teaching of the gospel in the parables of the friend who knocks at another friend's door in the night asking for three loaves, also that of the widow troubling an unjust judge in order to obtain justice. Despite the denials, both the friend and the widow received what they were asking for, because they were troublesome. Perseverant prayer achieves the same results.

One, who grows feeble in the spirit of perseverant prayer, also grows feeble in the perseverance of doing good.

8. *Attention.* While praying, the soul must be aware of the divine presence, concentrating on the prayers she is addressing to the Lord, driving away any distraction, and almost meditating on each word, even those of the Our Father or the Hail Mary or the Glory.

c) What we should ask for in prayer

The final aim of our prayers will be always God's glory, our sanctification, and the good of souls for the greatest consolation of the most holy Heart of Jesus.

1. To give particulars, the Religious of this community will ask that God be known, adored, loved, and served all over the world. To reach this goal, the Religious will be fond of the spirit of prayer aiming at winning good workers to the holy Church, in obedience to the divine zeal of the heart of Jesus' command: « Pray, therefore!...; » which forms the object of our great mission.

The aim of our prayers is the triumph of the holy Church both in the sanctification of its members and in the holy freedom, as well as the exaltation of the Holy See and the sacred worship for God's glory.

2. For the sake of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and his divine love, the Religious will ask with ardent desire and perfect union with his divine will, the virtues of humility, obedience, meekness, and patience. She will also ask for charity toward all; benign charity, patient, fervent, industrious, compassionate as well as the true, right, fervent zeal for the most holy Heart of Jesus' interests. She will pray for wisdom, acknowledgement of her own nothingness, and a knowledge of the immense, infinite greatness of God and Jesus, who is our supreme goodness. She will also pray to obtain the grace of meditating deeply on the life, Passion, death, and the mysteries of our Lord Jesus Christ's infinite love. The soul who is eager for her sanctification will pray with great fervor to know Jesus intimately, to love him ardently in the great Eucharistic mystery, to adore him devoutly, to watch with him lovingly before the holy tabernacles all over the

world. At last, she will petition Jesus in the Holy Sacrament for the most intimate union of pure love through the daily Eucharistic Communion; and for the grace to receive him in her heart with finest disposition. (5)

Remember, a soul, that to make perfect these holy requests, and to achieve holy perseverance through a holy death, you must implore it every day from the most holy Heart of Jesus' charity and the most holy Virgin Mary, and through the intercession of the angels, and the saints. So that the prayer for holy perseverance may be fruitful, you will daily ask the Lord for growth in holiness, in holy virtues, and in spiritual goods.

3. Now let us speak of the effect of our third request. We should ask the divine, infinite goodness for the good of everyone. Since charity requires of us to love our neighbor as ourselves and to desire for each person what we desire for ourselves, we should ask the Lord for the sanctification and the eternal salvation of all.

a. Over and above what the divine Rogate commands of us, we must pray particularly for the conversion of sinners with such earnestness as to draw our tears, especially when the matter is the misled clergy or the Religious. We should ask for divine mercy, and for conversion to its love and to the perfect fulfillment of their duties. It is also our duty to pray for those in power that they may behave in a holy Christian spirit for the good of their subjects. In response to the saying of the Holy Spirit in the Eccl.: « Do not be late in praying and helping those who are being drawn into the abyss, » we will pray with solicitous, holy care for the dying, especially those who are running the risk of dying in disgrace. While praying with great tenderness of heart for all children, we will remember those who are not baptized so

that they may receive the sacrament of baptism, as well as for those who are baptized, that they may grow innocent and free from the world and the devil's snare since their tender age, and live in an environment of good education to achieve good results. (6)

That the kingdom of Jesus Christ on earth may rise and spread widely on the ruins of the devil's, we must pray for the destruction of the kingdom of Satan, for the destruction of the devil press, for the overthrow and the annihilation of secret societies or hellish diabolic sects, especially the excommunicated freemasonry, for the complete defeat of socialism's subversive principles all over the world and of the diabolic Bolshevism's, which originated from the unhappy Russia!

b. The love of Jesus Christ urges us to pray for our neighbor's temporal good when it is subordinate to the spiritual benefit. Let us pray, therefore, for the vexed people so that they may be consoled by God; for those in jeopardy, to be saved; for the abandoned, to be helped in their tremendous suffering; for the sick, to be healed or attended or relieved and comforted, for the prisoners, to be freed if they are not guilty, and not to be oppressed or abused immoderately, if they are guilty. (7)

c. Each Religious will pray fervently for the spiritual and temporal well-being of the superiors, the superior general, the masters, the fellow-members, our houses, and the school-board, the students, as well as for the divine providence in our houses, the soundness of the fellows, the education, the arts and crafts, and the preservation from evil, relating everything to our spiritual well-being, to God and Jesus Christ's divine will. To expand our intentions to everything and everywhere, we must combine our intentions and prayers with the intentions

and prayers of our Lord Jesus Christ in his mortal life and in the Holy Sacrament, imploring spiritual and temporal graces.

4. Thanksgiving. It is our duty to give thanks while praying.

Daughters of Divine Zeal, please do not neglect this highest duty, not only because it is a great means to win more graces and mercies, but all the more because the great donor of all goods deserves the greatest, universal tribute of gratitude from each creature. Gratitude shall be a prominent virtue of this least institute, which is consecrated to the sweetest Heart of Jesus! Following the exhortation of St. Paul: « In all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking him with a thankful heart » (Phil. 4, 6), we will never cease giving thanks to the Lord. This way, the universal prayer will become the fountain of many mercies for us, for the holy Church, and for the whole world.

d) *When and where we should pray*

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We must pray always, in any place and any time.

It is written: « They should always pray and never become discouraged » (Lk. 18, 1); « nothing hinder thee from praying » (Eccl. 18, 22); therefore, by forming a habitual intention to pray and give thanks in any moment, we have to lift up our mind to God before any action and service, redressing human failings, which do not allow a continuous elevation of the mind in prayer. In his infinite goodness, our Lord accepts any laiving intention of carrying out what human failings or other circumstances do not allow us to.

Can we pray while working? St. John Climacus wants the people not to attend to anything else while praying, but his opinion concerns the graver of obligation. (8)

The prayer in common is to be vocal, and each one must say it because exempting oneself from it would be a serious default and the beginning of lukewarmness. We must hold in great esteem prayer in private and in common; the private prayer, either allowed by obedience or required by a specific devotion, is of great profit to the person who knows how to deal with God tête à tête, in the solitude of her heart; the prayer in common wins the graces from the Lord easily, because God cannot help granting graces to the prayer in common, on condition that the people pray with fervor, faith, and pure intention — says St. John Chrysostom.

Any time is good for prayer, but special times are more suitable to win graces, because they are more acceptable to God as, for instance, the time during the celebration of the holy mass; then heaven unfolds to pour out graces on earth since our prayers join our Lord Jesus Christ's prayers, who immolates himself on the altar as victim of atonement for our sins, reconciling us to God. Another acceptable time for prayer is that of Holy Communion, when Jesus is in our heart through the host. Isn't it the time to make true the following words of the apostle: « He gave us his Son — will he not also freely give us all things » (Rom. 8, 32)?

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The liturgical feasts are also acceptable times for prayer. Just as the kings of this world are more favorably disposed to grant favors on their saint's day or on the anniversary of their coronation and victories, so the adorable Lord Jesus Christ is more disposed to hear us in the days set to commemorate the mysteries and the triumphs of his divine love for human beings; the same happens to the most holy Virgin Mary, the angels, and the saints on the days of their feasts.

Hence, we shall profit by these solemnities by appealing

humbly and confidently with petitions and prayers in order to obtain what we need; these favorable opportunities cannot be missed. (9)

e) *To whom must we pray?*

1. We must pray to God, one and triune, the most holy Trinity, from whom any good proceeds.

We pray to the eternal Father through the merits of his Son, our Lord.

We pray to Jesus, our supreme goodness, in the practices of piety, devotions, holy masses, Communions, and always. (10)

We pray to the adorable third person of the most holy Trinity, the, holy and divine Paraclete, on whom any sanctification depends. We must pray to him fervently, especially in his novena and feast, asking for his seven gifts as well as for the achievement of the 12 fruits. When a person receives the gifts of the Holy Spirit, she becomes holy and perfect:

2. After the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we pray to the most holy Virgin Mary, because Jesus tied his graces to the powerful, loving intercession of his and our most holy mother Mary. (11)

3. Let us also pray to St. Joseph, Immaculate Mary's most holy spouse, the Son of God's putative father, the Holy Family's head, the universal patron of the holy Church, the special protector of the people of any class and condition, the greatest among the saints, powerful in heaven and distributor of the divine graces.

4. Let us also pray to the powerful St. Michael the archangel, head of the celestial army, most zealous for the divine honor, conqueror of Lucifer, leader and guardian of the holy Church, assistant master of the good

death, protector and visitor of the holy souls of purgatory.

5. Let us pray to St. Gabriel the archangel, the messenger of the good news, a special guardian angel of the most holy Virgin Mary, fortress of God, and courage of the shy; to St. Raphael the archangel, medicine of God, sure and faithful guide in the life pilgrimage; to our dearest guardian angels, who are our faithful friends, guide, help, light, and comfort since our birth; to our beloved saints, whose name we bear since our baptism; to the patron saints we draw by lots every year in a spiritual industry of ours; to the saints whose lives edify us, and especially to the Celestial Rogationists of Jesus' Heart.

6. In a special manner let us pray to the powerful, great benefactor, wonder-worker, and saint of all the world, St. Anthony of Padua, also appealing to the patron saints of the cities where we have communities as well as to the saints who won graces for us. Our thanksgiving will always join our prayers to God, the most holy Virgin, the angels, and the saints. (12)

f) Various formulas of prayer

The best prayer our Lord Jesus Christ taught us is the Our Father. Several devotional books can help us both to understand the various interpretations and to keep them in mind while praying, being fully aware of its divine words and petitions.

Next to Our Father is the Hail Mary. The second part of it is as important as effective. The rosary, taught by the holy Virgin is also an excellent prayer, because the saying of the Our Fathers and Hail Marys is combined with the meditation on the mysteries of the life, Passion, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and

on the mysteries of the most holy Virgin. Our communities will say it every day. The litany of the most holy Virgin is another celestial prayer that follows the rosary.

Prayer books written by the saints as well as the « Filotee », like the one by Riva in vigor in our communities, contain plenty of beautiful prayers. We must be very fond of our prayer book because it contains specific prayers which are related to our houses and to the birth and progress of our institutions. The after-mass prayers may be said in private or in common.

Divine are the prayers of the Holy Scripture, especially the holy prophet David's psalms; in the private recitation they may be said in the Latin or the Italian version. Even though the Italian version is more understood, the Latin is preferable; in the recitation in common, however, the Latin version is binding.

Inspired are also the various prayers of the Church such as the Oremus, which mean « let us pray » (we may also use them in private devotion), as well as the majestic Litany of the Saints, which we say in our communities in particular circumstances.

g) The heart's prayer

The most effective prayer is the one coming from the heart. The person who is skilled in mental prayer, meditation, and mortification; the person feeling the love of Jesus along with his Heart's interests; the person zealous for knowing and loving Jesus, feeling compassion and ardent zeal for souls; this person who is dedicated to virtue and sacrifice, needs no formulas of prayer, because the Spirit, dwelling in her, makes her groan inexpressibly. To obtain divine graces for divine glory and salvation of all, she will pray with lively ardor and will annihilate herself before God and Jesus' divine presence, kissing his

adorable feet and looking at the supreme goodness with most tender trust. Beautiful, wise, loving, convincing words will come from her heart longing for the Heart of Jesus' interests, winning the graces, which the world does not deserve. Tears will well up to the eyes, and sighs from the heart, as from a fountain. To better touch the Heart of her divine spouse and win graces for God's glory and salvation of souls, which would seem almost impossible to obtain, this person will combine her ardent prayers with her effusive and diffusive thanksgiving for the graces that the Lord has granted, is granting, and will grant to everyone. Kneeling down with the hands raised to the sky or to the crucifix or to the holy tabernacle, she will be as the priest, between the vestibule and the altar, moistening the ground with tears, if necessary.

Her prayer will become one with our Lord Jesus Christ's divine prayer; the wails of her soul will be the wails of Jesus in the solitude, in the caves, on the mountains; her sighs will be the sighs and the prayers of Jesus suffering in his Passion from the garden to the cross, up to the loud cry when he breathed his last; her prayers will be the divine petitions that God, the eternal pontiff hidden in the Holy Sacrament, repeats for us until the end of time.

When this person who is united with Jesus through meditation and the sacrifice of herself is obliged by obedience or common life to interrupt her prayer, with all her heart she will make her time and actions an actual or habitual prayer; the night will be also a suitable time for her to pray more ardently and passionately in union with Jesus, and even while sleeping she will pray in union with Jesus, at least intentionally and by protestation and desire.

No one but God knows the graces this person wins

from the adorable Heart of Jesus, in favor of the holy Church, the pilgrim souls, the souls who are in purgatory, and the whole world. No one but God knows how much her prayer pleases the most holy Heart of Jesus. It was to this praying person that the Holy Spirit spoke in the words of the celestial spouse: « The flowers appear on the earth... the cooing of the turtledove is heard in our land... Come then, my love, my lovely one, come. My dove, hiding in the clefts of the rock, in the coverts of the cleft of the rock let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet » (Songs 2, 12-14). The voices coming from the heart, longing for my glory and for goodness of souls are utterances of paradise.

Even when this person forgets herself in the prayer to the most holy Heart of Jesus' interests, she will leave her prayer in a holier state than before, sharing the good she has obtained for souls, the divine glory she has caused, and the celestial consolations she has given the beloved Heart of Jesus. I wish such souls were in all communities that are consecrated to Jesus!

h) *Exhortation*

Our padre talks to his daughters in Jesus Christ:

You along with the future Daughters of Divine Zeal must know and keep in mind that this Pious Institute of the Heart of Jesus' interests, along with the two religious communities, the orphanages and the institutions originated, improved, and was formed through prayer; especially through the prayer and the yearly petition we presented to the eternal Father in the most holy name of Jesus in January, believing our Lord Jesus Christ's divine, ineffable promises. Through such petitions we asked the divine, infinite goodness for special graces of sanctification and formation in the Lord for this pious institute;

we asked the kingdom of God along with its justice, basing our faith on our Lord Jesus Christ's merits of infinite value, on his divine word, and also on the most holy Virgin, the angels, and the saints' powerful intercession.

We point out that the prayers we have made in any time and circumstances, especially during the mass, the feasts, and embarrassing situations were accompanied by the conditions we have talked about in this detailed chapter. At the same time, we have endeavored to combine the works with prayer, avoiding even the least venial sin by deliberate assent; we have done our best to help our neighbor spiritually and corporally for God's sake only, always imploring good workers for the holy Church in compliance with our special mission, besides practicing various spiritual industries` Thus, divine mercy bent down toward this small grain, blessed it, looked favorably at the poor of his divine Heart and said: « Grow and multiply!

The community is bound in duty to keep in mind such things, knowing that when the unvarnished faith in the prayer, in the yearly petition, in the spiritual industries grows feeble — God forbid! — when the vision of the pure, right intention grows dim — God forbid! — when the spiritual industries are neglected — God forbid! — when even the least deliberate defect does not matter, then the door is open to the devil, who will come in to ravage the sheepfold! Disgusted, God will withdraw his grace, will stop looking favorably at this pious institute, to which he has been so loving and has given so many benefits, holding it as his own no longer; on the contrary, he will become indignant at it, because the more he benefits and cherishes an institute or a community, the more he becomes indignant at it when it becomes unfaithful! Then, everything Will go to ruin: what has been built for so

long, even for centuries, will fall down decaying in a short while, as unluckily happened to so many institutes once holy and blooming in the holy Church.

The superiors, above all, will pay careful attention to avoid slackening in the communities by maintaining observance along with the exercise of holy virtues, by strongly opposing the least deliberate defect, and by dismissing the people who offer no hope; they will be also watchful in order to prevent false vocations from entering the community. Let us pray that the Lord give us the people of true vocation, whose hearts are with Jesus, whose thoughts are turned to Jesus, and whose minds understand the Heart of Jesus' interests, their own sanctification, and the salvation of others as well (S.D.D.Z.)!

9. TO JESUS THROUGH MARY

a) *The secret of holiness*

The additional great love that must burst into flames in your heart is for the great mother of God. Dearest daughters, you know well that you cannot love Jesus without loving Mary, that you can go to Jesus through Mary only, and that Immaculate Mary has been ,proclaimed superior, owner, mother and master of this institute; therefore, love and devotion to the most holy Virgin should be a peculiar characteristic of this order (Speech, St. Joseph, 1908).

You wrote to me about our sweetest mother, owner, master, and superior's entrance in this lucky community, (13) making my cool heart's flint spring a few tears! May your Immaculate Mother in Sorrow, and superior bless you daughters, disciples, and subjects filling you with her most elect graces in order to make you always grow more in the holy fervor of love and service for

the consolation of the Celestial Queen of Hearts. By loving and serving this great mother we can know, love, and possess through charity the supreme good, our Lord Jesus Christ, who must be our last and supreme goal. The people who seek Mary, find Jesus; those who do not seek her, do not find him. She is the door leading the beginners in the spiritual life to Jesus, and makes the proficient ones enter Jesus' nuptial hall and the wine-cellar which enraptures them with divine love. By loving the most holy Virgin with great transport you will grow in virtues belonging totally to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Love for the most holy Virgin mainly consists in the imitation of her virtues, especially humility, purity, strong and constant love for our Lord, zeal for his glory and salvation of souls as well as great charity and meekness in all encounters.

During my trip (14) I have experienced a great treasure of devotion to the most holy Virgin, a secret of sanctification, which opens a new horizon on the luck of belonging to the most holy Mary, helping find Jesus through her. This particular devotion was outlined by a great servant of God, who was beatified some years ago. The devotion I bring to you with the Lord's help is like a priceless treasure from far off that will fill the proclamation of immaculate Mary as mother, owner, master, and absolute superior; it is like the answer of the most holy Virgin to our proclamation, and I am glad to announce it in reply to your touching statement about our sweetest mother and lady's lovely entrance.

Everything you had arranged for the hearty reception of our sweetest mother was wonderful, inspired, and pleasant to her and her divine son, Jesus, our goodness. I did not deserve being there, so I went on unaware of it. On Saturday 19, however, I went to the feet of our

Rapid Hearer in the cathedral to sing her praise, but I had no image of Our Lady of the Letter. After finding one in a book, I exposed it all day long. This way, the most holy Virgin called me back to Messina.

Through the doctrine of that blessed servant of God I am going to make you belong totally to the most holy Virgin and to Jesus through her. (15)

Now I bless you all, but in a special way I bless the one who must impersonate the most holy Virgin's superiority and holiness. I hope to see you all strengthened and blooming in the spirit of religious observance, in the exercise of holy virtues, in the zeal for your own sanctification, and in the fervent prayer to win numerous, holy workers to the holy Church.

Sincerely,
Your servant in Jesus Christ,
Padre Mary Hannibal Di Francia.

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b) *Slavery of love*

To redeem human beings, who were slaves of Lucifer, Jesus Christ took the nature of a servant, making himself subject to the Father and the most holy Mary.

The most holy Mary was the creature most obedient to God, being perfectly conformed to His will. Saying, however, that she was a servant because she said « I am the Lord's servant, » is the slightest thing we can say since God would have never accepted Mary's servitude if such servitude were not servitude of love. It follows that we must make ourselves servants of Jesus for love.

This servitude starts with the baptism that changes us from servants of sin into servants of Jesus Christ. We must be fully aware of this truth cooperating with our will and making ourselves conscious servants of our

Lord Jesus Christ. We, however, are unable to do so without being servants of the most holy Mary out of love. This is the secret! This was the revelation the Holy Spirit made to St. Louis M. Grignon (Speech, Oct. 25, 1908).

Let us consider how great is the privilege of being servants of the most holy Virgin. The aim of this sacred servitude is. to become perfect servants of our Lord Jesus through the most holy Mary, confessing him as our Lord and God, serving him with faithfulness, and doing his adorable will. Oh, what a glorious servitude! Through it we belong totally to Jesus and Mary, who unite us to their divine Hearts by making us share their graces!

This sacred servitude of perfect love makes us perfect children of Jesus and Mary by freeing us from the devil's snares, by improving our knowledge and love for Jesus and Mary, by granting us many blessings during our life and death, and by making us happy for ever, if we are faithful and persevering.

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To reach this great glory, we have to prepare our-selves by prayer imploring enlightenment and grace from the most holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary as well as from the Holy Spirit; we have to acknowledge our nothingness as well as to renounce the world, sin, the devil, and our passions in order to improve our knowledge and love for our Lord Jesus Christ and the most holy Virgin, our sweetest mother and lady (From the « Way of Preparation to the Sacred Servitude »).

c) The Sacred Servitude's chief points

Rome, May 13, 1906 (16)

The Marian Servitude's chief points as I understand and apply them to myself are the following:

1. I do not belong to myself any longer, but to Mary. My body and its physical, social rights, senses, faculties, ect. belong to Mary, who may dispose of it at her will.

2. The soul and its spiritual, intellectual faculties as well as its powers, rights, etc. belong to Mary.

3. The merits, graces, virtues, either past or present or future, that I may have or practice with God's omnipotent help, belong to Mary.

4. What I possess for any reason, either things or persons, as for instance the rights of the physical, civil, social, moral life, etc. belong to Mary; just as a slave and his things belong to an absolute owner and lady who purchased or received him as a slave gift, so my things belong to Mary.

5. Since this donation and servitude are going to be eternal, so also the eternal glory that I hope to receive in a Christian spirit, belongs to the most holy Mary, who may dispose of it, making other creatures, she wants to save, share in it according to her pleasure. While making this donation, I humbly request that my power to love God and the most holy Mary for ever and beyond measure be not reduced by my glory's renunciation.

6. This perfect, complete servitude will be practiced by means of the following:

a. Meditation on the servitude of love and renovation of it.

b. To have a virtual or at least a habitual awareness of the servitude in order to receive everything in any moment with humble gratitude from my owner's hands as her gift or grace.

c. In order to act or use the physical, intellectual,

moral, and spiritual life, I have to ask at least the virtual permission of the most holy Virgin.

d. I will avoid any in and work the greatest good, because a servant must take care of the lady's things, behaving according to her will.

e. I will endure any cross, suffering, humiliation, opposition, etc. as serious, lovely punishments from the celestial owner, who aims at my atoning and amending.

f. Basing everything on my filial love through the consideration that I am a son, who out of love wants to become a servant of the celestial queen; or that she adopts the servant as a son, making me a son and a servant out of love.

7. It is fitting that this servitude for becoming a perfect servant of Jesus, our supreme good, bring about Jesus' reign in me perfectly, through the most holy Mary.

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8. If until now I have sought to find and possess Jesus without succeeding, it has been because I circled the mystical city's walls without entering through the door: now is the time to enter through the door which is the most holy Mary. Amen!

10. DEVOTION TO ST. JOSEPH

Since this least congregation is placed under St. Joseph's special protection, the congregants will honor and love him as the Virgin Mary's spouse and the Son of God's virgin father. They will take the habit and the vows on the feast of their patron (C.R.). (7)

As great means of sanctification and progress, the most holy Virgin disposed that her holiest virgin spouse

St. Joseph be your particular protector and that the taking of the garb and the vows be under his auspices every year. How beautiful and powerful is the great Patriarch's special protection! He watched over, and saved this little seed, this humble institute from so many stormy events which tossed it about as if it were a little flower among the whirls of a violent storm threatening it with death! He invited the people to come here, formed vocations, provided both souls and bodies with spiritual and material means; he opened a new epoch of providence and public progress for you and our orphanages through St. Anthony of Padua's graces and miracles. To them we are so very much obliged! The great Patriarch St. Joseph will be your model of interior virtue, of love for Jesus and Mary, and of any most elect virtue (Speech, St. Joseph, 1908).

11. THE HOLY ANGELS' PROTECTION

Honoring the holy angels will be always in vigor in this order. The glorious St. Michael the archangel, special protector and defender of the Evangelical Rogation of the Heart of Jesus and of its institutions, will be honored in a special way. Also the seven angels who are in the divine presence will be honored through some daily homage. Equal devotion will be attributed to the holy guardian angels through a daily invocation and the yearly feast (C.R.). In His infinite goodness God granted them to all people for their protection.

The angels are celestial princes who contemplate God's face, as our Lord Jesus Christ said (Mt. 18, 10). Wholly spiritual and simple by nature, they are of a higher rank than we humans. But even though we are inclined to evil and born in wickedness, the angels esteem and take care of us for God's infinite charity.

If we happen to fall in grave sins, disfiguring the image of God in ourselves, the guardian angel will never stop protecting, assisting, and inspiring us to good, because he is a most faithful friend. Happy are they who hear and understand his calm and ardent inspirations in the midst of stormy passions. In the opinion of the sacred authors, the guardian angel not only protects and leads our soul to eternal life, but also takes care of our body looking after our spiritual and temporal life...

The guardian angels keep us continuously under their protection, freeing us from a thousand disasters, misfortunes, accidents, perils, and calamities which are quite unknown. Not even a loving mother has as much tender care of her children as the holy angels have for each of us!

We know our true friends when we are in trouble, when worldly friends turn their back, more than often, in spite of their friendly declarations. The holy guardian angels, instead, are always faithful, and the more we are in trouble, the more they take care of us.

In public misfortunes or calamities all guardian angels, by mutual consent with the angel or archangel or principality or patron or guardian of the nation, or of the people who are struck by divine punishment, lend help to our need. By evidence from the Holy Scripture and common opinion, each nation has been given an angel of the principalities as a guardian and defender. This is the meaning of the following words: « When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when he divided the sons of men, he fixed their bounds according to the numbers of the sons of God » (Deut. 32, 8). Origen wrote: « In the beginning earth was distributed to the angels » (Homily, 35 in Lk.). In times of calamities, the holy angels

show greater zeal and intercession before God in benefit of the people as well as of each of us.

When God got angry with his people threatening them with extermination, Moses prayed and obtained mercy. When God is going to punish us, our guardian angels do what Moses did because they were assigned to the human beings to protect them; besides, God likes being deterred from punishing humankind, cooling down His anger because of human prayer and penance.

How many times the holy guardian angels pray for us, begging mercy from God, who is about to punish us! This is why Isaiah calls the angels ambassadors of peace (Is. 33, 7), Origen, our spiritual doctor (Homily, II in Song), and St. John Chrysostom, light of souls, supporters of bodies, defenders of the goods, also adding that « we are supported and helped at land and sea, we are enlightened and consoled in our tribulations as well as freed from sickness by the angels. »

To win their protection in time of public or private calamity, we have to nurture a sincere devotion to these most faithful guardians, purifying our soul from sin. If we are not afraid of eternal death, how can we hope that the angel will free us from temporal death? If we do not step offending God, we cannot pretend to be delivered from His punishment. In fact, we read in the Scripture: Many men died because of the sin (Rom. 5, 15). « By sin whole races are disgraced » (Prov. 14, 34).

It is written: « If a man fears the Lord, evil will not come his way » (Eccl. 33, 1). « They (the angels) will support you in case you hurt your foot against a stone; you will tread on lion and adder, trample on savage lions and dragons » (Ps. 91, 12-13). These passages are speaking of the strength that the holy guardian angels infuse

into the souls of the devout in order that they may overcome the hellish enemy's temptations even by treading on the proud Lucifer. The holy angels protect the devout who are in the midst of epidemics, which destroy human lives in the cities and wherever they run their course.

That so many priests and holy virgins who attend untiringly the people infected or stricken with cholera are not affected, is due to the dear guardian angels' particular protection. If God sometimes wants to crown these heroes of charity with martyrdom, the guardian angels will double their protection in the transfer of these souls to eternity, introducing them to God.

How much God protects those who fear and trust him is shown by the three Hebrew children in Babylon when they were thrown in the burning furnace by Nebuchadnezzar's will. Sent by God, an angel untied the ropes, drove away the flames from the furnace, and, shining beautifully, he began walking together with the three children unharmed in the midst of the surrounding, burning walls; they praised, blessed God, and invited all creatures to do the same.

Everyone knows what the Angel Raphael did for the young Tobias during his journey, when he accompanied him and took him home sound and safe. He led the way, was a guide and comfort, delivered him from the fish that was about to devour him, introduced him to the uncle, protected him and brought about his marriage with Sarah; at last he took him home rich and happy, and caused Tobias' father to recover from blindness.

Even though we were sinners and negligent in the past, if we want to Win the holy guardian angels' protection in time of epidemics, earthquakes, war, or any other public calamity, we must begin purifying our conscience from all the obstacles that oppose divine clemency and mercy

without losing heart. By benignity and compassion, God declares in the sacred Scripture that he will come back to us as soon as we go back to Him; humanly speaking, he even forgets our sins when we repent with all our heart. Therefore, let us approach the holy Eucharist; by so doing we attract the angels of heaven around us, and we become dreadful to the spirits of hell. While approaching the Sacrament, let us repeat with fervor our resolves to sin no more, preferring to die in the public calamity rather than to offend God. After doing so, we will cease to invoke our holy angels' protection in the calamity, saying special prayers and urging others to do the same with confident appeal.

It is remarkable what the guardian angels do in order to deliver children from serious perils! Abandoned to themselves, children often run serious risks or falls, but the guardian angels watch over them keeping them sound and safe. In amazement the people exclaim: « It is obvious that the guardian angels save children! » Well then, all of us are children before our guardian angels, if we purify our conscience from our faults, entrust ourselves to them with holy simplicity, and invoke their help.

From how many perils, unknown to us, we are delivered by the holy angel of God! No person may have escaped some risk without help of his guardian angel. Therefore, we must nurture in our heart devotion to the holy guardian angels, who will always be our most faithful friends in our quandaries and in public calamities. Children and youths must be especially devout because their guardian angels are zealous for keeping them safe from the perils of gin and eternal damnation.

When the hour of death nears, happy is the person who heartily nurtured the beneficial devotion to the holy guardian angel! His angel will be beside him with loving

care as a tender mother, fighting against the hellish enemies and providing him in time with the sacraments. When the soul leaves the body, the guardian angel will introduce his devout before the tribunal of Jesus Christ, just judge.

The holy guardian angel's protection for the person who loved and honored him on earth continues in purgatory. That tremendous prison of fire and inexpressible torments is to be feared more than any calamity on earth! Well then, the guardian angels' merciful service in favor of their charges continues in purgatory. By inspiration, they urge parents, relatives, and friends to pray for those souls; they touch the hearts, pray, offer the divine masses to the Lord, and even visit the holy souls in purgatory to comfort and console them. What next? When the angel obtains the eternal freedom for the soul entrusted to him, what a glorious day is that one!

The angel goes to him, and says: « Your time of expiation is over; come with me in the kingdom of glory! » What a joy when the angel of God introduces the devout to his Creator and Redeemer in the eternal home! Over there, the guardian angel will share his happiness with the creature he protected. There the elect will bless God forever for the guardian angel's creation and appointment, seeing in God the inexpressible, specific relation between himself and his guardian angel! This joyous contemplation along with the knowledge of the mysteries which appear always new and delightful will never end (From: Preservation from Divine Punishments)!

12. THE CELESTIAL ROGATIONISTS (18)

I think that you have received and performed the proclamation of the lovely, glorious St. Francis of Sales

as celestial Rogationist after explaining the ceremony to these children, inspiring them with fervor and lifting them up to heaven on the strong wings of faith! I am mailing four more proclamations reminding you that the ceremony is private. If you are going to accomplish it before the mass and the people are in the church, you can do it even in the choir.

The proclamation papers are to be preserved in a dossier, which must be glued or sewed after recording them in a register so that they may be read in the refectory every year the day before their anniversary in order to offer the mass to the Celestial Rogationists.

We proclaim Celestial Rogationists or Daughters of Divine Zeal those male and female saints we honor, love, admire, and invoke, believing that they would like to become Rogationists or Daughters of Divine Zeal. By this proclamation they become our celestial vocations! In the course of time, the celestial vocations will increase.

While human events reduce our ranks and impede vocations, through such proclamation we are becoming an army or a community so numerous to outdo whatever else before long! What a grace of the Lord! We will be a crowded religion in the midst of an uncrowded religion on condition that holy, pure, and candid faith be of assistance to us, in the simplicity of heart. Amen (Letter, Jan. 27, 1916).

13. DEVOTION TO THE SOULS IN PURGATORY

Praying for the holy souls who are in purgatory is to be a preeminent devotion as well as a practice of piety; therefore the probationers will often read and meditate on purgatory concluding the prayer before any action with a requiem. They will offer the mass and the Communion

to the holy souls in purgatory every Monday; in November, they will offer all the exercises of piety (P.R.P.). Before taking the vows, they will make the pious donation (Heroic Act of Charity) in favor of the souls in Purgatory (R.L.P.).

Piety for the dead is as ancient as death itself. But Christianity, which sanctifies everything, fostered piety for the dead beyond measure making a point of remembering them, owing to the fact that these souls need our help in order to transfer from 'purgatory to paradise. By reason of that, it is everyone's duty to remember them.

Dreadful is the soul's transfer from earthly life into purgatory. Without knowing how, the soul finds itself in the midst of the burning whirls overturned by the surrounding flames that penetrate inside, making it burn like a flame. The soul does not know how to get free from that inner fire; wails, squeaks, and agonies are not a remedy to the horrible burning, while degrees and duration of pain are as various as the defects it must expiate. Some souls suffer more, others less; some are condemned to a day prison, others to a month or a year or 20 years or 50 years or a century prison. Fire is not the only pain, because pains are as varied as the faults. For instance, if one offended God by gluttony, he is horribly tormented by hunger and thirst; if by ambition, he is deeply humiliated and plunged by stench and his own decaying body... Thus, sin is atoned through various pains.

Missing God, however, is the most bitter pain for the souls in purgatory. God! We do not know him in this world! We are like the blind by birth who do not long for light, because they do not know it! On the contrary, the souls in purgatory long for God with an intimate, inexpressible desire because they saw Him when they were introduced at his presence; they saw his infinite beauty, the beauty enrapturing for ever the myriads of

the elected; but the vision lasted an instant: on and off! And yet, what deep impressions the vision of God left inside them! All flames in purgatory are not enough to make the souls divert their mind from that lovely attention. They think of God, loving him, longing for him, being eager for him, and desiring him: like doves that one taken into custody, they flutter their wings over and over the subject of their longing, but in vain. They cannot take off to God before satisfying His justice.

Oh, what pain this is! How painful is this state for souls! They are always on the point of taking off to God, but they cannot; they love God, but do not see His face; they are queens of paradise, but are taken into custody in purgatory; exile is over, but they do not enter their homeland! At least, could they lift up their petitions to God so that their pains might be shortened by prayers! I think of them as saying: « Lord, we have sinned; we have been negligent in our duties not worrying about our daily defects; little thefts, frequent rumblings, and being absent-minded during the mass, were trifles for us. We disregarded penance for our faults and complained because of the cross you sent to us. O Lord, please forget our debts; deliver us from these flames burning inside us. » In vain! The souls in purgatory are unable to pray for themselves. They are plunged into their bitter suffering without being able to help themselves!

However, we can do what they can't. They are unable to help themselves, but we are bound in duty by charity to help them. The souls in purgatory are our neighbors, as they were while living on earth; or better yet, they are our neighbors for a greater reason, because they are confirmed in grace, and therefore we must take care of relieving them from their painful condition. Furthermore, having the means of helping increases our duty. To relieve

their pain and to hearten them in their most intense suffering, we have not to share in their pain, nor to go on pilgrimages, nor undergo maceration; some exercises of piety and works implying little labor are profitable for those pitiable souls. We can help them in many ways such as by hearing and offering the mass, which relieves them greatly. We are told that St. Gregory once delivered all souls from purgatory with one mass. Surely, many souls ascend to heaven from purgatory when we offer a mass. We can help them by saying the rosary of the most holy Mary in their favor, making them feel a paradisiac refreshment, or by offering alms, fast, prayer, mortification, good works, and holy indulgences. The heroic act of charity, the transfer of all our merits, indulgences, and suffrages that we will receive after death, is also helpful for the holy souls in purgatory.

Now, don't you think that neglecting the elect souls who are wailing in the midst of horrendous pains is an unaccountable cruelty, especially if we consider how easy is for us to help them? Please meditate a little while on the following truth: we are able to relieve the souls who are in purgatory by doing a little work! What is keeping us waiting? Imagine you are entering a hospital's room, where on both sides sick people, struck by serious disease are lying. You approach a bed and are terrified by the sight of a sick squalid face, the chest going up and down painfully, and breathing his last death-rattle. You stand aloof frightened, but nearby you see another man, whose face is disfigured by horrendous sores; on his side you see another patient burning with fever and thirst and calling to you: « I have not slept for five nights. Please help me! » At this pitiable sight, you are moved; your eyes are wet with tears... But, imagine that you have the power to heal them in a moment. If you did not do so wouldn't

you be the most cruel person in the world? But you are more than cruel if you neglect the souls who are in purgatory by denying your helping hand.

The Israelites were burning with thirst in the desert: Moses hit the rock and clear water sprang out to quench their thirst. The souls in purgatory are more thirsty than the people of Israel, and we have the power to quench their thirst through our prayer and other means. Do you know why we have little interest in helping those poor souls? Because we are of little faith! If we could see the pitiable state of those souls, the whirling flames surrounding them, the divine justice punishing them, this view would move us to mercy!

If only those souls were able to make us hear their wails! What they would say to move our hearts! I suppose that being unable to concern us with their state is one of their most terrible pains. If they could, who would resist their complaint? You who have witnessed the death of parents, relatives, benefactors, and friends, whose souls are probably in Purgatory, you would not be so apathetic if you heard their plaintive echo from purgatory! But, if we are not moved by their pitiable state, even though we can help them with little difficulties, at least let our own interest move us, because too many benefits come from the help we give the souls in purgatory.

Helping those souls attracts the protection and the mercy of God, who delights so much in the appeasement of His justice in favor of those elect spirits who are predestined to the glory of paradise. When David's anger was appeased by the prudent Abigail, he did delight in it, but not as much as God does when we appease His scourging justice with our prayer.

In the first book of the kings we read that the prophet David was ignited by righteous anger against the foolish

Nabal and moved with the army to punish him. But Nabal's bride, the beautiful, wise Abigail stood ,in the middle of the way, knelt at the foot of the angry prophet, and offering gifts prayed: « May your anger fall upon my head, but do not harm Nabal. Please forgive his foolishness! » That prayer appeased David and calmed his anger, making him feel happy for not having punished the fool-hardy Nabal. He said to the imploring Abigail, « Blessed be your talk, o woman, and blessed are you for restraining me from vengeance through my own hands » (1. Kings 25, 33).

Likewise, the people who help the purgatory's souls are pleasing God, because while His justice scourges the souls. His mercy feels sorry beyond measure. Then, let us do what the prudent Abigail did; led us offer gifts and petitions to appease God's right anger; let us give satisfaction for the faults of those souls, saying what Abigail said to the prophet: « Lord, do not look on those souls' foolishness, but forgive their failings. » God's justice will be appeased by our offering and prayer; His mercy will prevail over those souls' faults and Jesus Christ will say gladly: « Blessed be your speech and blessed are you who restrained me from punishing through my own hands. »

When we relieve the purgatory's souls with our prayer, they invoke mercy on us from God. Unlike the worldly people who often forget their benefactors, those thankful souls ask God for abundant retribution on their benefactors with constant petitions and with their most effective prayer. Those devoted to the souls in purgatory know all this very well, because they have experienced their protection many times. For instance, some devout persons were attacked' by thief s, but those blessed spirits appeared' as warriors putting the bandits to flight. Others overwhelmed by dreadful storms, invoked the

blessed souls, and were delivered by them; some others were in need of sustenance, and received a quick helping hand from those souls when they invoked them; and people struck by disease were healed' through the intercession of the blessed souls.

These devoted to the souls in purgatory will experience a greater benefit when they themselves descend in that abyss. Every one hopes not to fall into the abyss of hell; but, who can make sure of avoiding the purgatory's fire before going to paradise? Many of the saints we honor on the altars paid something to the divine justice in that frightful prison! Where do you think we are going to pay the penalty for our faults and' daily defects? We will see each other among the purgatory's burning flames, and we are lucky if it happens so. In 50 years, most of us now in this church will burn in that purifying fire in the abyss. Then, a new generation of people will stay here, your children, grandchildren, etc... Then, a preacher, perhaps more zealous than I am, will sermonize, trying to move them to .pity on their dead, namely, on us. But now please remember what Jesus said: « God will apply to you the same rules you apply to others » (Mt. 7, 2). It follows that if you today neglect so many souls who are waiting for your help in the horrible prison of the abyss, God will have you also neglected and the future hearers will remain unconcerned with your suffering, denying their help to you.

Let us look after our interests. Time flies, death approaches. Sights of death surround us. If you follow my exhortation today, if you begin interceding to relieve those souls, if you remember your forefathers and parents in your prayer today, God will make your children pray, intercede, and relieve you from your bitter pain through masses and alms!

Then, we are lucky! The flames surrounding us will die out, heaven will unfold, and the angel of God will come joyfully to us... (Speech, Nov. 2, 1879).

NOTES

(1) This point was of so great importance for our padre that he wrote: «We repeat that the institute's life along with its spiritual and temporal existence as well as progress is strictly tied to the Eucharistic Communion we receive frequently, in a holy manner. But without the spirit of meditation and prayer one cannot be fond of, nor hasten to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, nor be zealous for the divine Heart's interests.

How can a person long to join Jesus in Communion, when she does not kindle herself with the wish and love of Jesus through meditation on the adorable Jesus Christ, his Passion, and death? How can she understand and desire him in the great mystery of the Eucharist, if she does not meditate on this great mystery of infinite love? How can she bring a fervent, immaculate heart to the Eucharistic table? The person having no spirit of prayer will never detest sin, because dread of sin springs up from meditation on the eternal truths, the Passion, and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wretch daughter, you cannot be called Daughter of Divine Zeal any longer, because you have lost the zeal for your salvation, since you neglected meditation. How can you shun sin, since you have lost the fear of God, which is the outcome of meditation? You will fall from sin into sin, because after spoiling and defiling the grace and the religious wedding's beautiful dress, you will approach the angels' table impudently!

Thus, each Communion will be a new, grave debt to God as well as a new deterioration of your spirit, giving new power and right to the devil, who will tempt and push you to evil » (S.'D.D.Z;).

(2) «The more the meditation is concentrated, the more the intellect knows the necessity of God's help and grace in order to grow in divine love, holy virtues, and sanctification, as well as to understand the great moment of holy perseverance.

The more the meditation is concentrated on the divine attributes, charity, the Passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, the more the intellect understands how much God is worthy of being loved and served by the people, according to the state of their life.

When the intellect is enlightened by meditation, it moves the will to reach these holy goals through prayer, the will itself esteeming prayer as the best means. On the other hand, the prayer becomes effective when through meditation the person becomes fully aware of her goals, and that prayer is the best means to reach them. Hence, she will combine prayer with cooperation» (S.D.D.Z.).

(3) As to meditation on the Passion, see chapter XXIII.

(4) Blessed Fr. James Cusmano is the founder of «Boccone del Povero» in Palermo.

(5) «O soul, in your prayer you will ask the Lord for the spirit of meditation and penance, the victory over your passions, bad inclinations, and the hellish enemies' snares and temptations as well. You will ask for grace both to escape any sin, even the lightest and the involuntary one, and to observe your rules perfectly, even in the least details. In your prayer, you will always ask the most holy Heart of Jesus for the Holy Spirit along with his seven gifts of intellect, wisdom, science, counsel, piety, strength, and holy fear of God. You will long for these priceless gifts, imploring them with the most ardent petitions at any time, especially in Pentecost time. You will always ask the Lord to give you a new heart full of holy simplicity and purity, remembering that you are a Religious nailed to the most holy cross through the three nails of chastity, obedience, and poverty. To observe these sublime virtues as vows, you will ask the Heart of Jesus' infinite charity for help and detachment from everything and everybody, especially from yourself, your will, opinions, desires, and anxieties not-orderly regulated. In short, you will ask him to make you as holy and perfect as he wants you to be, even if you never seem to be aware of being perfect. You will ask a profound contrition for your sins, as well as for grace to bewail them. You will also ask the Lord to grant you a love of the cross; if Jesus grants you both the privilege to suffer and to like suffering, you will ask for suffering, if such a wish comes from God and not from your selfishness. You will ask such a gift together with the grace of love, patience, and union with His divine will. At last, because many virtues are implied in the spirit of sacrifice, you will ask for courage and a spirit of sacrifice in everything» « We must pray for all families so that the fear of God along with religion, good example, peace, and harmony will reign in them; for youths so that the Lord may preserve them in his holy fear, that he may bridle their passions, and bring them along the way of truth. Pray for the propagation of faith and the holy childhood, for the conversion of the unfaithful, for the Catholic missions, the conversion of the dissident nations, that they may become united with the Catholic Church. We have to pray for the good success of the works

in the Lord as well as for the Catholic associations and the institutions founded by competition, etc. (St. Paul). We have to pray that marriages may be celebrated in the fear of God, and their offspring grow under the Lord's blessing; that the religious orders progress in the holy observance of their holy founders' rules. We have to pray for those who commend themselves to our humble prayers, in which they confide sincerely.

(7) « Let us pray for sailors, especially when the sea is stormy, the winds break through, and hurricane rages. May the Lord guide, forgive, and bring the sailors into the harbor. Let us do the same for travelers who are running risks. In times of divine punishment, near or far from us, we will pray to appease divine justice, asking divine mercy to temper the punishment for the spiritual good of all.»

(8) «Instead of being absent-minded during work, it is better to lift up our mind to God through vocal prayers in common such as saying the rosary and offering prayer to the Lord.»

(9) Novenas and triduos to obtain graces:

In all occasions, quandaries, perils, and needs we should resort to prayer, the golden key that opens the treasure of the divine graces and mercies. When we find ourselves in such circumstances, usually we resort to the following six novenas: to the most holy Heart of Jesus, the most holy Virgin under the most appropriate title, St. Joseph, St. Michael the archangel, St. Anthony of Padua, and a special prayer to all souls.

If we say two or three novenas, it can take 9 or 18 or 27 days, depending on how many of them we say daily in the morning, at noon, and in the evening. For an urgent grace, we may say the novena in 3 days by reciting it 3 times a day. For a most urgent grace, we may complete the novena in a day by reciting it 9 times in the same day.

NOVENAS

Saying novenas to obtain graces is a good custom.

When a novena is said in common with fervor, proper prayers, and songs as well as accompanied by exercises of holy virtues, divine mass, and Holy Communion it is sometimes enough to make us receive an important grace. If one novena is not enough, we may repeat it with the same dispositions as many times as we need. Because our Lord created everything with order, weight, and measure as well as ended his life with marvelous order, it is suitable saying the novenas in an orderly way, without interruption. If we are going to say 3 novenas, we have to say them successively, one after the other. The importance of this regularity may be deduced from the

30 divine Gregorian masses, which must be celebrated in 30 successive days, if we want to get our goal, according to the Church's teachers and doctors.

PETITIONS

The petitions are an effective means of prayer we are using since the beginning of our institution. They are written in the solemnities and are presented on the feast of our Lord or the most holy Virgin or the angels or the saints in order to obtain special graces. Before being presented, the petition is recited in common.

Through such petitions we implore spiritual graces for the glory of God, for our own sanctification, and the good of souls as well as to obtain graces for a community house or for the whole order. We may also add humble petitions for temporal graces regarding the spiritual good.

We must begin the petition with a thanksgiving for the favors we have already received, praising, blessing, and rejoicing for the gifts and privileges of the titular saint, in whose feast we humbly present the petition. Furthermore, recognizing that we are unworthy to receive the graces, we have to ask forgiveness for our sins, and show great trust in our Lord Jesus Christ, the most holy Virgin, the angels, and in the saints' merits.

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SONGS

To implore graces for ourselves or for others, prayer accompanied by songs is excellent; Because we have to praise, thank, and bless God, our Lord Jesus Christ, the most holy Virgin, the angels, and the saints, accompanying the prayer with song is beautiful.

The music of these songs must be totally different from that of profane songs; it must be more or less liturgical, solemn and adapted to Latin words as much as possible, especially when the song is written for the mass.

(10) «Jesus is prayed to under all his titles and mysteries of infinite love such as: incarnate Word, child, circumcised, presented in the temple, flight into Egypt, etc. as well as to Jesus hidden, suffering, teaching, praying, patient, crucified, and dying. The people pray to his divine face, his Most Precious Blood, his most loving Heart. Other titles under which he is prayed to are: Ecce homo (behold the man!), resurrected, seated at the right hand of the Father, hidden in the Holy Sacrament, exposed on the throne, passing in procession, or as a viaticum through the streets; he is prayed to as enclosed and dwelling in the innermost part of our soul and heart...»

(11) « The most holy Virgin too is prayed to in the mysteries of her pure terrestrial life such as: immaculate, baby, 3 years old in the temple, St. Joseph's bride, visited by the Archangel, and associated to the mortal life of our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as in her great title and mystery of Our Lady in sorrow. She is venerated as the Father's first daughter, the Son of God's Virgin Mother, the Holy Spirit's spouse, Queen of the Apostles, Mother of the High Priest Mother of the Church, and assumed into heaven. Innumerable are the most holy Virgin's titles regarding her excellence as well as the sanctuaries, the graces granted by her, her apparitions, symbols, etc. Hence each person prays to the most holy Virgin under the title most appropriate to his/her devotion, but especially under the most important, common titles that the Church celebrates in the ecclesiastical feasts.»

(12) See how our padre insists on recommending the thanks giving for the graces we have received; thanksgiving is one of his spirituality's characteristics.

(13) On the occasion of unveiling a new statue of Our Lady in sorrow.

(14) We do not know when this letter was written and where it came from, but we suppose that it was mailed from Rome between 1905 and 1906. The new secret of holiness is the devotion under the title Sacred Slave of Love by St. Louis M. Grignon de Monfort. Our padre seems to be saying that he has received new enlightenment on this devotion, because he was aware of it from the time he consecrated himself through this formula of his own, on June 10, 1888.

« Prayer to become a slave of Jesus and Mary: O my sovereign lady, most loving Immaculate Mary, I kneel at your feet in spite of being an unworthy son of yours; please help me to become a true slave of yours in order to become a true slave of Jesus.

My queen, I am the prodigal son who after 30 years of absence, 20 of which were spent in perversion, wants to go back to his Father's house, not as a son, but as an absolute slave of soul, body, thought, freedom, will, life, and death. O most holy Virgin, receive me at the entrance of my king's house, but first, accept me as your perfect slave, in order that I may surrender myself as such to your Son. O beautiful queen, please grant me this grace, as you did with your servant De Monfort!

Blessed De Monfort, for the sake of this slavery, for your zeal in spreading it, please make me become a real slave of Jesus and Mary by faithfully accomplishing the internal and external practices you have taught! Amen.»

(15) Our religious orders' solemn consecration to the most holy Virgin in the spirit of the Sacred Slavery was made on Dec. 8, 1906,

after a long, considered preparation. The report was published by the magazine Queen of Hearts, the confraternity's official organ. We quote:

A page edifying our readers traces back to our confraternity's origin, relating in detail how the priestly order of the Evangelical Rogation by the Heart of Jesus and the Daughter of Divine Zeal, along with their houses, founded by Canon Di Francia, consecrated themselves to the Virgin Mary on Dec. 8, 1906. Their letter referring to the resolve to put the two religious orders under the special protection of the Queen of Hearts, was really overflowing with faith and love.

They forwarded a circular to their houses and a letter to us, petitioning special prayers to become worthy slaves of Jesus in Mary and slaves of Mary in Jesus. They said: « Here, all of us are fascinated and enamored of the doctrine revealed by the Blessed Monfort, apostle of the Holy Spirit and the most holy Mary; we are longing to become slaves of the Madonna.»

Their orderly preparation in the houses began on Nov. 5: in 33 consecutive days, and in compliance with the Blessed's counsel, they made the well-known practices, read, and meditated on the Treaty of the True Devotion and on The Secret of Mary.

The prayer to the Blessed Monfort that Canon Di Francia wrote on that occasion is worth remembering: «O glorious Blessed Louis Mary of Monfort, we greet you as a living flame of love and zeal for Jesus and Mary; we admire the divine wisdom that the Holy Spirit infused in you, revealing the secret of the greatest devotion to the most holy Virgin; for Jesus and Mary's sake we beseech you to help us understand such a celestial doctrine and grace in order to embrace it. Please pray for us that we may be worthy of becoming true slaves of Jesus in Mary and slaves of Mary for Jesus! Amen.»

On the eve of the consecration, all of them kept a strict fast offering what they had saved to Jesus and his holy mother for the sacred slavery, in compliance with Blessed De Monfort's counsel. Their secretary mailed the money, asking to have it deposited at the foot of the Queen of Hearts and they enclosed the list of the persons who consecrated themselves along with a report, from which we quote some passages:

The consecration of ourselves as slaves of love to our Lady was fulfilled on the day of Immaculate Mary's feast...

In the Evangelical Rogation's community, the consecration was made at midnight sharp, the time when the most holy Virgin Mary's privileged soul was created and infused in her virgin body; the Daughters of Divine Zeal made their consecration the day after, before the holy mass.

In both institutes, we made the consecration with great enthusiasm

and faith... undersigning the acts and placing them in a framework at the foot of the most holy Virgin, our sweetest mother and owner.

In copying out the names (we enclose the list and the male community's title), the Blessed Louis happened to be the top list by chance... From now on, he will be our special patron! How much we enjoyed his Treat and Secret during this month of preparation! All of us have been deeply impressed. These books are full of celestial fire, and shoot arrows burning with love for the most holy Virgin, as the Blessed Louis De Monfort did. For sure, he has a special place among the lovers of the Madonna. May he help us live faithfully the spirit of the sacred slavery we have embraced.

Isn't all this edifying? On the anniversary day, every year, they renew their consecration. The communities of the twin institutes renew the act of consecration with the same transport and fervor as if it were for the first time. They make the same preparation, and celebrate the same liturgy on the eve and on the feast. After Immaculate Mary's feast, letters full of tender affection for Our Lady arrive from Messina, Taormina, Oria, Giardini, Francavilla Fontana, Trani, San Pier Niceto, etc. They enclosed the names of the new consecrated along with the saving from the fast, a small but sincere tribute for the sacred slavery of love toward the great Mother of God. These letters give evidence that these institutes hold the perfect devotion to Mary in great esteem.

To conclude, we point out that both the priests of the Evangelical Rogation and the Daughters of Divine Zeal renew their consecration of the sacred slavery to the child Jesus, supreme goodness, with a charming formula, on Christmas.

(16) The consecration of the institute to the most holy Virgin was made on Dec. 8, 1906, and was preceded by the personal consecration, or better, by the renovation of the consecration our padre made in Rome on May 13, 1906, in the sanctuary of Mary Queen of Hearts, held by the Monfort's priests. Our padre premised a triduo of holy masses, making the consecration on the fourth day. Fr. Bonicelli wrote: «We feel that we can still see him going to the front of the sanctuary after the celebration, making the solemn act, and praying with opened arms to the Beautiful Queen, as he called the Madonna. Then, he went out fully happy for having strengthened his bonds on the day dedicated to the most holy Mary's humility, on May 13, according to our order's calendar.» The meditations of those days on the sacred slavery are abbreviated in these brief notes.

(17) In those times, the feast was celebrated on the third Wednesday after Easter as a first class feast with an octave. Pius XII replaced it with the feast of St. Joseph the worker, on May first.

(18) Let us remember this pious industry, which is one of our padre's characteristics. « He wanted to create for himself a celestial court of saints who would take special care of our orders. He chose those saints who in their mortal life showed a most fervent zeal for winning good workers for the Lord to serve in his harvest, as well as those whose institutions are similar to the Anthonian ones. He believed that these saints continue praying to our Lord for evangelical workers, for their institutions, and for the faithful who follow their pattern. Therefore, he wished to challenge them through special prayers in order that they might consider themselves Celestial Rogationists or Daughters of Divine Zeal. He proclaimed them as such with specific petitions, calling to mind what they did on earth to spread charitable works as well as the command of the Rogate» (Vitale, Father Mary Hannibal Di Francia. page 231).

CHAPTER V

LOVE OF CHILDREN AND OF THE POOR

As a practice of interior life, I will pay loving attention to my neighbor, striving hard to form within myself a tender, compassionate, and understanding heart toward my brethren.

Since this pious institute is devoted to the salvation of children, through the means that holy obedience allows me I will strive to commit myself to the education of boarders and day students, longing for their salvation, and asking the help of the most holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary to achieve it.

I will love and respect the poor of Jesus Christ with faith and charity, holding them as the suffering members of his mystical body, as well as being always fully aware of how Jesus Christ exalted them by declaring that whatsoever is done for the poor, is done to himself.

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I regret that the Ignorant, lost world rejects and scorns the poor, just as many Christians often do. I, however, will lead the poor to follow the paths of eternal salvation, and will hold them as great people, as princes before God, according to the Psalm's saying, « their lives will be precious in His sight » (Ps. 72, 14). Even though they may be troublesome, I will be sympathetic by aiding them, and helping them as much I can, and much more by evangelizing and drawing them to God.

Because our Lord Jesus Christ is supremely pleased by works of charity, I will be attentive and compassionate with the sick and the dying.

By observing perfectly the precept of love toward my neighbor; by loving them as myself I will achieve my personal sanctification by this most effective means.

THE ORPHANS

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Salvation of abandoned orphans will be one of the most cherished works of the Rogationists of the Heart of Jesus. They will provide the orphans with a sound education and an appropriate profession, with fatherly, loving care, they will infuse in them principles of Christian piety, and rear them in the holy fear of God, the love of Jesus and Mary, and reception of the holy sacraments. Finding proper ways to make them feel secure dear and joyous, they will provide them with the things they need, especially when they are sick, regarding the last of the orphans as the first of the fathers. When the orphans are ready to leave the institute, the Rogationists will endeavor to provide them with honest work, and watch over them so that they may persevere in the practice of Christian principles (C.R.).

Religion is the foundation of a good education, and work is the most effective factor of good discipline, for it forms the chief component of the orphanage's subsistence; neatness and hygiene are observed in detail (Rules for orphanage for girls).

Appropriate rules that follow from our educational system will be read day by day to the girls as the basis for their good behavior during their educational training. The superiors will demand observance of the rules.

Both the mother superior and the teacher will see to it that the community of the orphans proceeds with perfect discipline and order, following the schedule of sound principles, as well as the seasonal changes. The chiming of the bell will be the time-signal, and they will correspond to it quickly and exactly (S.D.D.Z.).

I have received your printed paper of Dec. 25, 1920, through which you have asked my opinion on the Pious Hotel Trivulzio of Milan and on the Council of the Orphanages' proposal to dismiss the male orphans from the institute at the age of 12-15, entrusting them to their mother or to a guardian; such a proposal foresees a vocational scholarship for the 12-14 year old orphans and a work scholarship for those of 15 years of age.

If the children's education is satisfactory under the civil and religious point of view (I suppose they have arts and crafts), I am absolutely against such a proposal, because the youths at 18 are well trained and capable of being successful in civil life. On the contrary, delivering them to their mother or to a guardian at the age of 12 makes their education come to nothing, generally speaking.

The orphaned boys who leave my institute when they have reached legal age, are so well trained in education and profession that they earn their living honestly. The chief point is basing education on sound civil and religious principles, which must be respectful of God, his holy law, and civil and ecclesiastical authorities.

Of great importance is the watching over the children, and counseling them against moral harm, because if misconduct is allowed, the orphanage cannot stand, everything goes to ruin, and the children become languid, and insensitive to education. Should be this the case, it would be better to entrust them to a guardian. Everything depends on the educators; they must not be the ones who are willing to eliminate all the educational systems, the lay one excepted (From « The Orphanage », bimonthly paper of Milan, Aug. 14-15, 1921).

Please train the orphans in discipline and work, since they are children. Later, they will be happy for that. Beginning from their tender age, they must be taught to

comply with their duty toward God, themselves, and their neighbor; by so doing, they are setting out on the right path toward their eternal salvation. Everything passes away, but since the human being was created to be eternal, each Christian must always keep in mind his last goal, which is his eternal salvation (1) (Rules for orphans, 1890) .

2. SISTERS COMMITTED TO EDUCATION

I make every effort to achieve the goal which is proper to any educational institute, that of providing its subjects with good success.

I am fully aware of my duty and responsibility. Gathering persons, feeding them, and leaving them merely to exist is not the educational institution's aim, for it does not change the abandoned orphans' fortune nor does it prepare a good future for them. Education aims at regenerating and moralizing the persons who are rooted out of vagabondage, enabling them to earn their living honestly.

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The serious task of educating and teaching so many orphans compelled me to seek out and to form good educators. I first applied to two communities of sisters, because no secular teacher may compete with them in education; in fact, the nun is born of religion to be a mother, a teacher, a friend, and a sister of the youth of whatever rank. A sister, being educator and mother of the youth, represents one of the finest missions of Christianity, especially in the last two centuries.

From the time I began gathering the female orphans I felt myself in need of educators, but the Daughters of Charity and the Daughters of St. Anne, to whom I had applied, rejected my request, for I was unable to reward

their work. Then a too daring idea crossed my mind: the idea of farming a community of nuns who should dedicate themselves to my orphan's education.

It is hard believing now arduous such enterprises are. Where could I find youths suitable to such a mission? A few persons in Messina think that I formed the community of the sisters by selecting some youths from the orphans. But they are mistaken... young women, willing to consecrate themselves to God and charity came here from other towns on purpose. They were not orphans; most of them had and have parents alive, but they left family and native towns to devote themselves to the poor abandoned orphans' education and service. They know their own mission: I myself educated them to such a school, a school of charity and sacrifice.

I am fully aware of the caustic criticism of this hard enterprise of forming a community of sisters who commit themselves to the orphans' salvation. To tell the truth, if there had been no critique, it would have been a marvel! Unluckily, the saying that no one can be a prophet in his own homeland is really true; I, however, feared the critique of the future more than that of the present. What I really feared was that my orphanage could come to nothing after my death; then censure could rightly blame my memory for not having made a lasting shelter of salvation for these poor orphans.

This charitable institute's continuity has been ruling my thoughts ever since. It has been the main object of my efforts, but to reach this vital goal I needed to form a community of sisters. From the time I failed to engage the Daughters of Charity and the, Daughters of St. Anne, I conceived the idea of founding the Daughters of Divine Zeal.

Oh! If those who once censured me knew the stormy

events I passed through in order to found this congregation of sisters as well as how I froze and sweated while gathering orphans from the city and its surroundings! What a hard task it was to educate so many orphans and form their educators and teachers at the same time! (Speech, Aug. 20, 1906).

3. OUR MISSION

Now our talk is about the orphanages, which represent our mission of gathering scattered, poor, abandoned, orphaned children in order to save them spiritually and materially. We pursue this aim by delivering the orphans from abandonment, depravity of the world, hunger, misery, idleness, scandals, risks, and temporal and eternal ruin!

How much the most holy Heart of Jesus delights in this work for the abandoned orphans' salvation! What a conquest of souls is snatching them from the devil and bringing them to God!

Rescuing an orphan from a deadly future along with providing him a spiritual and temporal well-being is such a redemption that it does not end with the individual orphan, but continues from generation to generation, bringing about innumerable goods!

A male and a female educated orphan who succeeds, will convey their education and morals in the midst of society through their example as well as by becoming parents of children, with whom they will share the teaching of faith and civilization, practice of piety and training they received in the pious institute, where they grew up for God and their happy future.

Those who strive diligently for the salvation of tender children, in whom they awaken the smile of love; who eliminate tears and desperation, deserve a great reward.

We would say that no work is so appreciated and pleasing to the most holy Heart of Jesus as the education of little children. In this case, our Lord will not cry out with uttermost anguish the utterance of the Holy Scripture, « What do you gain by my blood? » (Ps. 30, 9) as he does at sight of the frightful abuse the world commits against childish souls and at sight of their unhappy life or eternal loss. On the contrary, at sight of the holiest mission aiming at saving the abandoned, derelict orphans as well as at sight of its good results, our Lord Jesus Christ will exclaim: What a gain by my blood! These and the future souls are brought to my Heart by my faithful ministers and my faithful spouses! Blessed be the blood I shed in the midst of terrible suffering for the salvation of souls!

Everyone knows how much the child Jesus suffered for the babies the impious Herod slaughtered when Joseph and Mary took him to Egypt. He saw those babies slaughtered and drowned in their blood, felt their poor mothers' torment and cries in his most sensitive Heart. He experienced that horrible scene as if it were the occurring in his sweetest Heart as well as the sword points and the sabre cuts piercing his own Heart! And yet, he was consoled by the thought that the babies who were slaughtered in his place would be glorified in heaven.

But the most holy Heart of Jesus suffered even more when he foresaw the numberless tender souls, who deprived of parents and of an opportunity to be educated to a good life by zealous persons, would be left open to the spiritual slaughter which is caused by sin.

This unheard slaughter has happened millions and millions of times ever since the world began! My daughters in Jesus Christ, if you took care of yourselves only, you would run the risk of eternal loss. Let us not hold our

own soul more precious than the souls of our brothers (Act. 20, 24). Let us take the utmost care of the abandoned orphans. But because this involves the education of childish, young souls, we must expand our zeal not only to the abandoned orphans, but also to the tender, young souls who come into our ministry, whether those in the kindergarten, those in day-schools, or those in the orphanages. These institutions are concerned with the salvation of present and future souls, pleasing the most holy Heart of Jesus just as the orphanages do.

Let us conclude by considering how great and immense is the priceless reward that our Lord Jesus Christ will give the lovely brides who are completely committed to this holy mission. They will be rewarded during their life, at death, and after-death, because their mission rejoice forever the most holy Heart of Jesus, the holy Church on earth, the heavenly court in paradise, the angels, the saints, and especially the great mother Mary. (S.D.D.Z.).

4. TAKING CARE OF HEALTH

Usually, the orphans must be taken away from their abandonment and poverty without exacting monthly tuition; it would be a serious fault if the poor orphans were not received for lack of funds. But the person who called our attention to them or the intimate relatives can be asked for the bed and accessories as well as for some clothes and a little frock, etc. If they cannot afford to pay for them, either they or the institute may arrange a collection. At last, whatever the results may be, the orphan must be received in the name of God, whose creature the orphan is.

In dealing with the children, the sisters will teach

them hygiene and cleanness, both of which confer and preserve their health, while the lack of hygienic habits deteriorate both their own health and endanger that of others. By receiving the orphans, the sisters are bound in duty not only to educate them procuring their spiritual good, but also to keep, preserve, and improve their bodily well-being.

To protect the girls' health, the following items must be taken into consideration:

a. The institute's topography, which must be airy and sunny, having gardens without humidity.

b. The diet will be sound, avoiding both the insufficiency of food and the overabundance of it. The amount of food is to be gradual and proportionate to the child's age, remarkably increasing for those of about 13 years. Food is to be natural and without complicated sauces or the like. The children will become accustomed to the community food.

The sisters will pay diligent attention to the child's complexion, knowing that a pallid complexion and the lack of interest in play activity are symptoms of illness, fever or indigestion; in such a case a remedy must be applied.

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The faucet lavatory must be suitable to the children. As to the baths, they must be used with discretion.

c. Lively, animated sport in the open air is conducive to good health; in case of inclement weather, the children will play under cover, and the windows will be well, regulated for good ventilation and temperature.

d. Air must be always pure; the dormitories having proportionate air-holes on the top and the bottom must be airy and sunny with their windows open all day long, but closed at dusk. The beds will be at a distance of about a yard from each other; the windows will be high, and

some of them open enough to make air circulate in the night. Besides, the dormitories must be well ventilated, because fresh air is a major factor in maintaining the health of the children. As long as the lungs breathe pure air, children will be always healthy.

In the regions where climate is hot, the people sleep with open windows even in the night.

Children are more susceptible to colds in the hot and in the middle season more than in winter. Usually it happens because they expose themselves to currents of air, when over heated and perspiring. This causes the pores to close. As a result they are afflicted with inflammation, cold, and catarrh. To avoid these inconveniences, appropriate care is needed. Specifically, windows and balconies will be closed on the windy days, and to provide air circulation they will be opened only for an adequate time when the community is out. Special care will be taken to avoid the ebb and flow of air when children pass through the corridors.

A sister will keep watch in the dormitory at night, preventing the children from becoming chilled when they get up from the warm bed when the air is cold. Catching a cold and catarrh at their age is dangerous, since it can last for years, sometimes turning into phthisis.

Do not accustom the children to wear woolen or heavy clothes, because somehow enduring cold weather strengthens their health. As to the coverlets, the sister will provide for the children adequate coverlets as the cold season approaches (S.D.D.Z.).

5. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

If attentive and motherly care of the orphans' health is important, more important is their education in religious

principles, which must be the basis of their education and of their temporal and eternal happiness.

On arrival, the teacher will present the child to the Holy Sacrament and to the most holy Virgin, praying them to receive that child under their protection. The teacher will also encourage the little girl to say some «Hail Marys» and make a little offering, while she, herself, will pray interiorly for the soul that the Lord is entrusting to her.

When the child experiences the loneliness of separation from her relatives, the teacher will maternally console and comfort her and cheer her at time with candy or some other treat. The child will forget her loneliness if she is encouraged to join the other children in their play activities.

After giving the main rules for the children's bodily health, of which we take responsible care, now we are going to deal with a more important topic: the children's spiritual education (S.D.D.Z.).

Thirty years ago I began gathering, educating, and providing orphans with a good future; ever since I have been holding and experiencing that the steady base of any civil education is religious education! I have learned from experience, reason, faith, learned people, and common sense: that to form a civil human being, an educated good citizen, it is necessary to form a good Christian!

If we educate the youths' mind about the knowable, we must also educate their mind about the Catholic faith's supreme principles. If we exercise the children in arts and crafts, we must also exercise them in prayer, lifting up their mind to the purest region of light, where no distinction exists between ranks and social conditions, but it does between the virtues and merits of a Christian life.

Today, society is about to crumble, because the religious base has been shaken, either in the education of the heart or in the training of the mind! Generally speaking, school has become an environment of seduction, deceit, and depravity, especially in the cities. Youth are entrusted to atheistic teachers developing in tender hearts hatred and revolt against ecclesiastical authority. You are witnesses of how young people finish school poisoned by false teaching and historical lies, how they lack respect for priests, scorn religion, and prepare unhappy days for themselves, their family, and for society.

If we look at the education of common people, we realize that the consequences of an atheistic education are even more pernicious. The unrest among the working class shows it. The continuous strikes, revolts against civil authorities, hatred, crimes, and so many other evils give evidence of the threat to the social order (2) (Speech, Jan. 31, 1909).

Even though little orphaned children do not yet attend the elementary schools, they must be educated in Christian doctrine from their tender age, beginning with the first elements. The younger ones will be taught orally, the others will use the catechism booklets. The chief aim is to educate the children's mind by appropriate explanations, tales, and biblical stories, avoiding to teach the elements of faith mechanically.

The yearly feasts, especially those of our Lord Jesus Christ and the most holy Virgin, will be profitable means for the sisters to help children lift up their mind and heart to the knowledge of the adorable Jesus Christ. For instance, during the holy week they will inspire a holy fear of God and a great compassion for the crucified Jesus and his mother's sorrows, infusing the sacred melancholy of the holy days in their tender souls. On

Easter, they will inspire the children with holy joy for our Lord Jesus Christ's resurrection... The liturgical year's solemnities can be rich in teachable moments.

To teach Christian doctrine mechanically to children is nearly useless. To better impress the mysteries of faith in the children's tender minds, they will vary the instruction through careful wording of the catechism and the use of lecture, projecting pictures from slides and explaining the truths of faith. Teaching Christian doctrine to the orphans will be a matter of great concern for the sisters, who will devote themselves to it in order to develop the spiritual life of the orphans.

To facilitate attaining this goal and to win the enthusiastic cooperation of the children in learning Christian doctrine, at the end of the year the sisters will invite some priests to the exams; they will also use appropriate attractions in order to allure children to a deep interest in important learning... A day of celebration for the top list children, as well as other profitable activities and awards, for effective teaching will be rewarding without stimulating the children's pride (S.D.D.Z.).
(3)

The orphans will be diligent in complying with their religious duties, being pious and at home with God; otherwise they will be unable to accomplish any good. After arising and saying some prayers, they will do a brief meditation and then attend the holy mass; they will also say the rosary and read a spiritual book for a while. At night, they will examine their conscience. Every Friday, they will say a special prayer to the most holy Heart of Jesus, to whom they are consecrated under the title of Little Poor of the Heart of Jesus. They will go to confession once a week, following the confessor's counsel for receiving Communion.

Vocal prayer must be paced in a moderate and calm

voice, with exact pronunciation, and devotion. Children must be exhorted to receive the most Holy Communion with profound devotion and recollection, making an appropriate preparation and thanksgiving. Any action in common, such as study, work, school, and eating will be preceded and followed by a brief prayer.

On Sundays and feasts, the schedule will allow for more play-time, and also more prayer and spiritual reading. The orphans will share in a day of spiritual recollection every month and in a three day spiritual retreat every year.

The pious union of the Luigini Sons of Immaculate Mary was created to increase faith and piety; the orphans whose behavior merits it, will be awarded the prize of being admitted to the union. They will be religious not only in the external, practice of their duties, but also in their inner spiritual life, always having the holy fear of God, the surest guide to success (R.P.A.).

6. EDUCATIONAL RULES

To aid us in fulfilling our great mission of helping the orphans to develop good, pious, and holy characters, we indicate some of the specific rules and manners.

1. *Good example.* (4) The sisters and the assistants will endeavor to radiate observance, piety, zeal, charity, union of hearts, and holy fervor as examples of virtues and holiness for the edification of the orphans. The sisters' action more than the words must penetrate and edify the tender souls! As little as they may be, children have a natural power of perceiving by intuition the goodness inherent in their superiors' behavior. If their examples are bad - which God forbid! - the children by

intuition will form their own judgments and scorn what they have been taught. As sound as may be the teachings by words, in the presence of actions contradictory to the teachings, they fade away like smoke under the wind's force.

For instance, a sister making the sign of the cross before little children in a careless or irreverent manner is implying to them that the sign of the cross is unimportant. She may be unaware of the impression she is creating. A sister or assistant who in the presence of even three years old children, speaks to the superior disrespectfully, diminishes for them the principle of divine authority, which is shared by the people who are in a position of superior. A sister or assistant eating or drinking greedily in the presence of children, teaches them gluttony in a masterly manner.

We could give many examples which seem trifles, but which have the power to waste the orphaned children's souls because their pure, tender minds are able to feel in the innermost the bad qualities that a teacher nurtures tacitly or temporarily. For instance, if a sister or assistant is troubled by a voluntary grudge against another, she is unable to conceal it. Even the least perceptive child perceives it as though he were penetrated by a magnetic influx.

In the world, the ruin of souls which occurs in families is a hecatomb. Education in the world has been defined: « The most difficult art entrusted to the most inexperienced hands. » People act, talk, and speak in the presence of children as if they do not understand what has been said or done. On the contrary, children understand very much, even if they are unaware of it; in fact, babies learn to speak a language at about the age of two years.

It was well stated by St. John Chrisostom: « Education of children is the art of the arts; no human art, painting and sculpture included, can reach the merits of those forming the children's soul. » To well know the art of education, one should be a theologian, and a philosopher and a saint.

And yet, those who left the world to dedicate themselves to God in religion, seeking their sanctification, are able to lead the tender souls toward a sound, moral, and civil education if they are helped by divine assistance and keep in mind the importance of education, rules, and these exhortations. But such education must begin with the perfect example that the sisters must be to the children, since they are called and committed to the sublime mission of education (S.D.D.Z.). (5)

2. *Prayer.* Because everything starts well with God, the sisters who are committed to the orphan's direction, education, and service will combine good example with prayer in order to educate them in a holy manner. Separately from the orphans, (6) they will pray in common at the assigned time every day with zeal and fervor so that our Lord and the most holy Virgin may give them enlightenment in the performance of their duty toward the orphans; and to give the orphans docility and grace to cooperate faithfully with the sisters' instruction, direction, and motherly kindness.

3. *Surveillance.* Continuous, accurate surveillance is an important factor to keep the institute's orphans in perfect order. Watching over them is the master's, the vice-master's, and the assistant's duty, but the major responsibility is that of the master. Continuous, accurate, and careful surveillance is the great preservative from any defect, hence it is called the preventive method. From

the sisters' watchful care the orphans understand the importance and the aim of surveillance, and they learn to accustom themselves to discipline and the practice of their duties.

The master, either personally or through the vice-master, who should be fully aware of his high mission and responsibility, will never leave children abandoned to themselves, otherwise they quickly and inevitably become negligent and inactive. The sister who oversees the orphans must keep close vigilance over them, aware of all their actions and conversations.

Most watchful will be surveillance during play-time. The sister will be most alert as she leads the children to the recreational area annexed to the institute where their play activity will allow them to let off steam; all of which improves their health, as well as their physical and emotional development. In their play she will be attentive to prevent rough and rowdy actions, which could result in harmful injuries. In order that good habits in working and playing together be developed, quarreling and poor sportsmanship will not be tolerated. No one should separate them from the group, either alone or in pairs, but all should be within sight of the person presiding. (7)

4. *Holy suggestions.* Both superior and teachers will endeavor to instill in the children faith in divine things, love for Jesus and Mary, and the angels and saint. By speaking to them of God, of Jesus' love for them, his Passion and death, as well as of the most holy Virgin's suffering at the foot of the cross, they will affect them strongly with holy thoughts.

The sisters will bear in mind that a pure, virginal, childlike mind learns readily the most holy, sublime truths that are communicated to them in a simple, easy way. The marvels of creation such as the sun, the moon, the

stars, the fine days of spring, the field, the trees, the flowers, the food they eat, the water they drink are topics to be talked about frequently. The sisters will make children understand that all things are the work of God and everything has been created for our good. By showing them holy images and much more with edifying stories the sisters will often talk to them of Jesus as our Savior.

To succeed in everything, the sisters first must be deeply convinced of the holy truths; they must be spiritual souls giving holy examples.

5. *Loving manners.* For Gads sake, both superior and teachers will be affectionate and respectful toward the orphaned children, holding them as souls who are dearest to the Lord, perhaps dearer than themselves, because they are innocent and poor. In their affectionate care of the orphans, the sisters will never make use of offensive or harsh words, especially when dealing with those marked by anger and impatience, not even when it is a matter of correcting, reproaching, or punishing them.

That the orphans may develop the same virtues, the sisters' relationship with them must be marked by meekness, charity, and holy zeal as well as by a pinch of sternness, which will prevent the children from taking advantage of them or becoming excessively familiar. The sisters will beware of partiality, because it can be detrimental for all: instead they will love all in God dealing prudently with all in order to avoid the orphans' taking advantage. Such treatment does not prevent them from rewarding the best, humble, obedient, and observant children. But the sisters will not kiss even the least one of them, nor will they permit themselves to be kissed (S.D.D.Z.).

7. PARTICULAR RULES

1. We know by experience that a day of walking from early in the morning and in good weather improves effectively the children's health. However they should not return home later than dusk. After hearing mass they may go out to walk by tramway or by coach, if the place is far-off; at least two sisters will accompany theses and see that the orphans eat good food, and enjoy themselves all day long.

The community of the orphans will seldom walk through the public streets of the city, even though it is sometimes useful because the orphans' walking recollected and well behaved moves those who see them to admiration and compassion.

When the orphans are invited to share in a funeral, the superiors will usually decline the invitation, making exception for notable persons who disposed of the bequest in the orphans' favor, or for those people who have donated a good amount of money as recompense. To decline the invitation the superior will produce good reasons such as these: the orphans cannot afford to lose the profit of their work nor their time; dressing and resuming the working clothes is troublesome; the risk of catching a cold in winter time or in hot days, etc. If they accept the invitation, both superior and master will see to it that the orphans are dressed neatly and behave with propriety in public.

2. The orphans will have no relationship with outsiders, and no stranger is allowed to approach them. A watchful care must be taken especially when masters or farmers or such persons are working in the institute. Any approach by outsiders may happen to be dangerous.

3. If children have parents or grand-parents or benefactors, they will write to them on the main feast, their patron saint's day, as well as any time they receive mail from them. When parents or relatives come to call on them, the children will be affectionate and respectful, including in their conversion such things as to draw them near the Lord. Besides feasts and the like, the visit day will be twice a month, and the sister will assist the children (S.D.D.Z.).

4. Accompanied by a supervisor, the boys can see their parents or relatives every Sunday, always behaving respectfully and politely. Before letting the boys go to the parlor, the prefect must be sure that the visitors are parents or relatives, excluding any strangers or the female cousins of the same age. The same is true for the young girls. He will be present at their talk, moderating them through appropriate words and considerations, should they behave improperly, even if by ignorance. He will let the boys accept what the parents give them openly, but later he will search into things or clothes to see whether money or notes have been hidden (R.P.A.).

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5. It is above all in morals that the boys of an institute may become depraved. Nowadays malice is precocious, and many boys enter the institute after already being exposed to scandal in the world or in the family. When this evil enters an institute and spreads into it for lack of surveillance, everything goes to ruin: little by little all are affected by it; discipline fails, and religion does not matter to them; dependency, work, sincerity, and goad disappear; everything comes to nothing. Hence the prefect will take special care to prevent such a distressing evil to take root. To reach this goal:

a. He will see to it that the boys go to confession

every week after making a good examination ,of conscience; he will send for the confessor beforehand.

b. During play-time, he will be watchful to prevent the boys from speaking in secret, or from bunching up and hiding themselves in far-off ,places, or from forming an unobserved group of 'two or three persons. Purposely, he will close the door opening into the atrium, and refuse permissions which give the boys a chance to stay two by two unobserved.

c. Prudently, he will conceal the why of such a surveillance, attributing it to reasonable motives.

d. During play-time, he will not allow the boys to lay hands on each other, paying rigorous attention to prevent the elder boys from frolicking with or caressing the little ones. Neither will he allow the elder boys to play with the little ones.

e. He will teach the boys to avoid idleness as a great enemy, keeping them occupied with good games during the play-time.

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f. When the prefect receives a complaint against someone, he will question him tête â tête with much discretion, but without pretending clear explanations; then, after telling him to keep silent about the matter, he will refer everything to the superiors.

g. He will encourage the boys to receive Holy Communion frequently, because this is a great means that delivers from such an evil (R.S.A.).

6. The information is an additional effective means to keep order and discipline, as well as to prevent many evils; informing the superiors about a serious matter prejudicing the community or some of the fellows is commanded by the rules.

The boys are driven to act stealthily by instinct, and are afraid of the information; hence, they try to bring into disrepute this duty along with its beneficial means by borrowing the jargon of the world and the evil-doers, calling the information espionage. They do their utmost to give this word an ominous, hated meaning so that no one may fulfill the duty of informing the superiors; to root out this duty, they persecute the follow who informs the superiors with their anger, calling him a spy; furthermore, to show this brand of infamy, they avoid him, do not speak to him, do an ill turn to him, etc. All these means are a manifestation of the precocious malice that pretends impunity to bad actions.

For that reason, the prefect presiding over the immediate discipline of the boys will encourage the truth from them. He will do his best with fine manners to make the boys understand that the duty of informing is for the common or individual good as well as for the great benefits coming from it. He will deal severely with those who try to bring the duty of informing the superiors into disrepute; but, while inspiring love and esteem toward this legitimate, holy duty, on the other hand he will inspire reprobation for the information given on the ground of personal trifles or out of spite or revenge. He will point out that this is the kind of information each one must beware of because forgiving insults with meekness, patience, and mutual sympathy is better. Likewise he will teach the boys that information about serious, grave matter must be given with no passion, personal revenge, over-statement, and lies, it must be given instead with an upright aim, saying the pure truth (R.P.A.).

7. Observance of silence is another important means to keep good discipline in the institutes. The prefect will be a solicitous guardian of this observance both in

the times and places established by the rules. If the prefect wants the boys to observe silence, he will give the example by talking in a low voice. Nothing else helps the pupils to be silent as the teacher's talking in a faint voice. Even when the prefect is reproaching the boys who did not observe silence, the best means is to warn them in a low voice or by clapping his hands without speaking; shouting aloud in these circumstances invites the boys to do the same (R.P.A.).

8. PUNISHMENTS

Punishments. When children are educated and under surveillance, they seldom commit faults which need punishment, but a warning or rephension is usually enough. We point out again, we must follow Don Bosco's system, the preventive method, which wards off children's faults by watching over them in such a way that they have no opportunity to commit faults. Formed in a Christian spirit and devotion, they will feel the holy fear of God, and avoid committing serious faults.

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However, since human nature is inclined to evil and some people are bad-natured, especially those born in poverty, it is sometimes necessary to combine religious and civil education with some punishment to compel them to behave. In such a case the following rules are to be respected:

1. *Punishment will never be frequent nor disproportionate to the fault.* Punishments are like medicaments: if used frequently, no benefit is received from them, and, therefore, people feel compelled to increase the amount; but the more the medicaments are used, the less is their beneficial effect, and other medicine has to be substituted.

An institute of education under the sisters' direction cannot adopt this course, using punishments as to reach such a degree that the pupils become unconcerned with them; should it happen, the institute would become a house of correction, the children's community would go to ruin, and the spirit of the sisters who are devoted to education would come to an end because they would find themselves in difficulties, would become annoyed losing internal peace, etc.; everything would be in disorder. Punishments must be proportionate to the faults. When they are applied in excess, like medicaments they harm the patient, sometimes even killing. Hence, the sister will never punish out of resentment, but when she is compelled to punish, she will act according to reason punishing less than it is due.

2. *Before imposing a penalty, even a light one, the sister must ask the Lord for enlightenment, so that no one is mistaken.*

3. When punishment is over, the child will go to the sister who inflicted the punishment to give thanks, beg pardon, and promise to amend. It would be also useful to tell the child to confess soon if the fault was somehow grave; otherwise, when the confessor comes again.

Material punishments are to be used very seldom and with much discretion, because the teachers' active surveillance, the good, moral, religious education, the fine relationships of pure holy affection between teacher and pupils are the best means to prevent faults; therefore, punishments should not be used. On the contrary, relaxation of surveillance, lack of affection, the teachers' giving bad examples are the cause of faults and of punishments, which demoralize the institute. In such a case, the sisters would be worthy of punishments more than the pupils.

9. TWO MORAL PUNISHMENTS TO BE PREFERRED

1. *Simulated subtraction of affection*: driving back the approaching child, showing a sullen face, and showing no love are moral punishments. When friendly relations of pure, holy affection between teacher and pupils are well-established, simulated withdrawing of affection is the greatest punishment, which may be emphasized and prolonged according to the faults.

When a sister approaches the child who is being punished, she may be of great assistance by helping the child to reflect upon her fault and the punishment, and exhorting her to go to the teacher who imposed the punishment. For good results, it is indispensable that punishment be used very seldom. Its frequent use becomes abuse; in fact, the wise educator strives to prevent having to punish faults.

2. If a young candidate or daughter of Mary behaved badly, she could be threatened with the removal of the blessed medal; should she persist in the fault, the threat should be carried out for some days. A sister's intervention would do the utmost to make the candidate understand her fault, emphasizing that the punishment the superior gave to her is greater than others, and that a material punishment would be better. For these reasons, this punishment will be used very seldom.

We repeat over again that the religious, moral education as well as good example, active surveillance, and mutual, pure, holy affection are the best means to prevent faults and punishments; when they happen, however, lifting the mind to God to invoke help before punishing is also indispensable. But faults are not to be always punished, since sometimes we have to dissimulate or to give a benevolent interpretation to them.

We give a summary of what has been said:

1. *Prevention of the faults*; we have to put children in the moral condition of committing no faults by giving them a holy, loving education, good example, and active, accurate surveillance as well as by keeping them occupied, separated from outsiders, and by praying for them.

2. *Rare and moderate punishments*; after invoking divine help and seeking advice, we should use punishments calmly, disposing children to accept them reasonably and lovingly.

3. *Pious industries and strategies*; these aim at repentance and amendment.

4. *Exhortation to confess the faults with sincere sorrow, making steady resolutions*.

5. An excellent step for reconciliation is exhorting the repented people to go to the chapel in order to ask the Lord and the most holy Virgin for forgiveness, promising amendment.

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The sisters committed to education must be convinced that dealing with punishments is a very delicate matter, only helpful in avoiding future faults when it is well handled; but when faults and punishments increase because of the sister's faults, the punishment is harmful instead of helpful.

REPRIMANDS. They must be applied with calm and good manners, otherwise they kill instead of edifying. Besides behaving with dignity, persuading the people is also necessary in order that children may understand and hate their faults.

CORRECTIONS. When the fault is private, it must be corrected in private; the superior or the teacher may also correct a public fault in private giving some punishment

to the person at fault, when they deem it necessary to put an end to it (S.D.D.Z.).

The prefect will never reproach nor punish in public in these two following cases:

1. When he foresees a reaction from the boy, which would cause scandal and a greater stubbornness. In such a case, it is better to correct and punish privately.

2. When reproaching a private or nearly private fault, which might cause or confirm a scandal by calling the people's attention to it. Besides, concealing some faults to little children such as theft, dishonesty, or serious insubordinations is sometimes better.

An excellent method of education that the prefect of our institutes will adopt is persuasion. Either in the case of correction or punishment or warning, the prefect will strive to persuade the pupils of their fault through fatherly, but resolute words; after disproving their excuses, he will sometimes require their assent, as for instance by asking: are you persuaded of your fault? Do you agree with what I have said to you? And the like. He will use persuasion to condition children to accept punishment favorably and profit by it (R.P.A.).

10. SPECIAL CAUTION

I call the attention of the sisters who are committed to education. Besides what we have recommended for the success of the children, they also must use special caution to enhance the chance of success for a child, even though she is the least one, and to avoid an irretrievable blow. We look at it.

A child sometimes happens to oppose the teacher's will by instinct, without being fully aware of it. In such

a case it is the teacher's will that must prevail. She must tactfully move the child's will to her own in a way quite unknown to the child. The teacher will be delicate in using holy, loving dynamics, also adding prayer because without divine help not even a child's will may be subdued. In other terms, the teacher will pretend that the child's behavior is not stubbornness. But, let us come to the point that could harm the innocent soul.

Suppose that a child is at fault against the teacher's orders in various little things; for instance, the child is restless during the work and the mother superior is acquainted with it. Suppose that the mother superior goes to the children, asks the teacher how they behave and the teacher answers: « All is well. » If the superior says, « I know that this child is restless at work, gets up, goes away, etc., » the teacher has to speak wisely and well of the child by saying: « It is true, but not always; it sometimes happens because the child does not feel well; however, she is amending and is going to work calmly and willingly as the others do or even better. » The mother superior will conclude: « I am sure of that; this child will perhaps surpass the others. »

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But, if the teacher says: « Ah, my dear superior! This child acts on her own account and will; I do not know what to do any longer, because I am unable to correct her; she does not listen, therefore I cannot deal with, etc... » she would be a fool and would harm that child.

Should the answer be this one, the teacher would not only be yielding to the child but would be also showing great imprudence, as to destroy both authority and effectiveness of corrections. The child would rejoice interiorly, because her childish will would prevail over the teacher's will, but she would not have the heart to amend, because she was distrusted before the mother superior.

It would be worse than ever if the teacher's declaration of impotence were addressed to the children themselves; it would happen in the case of a request of the superior or to give free play, if the teacher said before them: « I cannot stand it any longer because these children are bad, undisciplined, and do not obey; I cannot do anything because they do their own will, etc. » Oh! Poor children! It would be the same as killing them! Those children would become such as the incompetent, imprudent, bad teacher described them! Such a teacher should never act so unwisely as to ruin those children or she should never teach.

To sum up, the wise teacher will never distrust children, but on purpose will justify their little faults so that the children may not think of themselves as mischievous; nor will the teacher declare impotence, but confidence. It has been wisely said about education of children: « You must not make them do, but make them want to do. »

When questioned about a group or class, the teacher will beware of saying: « All of them are restless, unbending, etc. » On the contrary, the answer will be such as this, « on the whole, I am glad. » Then, the teacher will shove to the mother superior the good qualities of the children who are doing well, will touch on some defects, and will add that they have good will to improve. Speaking this way has an additional benefit: knowing that the teacher justifies children before the mother superior, they will become more affectionate to her.

It is obvious that such delicate methods concern the communities of little children where the educational system is fostered by the spiritual trend, prayer, reading, practice of sacraments, teaching, etc...

11. STUDY AND WORK

1. The boy orphans are trained in arts and crafts, the girl orphans in feminine works. Both are trained by specialized elementary school teachers, and those favorably disposed to music attend appropriate lessons to cultivate their talent (Statutes of the pious, charitable institute called « The Poor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus », 1890). (8)

Because they will be obliged to earn their living when they leave the institute, the orphans need to work with love, attention, and in silence taking care of all tools and material as well as the books, paper, pens, etc. Those making special improvement in the work and study will be awarded (R.O.).

The orphaned girls of Immaculate Mary house will be fond of work as the means to succeed in life, whereas idleness leads to ruin; therefore, they will learn to work with love and diligence as a means of earning their living (R.O.).

The girl orphans who have been trained in the feminine works and are working for commissions will share in the profit of their work; their money will be registered, even though they may be unaware of that, receiving it when they leave the institute (Circ. Jan. 1925).

Both teacher and vice-teacher will watch over them when they work or attend school, taking care that they work in silence.

As to the school, we have to resort to lay teachers only when it is indispensable and after praying and gaining reliable information, because they must be pious, modestly dressed, church goers, docile, and expert in teaching. At the end of the school year the award distribution will be organized in a show, in the presence of guests (S.D.D.Z.).

2. Let us consider the administration. What do we do to maintain so many persons? Where do we get the necessary means? Besides paying the rent for the boys' institute, the orphanages' maintenance, installation and improvement of arts and crafts as well as continuous building, we keep 160 persons. All this requires an amount of about 40-50,000 liras, every year. Ladies and gentlemen, can we gather such an amount in Messina? Can we rely on the civic charity for this money?

You know what the generous population is able to give. So many charitable institutions along with their charity bazaars, raffles, and charity walks give little margin for an institution of 160 persons and needing an amount of about 40-50,000 liras a year to keep going. In the presence of our beloved archbishop of Messina and so many ladies and gentlemen I say that these institutes for orphans do not keep going and developing through alms and donations, because alms and donations are hardly a fifth of the yearly economical figures of the following report.

The city-hall contributed 3,000 liras, the province 1,000; what the sisters begged amounted to 3,000, monthly contributions to 1,000, casual alms to 1,000; altogether, these figures amount to 10,000 liras a year. How do we meet the remnant money?

Ladies and gentlemen, I have always deemed that an institute for the education of children and youths cannot pretend to keep going on alms only; it would seem like a strong young person who would like living on begging instead of working. A charitable institution is allowed to ask help within some bounds, only when the inmates are unable to work such as the blind, cripples; feeble old persons, or little children. But relying mainly on alms

to maintain an institute for youths jeopardizes the educational system.

The youth must be trained in a salaried work from the time of their childhood. For an institute of education, work is a main factor for building morals because it keeps order, discipline, life, and guarantees the future of the youth by teaching them how to earn their living through the sweat of their brow. Without work, neither religious nor civic education is possible. Pray and work formed the motto of the western hermits, who proclaimed that we have no consistency of religious principles without work, and they said so in spite of being dedicated to transcendental asceticism.

I nurtured these ideas from the very beginning of this foundation, and yet I have endured for so many years the criticism that my program fosters idleness in the orphans! On the contrary and despite the expense figures for rent, building, maintenance, and installation of arts and crafts, as reported above, we have drawn the means to enable the two charitable institutes to continue through steady work and hard industries. Thanks be to God.

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Our installing a mill and a bakery made us grow older beforehand, but we have solved a big problem of our institutes by earning the daily bread through the pure wheat bread sale; this work is contributing to our expenses with about 1,000 liras a month and is giving the people bread perfectly hygienic and nutritious, which is considered the surest one to our great satisfaction. (9) We had already installed a clothing factory for various products such as stockings, shirts, shorts, shawls, under vests, and the like.

While visiting the exposition of our works, you have seen embroidery in white, silk, and gold, crochet works,

pillows for lace making, golden yarns, old fashioned laces, man-made flowers of paper, cloth, and metal. Quite a few years ago we started a floriculture; fresh flower wreaths made by our orphans signifying the incense of prayer for dear memories, while bunches of roses or gardenias are perfuming rich tables of weddings. Incidentally, I add that we have installed a shoe factory, a tailor shop, and a typography in the boys' orphanage. With this, I end my report.

Ladies and gentlemen, you have noticed that a supreme, invisible hand, the hand of divine providence has driven us from the humble beginning, from the dark slums of Avignone quarter up to the founding of two charitable institutes, to the opening of two other houses in the province, and to the formation of a community of sisters, who are trained in the school of sacrifice and charity, who are learned in literature and art, who are going to continue the rescue of the abandoned, unsafe orphans. To conclude, let me say these words to you: « I recommend my orphans to you. »

I am not asking of you the usual alms! I know that so many charitable institutions in Messina knock at your door, so I want to be reasonable in my requests. The orphans and I are most grateful for the contribution that you have given in various circumstances, but now I am asking these additional favors: your moral support, your benevolence, your pious consideration on these institutes, your good will to help them not only through alms, but even better through your advice and good acquaintances, especially when a word, a recommendation may help. I ask of you not to accept easily the unjust censure or rumors that people spread among you in order to estrange you from me, by speaking ill of me and of my activities as if they were based on a bad administration or were

profiteering through the institutes' industries. Ladies and gentlemen, censuring and demolishing is an easy task, but you are wise enough and experienced enough to understand how much it takes to build something important.

Ladies and gentlemen, I ask of you an additional facilitation that you cannot deny to these orphans who are standing enraptured before you. Since they earn their living by work more than by begging, and since you may need an embroidered trousseau for your daughters who are going to a conspicuous wedding, please commission it at our orphanage. For instance, if a young married couple is coming back from the church and you want to give them a basket of flowers as a gift, please remember these orphans who are asking you for work. On Nov. 2, you are going to lay down a fresh flower wreath on the tomb of a beloved dead: please resort to these orphans, who while settling up the flowers will also pray for the repose of your cherished soul, who will be delighted in it. If your family uses knitted goods and you need some of them, please commission them from these orphans, who will serve you both punctually and exactly.

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Ladies and gentlemen, I ask you for work. If the little children of my orphanage have the right to ask your alms, the youth already trained in the work do not like living by begging, but want to work, even though they have to shorten their rest. While eating their daily bread, they want to say, « we earned it through our benefactors who gave us a profitable work. May God bless them » (Speech, Aug. 20, 1906).

12. THE MILL AT SAN PIER NICETO

Pray and work! is both the motto of the Catholic institutions and the rule for any well-doing. Prayer indicates

the worshipping of God, the holiest religion, and your keeping in mind Jesus' saying, « You can do nothing without me » (Jn. 15, 5). Work indicates that the human beings must not be idle expecting everything from God, they must instead bend to work in order to comply with the Bible's saying, « With the sweat on your brow shall you earn your bread » (Gen. 3, 19). These words almost have a literal application to the sowing of the wheat, which is the chief element of life. Everyone knows the anguish the people endure while sowing in the midst of weather conditions, harvesting and threshing under the scorching sun as well as while taking care of the work in order to make wheat bread.

If there is any aliment which must be accompanied by prayer, such an aliment is wheat, because our Lord taught us to ask the daily bread and the Bible tells us to learn from the ants: « The ants, a race with no strength, yet in the summer they make sure of their food » (Prov. 30, 25).

Wheat is a great blessing of God. It is the divine providence's most consoling, expressive sign. The bags full of this blessed earthly fruit coming back and forth from the mill, transformed into flour in a few minutes, and then worked into bread cannot help touching the Christians who should see the divine providence's benefits in everything.

Bread is so sacred that it makes us bless the donor; for this reason picking up and kissing it when it falls on the ground is appropriate. The offering of bread, flour, and wheat to God, who is the donor of any good, was considered the most sacred in the Old Testament... better yet, God was jealous of wheat pretending the offering of its first fruits as the most pleasant.

Even though modest and in the first stages, this mill

also represents other things: because it is born in the hands of priests along with sisters and is baptized with the blessing of the priest of God, it shares in the humanitarian institution which takes away so many poor children from the social risks, sheltering and forming them into good Christians through prayer and work. Oh! How marvelous is the sound of children's voices ascending from their innocence to heaven when it is combined with this clamor of the driving machine and the stones transforming wheat into flour! On one side is the blast-furnace that works this wonder in the sight of the human beings; on the other side is the children's living flame of faith that supports this miracle in the eyes of God.

This factory standing between the church and the pious institute, and the inspiring sight of the religious garb, is a moralizing element training and teaching these tender daughters of Niceto's population what work means, and what they must do if they are to eat the bread that divine providence provides. It reminds each one to lift up his mind to the operations of divine providence, in the holy fear of God, who can make this chief aliment disappear in a moment.

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People of St. Piero, woe if tomorrow you do not hear the roar of this revolving wheel and the grinding stones when you pass by! Woe if you have no wheat to grind! What a gloomy thought arose in my mind by the view of this mill and the tons of wheat being transformed into flour to be delivered to so many poor families! God is giving us bread in these terrible, threatening times; but He can also withdraw His helping hand as He sometimes does to punish our faults!

Unfortunately we are living in a time of divine punishments, and the ghost of famine is likely to rise from the bloody, grievous war. The submarines sink the ships full

of wheat going to feed the people, while the fields are abandoned for lack of workers. What next? Nowadays the view of a mill receiving wheat and giving flour is a lesson on the holy fear of God by reminding human conscience that our default may dry up the source of divine providence; on the other hand, it also reminds us to be faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ and to his holy law, if we want the daily bread not to fail.

Seventy years ago, when the most holy Virgin appeared to the innocent little shepherds Melanie and Maximin on the mountain of La Salette, in France, she said to them: « The arm of my Son is growing heavier and I cannot hold it any longer. Nuts and grapes will rot. » After touching on the danger of famine, she added: « If the people convert, every stone will become a heap of wheat! » Generally speaking, the people are not likely to convert. Nations and governments not only do not return to Jesus Christ's feet, but when the chiefs of the nations in Europe name God, they make politics by using His name as to have Him on their part. Human madness, how far astray you go!

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Will we give up hope for receiving forgiveness from God? Doesn't God see those who fear him with holy, filial fear of the earthly conflagrations? If a man fears the Lord, evil will not come his way (Eccl. 33, 1).

This little factory that starts the bread-making of wheat, which is the first fruit; this mill almost connected with the temple of God, this useful industry born of a priest and a few sisters under the protection of faith and surrounded by the prayer and the work of so many little creatures of God teaches us the meaning of divine providence, the gratitude due to the donor of all goods, and the holy fear we must have when we eat the bread coming from this mill. St. Augustine wrote that our marvel

at the produce of a seed forming one ear of wheat with 1,000 grains must not be less than our marvel at the miracle our Lord Jesus Christ worked when he fed 4,000 persons with 5 loaves. How grateful we should be toward the Most High, who gives us enough wheat for our daily bread, as well as the facility to transform it into flour!

I cannot help saying the last reason which is strictly connected with today's circumstances. If wheat is the most sacred among the products of the earth because it signifies divine providence and gives us the daily bread, which Jesus Christ taught us to ask and work for, we also have to somehow consider it as the material which forms the most august Sacrament, the Most Holy Eucharist. For this reason the prophet Zechariah said: Corn will make the young men flourish, and sweet wine the maidens (Zech. 9, 17). Here, the corn signifies the Holy Sacrament, Jesus Christ's adorable flesh; the wine, his Most Precious Blood. We receive both of them along with Jesus Christ's soul and divinity in the Communion.

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From this point of view, the installation of our mill is of greatest importance for it provides pure flour for the hosts that perpetuate our Lord Jesus Christ's sacramental life on earth. A mill that makes sure the forming of such an august Sacrament for the souls' spiritual life is somehow a divine institution!

Ladies and gentlemen, I let you know that with this mill we aim at our best service to the Eucharist. I wish that this wheel and stones continue to rotate by day and by night to form purest flour to form the hosts of which thousands and thousands of souls in San Pier Niceto, in the province, and in Sicily are fed! Then the abundance of divine providence will fill the earth and the punishment of the Lord will be averted (Speech, Nov. 26, 1916).

13. UNWARRANTED CHARGE

The people say that I shelter children too easily. They do not know the moral pressure under which I find myself more than often. Today it is an high ranking person pleading for a child, tomorrow a representative of the public press interceding for another child, then it is a benefactor .pretending to shelter an abandoned little girl. Ironically, the same person who has criticized me for accepting children too readily, is the one who will later insist that I take one that he recommends. To refuse is embarrassing, for who can refuse a bare-footed, sad-eyed child who seems to be saying to the sister, « I have no mother, take me with you! »

If I had taken the compasses as a cool administrator from the time I began sheltering abandoned children, first I would not have bartered my little things; second, to balance the sheltering of the poor abandoned orphans with the meager contributions, I would not have formed the institutes. Any enterprise requires initiative and impulse, but when the matter is about orphans who get lost day after day, then initiative and impulse are even more urgent. In Messina we have two orphanages that shelter many children, giving them an education, life, and safety; instead of getting lost, these children found their right path. Why should I extinguish the flame or instinct that drove me up to here? For a cool, inappropriate calculation? Besides, I somehow restrained myself; to the persons who charge me with sheltering all children that the people ask me for it I say that the charge is false. I often do violence to myself by declining to shelter children in order to avoid both going beyond my possibilities and jeopardizing the accepted ones. For that reason I sometimes found myself at variance with the people who pressed on me to shelter children. Such persons were

the same who had charged me with receiving orphans with impunity.

As to how we are taking care of the orphans, ladies and gentlemen, please come to check for yourselves. As a tutor, I somehow know my duties. It is not only with the salvation of souls and religious education that I am concerned, but I also take great care of my orphaned children's bodily health and civil education. Good nutrition, hygiene, cleanness, and good manners are main factors of the educational system in my institutes.

As for nutrition, please look at the children to see how rubicund and healthy they are. As for hygiene, I pride myself on the fact, for I follow the Kneip's system, I have read the Mantegazza's treatise, and keep hygiene seriously. In our four refectories, we follow specific rules about moral, hygienic precepts, and good manners in eating. (10)

Our institutes are provided with inside water facilities, and children wash any time they need. The institute for girls has a three tank laundry along with running water; there, the laundresses wash, cleanse, and mend the clothes every day, and at every week-end place the neat clothes on each person's bed. Both houses have rooms for wardrobes, where clothes, suits, and dresses are distinguished by personal identification number.

The dormitories are wide and airy; the one for girls is superlatively airy and sunny. Air and light are the main factors of life, and we complain that too many people ignore this important hygienic rule, which is so important. The 50 beds dormitory at the Holy Spirit has 9 windows in the south, two in the east, two in the north, 1 in the west, and is provided with little venting windows at the bottom along with 6 air-holes on the top. During the day, the windows are opened; in summer time, they are

opened even in the night, when it is possible. Thanks to God, the prosperous health my orphans are enjoying depends mainly on the observance of this hygienic rule: air, air, always air, fresh air, new air, pure air by day and night, in the dormitory, in the laboratory, in the school, during play-time, in the refectory, and everywhere.

We hold motion in great esteem. The boys are somehow trained like soldiers; they walk in the country once a week, and enjoy regular play-time every day. I once set up gymnastic tools, but later I took them away because a boy ran a serious risk. We also have a little theater to entertain and educate the boys. The orphanage for girls is provided with wide gardens, where children play and rejoice during their recreation.

Someone says: the institute for boys is on the ground floor, and the dormitory must be improved. Ladies and gentlemen, can you spare me your money? Spare me it, and I assure you that I will build up an institute model in short time! I know very well which things my institutes need in order to reach perfection; but, we have begun from nothing and I dare to say that we have come a long way, thanks to God. I also have other ideals and I am going straight to reach my goals (Speech, Aug. 20, 1906) .

14. RECAPITULATION

Saving tender children is a holiest work to which we will attend with sacrifice, deeply aware of the excellent good we do when we take them away from vagabondage, risks, and depravity and provide them with a sound education and environment. Thus, by God's help we form them to become good Christians, perfect Catholics, honest and industrious citizens as well as good parents when

they marry. We will keep in mind that educating children requires continuous sacrifices and self-denial as well as it implies troubles, want, worries, and difficulties. Let us accept everything willingly for the sake of our adorable Lord Jesus Christ.

To be successful in this holiest enterprise and to help the children to succeed, we have:

1. To edify them in everything and everywhere, keeping in mind the divine teacher's threat: « If anyone should cause one of these little ones to turn away from his faith in me, it would be better... » (Mt. 18, 6).

2. To pray every day to our Lord Jesus Christ and to Immaculate Mary that the children be docile, improve, and grow up with the fear of God.

3. To help them receive the holy sacraments, especially Holy Communion with good dispositions, encouraging them to go to confession every week after a good examination of conscience.

4. To make them delight in pious practices, in well-timed prayer, meditation, and holy rosary, sometimes allowing them to share with us in order to win good workers, etc. We have to instill in their heart love for Jesus and Mary, devotion to St. Joseph, the guardian angel, the patron saints, and St. Louis Gonzaga, whose pious union Luigini Sons of Immaculate Mary must be taken in vigor. Let us also give them scapulars, inscribing them to confraternities in order that they draw spiritual goods for their success. Let them also attend mass every day with recollection.

5. To teach them catechism every day, making them undergo the yearly examination and giving awards to the best ones. It is also important to teach them good manners twice a week.

6. To make them attend the elementary school along with regular examination with a pious, Catholic, upright teacher. The best ones will be awarded a prize at the end of the year.

7. To make them improve in arts and crafts so that they may earn their living honestly. The master trainers of art must be persons of good morals; but they have no complete jurisdiction on children, who will be under our surveillance.

8. To watch over children because it is a strict precept and a duty of ours. Directors and assistants will keep a watch on them in the church, in the laboratories, in the school, in play-time, and in the dormitories knowing that children have a keen instinct to escape from surveillance; therefore the educator must be smarter than they are. The devil seeks depravity of children constantly, but the assistant must elude Satan's snares by preserving the children who are entrusted to him immaculate for the Lord!

9. To love children with pure, holy affection, with deep understanding of charity, tender, fatherly charity in God because this is the secret of the secrets to win and save them. We have to deal with affection and meekness as well as with reserve, which prevent children from intimacy and confidence through reverential fear. Children must never be insulted. If necessary, punishment must be given in such a way that children know it is for their good. Children must never be reproached for private faults in the presence of others, especially the little ones who might run risks of scandal. In such a case, the warning or punishment must be in private. The superior will never become vexed with children nor show a grudge or lack of confidence against them. It is better to conceal

some faults instead of disheartening or making children grow weak.

Punishment or strong warnings must be avoided when they may provoke reactions; it would be like destroying a building. Because each educator needs God's enlightenments, he will ask them from the Lord and the mother of good counsel every day, even with tears and internal prayer in the daily occasions. Educating children is the art of arts, the science of sciences, and only a few have it, because one should be a philosopher and a theologian and a great expert of the human heart and a saint to be a perfect educator of a child. As for us, let us do our best by work and prayer to Jesus and Mary, imploring enlightenment about education of children.

15. TWO PHOTOGRAPHS (11)

In my orphanage, children are taught to respect civic and ecclesiastical authorities independently from principles of politics, which we do not mention in our teaching, only aiming at forming honest citizens as well as good parents.

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To understand well the importance of such a humanitarian institution which everyone esteems, we don't need any demonstration; to please you, however, I am going to show an eloquent proof that speaks by itself: two photographs which were shot in Taormina. Please listen to me. A 14 year old orphaned girl from Taormina worked as a scullion in various houses to earn her living. Beaten and fired because she pilfered, she went from bad to worse in other houses. Dispersed, ragged, hair topsy-turvy, and morally upset she was wearisome to herself and others, having no hope of a good future. One day she was drawing water at a fountain when a foreigner passed

by, looked at her, and took a snapshot after letting her pose as a characteristic girl.

In the photo she appeared like an African savage woman, barefoot and muddy, her hair topsy-turvy, the look on her face troubled; on the whole, she infused a feeling of horror and compassion, because she was an orphan abandoned to herself in the bloom of her youth. That photo appeared in some post-cards of Taormina.

Some days later, pious people asked me to shelter that poor orphan; I received her along with her extreme poverty. The youth was trained in education and vocational work, and at 21 years of age she was already transformed: no one could recognize her as the girl in the foreigner's snapshot. When she left the institute to be hired by a noble family of Taormina, we took a photo. What a difference between the first photo and the second one! The latter shows the good education's miraculous effects! The photo shows a neatly dressed serene youth, whose look transpires the gentle dignity of a calm soul that is born again, that looks forward to the future with confident trust. She is handling an opened book, which signifies morals, dignity, and culture. Where is the African savage woman, whose gloomy look disheartened and distressed? The African savage woman disappeared not through the blizzards of life, but through the beneficial, enlivening ray of the civil, moral, and intellectual education!

Ladies and gentlemen, look at the two photos that were shot seven years ago. See the difference that seven years and a half of education in my orphanage of Taormina have made! The youth is Rosaria Scimone. This youth also showed the education's strength by liberating herself from the snares of which present society is full; by now, she lives in a noble family at Acireale, where I

saw her the last time receiving good counseling by the refined family, which is happy with her.

THE POOR

1. LOVE AND RESPECT FOR THE POOR

Let us promise to love and respect the poor, seeking their bodily and spiritual well-being. The superiors promise to always maintain the kitchen soup for them, giving bread, alms, and other things as we have done till now (Resolves, June 17, 1920).

The Rogationists of the Heart of Jesus will always open the door to the poor of Jesus Christ to give them spiritual and temporal charity. Even though the order has no asylums or shelters for the poor, still it must receive them in the atrium or in a reserved room every day at lunch or dinner to give them a dish of food with bread. At least every Sunday we should gather, evangelize, and teach them the Christian doctrine, helping them receive Holy Communion. The most holy Heart of Jesus will be greatly delighted if we encourage them to attend mass every day receiving Holy Communion frequently. Because we see the suffering Jesus in the most poor and abject, we must treat them with particular affection applying some discipline and a learning program. The most favorably disposed and patient among the priests and the brothers will be entrusted with this task. Both the orphans and the poor will be told to pray every day to win good workers to the holy Church, adhering to the pious union of the Poor of the Heart of Jesus, which will be approved by the ecclesiastical authority (C.R.).

The Rogationists will remember that our pious institute is born for the holy mission of giving; the more we

give, the more we will be given by the Lord because he said: « (You) will receive a hundred times more, and will be given eternal life » (Mt. 19, 29).

2. A CHARGE CAUSING GRIEF

Some persons charge me with helping the poor. To tell the truth, this charge hurts me because helping the afflicted, miserable, abandoned, dying by starvation and cold weather, cripples, blind, and unable to work is a duty for all Christians, even 'when they have to make an effort; in fact, our Lord Jesus Christ taught us to do to others what we want be done to us. They say: « But you have deprived my orphans of anything in order to help care of the orphans. » To these persons I answer: « Never have I deprived my orphans of anything in order to help the poor, because I obtained the means from public charity and I have experienced that a supreme providence, in whose presence both rich and poor are equal, always provided me with the means to give a dish of food and some bread to the most derelict and needy. »

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They respond that I help beggars who are able to work. I say to them: « Please come to my institute at lunch time; » you will see the pool of Siloe full of old feeble people, either blind or cripples, or drooping by starvation. I assure you that I held some of them who had fainted from starvation. If some of them are unemployed, it is due to lack of work. Will society condemn these to death because they lack work? Charity and humaneness dare not, nor they deny them a piece of bread.

These persons insist that some of the poor steal and cheat me: What can I say? It is possible that a rascal conceals himself under the guise of extreme poverty picking up a dish of food and a piece of bread. What a great

thing! But, I cannot put into practice the saying, « so that the guilty person may not be saved, the just must perish! » So I cannot deny a piece of bread to so many unhappy persons for fear that a rascal is concealed among them! They steal! Please tell me, were you never robbed? Did human fraud and simulation never take money from your pocket or safe box, your vigilance and shrewdness notwithstanding?

Perhaps I am striking a discordant note that revives gloomy memories to you!... So I beg you not to charge me so easily if a beggar who is doubly poor happens to be in the midst of so many unhappy people when I try to give a helping hand. Society took no care of him when he was a little beggar or rascal abandoning him to himself, so he took a wrong way. Will society condemn him to *death* today? At least, may he find a gentle breeze of peace in the breath of celestial charity which is able to get him back to a better counsel (Speech, Aug. 20, 1906)!

3. HELPING AND EVANGELIZING THE POOR

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Aware of the command and the exhortations of our Lord Jesus Christ « give to everyone who asks you » and « give the remainder to the poor » , the pious institute of the Rogationists will be generous toward the poor, the afflicted, and the derelict. The kitchen soup for the poor will never fail in each institute, and after providing the community with everything, a dish of food, some bread, and some money will be given to all the spoor who knock at our door, taking into consideration their age and ailments. Helping the poor this way or giving them clothes or other forms of charity, after providing the community will be done with joy because the apostle says: « God delights in the people who give with joy. »

Alms must be given in the spirit of faith, remembering our Lord Jesus Christ's promise « you will receive a hundred times more » and « give to others, and God will give to you: you will receive a full measure, a generous helping, -poured into your hands - and all that you can hold. » On one hand, we have to provide the means of living for us and the institutions; on the other hand, we have to keep our divine Savior's saying « giving is better than receiving... » Believing in our Lord Jesus Christ's words will remind us that he said: « Whatsoever you do to the least of my brothers, that you do unto me. »

A form of charity we must have at heart, performing it with kindness and sacred care, is hospitality. If the guests are poor, we will provide them with everything without charging. Let us remember St. Paul's saying: « Because of hospitality Abraham deserved lodging the angels. » Each house will have the guest rooms separated from the institute so that the guests may have no relations with the community. (12) Some brother or priest will take care of them.

To foster the practice of alms and charity toward our neighbor in different ways, we quote the touching words of the Holy Spirit through the prophet Isaiah (58, 7-11)

«... (Is not this the sort of fast that pleases me...) To let the oppressed go free, and break every yoke, to share your bread with the hungry, and shelter the homeless poor, to clothe the man you see to be naked, and not turn from your own kin? Then will your light shine like the dawn and your wound will be quickly healed over. Your integrity will go before you and the glory of *Yahweh* behind you. Cry, and *Yahweh* will answer; call, and he will say, "I am here". If you do away with the yoke, the clenched fist, the wicked word, if you give your bread

to the hungry, and relief to the oppressed, your light will rise in the darkness, and your shadows become like noon. *Yahweh* will always guide you, giving you relief in desert places. He will give strength to your bones and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water whose waters never run dry. »

But helping those who belong directly to the Lord such as the priests and the religious communities in need pleases God at the highest, attracting his best promises of retribution and celestial blessings.

We cannot help being touched and generous toward those who belong to our Lord Jesus Christ, completely trusting in the prophet Malachi's divine promise: « Bring the full tithes and dues to the storehouse so that there may be food in my house, and then see if I do not open the flood gates of heaven for you and pour out blessing for you in abundance. For your sake I will lay a strict injunction on the locust not to destroy the fruits of your soil nor to make the vine in your fields barren, says *Yahweh Sabaoth*. All the nations will call you blessed, for you will be a land of delights, says *Yahweh Sabaoth* » (Mal 3, 10...).

Temporal charity must be combined with spiritual charity because the poor need evangelization. Some of them do not approach sacraments for many years either from laziness or from ignorance of the Christian doctrine. At least on Sundays and feasts, before giving food, we have to gather and teach them the catechism, the I Believe, Our Father, and Hail Mary making them pray and approach the sacraments of confession and Holy Communion. We have to bear in mind that our Lord, as a sign that he was the divine messiah, to the miracle of his omnipotence added the miracle of his mercy: « The poor are evangelized. » But evangelizing the poor without helping them

is an unfinished work. We must join both; by so doing, we will do a good service pleasing the adorable heart of Jesus, who will reciprocate by giving us copious, divine blessings; therefore, this double charity must never fail (From the Appendix to our primal Constitutions).

4. WORKING PERSONNEL

To the institute's employees, workers, and the people who are helped by it.

Dear sirs:

You know that the institute to which you belong as employees or workers or inmates or because you are somehow aided has no property nor cash funds nor sure income nor fixed profits, but lives by the help of divine providence. You also know that I have many orphans to maintain in two institutes as well as many duties to fulfill. Given all this, we both are in great need of divine providence to meet our interests.

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It is true that each one in his task, as myself in different ways, works to help things along, but everything will come to nothing without the help of divine providence, because God keeps an eye on the human fortunes ruling and directing them according to his supreme will. He makes the sun rise and the earth bloom, gives rain and provides all creatures with things. But if we forget God, God will forget us, and despite our working, toiling around, providence will not or hardly come.

This is why I feel myself obliged to ask you to observe the religious duties as well as any other Christian duty. On one hand, you want me to give work to you, paying you for it; on the other hand, I ask you not to hinder divine providence by forgetting God, because if He does

not give me the means, I am unable to pay and reward you according to your need or work; if you do not comply with your duties toward God, with good reason I have fear of losing His means. This is my interest and yours.

Besides, your religious duties are not intolerable burdens nor do I require of you great sacrifice, but religious acts that are very easy. My dearest in Jesus Christ, please consider that we are unable to stay in the grace of God, unless we fulfill our religious duties.

Living without confession, Holy Communion, and study of the main elements of our holy religion, living without lifting up our eyes to heaven to pray and adore God as our Lord and Creator, living without considering our last end as well as the eternal destination, this is not a Christian living, a living of God's creatures, but a living of ungrateful beings, of fools who run the risk of getting lost for ever. By forgetting God and our religious duties it becomes unavoidable for us to fall into many sins!

This is both the rub of my worries and our common prejudice! My dearest, I assure you that I fear nothing, and nothing disheartens me in the proceeding of these charitable institutes, but sin. Want, difficulties, persecutions, etc. everything seems like nothing, because I hope and trust in the Lord, who is a provident and loving father. But, if sin dwells among the people who live in the institutes, then I see everything lost!

My dearest brothers and sisters, such a truth the Holy Spirit manifested in these words: « Virtue makes a nation great, by sin whole races are disgraced » (Prov. 14, 34). Do you know why misery is reigning in the families, the families are fading, means are failing, bankruptcies are common, and misfortunes are increasing? Because of sin! On one hand, the people live far off from God, disregarding the religious duties and adhering

to nothing but interest; on the other hand, God does not bless their business, industries, fields, and work; on one hand, we make plans, on the other hand, God makes them useless; we collect money, but God makes it disappear with no profit. In short, without the blessing of God, nothing goes on well; with the blessing of God, everything flourishes.

God does not bless the people who disregard the religious duties such as confession, Holy Communion, preaching, religious education, spiritual reading, and prayer in the morning and night. The persons who live oblivious of God are too feeble to overcome temptations, internal and external sins, bad thoughts, bad words, and bad actions reaching such a degree as to even justify their sins by calling themselves the best Christians.

But I think otherwise. I do not like such people to share in my institutes, because such a sharing is to the prejudice of both of us. One Jonah was more than enough in a ship to make a storm rise, threatening the ship with sinking. Only when Jonah was thrown overboard did the storm die down. If I permit the sharing in my institute by the people who have no fear of God, who disregard the religious duties, who are defiled by transgressions of divine law I have good reason to fear that God and divine providence will cut the help, letting the storm sink us. But I am determined to expel the Jonahs for our common interest. To save the others, I have to cut the corrupted member who attracts divine punishments. If I do not behave this way, I will render an account to the Lord, who will punish me.

My dearest brothers and sisters:

Even though I am an unworthy minister of the Lord, I feel confident that you will receive my words as a beneficial warning from our Lord Jesus Christ, who wants to

drive you on a better way of living. Your being observant of the Christian law attracts the divine blessings on you during this life, making you worthy of eternal salvation. (13)

NOTES

(1) This is the aim of education: «It is of greatest importance not to be mistaken both in education and in the direction toward the last end, because education and last end are intimately connected. In fact, since education consists in forming the human being as it must be and behave in this terrestrial life in order to reach its last end for which it was created, it is obvious... that we have no true education when it does not aim at the last end (Pious XI, Encyclical *Divini illius Magistri*, Deo. 31, 1929).

(2) Keep in mind that our padre was writing when liberalism was reigning. The state considered itself free from any superior law, either divine or natural, and the individual gloried in feeling himself free from the Church, revelation, God, and from the state... Invoking the name of God in the school or in public offices made people risk various trouble, immediate dismissal from work included.

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(3) Our padre also recommends the orphans to join various pious unions: «You know that all of us are associated with several pious unions to profit by their spiritual goods. You also know that every 6 months the new orphans are informed and told to associate the pious unions; their names are to be registered in the house book before communicating the list to the directors' offices for getting the membership card. We like to know if that has been regularly made and exhort you to never neglect it. Remember that we usually give an offering for the membership cards and something more when figures or medals are mailed to us.

We insist on the yearly practice of the sacred slavery, on the registration at Queen of Hearts in Rome, and the tribute to be sent. About the orphanages we point out that the female orphans will not be registered nor will say the formula of consecration, unless they are at least 15 years old as well as instructed at least for a couple of years» (Circular, Jan. 1925).

(4) First of all, the sisters will give good examples to the girls in speech, love for work, religious practices, obedience, mutual

respect, etc. avoiding intimacy and confidence with them. Woe if they induced the girls to speak ill or refer or exchange mutual gifts or give secret messages. By doing so they would lose their own dignity ruining the girls. To make themselves respected, the sisters will be reserved and decorous, humble and polite, avoiding particular preferences. They will only give preference to merit. Wisdom knows how to combine dignity and decorum with humility and courtesy» (Rules for the sisters running the orphanages.

The novice overseer will be always vigilant over children without getting tired or straying or being bored; she will keep watch so that none of them be at fault with discipline. To train the children to be docile, obedient, and disciplined the sister will give good example: she will arm herself with patience, meekness, and charity talking almost always with gentle, mild voice, because such a behavior keeps children quiet more than any invective or hard reprehension. But the most effective means to make children docile and obedient is praying to God for them and making them pray for the same purpose. A mild educator makes the pupils mild. The sister will beware both of saying words of contempt to children and of beating them because she becomes bored watching over them (R. L. P.).

The Little Retreat novices will consider themselves like maid-servants of the girls and the poor, especially of those who belong to the pious institute. For God's glory, the most holy Heart of Jesus' consolation, and the souls' sanctification the novices will give good example to children, edifying in everything through the exercise of virtues, especially humility, obedience, patience, meekness, discipline as well as through a modest, contrite appearance, and recollection during the prayer and the holy mass.

If a novice is offended or scorned by children, she will show no personal resentment, but will be patient and meek in order to edify them. Only when charity urges to refer the matter to the mother superior the novice will do so for the good of children, but without a feeling of revenge or of personal satisfaction* (R. L. P.).

(5) « Children follow the educator's pattern; their behavior depends on the educator's behavior; therefore, the prefect of the boys will be flawless in morals and religion making it appear in his actions, gestures, words as well as in his way of acting, talking, and thinking.

As to appearance, he will be somehow serious and lovable among the boys to make himself loved and feared. To keep them subject, he will be strong, but without showing pride or arrogance or anger; he will not insult, beat, illtreat them, on the contrary he will show that he is warmly interested in their good, and the boys will be charmed by perceiving and understanding it. This is the education's real secret!

When the educator is really interested in the pupils' good he loves

them in a holy manner, and is concerned with their future. If they do not succeed, he can be strong enough to punish them when they are at fault, and the pupils will never feel offended, on the contrary they will love and fear their educator.

To succeed in everything, the prefect will pray to the Lord for help and enlightenment every day, because educating the youths is the art of the arts and no one can succeed in it without the Lord's help and enlightenment! He will also pray to the Lord and Our Lady every day so that his pupils may succeed and save their souls» (R. P. A.).

(6) «A formula of this prayer directed to the most holy Immaculate Mary, to whom our orphanages are dedicated since their origin, is preserved in our orphanage.»

(7) « To perfectly fulfill his duty, the prefect will watch over the boys with careful attention.

Surveillance consists in keeping guard on their actions during work, prayer, and especially in play-time because it is then that the boys try to escape his supervision. When the boys are playing, he will not be carefree, but will supervise from a place whence he is able to see all of them; if they are walking, he will be in their midst hearing their talk even though they speak in a low voice. While playing, he will let them cry aloud and jump at their liking, but without laying hands on each other or beating or insulting the fellows or damaging the community's things or damaging their clothes by falling down on the ground.

During work time, he will watch over in the factories seeing that the boys are not idle, do not gossip, nor play nor struggle against the boss.

Also in the Church he will be most diligent, helping the boys enter composed and recollected. To be of help, he will stop them at the church's entrance till they are calm and silent; then he will lead them, recollected and reverent, will sign himself with the holy water, and genuflect in the middle of the aisle, teaching the boys to do the same while going to their place; the vice prefect will enter last. The prefect will also see to it that the boys sit down or kneel at the proper time as well as follow the liturgy, composed and silent, answering the prayer all together with a moderate voice.

In the refectory, he will demand of the boys fine manners and observance of silence.

Personal attention will be given to each boy that he be provided with clothes and footwear every week and bed sheets every other week. The prefect will see to it that the boys take care of their clothes, having them repaired as soon as possible, and that they observe bodily neatness in the hands, face, neck, ears. If necessary, he will have the boys wash themselves in his presence.

The boys are not allowed to do anything without permission nor to go to the parlor to talk with external persons nor to act as door keepers. While giving permissions the prefect will pay careful attention to prevent two boys from meeting alone far from surveillance. He must be careful because boys are skilled in asking permission which gives them the chance to meet alone » (R. P. A.).

Following the institute's character, system, and spirit the prefect will moralize the boys through appropriate instructions and exhortations. He will beware of introducing talks, examples, and maxims that stimulate selfishness or wordliness or somehow excite pride, vainglory, and curiosity. His tales will be always most honest, innocent, and religious » (R. P. A.).

(8) Keep in mind that our padre was writing in 1880, when the institute's conditions allowed that only. Besides, in those times, an elementary graduate worker was an exception.

(9) Due to this certainty, Messina archepiscopal chancery office ordered all the priests to buy the hosts and the wafers from our female community at the Holy Spirit.

Our padre wrote: through the bakery, our orphanage has another qualification in the city.

(10) *Moral precepts*: 1) Say the prayer before and after eating.

2) Eat to obey the natural law, to keep yourself in good health, and to live according to the will of God, not for gluttony. 3) Listen to the spiritual reading at dinner so that the soul may be nourished. 4) Think of so many poor who are hungry, and resolve to help them as you can. 5) Think of the eternal celestial table, where Jesus our Lord is waiting for us in his kingdom to give us the food of eternal glory, if we deserve it.

Hygienic precepts: 1) Eat slowly, and chew well the food. 2) Do not eat too hot food because it ruins our teeth and our digestion.

3) Do not drink cold beverage soon after eating because it ruins our digestion and our teeth.

Fine manners precepts: 1) Eat what you are given without complaining, and get used to eating any food. 2) Eat with fine manners and take your time. 3) Do not dirty your hands, your face, and your napkin.

4) Do not rest your elbows on the table. 5) Eat in silence without making noise.

(11) The city hall of Taormina had leased the building to the orphanage for 600 liras a year. More than once the anticlerical bias threatened the orphans with expulsion. In March 1914, the city council administration seemed to be about to give the deadly blow, and our padre published an open letter through the press addressing the mayor along with his council to defend the orphanage's rights. The Scimone's episode is taken from that letter.

(12) The precious virtue of hospitality, which is so dear to the Heart of Jesus as well as delicious and consoling for those who practice it with faith and charity, will be practiced with great love when it is possible. The external persons, however, will not enter the community because it could start slackening (Resolves, June 17, 1920).

(13) Our padre combined some rules of Christian life with the considerations we have quoted above for the service personnel.

CHAPTER VI

EVANGELICAL ROGATION

I declare that the precepts of charity will form the goal of my religious life in this institute, and to reach it under the guide of holy obedience I will not spare myself in working hard for the spiritual and temporal good of my neighbor. To expand this charity to everyone as much as I can, I will aim at reaching the greatest, universal, spiritual, and temporal good of my present and future neighbor through the most effective means of the « Evangelical Rogation of the Heart of Jesus», which forms the institute's special mission. To reach this goal I will present my petitions to God in the mass, the prayer, the Holy, Communion, the visits to the Holy Sacrament, and the rosary, exhorting my brethren and the children who attend the catechism classes to do the same.

1. ZEAL AND ROGATE

The spirit of the Evangelical Rogation of Jesus' Heart, which was given us by divine goodness must be kept always alive and fervid and must be spread through all the means at our disposal. (Resolves, June 17, 1920).

The divine mission of obeying our Lord Jesus Christ's Rogate is entrusted to this institute's sisters who bear its words printed on their chest: « Pray, therefore,... » They will take the vow of praying every day to the Lord that he send out new apostles to the holy Church, true ministers of God and the most holy Virgin, who preach zealously Jesus Christ's gospel in its purity all over the

world along with morals, penance and observance of God's law, necessity of prayer, detachment from earthly matters, death, paradise, hell; as well as life, Passion, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthening the people in their faith so that the enemy may not prey upon their souls. These holy vocations, these true ministers of the Church, these good workers of the mystical harvest, and these new apostles will form the particular object of the active and contemplative life of this pious institute's sisters. So that this prayer may have better results, the sisters will do their best to spread it among the people, the inmates of the institute, and other persons praying to the Lord that he himself will expand the spirit of this prayer (Rules, Oct. 6, 1897).

Zeal is the virtue that seek divine glory and sanctification of souls. Due to human failings, no one is able to encompass all the objects of a virtue at the same time, but we are obliged to apply the virtue to particular objects in order to practice it. In our case, which is the best object for the zeal of the Poor of the Holy Heart of Jesus, who take the vow to foster divine glory and salvation of souls? The object will be: winning good workers to the holy Church through prayer and cooperation. This object summarizes the best of everything to foster divine glory and salvation of souls. The reason is that the power and the mission of glorifying God and saving souls has been entrusted by our Lord Jesus Christ to the good evangelical workers, who are the priests. He said to the apostles: « As the Father has sent me, so I send you. » Now, our Lord Jesus Christ's mission and his redemption aim at the Father's glory and our salvation, which form the mission and the aim of the Church's ministers. To fulfill this mission, God endows His priests with a particular power and grace: When they

answer the Lord's call faithfully, no one is able to value the glory they give to God and the good they cause to souls. Who may value the beneficial effects of one faithful priest's ministry? These mysteries of grace will be valued at the judgment day only. Considering how much glory one divine mass gives to God and how much good it causes to so many souls is enough to somehow understand the importance of one priest who says mass every day. If we consider the whole ministry of a priest, we may conclude that a good priest is a glorifier of the Lord and a savior of souls: it is like Jesus Christ himself who gives the eternal Father what is due to His divine love by saving souls from eternal death!

Hence we realize that the best, surest, and easiest means to seek God's glory and salvation of souls is winning good priests to the holy Church, because this is the shortest, surest way to reach God's glory and salvation of souls, which is the goal of the people who are enflamed by zeal (C.P.).

2. ROGATE AND OUR INSTITUTIONS

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I was still a deacon when I entered the Avignone Quarter for the first time, 22 years ago; (1) this quarter was the city's infamy, and it impressed me a great deal with its great misery and abandon. Those unhappy persons were living like animals: all marriages were illegal, children were immersed in mud, and were exposed to immorality, and old people died on the bare, wet ground of the slums. It reminded me of the words of the gospel: « As he saw the crowds, his heart was filled with pity for them, because they were worried and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. So he said to his disciples, "There is

a large harvest, but few workers to gather it in... Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest" » (Mt. 9, 36-38).

Ever since I engaged myself to relieve those abandoned persons spiritually and materially as much as I could. To keep the young girls safe, a loom was installed in one slum to teach them to work; it was the first seed of the orphanage for girls. Later, we began gathering the boy beggars in a few small rented houses thus starting the orphanage for boys. But the word of the gospel: « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in His harvest », 'was predominant in my thoughts since the beginning of this pious institute.

I thought: what is the meaning of the few orphans who are saved, the few poor who are evangelized, compared with the millions and millions of people who get lost and are abandoned like sheep without a shepherd? I looked at my ,poor means, at the smallest sphere of my activity, and sought for a solution. I found a wide, unlimited outlet in the adorable words of our Lord Jesus Christ: « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest that, he will send out workers to gather in his harvest. » I seemed to have found the secret of all good works and of the salvation of all souls.

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Through this predominant idea, I considered this institute not simply as a charitable institution aiming at saving some orphans and poor, but aiming at a greater and wider goal: the divine glory, salvation of souls, and the good of the whole Church. Both the aim of picking up from the most holy mouth of Jesus Christ the command of his divine Heart: « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest » and the zeal for fulfilling it in the best way

for the greater consolation of the Heart of Jesus form the goal of this institute.

Truly, the spirit of God blows wherever it wishes (Jn. 3, 8); he chose what the world looks down on, and despises, and thinks is nothing, in order to destroy what the world thinks is important. This means that no one can boast in God's presence (Cot. 1, 28-29)!

Divine mercy who sees the sky and earth (Ps. 113,6) liked to entrust this pious institute of poor and orphans with this great treasure, a precious seed, a grain of mustard, which may spread all over the Church with the blessing of the Lord. Thus, the Lord liked to make the children and the youths, the orphans and the poor of this pious institute understand the importance of this divine words: « Pray, therefore, etc. »

The spirit of this prayer became quickly the spirit of this pious institute and formed its character, its aim, and its practice.

It was the turn of the two little religious communities leading the male and the female orphanages to become masters of this sacred patrimony of the Pious Institute of the Poor of the Heart of Jesus, to be trustees and guardians, to form the center of this important religious practice, and to become propagators of it. As in any charitable institution, the inmates who succeed each other form the object, not the institute; the institute instead, resides in those who are committed to the mission, who are united by the bond of religious profession through a name, a rule, and the sacred garb.

In this pious institute, the two little religious orders take the vow to pray every day in order to win the good workers to the holy Church in obedience to the most holy Heart of Jesus' command. Both Rogationists and Daughters of Divine Zeal wear on their chest the sacred red

emblem of the most holy Heart of Jesus along with the gospel's words: « Pray, therefore,... » (2)

In fact, that the two orders are concerned with works of charity and beneficence derives legitimately and immediately from the mission of the vocation prayer: in fact, if they pray continuously to win the good workers to the holy Church, if they follow the wish of the most holy Heart of Jesus through his divine command, much greater is the reason they have to strive to be good workers themselves. The fulfillment of the fourth vow not only engages them to this continuous prayer, but also binds them to spread its spirit everywhere, which they do by educating orphans and evangelizing the poor, by teaching them that the most desirable grace is to obey the command of the most holy Heart of Jesus through the practice of the Evangelical Rogation (Preface to Precious Adhesions, 1903).

3. HARD ENTERPRISE

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Fights were pressing on every side, the pious institute was on the verge of collapse many times. It seemed to be dying, but it did not. Encouraging help intervened to keep it alive and subsistent, to test it over and over again, and to make it savor new unexpected pains.

The pious institute endured hardships for about 20 years, in spite of having won many souls to goodness, of having delivered many children from depravity, of having evangelized and helped many poor. Despite the fact that the inmates had been praying and presenting petitions every day, sometimes even by night; that elect persons had joined the two orders remedying the starter's failings (3) and that we were preparing a better future, the future was still nothing else but a myth, a dream, a

hope. The present time was always more difficult, more entangled, more disheartening.

Lo and behold! A resource-idea flashed across the priest starter's mind. This idea was a child of a great word of the gospel, a child of a greater, sublime idea, that the Spirit, who blows wherever he wishes, instilled into the soul of a spiritual youth many years before the pious institute's birth. This evangelical revelation, this divine idea, - abating it is not humility - preceded and escorted the poor priest starter in his hard enterprise. This idea became the pious institute's foundation, as the key that opened some treasure of divine mercies and the secret of the divine favors we desired so much. Let us declare this great word of the Gospel, this great command.

The evangelists St. Matthew and St. Luke report this divine command of Jesus' Heart's divine zeal; St. Matthew says: « There is a large harvest, but few workers to gather it in. Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send workers to gather in his harvest » (Mt. 9, 37-38). St. Luke says: « He said to them, there is a large harvest, but few workers to gather it in. Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest » (Lk. 10, 2).

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A mean paid a special attention to this divine command making his debut with it in his carrier (4) even before he had read it in the gospel.

The priest who knew this divine secret started the pious institute in that enclosure of slums, in that corner of Messing we mentioned above, giving the pious enterprise the chief program of practicing perfectly the divine command of Jesus' Heart's divine zeal, « Pray, therefore... » He gave those abandoned poor, who really formed a flock without a shepherd, the rule to pray in common to the owner of the harvest.

Listening to the tender voice of those children of the poor praying the Evangelical Rogation to win good workers to the holy Church was wonderful; from that pitiable place the prayer raised to heaven, up to the throne of the One who < sees the sky and earth » (Ps. 113, 6) and « listens to the wants of the humble » (Ps. 10, 17).

While that common folk was catechized and children were educated and trained in arts and crafts, the prayer to win favors from the adorable Hearts of Jesus and Mary ascended to heaven. We taught the children saying: « My dear, we have gathered you for your salvation, but you see how many obstacles hinder both formation and steadiness of these institutions; we, however, have to trust, to serve God, to love Jesus, and to pray because we will obtain everything through humble, confident, and perseverant prayer. » As a matter of fact, prayer was the nascent institution's continuous breath. Sometimes we prayed even in the night, keeping vigils.

We strove to make the people hold the mass in esteem, teaching them that through the offering of the mass we might obtain any grace, because when the divine victim is immolated on the altar, the heavens unfold pouring graces down.

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A person once said: « God's blessings do not yet come down on this institute! » That person meant: « God's blessings do not yet come to fecundate and foster this institute. » From that time the priest started longing for the most holy Heart of Jesus' fecundating blessings like Jacob did for his father's blessings.

Holy mass and blessings! Oh! Who will offer the holy mass so worthily to win all the divine blessings for this pious institute? Is this institute going to die? Besides attending to the salvation of souls, this institute is perhaps the only one in the holy Church that fulfills and

makes people fulfill the divine command: « Pray, therefore. .
» On this ground we could not help trusting in the most holy Heart of Jesus for safety.

These were the starter's wails and sighs, and to reach safety we offered the daily mass' intention for such a purpose, declining the offering for other intentions.

4. THE RESOURCE-IDEA

I have said that a happy resource-idea flashed across the mind of the pious institute's starter; this idea was a child of the evangelical rogation, that is to say, child of the spirit of the daily prayer or rogation to win good workers to the holy Church.

Blessed by God, the happy resource-idea was born of that priest's following reasoning: the bishops are the persons more concerned with the divine words « pray, therefore... » because they first need priests sent by God through the Holy Spirit, they are responsible for the seminaries, they are greatly concerned with the seminarians' becoming holy priests, but they cannot achieve this goal without the prayer ordered by Jesus; their means, labor, schools, and industries notwithstanding.

Consequently, the bishops cannot help taking at heart this pious institute: They cannot deny me a favor when I ask them for it. Which favor? A financial help? Never. The Lord's works are not founded on money, but on the contempt of it. Then, what will I ask the prelates of the holy Church, the successors to the holy apostles? What does a foundation need to grow and develop for the Lord's glory and the salvation of souls? Are there any additional needs besides divine grace and blessings? Well, now, I will resort to the sacred prelates of the Church unfurling before them the glorious banner of the

Evangelical Rogation, which I have not erected on highest towers, but on the slums of the poor. While kneeling, I will entreat them to give a pure, spiritual contribution of prayers and blessings during the most solemn act of our holy religion, during the great sacrifice of the mass. (5)

Hardly had I conceived this idea that I put it to work by mailing a printed letter to the bishops of Sicily, then to the bishops of Italy, to the cardinals, and to the superiors general of the religious orders. They were told of this pious institute's existence having two aims, the primary one at complying with the divine command of the sacred Heart of Jesus' divine zeal, « pray therefore, » and the other one aiming at various charitable purposes.

The Church's prelates were also told that the nascent foundation was on the verge of death and in need of their help. They were specifically entreated to become spiritual benefactors of the foundation for the sake of the divine command, because the foundation had taken this command from our divine Savior's mouth lighting a hearth that should grow with sacred flames of fervent zeal for the Sacred Heart of Jesus' interests. The Church's sacred prelates were entreated to give the following four spiritual favors to the nascent institute:

1. Once a year and under no obligation of conscience, to apply the special fruit of one mass for the spiritual benefit of the foundation, that is to say, for its growth in the Lord.

- 2 Every day, at least through a habitual intention, to offer this pious institute along with its members, labor, and hopes to the Sacred Heart of Jesus during the elevation of the host.

3. Both at the end of the mass and in other occasions

while blessing the faithful, to have a mind to bless the pious institute along with its members as if they were present and kneeling around them.

4. To join their intention to the intention of the pious institute's members, who pray every day to win holy priests of the Lord from divine mercy.

SPIRITUAL RETURNS: after asking the above spiritual favors, the pious institute promised to return the following ones:

1. Monthly masses for the spiritual benefactors, who are either alive or dead.

2. A daily sprayer by the institute's orphans, poor, priests, brothers, and sisters for each of the sacred prelates and for their intentions.

3. While praying to win good workers to the Church, the component of the pious institute will apply a special intention in favor of the dioceses and the seminaries whose bishops have granted the four spiritual favors.

4. At the nevus of each sacred ally's death, the pious institute will offer a mass and a triduo of prayer, Holy Communion, and the rosary for the repose of the spiritual benefactor's soul.

5. SACRED ALLIANCE OF PRIESTS FOR VOCATIONS (6)

After mailing this petition to the Church's prelates in the name of Jesus, we received some adhesion letters so expressive as to surpass any expectation. Through its high representatives, the Church seemed to give a helping hand in order to sustain the nascent foundation, pushing it forward in the field of the Evangelical Rogation

for its complete shaping. To the senders' great satisfaction the four spiritual favors were granted enthusiastically; the Italian bishops' letters announcing their adhesion are most precious and they are the most delicate documents of the pious institute's archive.

At each arrival of precious adhesions, we rang the oratory's bells to give thanks to our Lord and to the Virgin Mary. If some children were under a punishment, they were relieved from it because that day was a feast for all. It is praiseworthy remembering that the spiritual benefactors chose the best dates either of their life or of the ecclesiastical year for the celebration of the yearly mass. Among the cardinals, Card. Oreglia, dean of the Sacred College, was the first to adhere.

The highly beneficial effects on this least grain, which followed the spreading of so many spiritual favors of the holy Church were such that the idea of invoking the supreme help of prayers and blessing on this pious institute along with its components is considered not a simple idea, but a true inspiration from heaven.

Everything began blooming, the doors of divine providence were opened, and the vocations to the two orders increased. Even the 1908 earthquake, which destroyed Messina, put forward the pious institute in the Italian continent, where it flourished with various important houses.

We were given St. Anthony of Padua as our most special, prodigious protector, and his continuous favors compelled us to publish a monthly periodical for Italy, America, and other foreign countries' benefactors. Thus, the humble, nascent, little institute came to the knowledge of the people in Italy and elsewhere. The spiritual help from the ecclesiastical authorities' prayers and blessings is still visible. To have such an admirable spiritual

treasure unimpaired and increased, we feel drawn to use all means at our disposal.

Kneeling before the bishops all over the world, who are the illustrious, sacred successors to the apostles, the humblest components of this pious institute of the interests of Jesus' Heart implore the four spiritual favors that sustain and keep the pious institute alive since it leans on this priceless treasure, not an gold, purest gold (Ps. 119, 127). This most particular favor the pious institute's components ask for the sake of the loving Heart of Jesus and for the sacred word « pray, therefore,... » etc., which shines on the forehead of the holy Church's least daughters.

So many sacred allies who are spiritually united in the daily prayer to win good workers to the holy Church will make this continuous Rogation effective by obtaining from the most holy Heart of Jesus the ministers the holy Church desires and needs. The continuous blessings will make heaven pour out favors on us; the hearth lighting the fire of the Rogation, lying down almost unknown in the holy gospels, will never fail; rather, it will increase for the good of the holy Church, for society, and for you, in whose benefit we return acceptable spiritual favors.

Owing to so many innocent souls and poor of Jesus Christ as well as to the virgins who pray continuously to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, St. Joseph, and the holy apostles, the holy Church's sacred prelates also hope for good results for themselves, their dioceses, and their seminaries. Otherwise, why would our Lord Jesus Christ have instilled and recommended, this prayer so many times - the gospel has: he used to say (Precious Adhesions, 1903 and 1921)?
(7)

6. PIOUS UNION OF THE EVANGELICAL ROGATION

At midnight between the 19th and the 20th centuries I started a Pious Union of the Evangelical Rogation of Jesus' Heart in the church connected with my institutes in Messing; my archbishop, who erected it canonically, was the first charter member.

We use the word Rogation from the Latin word Rogate which is a command to pray, also conforming to the spirit of the Church that commands the rogation days to win spiritual and temporal goods. We use the word Evangelical because we find this command in the gospel and call it of the Jesus' Heart because this prayer is mainly addressed to the same divine Heart that recommended it and from whom the holy Church expects so great a mercy.

This pious union aims at spreading everywhere this prayer so appropriate to our times, hoping that it becomes universal rogation in order to win so great a mercy from divine goodness.

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Consecrated to the most holy Heart of Jesus, the pious union is also entrusted to the Queen of the Apostles, Immaculate Mary, whose Immaculate Heart forms one Heart with that of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is also under the protection of St. Michael the archangel, St. Joseph, the holy apostles, and the holy disciples of the Lord; the holy pontiffs, the holy founders of religious orders, and St. Anthony of Padua are special patrons.

Through His Eminence Card. Gennari I got a rescript by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, dated Feb. 6, 1906, approving the pious initiative and granting various plenary as well as partial indulgences to the members.

Women and men, lay people and Religious may share this pious union under no obligation of conscience receiving

ing the free membership card along with some prayers. The members have at heart to pray for good workers to the holy Church (From a letter to the bishops, Jan. 1, 1920, and from the membership card of the P.U.). (8)

7. THE ROGATIONIST VERSE

On July 11, 1909, I was with the Holy Father Pius X in private audience petitioning him to add the following verse in the Litany of the Saint: « That you send out numerous, worthy, and holy workers in your harvest... Lord, hear our prayer. » His Holiness granted me the favor, benignly writing: « Granted according to the petition, when the litany is said in the institute. »

Given all this, don't you think that it would be a blessing of the Lord, a great hope for future vocations for the dioceses, if this great command of our Lord Jesus Christ were picked up solemnly and obeyed properly by placing it in the Major Litanies? In this way the Church itself would pray to win numerous, holy priests!

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Please note that our Lord gave this command to the teaching Church more than to the learning Church; as a matter of fact, the gospel has: He said to his disciples, that is, to the apostles; therefore, it's up to the Church to pray formally for this purpose. To reach such a goal the bishops should address a petition to Jesus Christ's supreme vicar, saying that Jesus Christ gave this command to the teaching Church.

Of course, there would be opposition and opponents as there were when new devotions and practices were introduced, as for instance, devotion to the adorable Heart of Jesus, the most holy name of Jesus preached by St. Bernardine, and the title Most Precious Blood which was given to the congregation by Blessed Del

Bufalo. Even the great religious orders were opposed. But prevailing over the obstacles, good made its way and triumphed in the name of Jesus. For instance, the following abjection was raised: the Major Litanies are ancient liturgical prayers, and it is unsuitable to change them. But even though fixed in the dogmas, the holy Church has been always adapting itself to worship and liturgy.

To how many changes have we witnessed in our times? The Loreto Litanies, which are as ancient as the major ones, were increased with the following verses: Mother of Good Counsel, because of the rash proceeding of society and governments; Queen of Peace, because of the world war; and earlier, with Queen of the Most Holy Rosary and Queen Conceived without Original Sin. Besides the changes introduced in the new canon law, the breviary has been also reformed, the missal has been given two new prefaces, and feasts of first class passed into second class.

Well, now, if the holy Church made all these changes by her own inspired, prudent initiative, why can't the Church add to the Major Litanies a new verse for a prayer which has been commanded directly by our Lord Jesus Christ with these words: « Pray, therefore,... » etc.? Why cannot the Church adopt the remedy to which our Lord Jesus Christ pointed for this desolation, for this depopulated religion of our times?

You could also remind the opponents that a new verse was introduced in the Major Litanies when the Turks threatened Italy and other Latin countries. The verse was: « That You restrain and bring to nothing the efforts of the Turks and the heretics,.. Lord, hear our prayer. » When the risk passed away, that verse was eliminated in the subsequent versions.

Are we not in more serious dangers, both spiritual and temporal, which require the work of the Lord's priests among the people? What a surprise it would be if the Church inserted into the Major Litanies a verse of vocation prayer in order to apply a remedy Jesus recommended, or better yet, commanded through these divine wards: « Pray, therefore... » etc.? (9)

If you have no objections against my poor notes, but agree that they are based on evangelical truths and are a remedy to our gloomy times, I implore you to not consider that it was the ass of Balaam that spoke these words, because the Holy Spirit blows wherever he wishes (Jn. 3, 8) and God chose what the world looks down on, and despises, and thinks is nothing (1 Cor. 1, 28); I beg you instead to write a fervent petition to the Holy Father Benedict XV with zeal and eloquence, asking to introduce that verse in the Major Litanies soon after the verse *Ut Domnum Apostolicum* etc...

I am mailing this paper to all the bishops hoping that many of them will send this petition to His Holiness, not only because of my reasons, but also for even better reasons they will find in their zeal for the Heart of Jesus' interests. I beg you to be so kind as to let me know of your mailing it to His Holiness. I will be very happy if your Secretary sends me a copy.

It would be helpful if good people and observant communities of your diocese prayed together with you to the most holy Heart of Jesus, his most holy mother, St. Joseph, St. Michael the archangel, the holy apostles, the angels and the saints of the diocese, and the illustrious St. Anthony of Padua in order that this pious, opportune enterprise may succeed for the greatest glory of the most holy Trinity, the immense benefit of the holy Church, and the whole world as well.

8. SUGGESTING A ROGATIONIST PASTORAL

If the bishops explained our Lord Jesus Christ's great command, « Pray, therefore,... » in the pastoral letter of the coming Lent, they would do an excellent work.

For that reason I beg you to publish a learned, touching pastoral letter about that divine command, proving with zeal that it is of great importance to all the people, but mainly to the clergy, to pray to the owner of the mystical harvest to call elect youths in the cities and the villages so that priests may be formed by the Holy Spirit, evil averted, and the people saved from the increasing spiritual and temporal ruin.

Your Excellence could conclude this very opportune pastoral letter by referring to the pious union of the Evangelical Rogation of Jesus' Heart and by exhorting your faithful, chiefly the clergy, the pious souls, the nuns, etc. to join such a union. By doing so, you would draw the blessings of God on your seminary and the mystical flock.

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Oh! If all the bishops did it in their dioceses, the prayer that our Lord Jesus Christ commanded as the infallible means to win priests according to the Heart of God would become a universal rogation. It would do a strong, sweet violence to the most holy Heart of Jesus winning the grace, of which the people have become unworthy.

Your Excellence could tell a pious, zealous priest to keep in touch with me so that I might mail to him the membership cards for the free enlistment of as many persons as possible.

The growth of this prayer or evangelical rogation of Jesus' Heart would be the beginning of the papal favor to insert this prayer in the Major Litanies: it would

crown as definitely as solemnly the perfect obedience to the great command of the divine zeal of Jesus' Heart! And how much the divine Heart would be pleased!

Don Rua, the first successor to Don Bosco, once told me that he was concerned with proposing and promoting the insertion of a verse analogous to the Rogate in the Major Litanies, but he couldn't apply himself to it. Nowadays time presses more and more, urging the universal obedience to that divine command! (From the letter to the bishops, Jan. 1, 1920).

NOTES

(1) The Padre was writing on Oct. 10, 1900.

(2) Today, only the Daughters of Divine Zeal are wearing the external emblem.

(3) Keep in mind that our padre is speaking of himself.

(4) Here our padre is speaking in third person.

(5) In the preface to the *Precious Adhesions* published in 1903, our padre talks in first person expressing some thoughts we deem useful to refer. To begin with, he acknowledges that the original idea of the Sacred Alliance came from the Madonna, and after touching upon the serious difficulties the institute was facing he adds:

«The elegant, lyric poet Ariel from Brescia, one of the elect group at the beginning of our century (our padre was writing on Oct. 14, 1900), wrote beautiful verses in honor of the most holy Virgin under (he title of Good Counsel. I often called them to my mind when the storm grew so furious that I saw no way to escape it. Through those delicate verses I exclaimed:

As the pilgrim on his way saw you clearing
The sky of clouds by blinking your eyelash.
Mother, clear and save my ship for sailing
Give me a lightflash!

The most holy Virgin is the great channel through which all the

graces, no one excepted in St. Bernard's opinion, come down from heaven, because she is in charge of the celestial treasure. We find her at the beginning of the human salvation as well as at the head of the works and the small or great institutions that rise in the Church.

I often invoked the Mother of Good Counsel confidently, and the following idea once crossed my mind: this institute absolutely needs a divine help. As a matter of fact human help does not fit to the institutions that aim at belonging totally to God as well as at working for his glory and the salvation of souls. I deeply felt the need of the celestial blessings! O God's blessings, how much desirable and how very fecund of good you are!

I joined these two ideas: I thought of the great sacrifice of the mass as of the most effective means to obtain graces, since the victim which we offer to the eternal Father is of infinite value. On the other hand (even though this institute is the least among the institutions of the holy Church and still in the first stages), the mission to pray in order to win good workers to the holy Church is such that it warmly interests all the faithful, each Christian having at heart the good of souls, but especially the bishops, the shepherds of the mystical flock, those who are in charge of souls, those who are the living apostles of Jesus Christ. I concluded that no person in the world needs the good workers as much as the bishops; therefore, if I appeal to their prayer demanding their blessings and asking them to celebrate one mass in order to attract the divine mercies on this little charitable institute, they will not deny it to me.

This idea was like a ray in the darkness. I seemed to have found the secret of the divine mercies.»

Touching upon the happy results of this Sacred Alliance, our padre points out: «The blessings and the prayers of the holy Church's prelates are producing their good effects on this pious institute and on the spreading of the vocation prayer. It is a consolation to see our Savior Jesus' command being welcomed and obeyed.

Several bishops have asked to introduce the vocation prayer book in their dioceses, especially in the religious communities. The daily recitation of such prayers in the seminaries is of greater importance, because they improve the culture of the holy vocations and develop them as well. Besides attracting divine mercy on their good success, by saying these daily prayers the clerics become more aware of the priesthood's importance and mission, finding a practical rule to sanctify themselves becoming good evangelical workers for the divine glory and the salvation of souls.

Not satisfied by their spiritual help through the yearly mass, prayers, and daily blessings several bishops from Italy have also

joined this pious institute's prayers in order to win good workers to' the holy Church by applying their good works and practices of piety to reach this goal. »

(6) This title was perhaps suggested by a previous priestly association called Sacred Alliance at the Altar, which the S. Congregation of the Indulgences endowed with many favors on Aug. 18, 1868. It was formed in Palermo by a few priests who wished to join the Sicilian priests at the foot of Jesus Christ's altar in these most lamentable times; through this union of prayer, they meant to entreat Jesus for our wretched homeland, for our brothers in Ireland and Poland, for those ensnared by the error, for the Holy Father's triumph, and for the Catholic Church's exaltation» (The Catholic Word, Nov. 15, 1868).

(7) The Sacred Alliance started with the adhesion of Mons. John Blandini, bishop of Noto, and has suffered many changes and developments. First, it appealed to 12 bishops in Sicily for the apostolic mass, in honor of the holy apostles; second, it appealed to all the bishops in Sicily and later in Italy; third, it appealed to all the priests.

At the beginning, the requests were three; later, the sacred allies were invited to join the institute's intentions in the prayers to win good workers. The intentions of the Sacred Alliance, which has been called Priestly Rogationist Crusade, are the following:

DUTIES

The members pledge with no obligation of conscience:

1) To offer the divine mass once a year or, at least, a special memento (silent prayer during the mass) to win many, holy priests.

2) To join the Rogationists' daily prayers and to pray for vocations to their institute.

3) To pray during the mass, at least through habitual intention, that the persons who are called by the Lord may perfectly answer their priestly or religious vocation.

4) To apply the blessings at the end of the mass or in other circumstances to the wordly priesthood, to the benefactors of the ecclesiastical vocations, and to the Rogationist institutions.

SPIRITUAL RETURN

The Rogationists consider their sacred allies as associates in their spirit of prayer, they pledge therefore:

1) To celebrate one holy mass a week for the sacred allies' intentions.

2) To pray every day for the sacred allies' sanctification, for the parishes and the souls entrusted to them, for the dioceses and their seminaries as well as for the novitiates and the intentions of the superiors general who are sacred allies.

3) To celebrate holy masses for the sacred allies as soon as the notice of their death arrives.

4) To celebrate perpetual masses for the dead sacred allies. In 1960, our spiritual benefactors were: cardinals 19; bishops 162; priests 1,054.

8) To spread the Pious Union, our padre relied on the bishops' zeal. In a circular on Oct. 4, 1908, after saying of the Pious Union's existence and aim he added:

« First, I dare beg your Excellency to make your venerable name entered in the sacred allies book so that your clergy and faithful may follow your example.

Second, I ask your Excellency for permission to introduce this Pious Union in your diocese. Later, I will write directly to the pastors or other zealous priests or even to pious lay persons.

If you would like to let me know the names of pastors or priests or other persons, to whom I may write in order to reach greater results, I would have additional reasons to thank your charity. To please you more, I will also inscribe your seminarians as members of the Pious Union so that the most holy Heart of Jesus may form many holy workers for your diocese's harvest. »

In 1922 our padre mailed another circular, repeating the invitation and concluding: « Excellence, I appeal to your great zeal. The matter is of the greatest importance for your diocese. For the most loving, sweet Heart of Jesus, please introduce this Pious Union in your diocese.

Your Excellency may erect the Pious Union in a church of yours or you may make me enter into correspondence with one of your zealous priests to make things go on. I will mail membership cards along with all is required, the stamps for the mail included. God and everything. »

A warm invitation to the Catholic editors to spread the prayer for the good workers as well as to invite the people to join the Pious Union traces back to before the 1908 earthquake: « Here and there the people begin feeling the need to obey the divine command, « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in His harvest» (Mt. 9, 38 - Lk. 10, 2). Various periodicals are concerning themselves with spreading this prayer in order to win numerous, holy priests to the holy Church from the owner of the mystical harvest. Such prayers begin appearing here and there.

Because it is 30 years since I began concerning myself with this aim through new institutions, prayers, prayer books, periodicals, and a universal Pious Union which has been approved and provided with indulgences by the Holy See, I ask you to concern yourself with it through your excellent periodical or newspaper, for the Lord's

glory and the good of souls. I submit some periodicals to you in Older that you may realize the progress we have made in this advertisement as well as how bishops, archbishops, cardinals, superiors general of religious orders, and popes have received and promoted it.

However, we work hard to spread it, and I warmly recommend K to your zeal. For the sake of the most holy Heart of Jesus, please help the periodicals that I am mailing to you; advertise them in your periodical and invite the people to join the universal Pious Union that is free of charge and lays no obligation of conscience upon the people.

When this prayer that Jesus Christ commanded is spread in the holy Church, much good will come to the nations. In fact, the secret of the Church and society's salvation is dependent on the priests of God and on the new zealous apostles of charity that divine mercy will send out! How can God deny our request when he himself commanded us to pray for it? Our disregard for it till now is the cause of such a pitiable lack of elect workers in the mystical harvest!...

If you concern yourself with this holy advertisement, you will deserve a great reward because your advertisement will raise new apostles who will operate a great deal of good in the holy Church, which will be your crown of inconceivable glory in the kingdom of heaven!»

Our padre had also begun an advertisement or Rogationist crusade in the sister monasteries, but he had to stop because more than one convent was hurt by the proposal as if it were a change to its rules or traditions. It is understood that those good Religious had not understood the point!

(9) Our padre was writing in 1920; the objection was not a theoretical one. Card. Gasparri opposed the insertion of the Rogationist verse in the Major Litanies because of their venerable antiquity. This objection, however, was dropped soon after when Pius XI introduced the verse *Ut omnes errantes*. etc.

CHAPTER VII

RELIGIOUS VOWS

I acknowledge that the essence of the religious life consists in the three vows of poverty, obedience, and chastity.

1. PREPARATION

Each religious community is based on the perfect observance of the three evangelical -counsels: poverty, obedience, and chastity. If divine mercy grants this Pious Institute of the Poor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus the grace to form a religious community, the profession and observance of the three vows mentioned above, called evangelical counsels, will 'be after the postulate.

To become worthy to profess the rule and the three vows, the probationers must accustom themselves to practicing the virtues of perfect chastity, free poverty, and exact obedience beginning with the time of entrance. Even though they do not take the vows by entering the postulate, still they have to embrace these virtues by resolving or proposing the practice of them (P.R.P.).

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To prepare themselves to the religious profession, the youths will pay careful attention to adorn their soul with holy virtues, especially charity, humility, immaculate purity, perfect obedience, meekness and gentleness, patience, modesty, and perseverance. They will love seclusion, recollection, prayer, meditation, spiritual reading, holy talk, silence, and the practice of being in the

divine presence Candid and sincere, they will do everything with pure intention, offering themselves as victims to Jesus, our supreme goodness (Speech, Sept. 4, 1909).

The Little Retreat novices will nurture in their heart the longing to take the religious vows of chastity, obedience, poverty, and a fourth vow that is so dear to God in order to belong totally to Jesus and to help the people. In the meantime they will accurately practice the virtues concerning the vows they hope to profess when the merciful God allows it, being aware that they cannot be worthy of doing it, unless they observe the virtues for a conventional period of time (R.L.P.).

Dearest daughters, I exhort you to draw yourselves closer to our beloved Jesus Christ, our supreme goodness, to grow in his love, to desire to love him, and to have pity on his Heart's pains consoling him through your fervent practice of holy virtues. Please renew your resolutions, starting a new life with humility, mortification, obedience, and prayer in order to prepare yourselves to pronounce the vows and to commit yourselves to the service of God. Please light the wise virgins' lamp because the groom is about to come together with his mother, the most holy Mary. Look at this great mother and at the glorious Patriarch St. Joseph so that your upright wishes may be fulfilled through their powerful intercession (Letter, July 2, 1888).

The Religious will take the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience in the presence of this pious institute's director. Because this little order stands far the sacred banner announcing the evangelical motto «Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest,» the congregants will also take the fourth vow of the daily prayer which aims at winning good workers to the holy Church (P.R.P.).

2. THE PROFESSION

What is a vow? It is a resolute promise to God to perform a possible and higher good for God's glory and for our perfection. This is the theology's definition we are going to look into.

A promise to God. When a person promises something, he honors the person to whom he promises by showing love and respect or by acknowledging his duty of thanksgiving and subjection. As by keeping his promise, he confirms his love, respect, thanksgiving, and subjection, so by breaking his word, he denies love, respect, thanksgiving, and the subjection to which he was bound. When a person makes the promise he seems to say: I esteem, respect, honor, and love you, therefore I make a promise to show such feelings; on the contrary, when he breaks his word he seems to say: I do not esteem, respect, honor, and love you because when I made the promise, I cheated you. This is meant by the promise's non-execution. Besides, the more the person to whom we promise is noble and worthy, the more our offence is grave when we break our word.

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To whom do the people make the religious vow? To God! When a Religious takes the vows, he acknowledges God as the Lord to whom he must be subject, as the benefactor he has to thank, as the holy of the holiest he has to honor through the practice of the virtues. On the contrary, when a Religious breaks his ward, he denies God as the Lord, benefactor, supreme goodness, and the holiest!

Resolute promise. What does the vow imply? A strictest observance of it. Before taking the vows freely, the Religious meditated a year upon it preparing himself through retreat to make a free decision. Therefore, his breaking off has no excuse.

A possible and higher good. The condition that the vow must be possible and better than its contrary is indispensable for the vow's validity. This doctrine drives us to consider these sublime topics: what we have promised is better than its contrary, chastity is better than conjugal status, poverty is better than possessing, obedience is better than living free.

For His glory. This is the vow's chief aim. By observing the vows, the Religious glorifies God! Yes! By doing so, he acknowledges God before the world, acknowledges the religious truths, and increases the worship to God by winning souls to him.

For our perfection. The vows' second aim is our sanctification. Our observing them helps us to reach this goal, because the vows are the turning point of the religious life (Speech, May 10, 1908).

Before taking the holy vows, please consider that they are so important as to make you indebted toward God, your transgressions heavier, and you yourselves obliged to give a strict account of them. Not taking the vows is better than taking them with levity or without a resolute mind to observe them. Dearest children, please consider the step you are going to take. If you feel yourselves unprepared or unwilling, you can go back to the place of the novices with holy caution.

But if you feel drawn by pure, holy intention to resolutely bind yourselves to Jesus through the vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, please take your vows with a steady mind of observing, renewing them every year, and persevering until you take them for ever through the perpetual profession. By professing you bind yourselves to the observance of the constitutions and the rules, as well as to the meaning, degree, and circumstances that they foresee.

My dearest children, now let us adore our Lord in the Holy Sacrament imploring from the divine Heart of Jesus, the Immaculate Heart of Mary, your angels and saints the divine help you need so much in this important moment of your life (Speech, Oct. 12, 1910).

Renewing the vows is of a great importance. Like a boat leaving the harbor and going toward the open sea, our soul is leaving the world, going deeply into the sea of all goods, which is the religious life, in order to be closer to God. Let us consider the two extremes: the world we leave and the God we are about to join. By doing so, we will appreciate the regular life nurturing gratitude, and fervor as well (Speech, 1902).

Daughters, what is the liturgy we have performed for you? What is the step you have undertaken? In the presence of Jesus in the Holy Sacrament, you have taken the perpetual vows throughout the formalities of the religious service; you have given up yourselves to God through the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. But, did you think of it? Did you consider that you have renounced both your freedom and will for ever, that you have bound yourselves to the will of others that you have given up your rights over things? Oh! Why didn't you come back to the world? Why didn't you think of seeking new affections, good opportunities of fun, and freedom in the world?

I feel that you are saying: father, we left the world for ever to surrender to Jesus; through the vows, we have lost no freedom; on the contrary, we feel ourselves freer!

You are right! Happy you, who are given this understanding by the Lord! Religious profession is the consummation and the fulfillment of the spiritual wedding between

Jesus and the soul: it is the topmost of the ascensions (Speech, March 30, 1919).

Consecrating oneself to God is a holiest religious act which gives a greatest glory and happiness to a creature on earth. Consecrating oneself to God! The things which are consecrated to God are sacred (Speech, May 5, 1912)!

3. THROUGH ST. JOSEPH'S HANDS

Brothers, sisters, and children in Jesus Christ, today is a double solemnity for us because we are honoring St. Joseph by renewing our vows.

This holy patriarch is the protector and patron of all, but chiefly of those who embrace religious life. Professing every year on St. Joseph's patronage feast makes us happily hope to achieve his help in order to observe the vows perfectly, imitating him, who is our model (Speech, 1906).

It has been since a few years that we gather on St. Joseph's feast to renew our vows. This day has been always dear, memorable, and holy for us because we have taken breathe under the auspices of the Church's patron (Speech, 1910).

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4. ...AND UNDER THE MADONNA'S CLOAK

How will we dare belong to Jesus through holy profession? We are frightened by simply thinking of it! Owing to his most holy Heart's infinite goodness, however, out of love Jesus does not look at a soul's failings! Sweetest mother, if Jesus wants us, please purify our soul with new grace, clothing us with new virtues under your

motherly care. Make us share in your innocence, infuse in us a bit of our inexpressible humility, and instill part of the divine love that is burning in your Immaculate Heart. O beautiful Immaculate Mary, take us to the mystical wedding with Jesus, our supreme goodness; if we are accompanied by you, we won't die by confusion in his presence, his clemency instead will bend toward us. If your divine Son along with you wants us to profess, oh, win from his most holy Heart so much grace as to make us his slaves of love from now on, make us his everlasting faithful by imitating his divine virtues, by observing the religious rules, by seeking the last place for ourselves, and by fostering his honor, glory, consolation, and interests. May we accomplish it especially through the daily prayer to win good workers to the holy Church, through our continuous work and sacrifice for the salvation of souls, and the relief of the poor (From a petition, May 7, 1917).

5. HOW TO OBSERVE OUR FOUR VOWS

We can observe chastity through prayer, holy thoughts, mortification, Communion, devotion to Mary, St. Louis, the saints as well as by humility and avoidance of idleness.

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We observe poverty through detachment, care of little things, the monthly examination, and penance such as abstinence from comfort and food.

We observe obedience by trying to lose our own will and by blind, ready, joyous, and supernatural obedience.

Vow of obedience to our Rogate. What a beautiful obedience is this one! It joins us directly with our Lord Jesus Christ! He founded our order! I do not dwell on

its importance and goods, but I say this only: let us obey by praying and by encouraging the people to pray to win good evangelical workers (Speech, May 10, 1908)!

A. POVERTY

As far as I am concerned with poverty, I declare to hold it as the most precious pearl, as the foundation of my vocation and of the institute's existence. By consecrating myself to this institute I mean to commit myself with transport of love to poverty, contemplating it in our adorable Lord Jesus Christ, the most holy Virgin, and the saints who practiced it with holy enthusiasm.

I will hold it as the fountain of priceless celestial treasures, knowing that until this institute is evangelically poor and glories in poverty, it will stand firm and unshakeable, improving day by day. But if it grows weak in the practice of holy poverty, it will go to ruin, ending as so many religious communities have done before.

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So, I will be most attentive to avoid offence against holy poverty as well as to give bad example, which could make others vacillate in such a vital religious virtue and vow. When the people dispute or discuss or interpret the rules, with God's help and my own will I promise to favor the strictest theory about the evangelical poverty's observance. In practice, I promise to embrace holy poverty in all its manifestations, and specifically:

1. Until this institute's rules concede the radical possession on one's own property, I will hold it with holy detachment, ready to renounce it when this order's chapter and the superior authority will compel to do so. (1)

2. I will hold back nothing from my capital's profit, but will hand over everything to the superiors, empower

ing them even to cash, if they ask for it. Likewise I will quickly turn over all stipends of masses, preaching, and alms to the superiors.

3. I will retain no room, furniture, clothes, clothing and anything else as mine; on the contrary I will receive everything from the institute as out of charity; therefore I will never say: my room, my clothes, my objects; I will say instead: the room where I dwell, the objects I use.

4. I promise to love holy poverty for my Lord Jesus Christ, who was poor and suffering. While lacking something I cannot have, I will conform and suffer in peace rejoicing in my use of the poor things such as the room, the clothes, the bed, the food, and anything else.

5. I will always pray to the Lord to give me the spirit of holy poverty.

1. MOST PRECIOUS VIRTUE

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Poverty is a most precious virtue the Son of God embraced for our sake and example. This divine virtue is completely unknown to the world, which considers the rich people happy, whereas our Lord Jesus Christ threatened them, but said to the have-nots: happy the poor.

The perfect observance of poverty enriches the soul with every good. It creates, keeps, and strengthens the communities. In fact, even the most flourishing religious communities decline and fail for lack of poverty's observance! Because of that, the probationers are warmly recommended to observe holy poverty. They will have nothing of their own, but everything will be in common; they will keep no thing secretly, they will make no gift or loan, but will give their boxes' key to the superiors.

Having nothing is not enough for the probationers; they must be also detached from the desire of owning, embracing the poverty's inconveniences about clothes, food, dwelling, and bearing any want for God's sake. The probationers will glory in this precious evangelical pearl, saying: We seem to have nothing, yet we really possess everything (2 Cor. 6, 10) (P.R.P.). (2)

The Little Retreat novice will nurture a particular affection and a tender, strong love toward the holy evangelical poverty. Each novice will strive to love poverty as much as the world strives to love riches. Since the world loves riches with a predominant passion, without getting tired in growing rich or in buying the most it can, so the Little Poor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus will love holy poverty with a predominant transport and will be never satisfied but becoming always more poor, surrendering all that is surplus and detaching her heart from earthly things more and more (R.L.P.). (3)

Our Lord Jesus Christ preached holy poverty by divine words, but above all by example. He became poor to such a degree that he had no place where to rest his head. For that reason evangelical poverty is a precious treasure for the people who love Jesus Christ, who said: « Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor; the kingdom of heaven belongs to them » (Mt. 5, 3)! The saints loved this sublime virtue of poverty with tender transport. The more a soul dispossesses herself, renouncing everything for God's sake, the more God fulfills her with himself, and he becomes her treasure. To achieve everything, one must lose everything.

To be always fond of holy poverty, each Little Poor novice of the Sacred Heart of Jesus will look at her divine model saying to herself: « I entered the novitiate to find Jesus only, but he is poorest; so, if I want Jesus

only I have to embrace him along with his holy poverty ». The Little Poor novice will also look at the examples of the most holy Virgin and of the saints (R.L.P.).

Reading books and listening to speeches which foster love of holy poverty improves one's love for it. The congregants will meditate on the divine model Jesus Christ as well as on the most holy Virgin and the saints, especially on St. Francis of Assisi and St. Joseph Labre's poverty without feeling ashamed of appearing poor for the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ's poverty. They, however, will always be clean in appearance and attire (C.R.).

2. FEAR OF SLACKENING

Daughters of Divine Zeal and Little Poor of Jesus' Heart, be lovers and observers of holy poverty, but fear slackening, because many religious orders that were once flourishing like trees full of years in the holy Church became parched and failed in short time after they broke from holy poverty! Slackening came about, and the order went to ruin! Many great convents and monasteries once flourishing with saints, now are profane houses or places of sin and blasphemies, because the communities neglected evangelical poverty! God stopped favoring those loose orders; the holy founders acknowledged them as their own no longer, so they ended! The enemy passed through the broken poverty as a furious winner putting everyone to the edge of his sword, heaping ruin!

Institutes rise, progress, and expand wonderfully when they are based on the observance of evangelical poverty. God blesses such institutes abundantly, the adorable Jesus Christ acknowledges them as his own, because he embraced holy poverty as his heart's delight loving both its inconveniences and want. The most holy

Virgin becomes owner, mother, superior, and provider of these communities, which grow rich with celestial goods having everything necessary to life. So they can say: «We seem to have nothing, yet we really possess everything » (2 Cor. 6, 10) (P.C.Z.).

To be truly poor, the Little Poor of Jesus' Heart not only wishes nothing sumptuous and vainglorious, but also maintains her heart free from even the affection to the poor, necessary things. To better reach such a goal, at the renewal of the yearly vows and promises as well as when it is handy during the year, she will make an affective arid effective renunciation.

To become truly poor, each sister will receive everything out of charity such as the room, food, clothes, and even water holding herself worthy of nothing, even though she works in benefit of the institute. So that the sisters may have nothing of their own they will live together, as much as possible avoiding saying: my room, my clothes, and the like; they will say instead: the room where I dwell, the clothes I am wearing.

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To be truly poor in spirit, they will have no worry about food, clothes, and anything else, but will rest trustful in the divine providence's hands, sure that till they seek God alone no thing necessary to their subsistence will fail according to our Lord Jesus Christ's infallible words: « Be concerned above everything else with His kingdom and with what He requires, and He will provide you with all these other things » (Mt. 6, 33) (R.L.P.).

3. LET US REMEMBER OUR ORIGINS

For holy poverty's sake each sister will avoid keeping even the least thing secretly, or by negligence, such as books or images or objects of devotion, because

receiving or keeping a little thing, even indifferently, gives way to the devil who would want you to delight in and later become attached to it. Then new possession will increase, as will your attachment, so that the spirit of holy poverty goes to ruin! Holy poverty requires that each be detached from room, place, clothes, and everything.

To feel ashamed for wearing a poor or mended or faded dress as well as worn shoes offends holy poverty. May God, Immaculate Mary, the angels, and the saints bless that sister who is fond of wearing poor clothes and worn shoes even in public.

The Daughters of Divine Zeal's origin was in Messina's most abject, poor place, the most miserable beggars' center of pitiable, crumbling slums. It was there that the sisters were given their first glorious name of Little Poor of Jesus' Heart. By always remembering their origin and by keeping in mind that each house must have a mark of their primal poverty as much as possible, the sisters will be worthy of such a precious, honorable name; therefore let furniture, accessories, refectory, and everything be poor; even though sufficient, let the food be poor and simple.

For the Daughters of Divine Zeal, true love and glory of poverty consist in bearing joyously its inconveniences, want, and humiliation (F.R.).

The Daughters of Divine Zeal will pay careful attention to the holy writers teaching that the persons really poor in spirit are fond of poverty's inconveniences; for instance, St. Francis of Sales says that desiring the comforts of riches along with the honors of poverty is too ambitious; therefore, the sisters will hold themselves happy and privileged by God when they suffer want and inconvenience in the matter of food, dwelling, and everything (L.C.).

Possessing nothing is not enough for a sister to be really poor in spirit; but she must be also ready and determined to even renounce a kingdom for the poverty of Jesus Christ, who became poor for us!

Daughter of Divine Zeal, mold your heart through this sublime disposition, and you will be holy! The divine lover will accept your disposition as if you had really renounced a kingdom along with its earthly glory for his sake! He will enrich you on earth with his celestial treasures making you a queen of the eternal kingdom along with its infinite glory in heaven! Perfect poverty is poverty in spirit, which refuses effectively not only all the world, but also requires detachment from useful, necessary things, from spiritual pleasure in order to seek God alone, together with His pure will. It 'is this spiritual nudity which forms the union of love between Jesus and the soul (F.R.).

4. POVERTY AND ECONOMY

This institute will usually earn its means of subsistence by work. The articles produced will be sold at the right price avoiding bargaining as much as possible (L.C).

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The great religious virtue of poverty requires that good care be taken of the provisions, doing everything without unnecessary expenses or with a minimum of expense. Attention must be also paid to prevent deterioration because a minor waste offends the virtue or the vow of poverty (L.C).

The mother superiors will avoid spending unnecessary money for the community's maintenance, remembering that they have taken the vow of poverty, that they must use (and not abuse) the divine providence's affluence, otherwise they offend our Lord, stopping him from

helping us. The community must be provided with the necessary food, clothes, furniture, accessories, etc., avoiding the surplus. (4)

Exception to saving and economy are the following cases: the furniture of our churches and oratories and the relieving of the sick people in our institutes, orphanages, and asylums. The mother superiors will behave with generosity, sacrifice, faith, and love toward Jesus in the Holy Sacrament; however, for expenses going beyond 300 liras (5) they have to ask the permission from the general council, which will be generous with God's house decorum, if the recurring community has the money. To heal and relieve the sick people, everything must be done with generosity, charity, and according to the means at disposal (S.D.D.Z.).

B. OBEDIENCE

As to holy obedience, I declare that this virtue forms the life and the existence of all religious institutes. As the natural order subsists because the elements obey the laws of divine will (should they disobey, the cosmos would end in a moment), so a religious house subsists through faithful, perfect obedience; should obedience fail, the natural and supernatural means for its existence would end.

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I acknowledge that holy obedience is a virtue leading to perfect sanctification and to union with God, because the people accomplish God's will perfectly by obeying the superiors along with the rules. Obedience is also the surest, safest, and shortest way to reach great perfection, and a religious house where all the people obey religiously is a kingdom of God on earth. Humble obedience is perfect imitation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who

always proclaimed to do his Father's will up to the death on the cross; by doing so, the obedient person transforms himself into Jesus Christ.

Disobedience, instead, makes the people resemble Lucifer, who said: «I will not serve». If prohibited by obedience, even the good actions became bad, While the most indifferent ones became worthy of great merit when they are accomplished by obedience. Always bearing in mind the Holy Spirit's saying « the speech of the obedient will always be heard,» I will strive with all my strength to obey my superiors, the rules, and the constitutions.

That my obedience be in the Lord and useful to myself as well as to the institute, I declare:

1. From now on, I renounce unreservedly my will at the hands of my superiors following the hierarchical competence.

2. I will not be obstinate in my judgment and opinion; on the contrary, by obeying exteriorly I also intend to obey interiorly, conforming my judgments and points of view to the superiors judgments and points of view.

3. I promise to obey for supernatural reasons such as pleasing the Sacred Heart of Jesus, setting good example to others, seeing Jesus Christ in the superiors, and obeying for Gads sake. I promise such obedience not only in the things I like, but also in those I dislike, keeping in mind that such obedience is meritorious and that we win the kingdom of God by subjugating ourselves.

4. My obedience will be ready never delaying for any reason; joyous, having internal and external pleasure, at least in the will, because « God delights in the people who give with joy » ; exact, accomplishing the superiors' command entirely and conforming my judgment and will to theirs; simple, without changing the orders by

reasoning; *faithful and constant*, obeying the orders, the constitutions, and the rules without delay and disregard.

5. At last, I declare to do everything by obedience; for instance, if I have to go out or eat or drink between meals or receive people or leave out some rule or anything else, I will ask the permission from the superior each time or every month. As to the receiving or writing letters or messages, I will do so through the superiors.

I will pray every day to the adorable Heart of Jesus to make me a perfect obedient Religious (C.R.).

1. OBEDIENCE: LIFE OF THE ORDER

Since without obedience no religious order can stand, obedience must be regarded by the congregants as the order's life. Distinguishing between the observance of the vow and the observance of the virtue of obedience, by vow the congregants must obey the superiors in everything concerning the institute and its rules. They are bound to obey in minor things under light obligation of conscience, but when the command is given explicitly under precept of obedience, they are bound to obey under grave obligation of conscience. As to the virtue of obedience, the congregants will hold that they cannot be good Religious without obedience, because love of God, zeal for the divine glory, humility, chastity, poverty, charity, and vocation fail without it. Their chief care, therefore, will be becoming victims of holy obedience, mindful of our Lord Jesus Christ who was obedient up to the death. They will glory in depending on other's mind for everything, striving to make their obedience -ready - joyous - exact - for supernatural reason - seeing God in the person who is commanding. This way, the

soul will quickly reach the most perfect union with God (C.R).
(6)

Obedience is the fundamental virtue of a religious community, which cannot exist without it. Through obedience the Religious soon becomes holy, mortifies her passions, becomes dearest to the Lord, and keeps herself safe from the devil, the world, and her own selfishness, While also achieving the other virtues. The Religious who is perfectly subdued to obedience, enjoys great peace along with freedom of spirit, and the more she seems tied, the more she is free. Putting herself in the hands of the Lord as malleable wax to be shaped as he wants, the obedient Religious will be Jesus Christ's spouse because he was obedient to his Father up to the death for our sake (C.D.D.Z.). (7)

Jesus Christ and the most holy Virgin are the perfect models of perfect obedience. Next follow the examples of the saints who esteemed obedience more than raptures and miracles. The holy writers say that it is better performing an act of obedience than having the power of reviving the dead, and the saints prefer obedience to the greatest penance and to the holy works. As sin came into the world by disobedience, so the virtues enter the souls by obedience making them pleasant to God. Therefore, the community practicing perfect obedience is a community of angels.

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To fully appreciate this virtue, we notice that God holds obedience as preferable to his orders, as we know from the people who experienced that in supernatural ways. For instance, St. Veronica Giuliani was told by the most holy Virgin, You will not say « I always want to do God's will and holy obedience, » but will say « I always want to do holy obedience and God's will » (C.D.D.Z.).

The aspirant will nurture a great love for obedience,

knowing that this virtue is the shortest way to reach holiness and that people reach their goal safely by living under obedience. Since God delights much in the obedient souls, He blesses them with special graces making them always succeed; on the contrary, the disobedient ones are like a boat without rudder never reaching the harbor because God leaves them in the power of their fool counsel. The example of Saul who was reproved by God for one disobedience is dreadful; more dreadful is the example of our first parents who ruined humankind by sinning against obedience. For that reason the aspirant who is indisposed to perfect obedience must leave this community not to harm the others by his bad example (R.A.).

2. PRACTICE OF OBEDIENCE

Obedience is the first practical rule for the people who want to reach perfection and eternal life. This virtue is precious because it is based on humility, which was taught and practiced by our Lord Jesus Christ, by the most holy Virgin, and all the saints. Through this divine virtue, a person dispossesses himself, surrendering to God, who will dispose of him as he likes.

Obedience is the safest way to reach Christian perfection, but it must be endowed with many qualities in order to be perfect. First it must be interior. It follows that the probationer has to obey for God's sake imitating our Lord Jesus Christ, regardless of external convenience or ulterior motive. Hence he has to see God in the superiors.

When a person obeys with self-denial, he makes a sacrifice of his own will, deserving more merit. We must remember that our Lord Jesus Christ obeyed up to the

death. Obedience is the death of selfishness, the sacrifice of one's own will, and is painful.

Obedience must be blind. Not asking nor understanding the why of the orders belongs to blind obedience.

Obedience must be ready; the more ready it is, the more is meritorious. At the command of obedience everything must be left such as a started work or a word that is being written or a *Gloria Patri* that is being said.

At last, obedience must be joyous because it is written: « God loves the one who gives gladly » (2 Cor. 9, 7). The perfection of obedience consists in keeping in mind the rules, the superior's orders and will, doing everything according to them.

Humble, interior obedience requires of us to conform our judgment to the superiors' judgment when we carry out their order, holding their command as good as it is right even when it appears otherwise to us. Besides being of great importance, renouncing one's own opinion pleases the Lord and helps the soul so much.

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To crown his perfection an obedient person precedes and carries out the superior's wishes. His spirit of obedience somehow makes him obey even his fellow and subordinates.

The probationers must be convinced that they are unable to please God, to improve their virtues, and to persevere in the good, unless they are perfectly obedient (P.R.P.). (8)

The Daughters of Divine Zeal will love holy obedience: blind, ready, joyous, simple, constant, interior, supernatural obedience; blind by obeying without seeking the why; ready, without making any delay; joyous, following the orders with joy and sincerity, even when aversion is felt; simple, making no distortion or excuse; constant, performing

the obedience in due time and place, without having the order repeated; interior, by approving and holding the command as a right one (except sin); and supernatural, by obeying for supernatural motive. Unlike the soldiers who obey for fear of punishment and unlike the employees who obey for fear of the fines or of losing their job, the Religious obeys for God's pure sake in order to please the adorable Heart of Jesus, to be united with him, to attract His blessings, and to become holy and rich with merits and virtues when the celestial spouse will call her to the celestial wedding. Obeying by supernatural motives requires of the Religious both to see God's and the most holy Virgin in the superiors as well as to see God and the most holy Virgin's orders, commands, counsels, exhortations, and wishes in the superiors' orders (C.D.D.Z.).

Our Lord Jesus Christ walked the path of obedience to death - his death on the cross (Ph. 2, 8). Each of his actions was a perfect obedience to his Father and often to his creatures will.

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How fortunate the obedient Religious is! She delights the Heart of Jesus, and God disposes of her as He likes drawing her always closer to Him. The saints loved obedience so much as to sacrifice themselves, while God sometimes worked miracles to help them obey. Let us be obedient, and we will belong totally to God!

St. Joseph Little Retreat novices will always consider that they cannot find Jesus entirely according to the novitiate's aim, unless they follow holy obedience, that every soul walking out of holy obedience is astray, and that every soul following holy obedience is on the way of divine union.

The virtue of holy obedience is as manifold as various: it must be practiced with the superiors, may be practiced

with the fellows, and even with the subordinates. Its perfection consists in preceding and carrying out the orders and the wishes of others. (9)

To be perfect in holy obedience, the novice will practice it toward God and the Church by obeying their law; toward the superiors, by obeying their orders, precepts, and even counsels; toward the rules, by observing them exactly; toward the fellows and the subordinates, by practicing obedience with prudence and discretion. By doing everything in the spirit of obedience the novice will sanctify and make meritorious her daily actions such as work, walk, eating, and recreation. Eating or drinking between meals or borrowing things will be done with the superior's permission. Each novice will hold herself as a slave of holy obedience and will glory in it.

The novice will keep in mind the divine example of Jesus who was obedient up to the death on the cross, and now is obedient to his creatures in the Holy Sacrament as well as the example of the most holy Virgin Mary, who is teacher model of perfect obedience, and the saints, especially the glorious Patriarch St. Joseph (R.L.P.).

C. CHASTITY

What am I going to say and promise about the observance of the notable virtue and vow of chastity? I acknowledge that our Lord Jesus Christ brought this angelical virtue on earth to his elect and to the fortunate souls he calls out of mercy to be closer to him through religious life. This special grace lifts up the soul to the angelical rank and to the mystical wedding with the immaculate lamb; the elect among the thousands God calls

to the priesthood or to the religious status or to both understand it.

It is the priest's and the Religious' sacred duty to observe this virtue and vow; even breaking it venially by deliberate consent makes them grow weak in the other virtues, makes the intellect dim, the spirit weak, but the devil stronger enough to tempt, leading the people to total ruin. Consequently, if I am not pure in soul, body, mind, and heart I will not be humble, obedient, veracious, and observant nor will I be a priest or a Religious.

A congregant who renounces chastity is unworthy of remaining in the order, he rather deserves being driven out; an order that tolerates such a rotted member or an order where God is offended by such a sin, even though secretly, is deteriorated before God. God would withdraw his blessings, demon would rule, good principles would become depraved, and all things would fall into ruin.

I promise to always contemplate the preeminence and the importance of chastity as well as to fervently implore every day the most holy heart of Jesus, Immaculate Mary, the angels, the saints, and my guardian angel in order to prevent chastity from the least stain. Always bearing in mind the psalmist's words: « God makes the angels His ministers, » as a priest I will consider that I have been made an angel of holy ministry because of chastity. As a Religious I will meditate on the words of the Song of Solomon, « He pastures his flock among the lilies, » that is to say, among the chaste souls as I must be with God's help and my good will.

In the presence of Jesus, our supreme goodness, the most holy Virgin Mary, the angels, the saints, and my own conscience I protest, declare, and promise to cultivate internal and external chastity till the end of my life. Internal chastity, by keeping my mind and heart free from

fantasies, suggestions, and temptations as well as by always more loving this angelical virtue. External chastity, by taking care of my eyes and senses as well as by avoiding to deal with women confidentially. When I am obliged to deal with them or with young girls, I will be reserved and self controlled in my words, never looking at their face nor letting them kiss my hand.

The pious institute of Jesus' Heart is made of the Rogationists and the Daughters of Divine Zeal's orders, who are separated and independent, but have relation of spiritual assistance. I, however, promise to never go to the sister institute avoiding any connection with its congregants. If I am told by obedience to go, I will take the necessary caution of modesty and words, without lengthening out any relation or talk with other persons. At the end of the visit or relation I will report everything to the superiors.

1. MOST PRECIOUS STONE

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Chastity! This is the virtue that leads the person to the evangelical perfection making him worthy of being united with God according to our Lord Jesus Christ's saying: « Happy are the pure in heart; they will see God! » (Mt. 5, 8).

This virtue is like a precious stone for this small community's probationers, who must be chaste and pure in their thoughts, words, and actions (P.R.P.). (10)

Since the Rogationists of Jesus' Heart are going to take the vow of this angelical virtue, their thoughts, words, and actions must be purest. To keep holy chastity safe, they will be in the presence of God using the following means: 1) Prayer and daily meditation on our Lord Jesus Christ's Passion; 2) mortification of the senses;

3) not staring at women neither lingering with them; 4) avoidance of idleness and of much rest, loving work and sacrifice; 5) being sincere in the holy confession without neglecting it; 6) being united with Jesus in the daily Holy Communion; 7) avoiding talk with lay people, reading of newspapers, and the like; 8) never laying hands on people; 9) praying many times a day to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, St. Joseph, and the guardian angel in order to observe the angelical virtue :perfectly (C.R.).

To keep the virtue of chastity safe, each sister will love internal and external mortification, humility of heart and humble works, modesty, avoidance of curiosity, silence, prayer, and attendance of the holy sacraments. The humble, contrite, and sincere confession is a most effective means to keep the people pure, but the daily Communion received with pure conscience, with feelings of love, due preparation, and thanksgiving transforms the people in God.

No one is allowed to lay hands on fellows and to form a particular friendship (F.R.).

Chastity is the most precious, shining stone of the virgin consecrated to Jesus, who is the spouse of the souls, the eternal Word of God, eternally begotten of the Father in the splendor of infinite virginity and divine holiness. He pastures among the lilies, loving the chaste, pure soul. To become a man, he wanted an immaculate mother; to be buried, an undefiled sepulcher; to stay under the species of spotless bread he wanted pure ministers for the consecration of the Eucharist and pure, angelical brides for celestial love, so unknown to the world and its followers. To be a Daughter of Divine Zeal, one must be purest in order to light the divine zeal in an immaculate heart. No one but those who are dead to the senses and pure in their heart can feel the most

holy Heart of Jesus' interests, be perfumed in the innermost of their soul, and say: « We are like a sweet-smelling incense offered by Christ to God » (II Cor. 2, 1)! The Daughter of Divine Zeal will be most jealous of chastity! She will understand its divine excellence, will love and consecrate it to the sweetest Heart of Jesus, where she will contemplate and preserve it jealously like a pearl of Jesus' Heart. She will have a watchful care so that the lightest breath may not spoil this most precious virtue, knowing that the vow makes it more brilliant and beautiful, but the least defect dims and defiles it (F.R.).

The beautiful virtue of chastity makes the creatures like angels. The more a soul is chaste, the more it is spiritual; the more imperfect it is in this virtue, the more imperfect it is in the other ones. Jesus said: « Happy are the pure in heart; they will see God! » The Little Retreat novice will take watchful care of her soul preserving her heart jealously through modesty, retreat, prayer, mortification, weekly confession, and daily Communion, which makes the virgins flourish. Each novice will refrain both from curiosity and much talk keeping her eyes cast down and mortified, as much as she can. Keeping her heart free from creatures, she will avoid intimacy with everyone, loving all the people in God. Laying hands on people is not allowed to the novices (R.L.P.).

D. THE FOURTH VOW: ZEAL FOR THE ROGATE

The novices long to make the vow of praying to the most holy Heart of Jesus that he will send out good workers to the holy Church. For such a purpose they will combine prayer with works.

1. *Prayer.* They will pray:

a. Three times a day, in common.

b. Four times a year, during the Rogation Days making the procession in the open. They will also pray to the apostles on their feast and to the Holy Sacrament during the exposition.

c. To win good workers, they will offer every day the holy mass, the rosary, Holy Communion, their pains, and the good works in union with the zeal of Jesus, who said: « Pray, therefore,» etc.

d. Each novice will pray in the secret of her heart all day long to win good workers to the holy Church, adding offerings, ejaculatory prayers, intentions, mortifications, and everything her zeal will suggest.

2. Works: the Little Poor of Jesus' Heart novices will be trained in different works regarding their community's well-proceeding and in charity toward the orphans and the spoor clerics. To please the most holy Heart of Jesus and to grow in holiness, they will apply themselves to various jobs with accuracy, practicing charity toward the orphans as much as obedience allows. To help the poor clerics, the novices will work and beg to obtain some income for them (R.L.P.). (11)

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The fourth vow: *zeal for winning good workers to the holy Church.* Because this vow implies the best exercises to faster divine glory and salvation of souls, it embraces everything (C.P.).

A secret for the salvation of the Church and society is concealed in the practice of this divine command (C.R.).

The spirit of our institute is the zeal for the Heart of Jesus' interests that are abridged in the words « pray, therefore », etc. Because all goods on earth proceed from the priesthood, by imploring good workers to the holy Church we aim at fostering the most holy Heart of

Jesus' interests, who declared that the zeal for God's house was consuming him. Now, God's house is the universal Church and Jesus' Heart is burning with desire to see all souls entering this mystical ark of salvation. Oh! How much we should strive to become holy for the divine mission of fostering the most holy Heart of Jesus' interests (R.R.C.).

The zeal for the glory of God and for the good of souls must be predominant in the Rogationists of Jesus' Heart, because they have the mission of winning good workers to the holy Church from his Heart.

Each Rogationist will pick up from Jesus Christ's adorable mouth the divine command « pray, therefore, » etc., which is the outcome of his divine zeal, and will consider its singular importance at the present time for facing the evils which are afflicting the holy Church by lack of holy vocations. To make the people know this divine command and this beneficial devotion each Rogationist will do his best, being himself one with Jesus in his burning thirst for the salvation of souls. Such a burning desire afflicted him from the time of his incarnation making him exclaim on the cross: « I am thirsty! » (C.R.).

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The obedience to this divine command forms the favorite joy, the chief point of the Daughters of Divine Zeal's vocation, mission, and glorious predestination (C.D.D.Z.).

Their zeal for this daily prayer will be always active and increasing: they will understand its importance in the light of faith, will always keep in their mind our Lord Jesus Christ's command, will consider the immense good deriving from it as well as the merits which accumulate in time and eternity. In time they will share abundantly in the works of the priests; in eternity they will share in their glory, which is the highest one. They will be the

wise virgins, whose lamp will not die out here, but will be transformed in the light of the highest priest over there. Through this zeal and prayer as well as through the spiritual fecundity of the perpetual virginity, the wise virgin bride of the virgins' king will somehow become mother of Jesus Christ's priesthood in the Church. Oh! If the Daughter of Divine Zeal answers and understands her vocation according to the spirit, she has a great vocation (F.R.)!

NOTES

(1) In 1918 things changed, because Canon Law defined exactly the simple vow's nature. The importance of the vow of poverty is well known from our constitutions.

(2) The religious holy poverty is a fundamental vow for the congregants, and they must hold it as a greatest treasure and as the basis of the order's existence and progress. The more the order holds in esteem and practices poverty, the more the order will be firm, blessed, and improved by God (C.R.).

«The Rogationists will possess no property in act, nor will they say mine, referring to things they use, they will say instead the room, the clothes I use, and the like having no thing in secret, not even a cotton thread. They will be fond of asking for the humblest suit, the worst shoes, and the poorest things in holy emulation » (C.R.).

(3) The Daughter of Divine Zeal will love holy poverty very much holding it as the great treasure left by Jesus Christ our Lord to his true followers, to the beloved souls. The Daughter of Divine Zeal's heart will get married with holy poverty, being fond of and glorying in it, for Jesus and the most holy Virgin loved it very much (F.R.).

(4) No mother superior will act the gallant. The necessary objects will be of the lowest grade, excepted the ones for the use of noble guests. Do not say that some things are cheaper because they last more; even those of low grade may last if they are given careful attention. It is also of no avail saying that some elegant

things are given free. We must avoid the devil's snare. Sometimes we have to renounce such gifts, and when courtesy obliges us to receive them, we can sell the marketable ones, putting the others in the guest rooms, or reserving them for the noble persons, but never for the Religious» (S.D.D.Z.).

(5) In our padre's times, money had different value.

(6) « So that the aspirant's obedience may be meritorious before God it must be external and internal, that is to say, it must be done for the Lord's sake in order to please God, gain merits for eternal life, and attract divine blessings. We must obey in spirit of faith, considering God's will to be in that of the superior, and holding that obedience sanctifies all actions, even the most indifferent» (R.A.).

(7) Blessed be the daughters that for Jesus' sake consecrate themselves to holy obedience. They will be the dearest ones to Jesus and Mary and will reach perfection quickly (D.S.S.).

(8) «Obedience! This is the great virtue that the aspirant will practice to become dear to God and to the people, as well as to be worth advancing in the religious life. The aspirant's obedience must be ready, blind, joyous, and faithful.

Ready, without delay; blind, without thinking over it, because the devil enters the reasoning about obedience and drives to transgression; joyous, means obedience with no aversion or agitation; faithful, means that the superior's order must be carried out punctually, and in the best way, as long as the order lasts. The aspirants will pay careful attention in order that their obedience be always faithful and endowed with the qualifications mentioned above, preventing it from becoming short-lived or useless; only by doing so they will get used to this beautiful virtues (R.A.).

(9) «The Little Retreat novice by the Heart of Jesus will strive to observe holy obedience in full, seeing to it:

a) That her obedience be external and internal; such an obedience requires absolute self-denial of her judgement, opinions, and will in favor of the superiors' judgement, opinions, and will;

b) That her obedience be blind, without external and internal reasoning; ready, without delay; and joyous, that is to say, accomplished sincerely at least with her will by repelling any trouble or aversion » (R.L.P.).

(10) «May this little community by God's help be an elect garden of pure lilies, dear to the one who pastures his flock among the lilies (Song of Solomon, 2, 16). Should it be otherwise, we wish God to destroy this little seed at its rising* (P.R.P.)

(11) The padre was writing this in 1887, when the institute had no clerics.

CHAPTER VIII

MORTIFICATION

To preserve holy chastity, I will love mortification, penance, and regular discipline, using the means and caution mentioned above. As to mortification and penance, besides practicing internal humility and continuous contrition for my past faults, I will not feel offended when people neglect or ignore me, silently considering myself worthy of worse treatment. When I happen to expose my need, I will do so with calm and simplicity.

Holy mortification of gluttony is of great importance, and I will fast and abstain perfectly as the holy Church commands: if health reasons or anything else prevent me from doing so, I will submit my case to the superiors with simplicity and will follow their opinion. I will also behave so about common food.

As to the other mortifications and penances, such as those we do on the first Friday of the month or in special circumstances of the year or in the months of May and June, and in the novenas, as well as the nightly vigils of about an hour, the silence by rule, the service to the poor along with the washing of their feet, the whip, and the use of penance tools once or twice a week, I will follow the community's customs. Such penances, however, may be replaced for good reasons. Furthermore, I declare that I am ready to accept any penance when I am punished for my faults.

So that the community may proceed well, everyone has to observe the schedule of the acts in common. Beginning with the reveille in the morning, I promise to be punctual when the bell chimes the hour for the prayer, refectory, spiritual reading, going out, recreation, and sleep, never exempting myself of my own will. When I have to be absent,

I will do so with the superior's expressed or presumed permission.

I recognize the Importance of regular discipline. My staying and behaving in community will be unlike my behaving in the world or in the family or among the seculars; therefore, I will pay the attention and the caution we are obliged to use by the institute's rules, by the promises and declarations I have endorsed, by the mutual good example, and by the edification we have to give to the little, simple-minded people who live with us. To begin with, I will keep silence according to the rules and to the customs of the house, saying few, wise words when I have to talk. Second, usually I will speak Italian (I will only speak dialect when it is necessary to make me better-understood by the poor and children), avoiding gossip, criticism, anger, and reproach against the people who are not under my jurisdiction.

While staying among children, brothers, and outsiders I will pay careful attention to restrain myself from relating worldly, useless, shocking, frivolous, Idle things, or news about crime, suicide, and the like which feed or excite curiosity. Likewise, I will refrain from complaining about personal facts, food, service or events and troubles of the Institute or anything else; furthermore, when the hearers might be surprised and shocked, I will not even complain in the presence of my brethren. Since I am entitled to relate to the superiors, when it is worth while I will do so with humility, meekness, and simplicity.

I will be unaffectedly neat as much as it is consistent with evangelical poverty, hating the intention of cutting a good figure.

1. SILENCE

The sisters are warmly recommended to avoid any chat, to be haters of idle talk, and to avoid useless words, keeping silence all day long except at play, where they will be modest and self-possessed to set good example to the children. If they love silence, keeping it while

working, they will produce, otherwise they lose time. Silence! Silence! Silence (S.I.G.)!

Holy silence is indispensable to keep order, to cultivate holy virtues, and to observe the rules. Holy Scripture says that the spirit is strengthened by silence: « Your salvation lay in conversion and tranquility, your strength, in complete trust » (Is. 30, 15). On the contrary, « A flood of words is never without its fault » (Prov. 10, 19); and, « The man who talks too much will get himself disliked » (Eccl. 20, 8); as well as, « Happy the man who has never sinned with his tongue » (Eccl. 25, 11). Holy silence was always kept by the communities of perfect observance.

The probationers will rigorously observe the rules about moderate and perfect silence. Perfect silence will be kept in religious acts, study, refectory, and dormitory. For the remainder silence will be moderate, and the people will speak in a love voice, with a few words when they need to say something (P.R.P.).

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Silence is the guardian of holy prayer. Since it is exceedingly important for the community's well-proceeding, the novices will observe it exactly with God's help. Normally, they will not speak too loud nor burst out laughing. At play there is no silence (R.L.P.).

Like the observant communities, the sisters will pay careful attention to the rule of silence, keeping moderate and perfect silence: perfect, from reveille to after-mass, in the refectory, and in the dormitory at night; moderate, during work-time. During perfect silence, no word is to be said, and when the sisters need to speak they will do so in low voice. They will keep moderate silence by talking in a low voice, being silent the most they can... Let us remember that the Lord said that we have to give an account of even a useless word, that Jesus speaks to the

souls in silence, and silence strengthens the spirit making the people avoid many faults (D.S.S.).

Discipline requires silence. A community of freely speaking, backbiting people is a fuss, a confusion, a disorder, where neither rule nor peace nor piety nor education can reign. On the contrary, when silence stands out in a community, everything proceeds well; there, grumbling, useless words, and defects cannot find their way. The institutes' rules and the observant communities hold silence in great esteem, because it helps the people by concentrating their attention, by controlling their desires, and by mortifying their heart; furthermore, it keeps their soul in the divine presence, fosters a calm and gentle spirit, and preserves virtues. Those who accustom themselves to silence are worthy to hear God speaking to their heart. Holy Scripture often praises silence, but condemns excessive talk. If silence is indispensable to any community, at greater reason it is indispensable to a community of youths. The point of fact is that to grow wise, considerate, pious, and recollected, they need to bridle their tongue, for the unbridled people grow thoughtless and inconsiderate (R.A.).

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The rule of silence allows no grumbling, no fault finding, no slander, and no useless words. To accustom oneself to the beautiful virtue of keeping silence it is of importance to also keep it interiorly (C.R.).

Keeping silence is a main rule of a religious community which allows the people to avoid many defects and to hear the Lord's sweet inspirations in their heart; for that reason I resolve to keep moderate and perfect silence faithfully and exactly. Unsatisfied by external silence, I will also keep internal silence by bridling my mind when selfishness penetrates my internal thoughts to the prejudice of patience, meekness, humility, obedience

and charity. I will also restrain my curiosity from knowing, hearing, and interfering with matters which are none of my business (P.D.).

Since most defects and disorders come from the tongue and « death and life are in the gift of the tongue » (Prov. 18, 21); I will pay special attention to bridle my tongue in everything. I will not speak of myself proudly nor will I relate useless, distracting and unbecoming things, nor will I backbite. I will not complain about anybody, especially about the institute's members, nor will I censure nor find out the defects of others, nor discuss my worldly life, nor will I fight to uphold my opinions. Avoiding harsh words even to my younger mates, I will speak with the older members with humble, pious, and respectful words. Bearing in my mind the Holy Spirit's saying: « It is convenient to wait in silence for God's help » (D. 1907), I will perfectly observe the silence prescribed by the rule.

2. VARIOUS MORTIFICATIONS

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The teacher will test the novices in many ways about humility, obedience, mortification, and sacrifice, and they will receive everything with spiritual pleasure in order to become acceptable to the celestial spouse, to destroy their bad habits, and to atone for their past sins. The novices must be told to practice obedience, mortification, and sacrifice with holy simplicity and sincerity.

As sober souls, they will not seek satisfaction in eating nor will they eat two different kinds of fruit, but will eat and drink as much as is sufficient, taking their time. As penitent souls, they will love mortification, humiliation, and penance, which are so much hated by the blind world, but so much loved by the saints. (1)

The Little Retreat novices will love penance with particular affection because it mortifies the passions, but enlivens the spirit. No penance, especially cilice, whip, fast, and the like is allowed to the novices without the permission of holy obedience. They are told to practice the penances and the mortifications the fathers of spirit suggest, because such penances destroy the natural defects without harming health, sometimes helping it, instead.

The mortifications we are talking about are: 1) abstinence from sweets, which are nothing else than a stimulus of throat, which the spiritual persons avoid; 2) partial abstinence from fruit on certain days; 3) habitual abstinence from eating and drinking between meals; 4) feeding on leftovers, which helps humility, but destroys gluttony; this mortification, however, is allowed now and then to the novices who ask for it; 5) keeping perfect or moderate silence when talk is allowed, or mortifying the eyes or renouncing play-time. Such penances can be used fruitfully with the superior's permission. Taking of a cup of coffee or milk or any drink without sugar or eating a dish of fowl or fish or any soup without seasoning falls in the same kind of penance. When the novice, however, may appear singular for doing much mortifications, she must avoid them (R.L.P.).

Neither the sisters are allowed to do bodily penances nor the superiors are empowered to give such a permission. Those in good health will fast according to the holy Church's law. Little mortifications that pass unknown to the people, such as drinking less than to one's fill, delaying a drink, enduring a midge, wearing a dress of poor quality, and the like, are helpful to the spirit and are allowed. The true penance consists in the practice of the interior virtues such as humbly confessing one's own

faults, restraining and overcoming oneself, keeping oneself pure, enduring the troubles, suffering and loving the fellows and the pupils, depending on the superior's will, and sacrificing oneself for Jesus, our supreme good, and the souls (D.S.S.).

Even when the confessor permits a grave penance, it cannot be performed without the superior's permission. But the little penances that pass unknown to the community are allowed; they are effective without feeding self-esteem (P.R.P.).

The congregants will fast according to the holy Church's law, and when they need dispensation, they will ask the superior for it. No one is allowed to do excessive voluntary penances without the superior's permission, but each one will embrace suffering, mortifications, contradictions, sickness, nuisance, and anything else coming from the reigning or permitting will of God as beneficial and holy penances. They will endure them with great love and holy joy, at least by intellect and will. It is also a beneficial penance any work that the people accomplish for the service of God and neighbor. Each of them will practice the little mortification which pass unknown to the people, such as expressing no complaint about food, mortifying gluttony in secret, restraining from talk, and the like which so many authors suggest. Everyone will be favorably disposed to suffer for the service of God and the good of souls the inconveniences of holy poverty, any discomfort and sacrifice such as hunger, thirst, lack of sleep and rest. On Immaculate Mary's and Assumption's eve the fast by eating bread only is allowed. On Holy Friday we are accustomed to kneel while eating the amount of food which is allowed by fast. On the eve of various feasts and in other circumstances, we keep the vigil in the church for about an hour praying according

ing to the superior's dispositions; no one can exempt himself without having the superior's permission (C.R.).

3. VOLUNTARY PENANCES

The Daughters of Divine Zeal will love, wish, and esteem the voluntary penances which foster divine love and holy virtues, purify the souls from past faults, expiate pain on earth, and lighten purgatory's pain when they are performed with pure intention. They also stimulate the souls to reach perfection, accustoming them to suffering, mortification, and destruction of selfishness. Besides, when a sister exhorts herself to do bodily penance with the only aim at pleasing God and achieving holy perfection, she heartens herself to improve her virtues and to love the cross. Those who despise or under-value the bodily penances by saying that the interior ones are enough, do not show true spirit nor wisdom, nor the science of the saints; they only show that they are not striving to achieve interior virtues.

We must bear in mind our Lord Jesus Christ's saying: « I tell you that if you do not turn from your sins, you will all die as they did » (Lk. 13, 5) and the triple cry about penance that the most holy Virgin said through Bernadette's mouth at the Lourdes grotto, « Penance, penance, penance! » It is true that our Lord's word is mainly concerned with internal penance and with repentance for sins which our Lord elevated to a sacrament: the humble, sincere, contrite confession to his minister in the priceless, most merciful tribunal of reconciliation. Nevertheless, God's word has a wider sense; when he talked about penance, he also meant the voluntary one which the person who is called to perfection performs in order to reach her vocation goal; otherwise, she

misses the religious perfection, jeopardizing her spirit through enfeeblement of repentance and resolve, and running the risk of losing the spirit, her vocation, and eternal salvation. For that reason each sister will esteem bodily penances, performing them in obedience to the rule and with discretion in order that they may be helpful.

The mother superior will moderate and control the voluntary penances, keeping in mind:

a. Sister's health, work, and job. The first penance a sister must offer to the Lord is the work she is doing in the community as perfectly as she can: for instance, getting up in the night from necessity, traveling by obedience, washing, sweeping, writing, embroidering, supervising, being hungry, thirsty, tired, and enduring incidents when things and the community require so.

b. The mother superior will also look at the improvement in the virtues of obedience, humility, zeal, and accuracy while the sisters perform their own duty or when they renounce their own will and opinion, etc. Some souls happen to deceive themselves through bodily penances; they are able to do hardest bodily penances without hesitating to break holy obedience, humility, charity, fulfillment of their duty, etc. These souls consider themselves saints for their bodily penances, but persist in the bad practice of the virtues becoming obstinate, somehow stubborn, negligent, angry, etc. Depriving them of their voluntary whimsical penances and inflicting other penances, helps them. If they are willing to amend their vices in order to achieve holy virtues, they may be allowed to perform voluntary penances with discretion; they, however, must be told to offer their penances to the Lord with the aim at amending their bad habit and improving religious virtues; otherwise, they will be forbidden to perform voluntary penances (S.D.D.Z.). (2)

4. NIGHTLY PRAYER

We are going to say something about the merit and efficacy of nightly prayer. The saints held the nightly prayer in great esteem, practiced it all their life, and obtained copious graces and celestial favors for themselves and the whole Church. Even though our Lord Jesus Christ had no need to pray, still he spent entire nights praying on the mountains, in the caves or while traveling; hence, the saints loved the nightly prayer, and the sacred writers praised and recommended it. Some founders laid down the rule which required arising in the night to say the divine office: this the Capuchins, the Theresians, and other sisters also practice. If our community of active life is unable to do that every night, still we should follow our custom of keeping some vigils in the night during the year as we did since the institute's origin.

These vigils are:

1. The night between the old and the new year. This vigil lasts about 90 minutes. We enter the church 45 minutes before midnight and go out 45 minutes after midnight: In the first phase we thank God, the adorable our Lord Jesus Christ, the most holy Virgin, St. Joseph, St. Michael the archangel, St. Anthony of Padua, the guardian angels, and the patron saints for the spiritual and temporal graces they granted during the year past. In the second phase, we start the new year by praising and blessing God. This holy practice in the pious institute of the Heart of Jesus' interests is called the first fruits, which are the beginning of the new year, the praise, the blessing, and other prayers of our prayer book.

2. One or two vigils in the holy week.

3. On the night of Sept. 8 we keep the vigil for the most holy Mary's nativity, the celestial *bambinella*. By spirit we go around St. Anne's house praying for about 30-45 minutes before her birth at midnight. Then, we enter the house to see the *Bambinella* in the arms of her fortunate parents, St. Anne and St. Joachim. Kneeling and reverent, we admire the celestial *bambinella*, praise her glories, and renew the celestial slavery of love imploring graces.

4. On Immaculate Conception's eve, we begin the vigil at about 30-45 minutes before midnight owing to the people's belief that the most holy Virgin's immaculate soul was created and infused in her immaculate body at 12:00 midnight sharp.

At 12:00 midnight sharp, we praise the immaculate *bambinella* who is in her mother's womb; then we join the adoration, the acts of charity and virtue that the celestial *bambinella* offered to the Most High, her Creator and Lord, from the beginning of her life. Keeping company together with her thousand guardian angels headed by St. Gabriel the archangel, we honor and offer ourselves to her through the sacred slavery of love, asking for graces and giving our thanksgiving.

5. On the beautiful happy night of Christmas, our most adorable sweet baby Jesus' birthday, we keep awake to prepare ourselves through a thrill of loving expectation in the Bethlehem's grotto, where we are in spirit. We renew our filial slavery of love toward the baby through a specific prayer. On this most loving night, we may hear one or two or three masses, receiving the most Holy Communion with the best dispositions of love and faith in order that the baby Jesus' mystical birthday may come true in each heart.

6. When we are waiting for urgent graces for fear of divine punishments, when human persecutions stirred by demon are pressing, it is always right to have recourse to nightly prayer through special vigils.

7. If a sister feels drawn to pray in the night and is able to do so without being sleepy during the daily jab or prayer, she can ask the permission from the mother superior, who may grant it with discretion. Happy and acceptable to the Lord is the sister who prays in the night before the Holy Sacrament to keep Jesus company, to talk with him tête à tête, to implore his divine mercies for her and the houses, for the sisters and the most holy Heart of Jesus' interests. Those who feel this impulse may follow it with the superior's approval. Till the sister gets used to it, she may happen to be sleepy; that, however, will not prevent her from insisting, because as long as the sister has pure intention and makes efforts following holy obedience, the Lord will help her in the night prayer.

8. Ordering other vigils during the year depends on the mother superior general. During the vigils, the houses' communities will be united in spirit in order to form one spiritual community. At the end of the vigil, the souls in Purgatory will be also remembered through some prayer. To keep the nightly peace, all the people will be perfectly silent before and after the vigil (S.D.D.Z.).

NOTES

(1) The categories of penances are 4: determined, imposed, voluntary, and disciplinary penances.

a) Determined penances are fast, discipline, and sackcloth in the days established by the rule as well as the 7 Glory to the

Father along with the ejaculatory prayer: we greet you, o immaculate blood etc., which we say with raised arms in the evening.

b) Imposed penances are the ones that the mother superior imposes to the novices' community or to the individuals for practice of mortification or for test, even when the novices are not at fault.

c) Disciplinary penances are the ones that the mother superior imposes even when the faults are light ones.

d) Voluntary penances are the ones that the individuals do with the mother superior's permission, following their fervor.

The sick people and those of delicate constitution may humbly expose their situation to the mother superior, following her decision. However, if they are granted special help and dispensation, they have to practice humility and obedience to counterbalance the dispensation (R.N.).

(2) Saying specific prayer with the hands under the knees or with arms raised appears often in the primal rules; following upon, the prayer with raised hands remained for the 7 Glory to the Most Precious Blood, the daily Our Father to St Antony, and the 5 Our Fathers on the first Friday of month; about the hands under the knees, we read the last writing by the padre: « Doing penance by putting the hands under the knees is not allowed» (S.D.D.Z.).

CHAPTER IX

RECEIVING CORRECTIONS

If ever the superiors warn or admonish me for my faults, I will receive their warnings and admonitions with humility of heart and with all my soul, without justifying myself or arguing about it; on the contrary, I will acknowledge my fault with humble, simple heart and will amend. If I am not aware of the fault, I will consider my being unable to see it as due to my selfishness which has dimmed my sight, and, therefore, I need to humiliate myself twice in my heart. If I am sure I have not fallen into the fault I am charged with, for humility and prudence's sake I will keep silence or I will justify myself calmly and with simplicity once or twice.

1. PRACTICE OF HUMILITY AND MORTIFICATION

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When the superior warns, or admonishes, or inflicts a penance to someone, the subject will receive and execute everything with humble heart, without internal and external remonstrances, even if he feels undeserving of it, attributing such a feeling to selfishness (C.R.).

The mother superior may inflict little penances or disciplinary mortifications for external faults, and the culprit has to receive and execute them with humility, adding internal acts of virtue. Such penances may be kneeling in the refectory or kissing the earth or saying some prayers with raised hands or begging pardon while kneeling in the refectory, and the like (D.S.S.). (1)

To amend and to atone on earth for the faults they would expiate in purgatory amidst burning fire, the novices will practice penances for their daily faults. The mother superior will diversify the penances according to quality and number of defects, and the novices will execute them. The mother superior will also see that penances be fitting for the faults and suitable for expiation and emendation (R.L.P.).

The aspirant will humbly receive the penances or punishments which the superiors inflict for his faults against the rules, considering himself deserving of them; he will execute them exactly without protesting, and at the end of the penance will go to the superior to thank him and to beg pardon.

The youths who long for sanctification and admittance to the religious community must be ready to receive penances and punishments even for small faults, always being glad to amend more and more (R.A.). (2)

Following the exhortation of the apostle we have to strive in order to become humble and to abate ourselves without undervaluing anyone. But, if we happen to sadden our fellows, we have to beg pardon, humbling ourselves. We must accept reproofs, reprimands, and penances with humility, avoiding justifying ourselves, since the upright person begins his talk by charging himself. Let us endure want, affliction, contradictions, lack of food, clothes, and everything, considering how much Christ, his most holy mother, and the patron saints suffered for us (R.R.C.).

If the probationers happen to fall in same defect, they will receive willingly the penances that the superiors inflict. Such penances will be proportionate to the faults, and the probationers will accept them with humility and mortification, thinking of deserving them. Who receives corrections shows that 'he is a simple-minded person

well disposed to virtue; on the contrary, who refuses corrections shows that he is a proud, incorrigible person.

We warmly exhort the probationers to humble themselves interiorly when they are corrected, and to accept the punishment as deserving of it; otherwise selfishness will deceive them. The probationer who longs for religious life recognizes his failure every time he is corrected; if he did not, he would be unable to improve virtue, and his vocation would appear fallacious. Let us remember the words of the psalmist: « A virtuous man may strike me in reproof for my own good, but a wicked one shall never anoint my head with oil » (Ps. 141, 5) (P.R.P.).

2. HARD TASK: CORRECTION

Correcting his subjects' defects is a hardest task for the superior. The more this task is of importance, the harder it is when the superior undertakes it without appropriate caution, because he may fail and harm, instead of correcting.

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Nothing is so delicate as correcting. Correcting is like a drug; when its dose is wrong or the drug itself is mistaken it may be poison or at least dangerous. For instance, if you reproach when a reserved judgment should be enough, or you scold when a sweet word is needed, it is like administering a wrong drug, which is harmful instead of healing. Oh, how much ruin the wrong corrections bring about! To perform his duty well, therefore, the superior must diagnose the defects.

First, he has to understand, know, value, and be fully aware of his subjects' defects by resorting to prayer, divine enlightenment, and careful attention. He has to spiritually diagnose each subject in order to understand the roots of the defects, for they are different from person to person; some of the roots are deeper, others shallow;

here, there is more malice, there, more weakness and fragility. The understanding of various individuals' defects is indispensable for the application of remedies.

To understand the individuals with their defects, nature, and character, so as to apply the right remedy, each superior will pray insistently to God to obtain enlightenment. The daily prayer must be said in each particular case through an intimate invocation upon the Lord, when correction is needed. Our daily prayer to the Lord and the most holy Virgin for helping us in dealing with subjects reaches its aim when we pray for particular cases, especially when we are responsible for the people and ask for enlightenment. In such cases our Lord cannot help but grant it success. But, if the superiors neglect the remote and the immediate prayer, they will lack enlightenment and become unworthy of it. The superior must pray continuously to win enlightenment on how to guide the community and the individuals. In particular cases, when the matter is urgent, he will pray interiorly, even for a moment before acting.

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He will also pray to win enlightenment about how to correct the faulty subject. Sometimes, correction may be made immediately through admonition; warning, or reprimand; sometimes, it may not; besides time and prayer, counsel may be also needed. The superior needs first to reflect on the nature of the fault, degree of culpability, etc.; second, he has to find out the right remedy; third, the subject too needs time to be more prone to accept correction. To make the correction beneficial, the superior will let the subject know his fault, will pray, and will tell other people to pray for it, if necessary.

Even though the superior may dissimulate some small defects along with some concealed reactions of his subjects, he must correct the defects at their rising.

3. ZEAL, NOT ANGER

The superior will beware of correcting under the impulse of anger or indignation, avoiding to offend the subject or his parents by talking, for instance, about his poverty, low birth, etc., because it hurts. When the superior becomes angry, he needs to restrain himself, cooling down and delaying the correction. Ecclesiasticus says that in anger people say many words that later they find unjust. Sometimes, however, the superior may correct in a somewhat loud voice if zeal requires it. But true zeal requires that the superior be devoutly indignant, self-controlled, worried for God's glory and salvation of souls as well as concerned with eliminating or remedying bad examples. The prophet said that one may be angry without sinning. The superior will speak firmly, will seriously consider the offense, and will show that his attitude is from zeal, not from anger or scorn. Anger and scorn are devastating to the soul of the subject, and thrust him into diffidence and desperation. Zeal, instead, is pure charity, enlivens, and attracts, even though it sometimes seems to throw down. Such a correction must go along with the superior's dignity, because it can be lost by anger or even by a gesture or word of scorn. Correcting on time, in the right place, with discretion, strength, and dignity is most difficult; therefore, the superior will bear in mind these precautions and will pray in order that he may be fair, calm, and decorous.

4. FITTING CORRECTION

It is the superior's duty to admonish his subjects by means of the following corrections:

First, the corrections must be fitting to the persons,

their sensibility, intelligence; character, and susceptibility as well as to the defects or gravity of the faults.

The superior must be aware that correcting the wrong doer in the presence of other people is sometimes inconvenient, because it renews bad example or calls the people's attention to facts they should forget, or scandalizes persons who know nothing of the matter. For instance, if someone referred that a subject talked back to the superior or grumbled secretly, the superior will beware of reproaching such a subject in the presence of other persons, because it could scandalize or induce others to do the same.

If the fault is committed in the presence of the community, the superior will ask the culprit to remedy the fault before all in the refectory or elsewhere by begging pardon or by pleading guilty. He will always avoid to call attention to faults whose remembrance could harm. It is to no avail saying: such are defects everybody knows, because reminding them of the defects, causes them to be firmly impressed on their memory.

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The superior will never attribute anything to the subject by rash judgment, for instance, by attributing intentions the subject never had or actions he never did. This is a most delicate matter. But suppose that the superior is a spiritual man who knows the culprit's malice along with his faults, yet the culprit is reluctant to acknowledge it more by ignorance than by stubbornness. In such a case the superior will tell him to pray and reflect, or will make him declare that he will humble himself twice: first, because he is at fault, second, because he is unable to acknowledge it. If the subject acknowledges neither of them by stubbornness, the superior will warn him more seriously, sending him back to pray, reflect, and meditate.

He himself will do the same, also asking other people to pray for the culprit.

When the superior admonishes a culprit, he must aim at inducing the subject to recognize his fault and other defects that accompany it. If the culprit does not acknowledge any fault, he is hopeless, is very likely to go from bad to worse, and, therefore, he must be expelled.

Suppose that the subject is good-natured and observant, but for particular reasons he acknowledges neither his fault nor its gravity, keeping silent by caution. If the fault is not serious and obvious, the superior will interpret his silence as acknowledgment, because he is not opposing obstinately the fact.

Were the superior to impose correction without the Lord's enlightenment for lack of prayer, or were the superior to judge a subject for personal passions, faults, malice, and bad intentions when such things do not exist, or at least not as he sees them; in such a case, the superior's demand of the subject to acknowledge the faults as he has judged them (God forbid it) would prejudice the subject's soul seriously. Serious too will be the consequences such as diffidence, anxiety, discouragement, and even true faults and loss of vocation.

To avoid ruin to the souls, each superior will pay careful attention to building up a spirit of religious perfection in himself, keeping in mind the Holy Spirit's words: « Stick to the advice your own heart gives you, no one can be truer to you than that » (Eccl. 37, 17).

5. TAKING COVER

As soon as the superior perceives that he has miscalculated the correction, he will pray to the Madonna of the Remedy, himself starting remedying by retracting the correction directly or indirectly. In case of need, he

will not hesitate to redress the wrong by declaring plainly his mistake, because upholding the mistake is arrogance and the cause of serious consequences. We must implore for the divine enlightenment in everything.

If a superior should be offended by a subject, he will avoid considering it a personal case, or reacting with a burst of passion and selfishness. On the contrary, he will have pity, keeping a calm and decorous silence to make the culprit retire into himself. Until the culprit does not see his error, the superior will pay some tender care to him, returning good for evil and showing love and charity, 'but in such a way that the culprit may not think of being in the right. This method is most suited to subdue and make the culprit repent. However, everything must be within bounds; if it does not matter to the culprit, but he abuses, the superior will resort to persuasion, reserve, and penances, if necessary.

When the superior is unsure as to how to correct serious faults, or if he is uncertain about the method of correction, he will pray, will take advice from his counselors, and will go ahead with them; it is understood that all of them have to pray.

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If corrections in the religious institutes were made with holy caution after imploring God's help, many evils would be avoided, several persons would amend, observance and discipline would flourish, and the superior would proceed in full agreement with the subjects, because corrections are drugs whose efficacy depends on the right application of them in weight, number, and measure (R.S.)!

6. A PAINFUL SIGN

The mother superior must keep in mind that when events compel her to use bodily or moral punishments

toward several persons, relaxation has already entered the community to ruin it. Other means are needed to bar such a thing. The mother superior must pay careful attention to ward off such .great an evil by correcting little defects with gentleness and firmness, even through moral or bodily ,punishments, inducing people to accept such penances with humility, mortification, and for God's sake. She will enliven the spirit of prayer, observance, and practice of religious virtues. So to speak, she must thrust relaxation out of the doors, locking it out. She will pray and watch over her mystical flock so that the hellish lion roaring around the sheepfold be unable to enter and devour even one soul. She first must show a holy, irreproachable behavior, setting the example of religious virtues and sacrifice for our Lord, for the good of the community, and for each person.

No continuous hard reproach, no serious, frequent punishment, but these are the means apt to correct and lead the subjects to perfect observance, making the house to be a garden flourishing with elect souls, where the divine eternal lover Jesus finds his delight (S.D.D.Z.).

NOTES

(1) «I promise to receive with humility and in silence the correction or warning or admonishment or penance from the mother superior and from any person having power over me. I will not justify myself, rather I will acknowledge my fault. For that reason I promise to pay careful attention to let no words of apology out. I will take care of it externally and internally, giving a humble justification after asking the admonisher's permission, when necessity requires it» (D.P.).

(2) «As probationers, they will be put to the test of obedience, humility, patience, work, and vocation; they will humbly accept any reproach of penance in silence without justifying themselves, even when they seem to be right. They will always think of being at fault* (R.P.).

CHAPTER X

MUTUAL LOVE AND RESPECT

To my great pleasure I declare that I have learned that this institute holds in great esteem mutual love and respect, and that our Lord Jesus Christ's command: « love each other as I loved you », which distinguishes the true Christians, in this institute is a main precept like the command: «You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. »

With God's help and my own good will I pledge myself, promising to pay careful attention to this holy love. I will try to form a tender, affectionate, loving heart for the members of the institute, asking the most holy Heart of Jesus to grant me the spirit of charity toward my brethren in order to love, sympathize, wish, and procure their good as much as I can, as if it were mine.

Bewareing of nurturing aversion or grudge against anyone, still less against those who seem contrary or offensive to me, I promise the following:

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1. I will not be prone to believe that I have been offended, I will think instead that my imagination and selfishness amplify the things making them appear grim to me.

2. If someone really offends me, I will not become indignant, but I will sympathize, love, and look on him favorably, recommending him to the Lord in order to return good for evil.

I will combine holy love with my sincere respect toward the institute's components, adults or children, superiors or fellows or servants, considering that God created, redeemed, and gathered them here; that our Lord gave up himself for each of them, that he feeds them with his divine body and Most Precious Blood more than often, destining them to

eternal glory. Avoiding to even saying the least offensive word to a child, I will address the priests with the title of father, and will deal kindly with the brothers, the poor, and the children.

1. THE VIRTUES' TOUCH-STONE

The world ratifies revenge as a predominant passion with this anti-evangelical saying: only the mountains do not meet! People are vindictive by nature; they hardly forget an offence, but pay with the same coin at the first opportunity. The offended person may be a good person, even consecrated to the Lord, who abhors revenge by principle. Still, if he was offended or thinks he has been seriously offended, he takes no revenge in the open, but if he has the power to favor his true or presumed offender, he won't do so! And because he needs to harmonize his conscience and the divine law of forgiveness with his revenge, he will create palliatives by rationalizing and deceiving himself through his reasoning. Oh, in how many cases the real gist is to vent one's offended and resented selfishness! Because of that the Lord will judge so many actions that we call justice and truth! « I will dispense strict justice » (Ps. 75, 2). (Oration, Mons. Carrano).

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Behaving charitably and conveniently with the persons who live with us is the touch-stone of virtue and good nature. Behaving cements the community, which subsists in the members' mutual union of charity. The best rule for this topic is our Lord Jesus Christ's saying, « As I have loved you, so you must love one another » (Jn. 13, 34) as well as « If you have love for one another, then all will know that you are my disciples » (Jn. 13,35).

The probationers will avoid quarreling and loud talk with each other, but they will love and respect each other mutually. They will not barter any object without permission nor accuse one of anything out of personal vengeance nor will they nurture a grudge; on the contrary they will sympathize and help each other even though it may require some sacrifice. The observance of this rule is indispensable to form this community with the Lord's help.

That the probationers must be united in mutual love of charity goes without saying, but they must beware of nurturing particular friendship, because it draws the soul away from love of Jesus and from vocation to religious life; therefore, the probationers are not allowed to confide secrets to each other nor to talk and stay alone by two (P.R.P.).

Each aspirant will restrain himself from nurturing a grudge against his fellows, from scorning or charging them with anything for personal trifles, instead he will endure contradictions with patience, will sympathize, respect, and love his fellows in the Lord, being always ready to favor, help, and serve them.

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For discipline and virtue's sake the aspirants will avoid flying into passion, giving free rein to angry words and actions; they must accustom themselves to restrain their natural impulses out of mutual respect.

Laying hands on and forming particular friendship harm spirit and discipline; therefore they are strictly forbidden to the aspirants, but they must love and esteem each other equally. It is also unbecoming for them to give the eye or laugh or make signs, as agreed upon (R.A.).

2. ONE HEART, ONE SOUL

I promise to respect my fellows, behaving with kindness, sincere and pure affection, as well as to be free from personal attachment, liking, and intimacy, warding off the people who try to have such relations; if they persist, I will refer everything to the mother superior. I will also avoid nurturing aversion or grudge against anyone, still less against those who seem contrary or offensive to me (D.P.). (1)

The sisters will respect and love each other in Jesus Christ with pure, simple, hearty, and gentle affection sympathizing mutually, keeping peace and harmony, and warding off any resentment as a devil's temptation. No one will speak ill of another, no one will marvel at their defects, but they will pray and help each other within the bounds of holy obedience. If someone happens to offend a fellow, she will humbly ask her for pardon, and the other one will do the same (D.S.S.).

Since the community is unable to please God, to improve, and to produce fruits, unless it is enlivened by charity through union of hearts, the sisters will strive to be united in the charity of Jesus Christ, and to become one heart and one soul. So that their spiritual union may be founded on Jesus Christ's pure charity, the novices will avoid the least intimacy or particular familiarity, avoiding to touch or hug or kiss each other. They will restrain themselves from useless or unbecoming talks, from confiding secrets and things concerning confession, from speaking ill, from letting off steam, from sharing in news which feeds curiosity, and from any other confidential relationship; they instead will practice charity by bearing with one another, by warding off even the least

grudge from their heart, by praying and helping each other in their work and much more in sickness. Each of them will choose the worst things and the last place for herself, leaving the best to the others. If someone happens to displease a fellow, she will humbly beg pardon following the advice of obedience. They will deal with mutual respect, calling each other sister... Admonishing each other is also a practice of charity. Therefore, if a novice happens to notice a defect, she may kindly let her sister know it in order to amend. The sister who has been cautioned will receive the advice humbly, amending and thus advancing in holy perfection (R.L.P.).

Loving this institute's members as myself is my main goal for reaching evangelical perfection. So, I will respect all of them, holding each one greater than I am before God; I will bear any defect or piece of rudeness with love, patience, and kindness being ready to help and serve my fellows as much as charity and obedience allow me. In everything, my rule will be our Lord Jesus Christ's command, « As I have loved you, so you must love one another » (Jn. 13, 34). I will be never envious of them, either when they are preferred or are told to be right and I am told to be wrong, or when they are appointed to offices which I am being denied; keeping myself calm and unchanged, I will always have with them relations of peace, charity, and humility (P.D.P.).

This pious institute's congregants will bear in mind the adorable Heart of Jesus' commandment, « As I have loved you, so you must love one another. If you have love for one another, then all will know that you are my disciples » (Jn. 13, 34-35). Each one will jealously preserve union of hearts through mutual charity, holding the others as beloved brothers in Jesus Christ as well

as bearing with each other without forming a bad opinion of any of them. Mutual help will be within the bounds of holy obedience, and no one will offend his brother in Jesus Christ. Not even fleeting aversion or grudge is allowed, and when something might impair mutual love, each congregant should precede his brothers in the reconciliation. Mutual charity suffers no affection of personal liking or attachments; therefore each one will respect the others, regarding them as our Lord Jesus Christ did (C.R.).

3. MORTUARY CHAPEL

Each house should build a mortuary chapel in the cemetery as a communal burial place for those who were united in life by Christ's bonds of charity. They were sisters in the divine savior's adorable blood, lived in pure love for each other, sharing in the same joy, the same pain, the same work, and were destined to be united in heaven. It is right, beautiful, and desirable that they rest in the same mortuary chapel. The houses which do not have it yet, will do their best through prayer and human means to build it. Meantime they will provide each dead with a cell or a piece of land in the cemetery, registering the file or the cell or the place's number where their human remains rest so that they may be transferred to the future mortuary chapel (S.D.D.Z.).

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NOTE

(1) I promise the following: 1) I will not easily think of being offended, because my fantasy and selfishness amplify the little things, making them appear grim to me. 2) If someone offends me really, I will not be angry, but compassionate; furthermore I will love, look favorably, and recommend her to the Lord in order to return good for evil with the Lord's help. Likewise I will beware of charging or ill-treating or taking pleasure in her suffering in any way, out of vengeance » (D.P.).

CHAPTER XI

RELATIONSHIP WITH PEOPLE

For our duty of setting good example, for the institute's honor, for my spiritual improvement, and the improvement of others I will pay careful attention when I deal with people in the institute and outside of it, treating everyone with prudence, respect, and charity. I will avoid setting bad example, becoming agitated, and offending anyone, because I want to practice the Apostle Paul's statement: « We do not want anyone to find fault with our work, so we try not to put obstacles in anyone's way » (2. Cor. 6, 3). So, I will cope patiently and benignly with everyone, especially with the troublesome, the poor, and the sick, dissimulating any insult and bearing in mind the Ecclesiasticus' saying: « The wise man dissimulates insults, but the fool gets angry quickly. »

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1. GOOD EXAMPLE

The congregants will combine fine manners with simplicity and religious decorum while dealing with themselves and with outsiders, striving to be cheerful, and avoiding sadness or ill humor.

A gracious, sympathetic, and friendly manner to everyone is a great religious virtue, and greatly recommended to this pious institute's members. To accomplish the aim of the institute, the congregants will nurture and practice spiritual and temporal charity toward their neighbor through works of religion and beneficence, as much as they can, and will console everyone with holy words and

temporal help, avoiding to afflict anyone. While dealing with their offenders and opposers, they will conduct themselves with particular charity, returning greater good to them and avoiding revenge (C.R.).

To be acceptable to the most holy Heart of Jesus, with his divine help I resolve to observe not only the religious rules, but also gracious manners while treating, talking, walking, eating, laughing, visiting, etc. (D.P.).

So that the religious virtues may edify and win souls to the Lord, the sisters will behave devoutly, setting perfect examples of a holy, virtuous life and being observant in their mutual relationship and with the outsiders, in private and in public (H.S.E.).

2. SIMPLICITY

God is simplest spirit, draws the simple to himself, and talks with them. The principle of religious virtue requires that one practices simplicity of heart and avoids simulation, duplicity, and hypocrisy toward God and neighbor. Avoidance of rash judging anyone and the disposition to justify or regard the failings of others with indulgence also belong to holy simplicity. This virtue does not lead one to disapprove of the orders of obedience or to condemn the actions of others, but disposes them to look on everything as good through a child's belief.

Simplicity is also characterized by prudence to which our Lord Jesus Christ's pointed: « You must be as cautious as serpents and as gentle as doves » (Mt. 10, 16). This celestial, purest prudence differs from the worldly prudence and the human respect. Even though it sees everything with simplicity, still it judges between good and evil as they really are before God.

Holy simplicity abhors lies. Behaving frankly and sincerely according to the divine oracle « yes, no, » each congregant will avoid the spirit of falsehood as if it were a pest of the soul. Not to expose simplicity and sincerity to risk, the congregants will almost never make use of compound mental abstraction, preferring to conceal through silence what is useless to manifest (C.R.).

3. MEEKNESS

Meekness is a daughter of holy humility, and helps the people to become humble. Each Rogationist will be most vigilant in the exercise of this virtue, bearing in mind our Lord Jesus Christ's words: « Learn from me, because I am gentle and humble of spirit » (Lk. 11, 28). Looking to his divine example, each congregant will excel in this elect virtue in every circumstance by controlling and mortifying himself. Even though one may be somehow angry without sinning, while admonishing, for necessity, usually we have to be meek while speaking (we should almost always speak in a low voice), while commanding, but over all while relating with our neighbor so that no one be scandalized (C.R.).

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Each superior is warmly urged to keep himself calm and perfectly meek in every event, because his excitement rebounds on his subjects. It is written: « Yahweh was not in the wind, » for He is the spirit of eternal peace. The superior is not forbidden to feel the impressions of the events, to share them intensely, and to act with fervor and concern in the circumstances, but he must never lose his internal calmness, for wisdom consists in combining concern and fervor with internal quiet, which makes everything proceed in order. Here is the rub: the

superior will never act by passion, which is the source of these vices: anger, furor, and wrath; if he feels them, he must not consent to them (R.S.).

Meekness! St. Francis of Sales says that this virtue should prevail over the others like oil floating on water. Such a virtue is necessary to everyone, but especially to the superior for many reasons.

The first reason is good example. Irascibility is common among human beings, but emotions of impatience are more spread among the Religious. The hellish enemy exploits the persons' inclination to irascibility and impatience by working upon it. Unless the superior prevails over this passion perfectly through meekness, he is unable to work as he should, and, therefore, he jeopardizes his subjects on the devil's behalf! Very soon his impatience, his very first emotions, outbursts, resentments, agitated talks, and the like unbridle each Religious' anger, deranging the community in such a way that the spiritual building collapses.

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What a disaster the untamed irascibility is! Each Superior and Religious must always keep in mind our Lord Jesus Christ's sweetest, gentlest meekness. He performed the great work of the redemption through his meekness and gentleness as the prophet Isaiah had foretold. He went to death like a meek lamb without opening his mouth or complaining, and his meekness heartened his executioners to torment him in so many ways. Had he reproached vehemently his executioners for their cruelty, they would have stopped ill-treating him, and our redemption would have been interrupted. Oh, let us be infinitely thankful to our Lord Jesus Christ for his meekness, which let him work our redemption perfectly! The psalmist says to God: « Yahweh, remember David and all the hardships he suffered » (Ps. 132, 1): here, David is a symbol of

Jesus, who included meekness among the beatitudes of the mount when he said: « Happy are the meek; they will receive what God has promised » (Mt. 5, 5). The meek soul is so self-controlled that it never yields to anger.

Each one will be meek, but the superior more. To reach this beautiful, beloved virtue which draws other virtues with itself, one must practice it and pray for it all his life long. We read: « In all that is right he guides the humble » (Ps. 24, 9): it means that God guides the meek superior's actions and words in the ways of His divine will, enabling him to lead his subjects to Jesus Christ (R.S.).

4. IN THE DAY-SCHOOLS FOR CHILDREN

Those having no relationship in the work of the kindergarten or in the day-school will not concern themselves in them, and those engaged in work in them will tend only to their own responsibilities. Each sister will refrain from giving the children images of saints, or anything else, as well as from petting them, talking, still less entrusting the day-school children with errands or delivering letters secretly, which is a serious fault worthy of punishment and a worst example. Likewise, they will avoid particular affection to anyone of them. If someone happens to know such things, she will make it known to the mother superior.

The teachers of the day-school and of the kindergarten will treat the pupils and children lovingly and respectfully, warding off favoritism, or prejudice. Such a fault of the sisters would be greater than the fault of the other Religious who are not keeping in touch with the day-school pupils and children (S.D.D.Z.).

The sisters appointed to an institute for girls must be convinced that they must keep in touch with society, whose reasonable needs they will serve; therefore, they will be prudent, intelligent, and virtuous, imploring the Lord's help in order to cope with the people in accordance with obedience, and to increase the Institute's reputation through their work. Refined manners of sound education and courtesy are greatly recommended to the sisters, because a good education is like a sister to devotion (S.I.G.).

The sisters will use fine manners among themselves, with the pupils, and the public, shunning from saying the least word offensive to anyone, even to a child. Once a week they will read the fine manner book. Besides, they will make cleanliness shine in the house, furniture, household goods, linen, and clothes.

Their beautiful mission consists in gathering civilized children and children of the people to train them in the work, to educate, edify, and teach them the duties of the Christian religion. They must carry out this holy mission with care and application, by edifying the pupils through their own good example, by emanating the odor of sanctity, of religious and civil virtues, and by making the children enchanted and won to good and virtue. Woe, if before the pupils they appear faulty, angry, lazy, cool in piety, and conflicting among themselves! Everything would be lost and the Heart of Jesus' interests would be betrayed! God would not bless them!

Likewise, they will not discuss the private affairs of the community with anyone, nor will they disapprove of nor will they speak ill of other sisters.

If they receive a tuition, the sisters are also bound in duty by justice to teach the pupils as loving, caring mothers, and to improve themselves through continuous

education. They will show a reserved affection, avoiding affectionate displays of kissing or of being kissed by them (D.S.S.).

The sisters who run a day-school for girls are expected to be good examples of religious and civil life. Woe, if before children a sister appears reluctant to obey a superior! Woe, if they quarrel among themselves! Woe, if they speak ill of each other with outsiders! It is like killing the poor pupils' souls, ruining the day-school, discrediting the institute and the sacred garb! If it happened, would they have any hope for vocations? In such a case, how much would they offend the most holy Heart of Jesus? How would our Lord bless and foster that day-school?

For that reason the mother superior will appoint the most perfect, polite, and learned sisters to the day-school for girls. This great responsibility weighs on her!

When the pupils happen to refer some criticism of lay persons or priests against the sisters, they will brush off such things showing no resentment, but, to edify, they will add: « You are wrong: these are honest persons; they do not say such things »; then, dropping the subject they will call the attention to work, etc. (S.D.D.Z.).

5. EDIFYING EVERYONE

The sisters will strive to avoid the least voluntary defect and evade the involuntary ones as much as they can. They will keep in their mind that a virgin consecrated to Jesus must be like a lily among the thorns, a closed garden, a sealed fountain living an angelical, immaculate life in thoughts, words, actions, and everything so that the aura of purity shall ascend to the celestial groom (D.S.S.).

Besides cultivating spiritual purity, the sisters will be most modest in their actions, avoiding lengthy talks with men or priests beyond what is necessary, to have eye contact, to have confidential talks, and to be alone with them for along time. The sisters will neither kiss each other, nor the children, nor the priest's hand; it will be enough to say to them: Bless me, Father. They will not lay hands on each other, nor on the children, nor let the children do so, but will avoid attachments, personal affections, preferences, and secret friendship. Walking through the streets they will be most modest, avoiding laugh and idle talk (D.S.C.).

Because the sisters of active life are in the midst of society, it is their duty to edify the .people. They will bear in mind the Apostle Paul's sayings: 1. « Show a gentle attitude toward all » (Phil. 4, 5). Here, gentle attitude is the edifying behavior. 2. « For I have an obligation to all people, to the civilized and to the savage, to the educated and to the ignorant » (Rom. 1, 14). 3. « We do not want anyone to find fault with our work, so we try not to put obstacles in anyone's way » (2. Cor. 6, 3). In short, we have to behave in such a way that our ministry of charity and religion be not blamed nor discredited.

By edification the sisters command respect and win many souls to God. None of them will develop familiar relationship with anyone nor will she laugh confidentially with outsiders, nor will she speak of the community's private affairs with them.

The sisters will observe justice by paying the workers' legal wages; they will practice charity by avoiding to overwork the laborers; will be benign with them by abounding in consideration and retribution.

Because all human beings are creatures of God and the price of the adorable blood of Jesus Christ, the sisters

will respect all of those to whom they minister by internal and external behavior, even though these persons may be miserable and abject.

Treating with people of rank, the sisters will pay the due respect and the refined, gracious, unaffected manners of the holy Church's teaching. When the sisters keep in touch with civil or state authorities in occasion of their visits to the institute or in any other event, they will pay the greatest respect by using the reverent speech which is due to their dignity.

Both in the cities and in the little towns, the sisters will foster among the pupils and the orphans the esteem for the king, the queen, (1) the prefect, and the mayor. When it is required by society, they will send greeting cards to them and their ladies on special occasions, such as their saint's day, birthday, and main feasts like New Year's Day and Christmas. It is always useful. In some occurrence they may send a gift such as devotions, children's small works, etc. It is excellent .inviting them to attend performances or rewards after exams, etc. When a personality happens to fall ill, the community will be concerned, will get information, will let him know that the community is praying; during the convalescence a cake or something else may be also sent.

All this induces esteem and affection; we, however, have to do so not for human protection but by faith, confiding in God only. And yet, we have to use licit means to keep friendly relations with authorities because of the good results for God's glory, for the institute's good, and for the persons in authority, who are led to form a good opinion of the holy religion along with its institutions (S.D.D.Z.).

(1) When our padre was writing, the king and queen were reigning in Italy.

CHAPTER XII

IN THE LORD'S HOUSE

1 recognize that I must be a model for everyone everywhere, but above all in the church because it is the Lord's house.

Before entering the Lord's house 1 will remember the Holy Spirit's saying: cWhen you enter the Lord's house, take care of your steps. * I will not enter it hastily and rashly, but at a sedate and recollected pace, making the sign of the cross with holy water. Then i will genuflect, adoring the most Holy Sacrament. When 1 pass before the holy tabernacle, 1 will genuflect reverently and recollectedly.

While kneeling in church I can rest my hands on the chair or the pew and my forehead on my hands in order to concentrate my thoughts, but without leaning against the chair or the pew. Calm and recollected, I will not engage in conversation with anyone; only when obliged by necessity I will speak in a low voice and briefly.

During the prayer in common I will pray with a low, contrite voice; when the rule or necessity lets us sit, I will do so decorously and modestly.

So that my external behavior in church be well-regulated 1 will strive to be recollected in the divine presence offering praise, thanksgiving, petitions, and love to the Lord.

When the people enter the church or the sacramental oratory they must pay reverence with faith, considering that they are in the presence of God, our adorable, beloved Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal king surrounded by the angels and the saints along with the queen of heaven and earth, who adore Him deeply. Before entering, each in an actitude of faith, will think of what she is going to

say to the supreme goodness in the sacrament while adoring and praying. It is written: < Before entering God's sanctuary, take care of your steps and avoid to be like one tempting God. » They will be recollected and devout in the presence of God in the sacrament, will increase their respect, recollection, devotion, and faith during the exposition of the holy host (S:D.D.Z.).

They will say the vocal prayers reverently, pausing, and in a low voice which expresses internal compunction; cries, rash, and confused voices are to be avoided. They must concert the vocal prayers in order to learn how to say them properly, as by art (R.A.).

If the aspirants go to a public church to assist at mass or to listen to a sermon or to serve at the altar, they will be careful to be for the people example of great recollection and perfect modesty (R.A.).

Because prayer is indispensable for sanctification and eternal life, the Little Retreat novices will cultivate a love for it, praying vocally and mentally, as our Lord Jesus Christ taught us.

While praying vocally the novices will combine internal recollection with attention, speaking with a gentle voice and a moving tune, which induce devotion and recollection; they will avoid high and unpleasant tone of voice. They must keep in mind that vocal prayer is not a performance, a declamation, but a wail of the spirit: the wail of the mystical dove (R.L.P.).

The sister header of the vocal prayer at the choir will make no mistakes: avoiding too high or low voice, she will read with a moving tune to express compunction and contrition of heart, as well as to express the wails of a humble spirit. She is responsible for saying the prayers prescribed by the rule: if some prayer is omitted through her fault, she is responsible for it (R:L:P.).

CHAPTER XIII

CONSENTING TO APPOINTMENTS

1 promise to accept any office to which my superiors deem to appoint me by obedience, humble and painful as it may be. Much more, when they give me humble and painful assignments I will be happier promising to carry them out exactly and attentively, even though 1 have to sacrifice myself. If for reasons of health or any other valid reason I feel that 1 cannot accept the appointment, I will submit my reason to the superiors humbly and plainly, and follow their decision.

1. ASSIGNMENTS IN THE COMMUNITY

As the working of the motor depends on each of its parts working in harmony, so the well-proceeding of a community depends on the exact execution of each of the assignments. It follows that each person performing her task with the greatest attention, diligence, and effectiveness is of great momentum in a community, because it enjoys the good effects of one's duty perfectly fulfilled, whereas when someone is negligent in performing her duty, the whole house suffers its detrimental effects, either temporal or spiritual.

Each officer must consider her task as related to the practice of the vow or the virtue of obedience. Because it is obedience that assigns the tasks, each one must receive them from the hand of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the most holy Virgin Mary, who are our

divine superiors. By such a consideration the officer will understand with how much loyalty, attention, diligence, and love she has to perform her duties, whose fulfillment is a service to God, a religious act, and an execution of the divine will. One must accept any office with this faith. The completion of one's own task implies as many acts of obedience as many are the actions needed to perform it; I would say that the acts of obedience are as many as the instants you need to perform the obedience; in addition, the proven disposition to fulfill one's own duty deserves the merits of obedience continuously. Accomplishing well one's own assignment is like accomplishing an important part of one's vocation (S:D.D.Z.).

The young probationers will be employed in the assignments necessary to maintain the well-proceeding of the house. Each will be willing to receive the assignment in the spirit of holy obedience without desiring others he would like. They can only wish and ask for the humblest tasks, holding them as the noblest before the Lord, but even in this case they must calmly leave the matter in the hands of obedience. Each probationer will fulfill his own task scrupulously and exactly; negligence is imputed to him as a serious fault. The community will say a prayer to the most holy Heart of Jesus every day, asking help for the well fulfillment of the assignments. Each one will perform his task in the divine presence to glorify the Lord and to perform his will; thus, fulfilling one's own duty will be meritorious before God. Oh, how many merits a youth deserves when he performs his duty in the spirit of obedience, humility, and diligence!

Besides other punishments, those who are negligent in fulfilling their assignments may be deprived of or suspended from doing them (P.R.P.).

Depriving a person of her assignment when she does

not recognize her faults nor wants to amend is a moral punishment. To awaken up in her the remorse of eating the divine providence's bread undeservedly, let her be idle. This punishment is most sensible and suitable to produce repentance and amendment (S:D.D.Z.).

To be the most neglected and mortified the novices will compete in obedience, charity, and humility, seeking for themselves the poorest, humblest, painful things or assignments. The humblest tasks will be given as reward or taken away as punishment. The novices will love and respect each other in a holy manner, each one seeking to relieve the others by asking for herself the heavier burdens and works (R.N.).

The sisters will strive to be diligent, industrious, and intelligent, trusting in the Lord and imploring his help.

Diligence means paying attention to performing everything well without forgetting anything. Being industrious means working willingly and avoiding idleness, because by working quickly and actively we do many works, minding the community's interests. Intelligence means that the sisters themselves have to find out the best way to make things proceed well according to the rules and holy obedience.

Each sister will fulfill her assignment with the utmost diligence, activity, and intelligence, imploring God's help (S:I:G.).

A novice may be appointed to the kitchen by holy obedience; in such a case she will somehow provide that the daily purchases be at her disposal in time. While cooking she will pay careful attention so that no thing be wasted and the Pious Institute's members be not disheartened for ill treatment in the food. Cleanness of the kitchen, of the household tools, and of the food will be at her heart. On the whole, she will shun from preparing

delicious, affected dishes in order to avoid gluttony, but will provide well cooked, tasty food (R.L.P.).

The sister cook will do her best while cooking. Her task is to maintain the life and strength of the sisters who work for Jesus and souls: thus, she may share in the good operated by them as if she herself were working together with them. She will beware of the least gluttony, to which the enemy of the souls could tempt her. Being always in the divine presence, at the sight of the fire she will remember hell and the fire of purgatory in order to avoid any defect, to pray for the conversion of sinners, and to intercede for the souls in purgatory. Utmost cleanness in everything is greatly recommended (D.S.S.).

Each will be diligent in fulfilling her assignment avoiding to neglect or to waste anything. To keep the children and the people's respect alive, the sisters will not wear a soiled garb, nor a worn, bruised veil or covers, but will be very neatly dressed even in the house (SIC:E.).

All will be fond of cleanness, which is not against poverty. The people, clothes, rooms, and the whole house will be clean (C:R.).

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True devotion is fond of cleanness (R:L:P.).

I declare that I am ready to receive from my superiors any assignment they decide to give me, even the humble ones, and to fulfill them with joy and readiness; if health reasons or any other valid reason are against this assignment, I will humbly submit my reason to the superior, and will follow his advice. I also declare that I am not attached to a particular assignment or work, therefore I will pretend no assignment of my liking because I am fond of and ready to perform what the superiors tell me to do (P:D:P.).

Assignments range from superior's office to door-keeper's but all of them are for our Lord Jesus Christ, and the last assignment is like the first one, and the first like the last. No one is allowed to refuse or leave the assignment, on the contrary he will receive it from our Lord's hands, painful as it may be. No one will long for a nobler or less difficult job: if someone wants to be ambitious, he will long for the most abject, humble, and difficult job. Each will be full of good will to exactly fulfill his job, following the rules and the orders. When someone happens to be absent, he will inform the superior for providing with a substitute, because no one can change nor meddle with the job of others, even for help, without permission. From necessity, however, it may be done until it is related to the supervisor (C:R.). (1).

I promise to joyously accept from obedience any job, even the humble or material or difficult or painful one, never refusing it; if health reasons or anything else are against, I will submit them to the superior with simplicity, following his advice. I also promise to fulfill the assignments with care, attention, and exactitude admitting as of now that negligence or repeated faults in the fulfillment of my job be imputed to me and be punished, if necessary. I will prefer the most abject, humble jobs as the ones that fit me better, and will ask for them (D.P.).

While assigning the tasks the superior will pay attention to each person's health, skill, and disposition, correcting those persons who long for a particular assignment or those who do not want to leave the one they have. When the subject may be satisfied prudently, the superior can please him; the superior, however, will warn the subject to be ready to leave his job at any time he is asked to do so. Likewise, if the subject has a job, he will continue to have it until the superior decides otherwise

for the subject's good; and the subject will be docile and strong enough to detach himself from it (R.C.).

2. OFFICES AND INTERNAL LIFE

The novices will engage themselves in the practice of active life with such a moderation and tranquillity of spirit that the practice of contemplative life be not jeopardized. Their service will consist in fulfilling the assigned tasks exactly. In the morning, the novices will say a brief, particular prayer asking God for enlightenment and grace to fulfill the daily tasks... They will strive to do their duty with diligence, love, humility, and loyalty.

The Little Retreat novice will strive to be always recollected in God, whatsoever her job may be. She will pray to God not only at the beginning of the day to win the grace necessary to fulfill her tasks, but she will also have a mind to do everything for God's greater glory, for the souls' sanctification, and for the sanctification of her neighbor.

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On this purpose, the novices will consider the fulfilling of the tasks assigned to them as deserving the maintenance and improvement of the pious .institute, which is committed to the glory of the most holy name of Jesus and to the sanctification of souls. They will consider their tasks not only in themselves and in holy obedience, but also in relation to the profit of so many souls, the good results in so many children, and the aims that God may have on this little charitable institute; as well as in relation to the hopes, the wishes, and the prayers concerning the fortunes this pious institute will have in the most holy Heart of Jesus.

After taking into consideration these topics, the

novices will hold any work, painful and humble as it may be, as sweet as it is glorious. Sweeping a room, cleaning a casserole, mending clothes will be great when they are related to God's glory and to the souls' sanctification. Besides the general intentions, the novice will have particular intentions about her tasks, considering fitting topics to lift up her mind to God.

For instance, if the sister is on duty to clear or wash the clothes, she may consider the cleanness the soul must have to be a dwelling worthy of our beloved Jesus Christ. If she is employed on sewing, following St. Magdalen Dei Pazzi she may ask God for the conversion of as many sinners as the stitches she does, praising and blessing God as many times as well. If she is employed in cooking, she may consider divine providence's generosity in feeding his creatures or the celestial, eternal banquet where God feeds the elect with His glory. If she is a nurse, she will see our Lord Jesus Christ in any sick child, remembering our Lord's saying on the judgement day: cc I was sick and you visited me. » If she is watching over the little children, she will meditate on how precious are the souls and how dearly Jesus paid for them. If she is a sacristan, she may lift up her mind to God and to the Holy Sacrament continuously.

Thus, the novice will strive to combine the practice of active life with contemplation (R.L.P.). (2)

3. RULES TO RUN THE OFFICE WELL

1. We have to receive any task from God and the most holy Virgin's hands with faith and love, resolutely minding to fulfill it with attention, intelligence and care.

2. Because we can do nothing without divine help as our Lord Jesus Christ said: (< For you can do nothing without me)) (Jn. 15, 5), each sister should invoke our Lord, the most holy Virgin, who is our divine mother superior, the guardian angel, and the patron saints asking for enlightenment, help, and grace to fulfill well her own task. To achieve this purpose the sisters will say a vocal prayer in common, and each one will say it with fervor and entreating heart: Besides, each will pray during the meditation, the Communion, and the holy mass as well as in the unfolding of her task; through ejaculatory prayer and invocations=she will ask for enlightenment, help, and grace so that she may overcome the difficulty, see clearly, succeed in everything, following obedience and divine will perfectly for her personal good and that of the community. When this prayer is made while performing one's own task, it is always of great efficacy and draws special grace and enlightenment. The first invocation, however, will be to the most holy name of Jesus, who will rule all our actions well when we invoke him with faith.

We have already said that each person has to accomplish her task not only diligently, but also intelligently, understanding and performing everything well. Dull, idiot minds will never fulfill even the simplest task well, whereas an intelligent mind may always open to the light of grace. For that reason, please do not accept dull persons in the community. However, those who for lack of intelligence do not know how to cope in singular cases, must learn to help themselves through remote and present prayer, which will be of great help if they have received the task with joy and a resolute mind to succeed. Each one has to help herself with prayer. When one finds herself in doubt or perplexity, besides calling upon Jesus' name she should resort to the Mother of Good Counsel,

by saying for instance: < Mother of Good Counsel, for Jesus' sake, your beloved son, please enlighten me on how to behave, how to resolve)), or the like. The invocation to the Mother of Good Counsel has been always effective beyond belief because it opens even the dullest minds.

Some people do not fulfill their tasks exactly because they have not received the assignment from obedience with joy, a resolute mind, and faith, but also because they neglect remote and present prayer. For that reason, they cannot lay the blame on incapacity, but on their negligence. Besides being prayerful, each will be mindful to give thanks to the divine mercy for the good fulfillment of the task, and before going to sleep everyone will thank God for the enlightenment and the graces he granted them during the day to help them fulfill their tasks, begging pardon for their faults.

3. No one will refuse the task assigned nor will she be reluctant to accept it, but she will receive it pleasantly and quickly, regardless of whether she likes it or not. Neither will she find excuses in sickness, which often is mistaken for selfishness. However, if someone faces difficulties in fulfilling her task, she may submit everything with simplicity and detachment to the mother superior, who will judge according to the Lord's enlightenment and the knowledge she has about the subject's disposition and state. At the end, the subject will follow the mother superior's decision; if the assignment is confirmed, she will receive it with faith from the hands of the Lord and the most holy Virgin, regardless of the health reasons or anything else, being sure that the spirit of obedience will win enough grace from the Lord for her success. If she surrenders with a good will and a sincere mind and

helps herself with prayer, she will be able to fulfill her task perfectly.

4. If in fulfilling her duties by obedience and with joy or at least with resignation the sister is absent from religious acts, spiritual readings, etc. she loses no merit of the religious acts from which she is absent, she rather deserves double merit for her sacrifice. Please understand that the community's members share mutually and equally in the merits of the assignments, good works, and prayers; the one who performs her task well in the eyes of the Lord is performing all the assignments of the others. Because the community's well being consists in the perfect execution of the duties of all, the person at fault with her task is like one attempting to it, whereas the one performing her task well is like one maintaining the whole house and, therefore, she deserves a reward from God. For instance, the sister cook who does everything on time, helps the community's order; if she did otherwise, the people would be unable to do their duties on time, and everything would go upside down. Likewise, the sister employed in the clothes works for the community's life and health; as a matter of fact, by being punctual she helps the congregants in the performance of their religious acts, discipline, etc.

It's all the same for anyone performing her task in the community. Hence, each one must know with how much love, diligence, attention, intelligence, fervor, and faith she has to perform her task, how she has to receive it, and how she has to help herself through remote and actual prayer.

We have said above that the sister who is obliged by her duties to be absent from religious acts, must not get vexed; here we point out that the mother superior is

obliged by canon law to provide such a sister with appropriate time for meditation.

5. Each sister will beware of dispersing, losing, or wasting the tools of her job; if it happens, she will confess her fault to the mother superior or the treasurer.

6. To have the necessary provision for her job, each sister will appeal to the mother superior or the supervisor without worrying, rushing, or pretending too much; when it is possible, the officer will do her best making shift, instead of claiming new objects, because everything must be done with sobriety and economy.

7. Everyone will avoid interfering with the task of others, except for emergency cases when no time or no opportunity is available to ask the permission.

8. Not even momentarily can anyone entrust another with the task they have received from the mother superior, except for emergency cases, as we have said above.

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9. No one should long for high appointments by natural disposition nor will they use means and subterfuge to reach them. Is it true that a Religious may covet to be a superior or to be appointed to an office of command, and she succeeds reaching it? God forbid! It would be a pitiful ruin for the house and the institute! May each stand aloof from such a hellish suggestion worthy of Lucifer, the father of pride, who wanted to stand out over all the angels!

10. When the mother superior is worried about the work to be done, the sisters can volunteer to do some hard or humble work; in such a case competing and being available according to obedience is worthy of praise, and everyone must know that the hardest, humblest

tasks are the most desirable for a humble, fervent Religious.

11. The lazy, cowardly youth will never fulfill her task well, and this fact is a sign of a feeble vocation or none at all; therefore, she cannot be admitted to the taking of the sacred garb, but must be dismissed, unless she amends. Due to lack of fervor in the spiritual life, a lazy, coward youth is even unable to sweep a room, light a candle, etc.

12. Those who are at fault in the fulfillment of their task must be exhorted and taught about how to perform it well. If they are stubborn, they must be corrected by penance and mortification. In such a case, the touchiest penance is depriving the lazy person of her office, letting her eat the divine providence's bread in idleness.

13. The mother superior, the teacher, and the treasurer will see to it that in the changing of the officers, the former one will hand over the office, explain the proceeding, and leave everything in order to the new officer.

14. The new officer will never censure the former one; and if someone did so, she will excuse her! Likewise, the former officer will never censure the new one; furthermore, when someone is against her, the former officer will speak well and excuse her by saying that she is doing better than herself. This way we keep peace and the Lord blesses us. May God forbid the great fault of censuring! By censuring, the transgressor would show she has not the religious spirit, but the world's and the devil's spirit!

15. Everyone will keep her office without thinking of resigning. If one feels herself unable to keep it any longer, but wishes humbler offices, she may pray, take

counsel from the spiritual director, submit her idea to the mother superior, and then will follow obedience. Also the mother superior must behave this way, always with pure intention (S:D.D.Z.).

NOTES

(1) Each aspirant will be appointed to an office, and he will be most diligent in fulfilling his duty. No one will claim a particular office, but will humbly accept the one that obedience gives him. Wishing and asking the lowest office as the most honorable before the Lord -is allowed, but even in such a case everyone will follow obedience. Negligence in fulfilling the office is considered a fault more or less serious, and is punished even with suspension from office. Each aspirant will comply with his duty and will be in the divine presence in the spirit of humility and obedience, as a practice of virtue. Oh, how many merits the aspirant gains when he fulfills his duty this way (R.A.).

(2) Each sister will be appointed to an office. The harmony of the house depends on the perfect fulfillment of the offices. Each Religious will commend herself to the most holy Virgin and to the guardian angel every day in order to comply with her office perfectly. Knowing that she is working for Jesus our Lord, the sister will apply all her attention and zeal. She will waste neither object nor time; on the contrary, she will be industrious and diligent. No one will get bored by her office nor will she refuse it, will be rather perseverant in it, changing her office only when obedience demands it.

Each one will strive to be in the adorable Heart of Jesus all day long, offering herself to him; even though she applies herself to various things, she will not lose the divine presence in her own spirit, but will refer everything to Jesus crucified and in the Holy Sacrament, whose divine presence is always within us (D.S.S.).

CHAPTER XIV

DETACHMENT FROM RELATIVES

I declare that I mean to live in this pious Institute totally detached from the love of my relatives such as parents, brothers, sisters as well as from love for my native country. I will never long to go back home, not even for a short time. If for a good reason I am obliged to go, I will submit it to the superiors whose advice I will follow exactly and submissively.

I will be also moderate either in writing or in claiming letters or news from them; when I write to them, I will be edifying as a priest and Religious, avoiding too much familiarity and allowing my letters and messages to pass through the hands of the superiors, as I have declared at chapter VII: B. Obedience.

When my relatives come to visit me, I will inform the superiors so that they may take part in our conversation, which will be moderate and edifying, because of my suggestions to do good and to attend the sacraments. I will recommend all of them to the Lord, especially my parents and my nearest relations, avoiding, however, to have too much association with them, following our Lord Jesus Christ's saying:

“Whoever comes to me cannot be my disciple unless he hates his father and his mother, his wife and his children, his brothers and his sisters, and himself as well” (Lk. 14, 26); and to Holy Spirit's saying: “Listen, daughter, pay careful attention: forget your nation and your ancestral home” (Ps. 45, 11).

Because I am now associated with the brethren by religious bonds stronger than blood, I will hold them as my relatives, saying together with Jesus my Lord: “Whoever does what God wants him to do is my brother, my sister, my mother” (Mc. 3, 5).

The aspirants will always love their relatives with pure love of charity and piety recommending them to God; still, they will begin detaching themselves from the natural affections of blood. Those who are willing to belong totally to Jesus by consecrating themselves to his service in the priesthood or in the religious profession need to detach their heart from natural love for relatives and creatures. God is jealous of the souls consecrated to Him: He wants to reign alone in their hearts. Jesus our Lord is our father, mother, brother, sister, and everything. He taught us this holy detachment in various ways.

To accustom themselves to holy detachment, when the aspirants mention their family house they will never say my house, but will say my relatives' house, because for my house they must mean the institute.

Since the relatives in their letters sometimes use unbecoming language or relate griefs and stories which do not matter to the aspirants, a faithful summary of the letters relating everything of the aspirants' concern will be made and given to them, and the aspirants will be satisfied with that (R.A.).

The novices will love their relatives with charity and piety, recommending them to God and caring for their spiritual good, as much as they can (R.L.P.).

Charity toward our neighbor urges us to love our nearest, our relatives; but pure love of God and holy freedom of spirit urges us to live detached from all creatures, especially from those who are connected by nature and blood and could prevent us from union with God. The novices will nurture true love of charity and piety toward their relatives, especially the nearest ones, but will endeavor to have their heart detached from them to belong totally to Jesus, who is

father, mother, brother, sister, and everything for the souls (R:L.P.). (1)

A person who leaves the world to devote herself to Jesus Christ, must moderate the affections that bind or attract her to her relatives and must purify her natural, legitimate love according to the virtue of charity and piety. She has to love her relatives in God, without natural tenderness and sensibility, but with strong and pure love recommending them to the Lord and asking him to bless, sanctify, and save them. The Daughters of Divine Zeal will not wish to see and write to their relatives often, but they will also avoid negligence by writing now and then and by answering their letters. Either the sisters see their relatives in the parlor or write to them, they will behave and write as the Religious do. Through their talk and writing they will exhort their relatives to attend the sacraments, making them esteem the religion. The sisters, however, are not allowed to have connections with their distant relatives (C.D:D.Z.). (2)

The sisters will be detached from all the people and from everything, seeking Jesus alone. Not worried about seeing their relatives, they will recommend them to the Lord peacefully. The sisters, however, must fulfill some filial duties of convenience and piety toward their parents (D.S.S.).

The probationers must know exactly the kind of relationship they may have with their relatives. They must know that the beginning and the foundation of a true vocation is holy detachment from relations of blood; therefore, they will love their relatives with orderly and peaceful affection of charity, which consists in recommending them to God for their eternal salvation. They will also accustom themselves to hold all human beings as relatives, because we all are brothers and sisters in

Jesus Christ. Beginning from now on they must understand that since they are desiring to become members of a community which holds the orphans as beloved sons, and the poor as beloved brothers, they must bear in mind our Savior's saying: ((Whoever does what my Father in heaven wants him to do is my brother, my sister, my mother)) (Mt. 12, 50); as well as the saying of Jesus to the one who wished to go back in order to bury his father: « Follow me and let the dead bury their own dead » (Mt. 8, 22). (PAR.). (3)

NOTES

(1) As to my love for my parents, I promise that as soon as I enter the religion I will spiritualize it, praying to the Lord to sanctify, bless, and save them. I will have correspondence with them on their saint's name, on New Year's day, Easter, Christmas, and every time I have to answer their letters.

My behavior with my nearest relations or benefactors will be the same; I will exhort them to the good, using a language appropriate to -my vocation.

I promise to never hurry my visit to my parents' house nor to be anxious to see them; when they come to visit me and obedience allows it, as a Religious I will receive them, out of respect and pure love, behaving affably, affectionately, and kindly (D.P.).

(2) The parents' mall will be summarized and handled by the sister in charge of it. Each sister or novice or probationer will be glad to observe this rule; besides, no Important thing will be left out in the summary. This rule locks the door to the world and to the devil, preserving the fortunate souls who are consecrated to the celestial spouse * (C.D.D.Z./).

(3) The probationers will never long nor claim to go to the parents' house. It is strictly forbidden, serious cases excepted. To meet his parents at the parlor, the probationer will go along with

the cleric assistant; such visits are allowed once a month to the close relations, such as parents, uncles, and aunts; any other visit is strictly forbidden. In these circumstances, the probationers will behave according to their vocation, avoiding to prolong the visit and cutting short useless talk, in agreement with the cleric assistant. The probationer who is interested in his parents' good, exhorts them wisely and respectfully (P.R.P.).

CHAPTER XV

LOVE AND OBEDIENCE TO THE HOLY FATHER

Through this 15th article and the following four I am going to declare and promise things of the greatest importance; even though they belong to the chapter VII: B, which is concerned with blind obedience, still specifying them through five articles is more useful.

To begin with: as a Christian by Lord's mercy, as a priest unworthy of the Catholic Church, and as a congregant of an institute aiming primarily at increasing the priests, I declare that I will have the greatest respect, an unlimited subjection, and subordination to the Holy Father. I will hold, love, and obey him as our Lord Jesus Christ up to my last breath. The Holy Father's interests will be my heart's living interests; his words, either said outside cathedra or privately, will be oracles of eternal salvation for me. His opinions and ways of thinking will be the rule of my opinions and the ways of my thinking, to which I will always conform myself. His sorrows and pains will be mine.

When I preach, confess, and talk I will instill in the people these feelings of unlimited subjection and filial love toward Jesus Christ's vicar. The first intention I will put in the mass, thanksgiving, divine office, meditation, and rosary will be for the Holy Father along with his intentions. When he issues encyclicals or delivers speeches and I am fortunate to read them, I will conform myself to his feelings obeying exactly what he commands or suggests. I will consider the Holy Father as sacred and venerable, and if I am fortunate enough to see him, I will repute the opportunity of kissing his feet and even the dust on which his feet trample as my fortune.

I have declared all this for the following reasons:

1. Because I know that our Lord Jesus Christ wants us to honor, love, and obey his vicar as his own person.

2. Because the predominant spirit and the rule of this humble institute command it.

3. Because I feel profoundly and intimately that such things must be.

4. Because the perfect subjection to the Holy Father brings about the Lord's blessing on each institute and each soul, whereas a lack of this subjection under the pretext of these distinction *ex cathedra* and not *ex cathedra*, person and sacred character is the beginning of serious faults for the individuals and the beginning of ruin for the communities.

1. PROMOTING OBEDIENCE AND LOVE TOWARD THE HOLY FATHER

The probationers will nurture in their heart the most profound respect and the most perfect subjection to their immediate superiors and to the ecclesiastical hierarchy. As we have God's holy fear, so we must have the superiors' reverential fear. Such a subjection and filial fear determine the humility and mold the spirit of the people who long to be members of a religious order. They will never speak ill of their superiors nor censure their behavior, and when they notice an evident defect, they will excuse them and avoid discussing them. This way they show their gratitude for the good they are receiving. The probationers will also keep in mind that the divine precept: « Honor your father and your mother » (Ex. 20, 12) implies the duties toward their superiors and the prayer for them. Therefore, they should pray every day for the Holy Father, for whom they will nurture a particular transport of love, faith, and subjection; for their bishop, holding him as the one sent by God to the

diocese they belong to; for the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and for their immediate superiors (P:R.P.).

The Rogationists of Jesus' Heart will be very loving, obedient children and most humble subjects of the holy Church, which is represented by the Holy Father, the Roman Sacred Congregations, the prelates, and the bishops who have juridical power over their religious houses.

They will nurture such a reverence, subjection, and greatest tender love as to reach even veneration toward the Holy Father, holding him as our Lord Jesus Christ, whose vicar he is, and his word, either written or spoken, as Jesus Christ's word. They will make almost no distinction between *ex cathedra* and not *ex cathedra*, holding even the Holy Father's private opinions and sentences as venerable. Heartily concerned with his vicissitudes, pains, and works, they will recommend him to the most holy Heart of Jesus in their prayer in common. On his patron saint's day, his birthday, and the like, they will present their homages and wishes, also publishing articles through the institute's periodicals. While preaching or teaching Christian doctrine or educating the youths, they will inspire love, reverence, and obedience to the Holy Father, giving lectures on the doctrine about the Roman pontiff and his infallibility, as well as calling to mind the ecclesiastical history's glorious events, which are related to the supreme pontiffs (C.R.).

Each superior will give example of unlimited veneration and of warmest, sacred affection toward the Holy Father, seeing to it that the whole community be devoutly happy for the supreme pontiff's consolations, but sympathetic for his pains. He will encourage the people to read the Holy Father's encyclicals, speeches, and above all the dispositions which bind them under the obligation of conscience (R:S.).

2. THE PAPAL INFALLIBILITY

The holy Church is formed by those who believe in Jesus Christ, and who acknowledge the supreme pontiff, beginning with St. Peter, as the chief of the Catholic Church.

The holy Church is classified into two categories; those who teach and those who learn. They are united by faith and form the mystical body of Jesus Christ, the invisible head, while the supreme pontiff is the visible one.

Those who teach consist of the Holy Father along with the bishops who are united with him. Those who learn are the believers who are baptized. Like children they are fed by the holy mother, the Catholic Church, with the doctrine and with the grace which comes from Jesus Christ's sacraments. So that the teaching Church could exercise her power with divine authority, Jesus Christ endowed it with his eternal priesthood, not a simple power, but the power of the sacrament of Holy Orders. Holy Orders bestow an eternal character in the priest's soul, as in Jesus Christ. This character is conveyed by bishop to bishop and by bishops to priests through the ritual of the sacrament.

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When a person is ordained a priest, he is endowed with the power to forgive the sins of the people who humbly repent and sincerely confess in the sacrament of reconciliation, as well as to consecrate the body and blood of Jesus Christ in the mass, distributing them to the faithful in the sacrament of the Eucharist.

All this is clear, sanctioned in the holy gospel, and entrusted to the holy Church.

Were bishops and priests to depart from Jesus Christ's teaching or to teach errors, faith would be lost

and hell would prevail over it. To prevent such an evil, our Lord promised the Holy Spirit's assistance to the head of the holy Church, who is the legitimate guardian of the Evangelical doctrine and is supported by God in order to ensure that the faithful stand in the truth.

This is the dogma on papal infallibility, whose name makes an impression on many people, far they think of it as of a personal impeccability or of an impossibility of being mistaken intellectually, in any case or circumstance. But the meaning of this dogma is not that. As a human being, the supreme pontiff may sin as we do, and history gives us such examples. Nor does the dogma means that the pope is unable to be mistaken or to blunder even when he publishes books on theology, because in such a case he would be a private doctor, subject to error as anyone else.

Then, what is papal infallibility all about?

It consists in this: when the supreme pontiff defines some truths of faith or dictates some rules of morals *ex cathedra*, that is to say, as the universal shepherd of the holy Church, then God gives him a particular assistance preventing him from errors. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is God equal to the Father and the Holy Spirit, promised this assistance to the first pontiff St. Peter and to his successors so that they might teach uprightly both the rules of faith and of morals to those who depend on their ministry, either bishops or priests or faithful.

Nothing seems to be impossible in this doctrine. Otherwise it would be like saying that God cannot give this particular assistance to His vicar he left on earth as His representative, as the chief of His Church, as the surest guide in faith and morals for the holy Church's members. It goes without saying that God is able to

endow the head of the holy Church with this particular assistance, not for his personal good, (1) but for the universal good of believers.

The truth that our Lord Jesus Christ promised this particular assistance to the supreme pontiff for maintaining mankind in faith and to strengthen it in good Christian morals is clear, definite, and evident in the gospel. To deny it is temerity and stubbornness, not the process of a rational person.

In Mt. 16, 19 we read that Jesus said to Peter: « I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; what you prohibit on earth will be prohibited in heaven; what you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven. r This is the divine assistance in the rules of morals we are talking about.

In Lk. 22, 32, before Peter denied Jesus three times (here is the personal peccability), Jesus said to him: « When you turn back to me, you must strengthen your brothers. » Before going to death, he said to his apostles: « Satan has received permission to test all of you, as a farmer separates the wheat from the chaff. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith will not fall) (Lk. 22, 31-32).

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Raised from the dead, our Lord Jesus Christ appeared to the apostles, and to make Peter repair his three denials asked him three times: « Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these? » « Yes, Lord,) he answered, « you know that I love you.) Jesus said to him: « Take care of my lambs.) A second time Jesus said to him, « Simon, son of John, do you love me?)) « Yes, Lord,) he answered, « you know that I love you.) Jesus said to him, « Take care of my sheep.) A third time Jesus said, « Simon, son of John, do you love

me?)) Peter became sad because Jesus asked him the third time « ~Do you love me?)) and said to him, < Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you!)) Jesus said to him, « Take care of my sheep)) (Jn. 21, 15-17). The sheep represent the ecclesiastics, who generate the faithful to the life of grace; the lambs represent the faithful.

Our Lord appointed the supreme pontiff to feed souls and pledged to assist him as his vicar on earth so that he may provide the faithful with a goad, holy pasture. God was able to give this particular assistance, it was convenient to give it, and he has been giving it for over 20 centuries; in fact, no supreme pontiff, even though guilty of unbecoming behavior, was mistaken in his teaching of faith and morals.

Had it been otherwise, what would have happened to the Church of Jesus Christ? Unity of faith and rules of morals for the good and eternal life would have long since been lost! In order to maintain the teaching in faith and morals, the holy Church, through the Holy Father, allowed entire nations to depart from faith through their fault rather than to compromise the principles. It happened, for instance, when Henry VIII asked to annul his marriage with Catherine of Aragon and to approve his union with Anne Boleyn.

Owing to its divine institution, the holy Church and its pontificate has prevailed over the persecutions, especially in the first three centuries, always standing firm in union with his legitimate chief, according to the promise of -Jesus Christ to St. Peter: ((And so I tell you: you are a rock, Peter, and on this rock foundation I will build my Church, which not even death will ever be able to overcome)) (From the letter to the friends).

3. DEFINITION OF THE DOGMA OF PAPAL INFALLIBILITY (2)

A word of life has been pronounced in the Vatican Council; a word, which three hundred million Catholics longed for, has started going all over the world.

It is an enactment of truth, a watch word centralizing the Catholic children around unity of faith, the seal of a belief 1900 years old, the beginning of a new moral regeneration of mankind. Oh, no one is able to hear it without feeling his heart beating with celestial exultation. It is expanding throughout the world. No sooner does it come from the mouth of God's one thousand priests, the faithful echo repeats the gentle expression in the four corners of the world.

Infallible! Rome's gentle breezes echo.
Infallible! Cities, people, and nations answer.
Infallible! Sea, sky, and stars repeat.
Infallible! Paradise's angels sing.

Oh, God's mysteries! Today, Christ's bride has set up a scepter before which the people must bow their head, the just in gladness, the unjust in anger: the scepter is the papal infallibility's sacred dogma, indisputable defense of his divine rights.

Today, impiety received the most terrible defeat from the moral power it tried in vain to shake on its firm rock. Oh, God's mysteries! We have witnessed how the depraved society got up as a man alone in his frenzy against this invincible power, throwing against it the hellish fiercest arrows. Today was the time when frenzy seemed like touching the highest point of its madness: so many sects in error, so many different unbelief joined each other to knock down the base of all authorities. Human impotence!

Today, a different result appears before the eyes of all Catholics. Christ's bride holds its head high on the failure of the dust. Almost regardless of the waves of apposition, the Church always achieves its aims, it is always a winner. The world seemed so agitated as if to impede that word from coming out of the Vatican; there was a moment when the earthly powers seemed to be opposing its great design; but God came down to help. By now, the earthly powers are under the incubus of a mysterious hand, they are about to lacerate each other, intercrossing one another with a vortex of wars and blood; (3) Jesus Christ's Church alone, the gentlest mother of mankind, looks at the failings of the human beings from its highness, running to save them from the abyss. Yes! It already begins its great work; the world sees it advancing majestic and writing on the papacy's diadem this word that orders afresh the moral life of the peoples: infallible!

Hail, o divine word! Expected for many centuries, today you elate us with superhuman joy. Touched and reverent, we kneel down before you. We join the Catholics' universal vow, and looking at Peter's infallible cathedra we say: we greet you, immortal Pius IX, the universal Church's doctor, Christ's vicar, the mystical bride's sublime guardian, Peter's boat's celestial pilot; at last, we greet you, glorious pontiff, that in 24 splendid years sublimated your name, which is a new pearl in the coming history and a sacred glory of posterity; we greet you, loving father, and with the five regions of the earth we salute you five times great! Five times infallible!

4. THE PAPACY IN LEO XIII

...When the social vertigo was at its summit, when the storm of human fortunes threatened to overthrow Peter's

boat along with the .people's hopes of well-being, a great, splendid, shining star appeared in the clear sky of Rome. The prophetic saying ((Light in the sky)) sent forth its rays and for 25 years rarified darkness, illuminated minds and hearts, cooled down brutal passions, induced esteem and respect to the Church of Christ, spreading the truth and religion. It helped afflicted humankind, lifted up prostrated hopes to heaven, reminded human beings of their duties toward God, toward themselves, and toward their neighbor. It provided thousands of people with spiritual well-being, calling the attention of the powerful to the importance of the respect which is due to the papal authority, as the base and the guarantee of any civil authority.

'If the Papecy's age-long institution were nothing else than a human institution, the difficulties that opposed the pontiff 'Leo XI14's glories would have been insurmountable. But Church and papacy are not human, but divine institutions: they have a vigor of their own, always new, active, young, renovating itself when it seems to be dying out. Church and papacy are the miracle of God's hand, the great unshakable building cemented by the blood of God-man, who swore once forever to Peter, the first supreme pontiff: cc And so I tell you: you are a rock, Peter, and on this rock foundation I will build my church, which not even death will ever be able to overcome)) (Mt. 16, 18).

The great pontiff, whose loss we mourn, showed again the infallibility of this divine promise that never failed in 19 centuries. Born pontiff under severe test and tribulation, he inherited the holy cross that his glorious predecessor, Cross from Cross, left to him. He embraced the cross willingly, swearing to die over it rather than to come to terms on the Church's rights.

The papacy's moral power, through Leo XI-11, prevailed over earthly powers: it was not only a rapprochement of the peoples, but also of kings and emperors as representatives of their nations; God's marvelous ways always reach the same aim through different paths!

God once showed that the Church's spiritual power may turn itself into so strong an earthly power as to get the upper hand. The severe Hildebrand, moved by the omnipotent spirit of God, throws down the emperor Henry's forces. Firm and unshakable, he leaves the king crying outside the door of his castle in sackcloth and ashes, and then admits the humble, trembling, and tearful king into his presence. At last, he forgives and rehabilitates him.

Many people will say: those were different times. Today civil and military powers are stronger, and the papacy must be subordinate. No, gentlemen! Today, the papacy is as strong as it was in the Middle-Ages. His two hundred million children, at a sign of the Holy Father, would become two hundred million crusaders, and would not shrink from giving their life for the pope in the battlefields.

However, this is not the Church's army. Peter knows how to handle the sword, but from the time Jesus Christ told him: « Put your sword back in its place... Don't you know that I could call on my Father for help and at once he would send me more than twelve armies of angels?») (Mt. 26, 52-53). Since then the papacy has understood its mission on earth and the weapons it must use to win the people.

Leo XII, I understood very well this divine mission. He grew warlike with the strongest spiritual weapons. He put on the breastplate of fortitude and constancy, the shield of the evangelical doctrine along with holiness of its rights, the helmet of the Catholic faith's greatest ideas,

and brandishing the double-edged sword of the divine ward, he entrusted himself to the spirit of wisdom and to Christian meekness, entered the struggle, and won.

- We won't go to Canossa - the most illustrious state-man of the German empire said; but he went twice: first, when he was compelled to meet the just requests of the empire's Catholics; second, when he put the controversy with Spain about the Caroline Islands in the wise arbitration of Leo Xlfl. In such a circumstance, the MiddleAges saw the Church's power standing out among the nations, and seemed to be rising again.

Gentlemen, what made this poor, unarmed man so powerful before the rules, who by principles and systems were the most alien' to the Catholic religion? What was inside this old man who in 25 years attracted not only the greatest enthusiasm of his faithful subjects, but also the admiration, the respect, and perhaps the affection of non-Catholic nations as well as of celebrities? How this frail, candid man fascinated in such a way that the rakish world thrilled twice with reverence, pity, and almost filial care on the occasion of his sickness?

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To answer this question, we put another one. How can we explain that nineteen centuries ago, a poor fisher from Galilee, known as a shy, weak man, bare-footed and bare-headed enters the Rome of the Caesars, resides there, and plants the seeds of a doctrine before which the idols of the Pantheon would be reduced to dust? The Church is God's power, this is the mystery; the supreme pontiff is a human-divine being, the vicar of the Godman.

When the Italian parliament began discussing the iniquitous bill on divorce, Leo's heart was pierced by a sharp sword. He wrote a most learned, imposing encyclical

pointing to the deadly consequences of a law contrary to the principles of morals and social order.

Once, while talking to the cardinals about the impious bill, his voice fainted suddenly, a painful Kiccuip came out of his chest, and tears came down from his eyes. Jesus' vicar exclaimed in tears: « Not even my last gray hairs are respected; they do not spare me such a deadly blow!)) A few months later, the unvanquished Leo subsided into the bed of his last sickness.

Gentlemen, was Leo XII~I a martyr? Did the people who cooperated in driving him to the tomb feel a beneficial remorse? I do not know; a mysterious comparison, however, hits me.

When our Lord Jesus Christ, betrayed by Judas, condemned by the impious Jews, and nailed to the cross breathed his last crying aloud, a beneficial change of heart resulted in a few. One of the two thieves crucified at Jesus' side, touched by the patience of that just one who died forgiving his enemies, repented, acknowledged him as God and asked that he be allowed to share in his kingdom. Contemplating at the foot of the cross the celestial features of the divine victim, the centurion exclaimed: < ~He really was the Son of God! » Some of the Hebrews who were standing there came down from the hill beating their breasts!

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Recently, Jesus Christ's vicar died after a wretched, crucified life inside the walls of his uninterrupted dwelling, and his last day appeared to be a rehearsal of the judgment on the reprobate and the elect.

Many adversaries of the papacy, who opposed the pope through the press, and others who disagreed because of different religious ideas awakened exclaiming before the venerable remains of the sacred, illustrious dead: c He really was Jesus Christ's vicar! » But, others remained

impassive! There are Hebrew crucifiers that persist in their devilish hate against the pope, whatever may be his name,

Pius or Leo or Gregory; others are hopeless; others run to hang themselves as Judas did!

These are children of perdition, destined to the Gehenna's fire; but those of gentle heart who love Jesus Christ's vicar, have their name written in the book of life (From the funeral oration on Leo XII~I)!

NOTES

(1) It is a personal privilege, because the Holy Father cannot give it to others; it is not a personal privilege, because it was granted for the universal, not for his own good.

(2) The definition was made in the fourth session of the first Vatican Council, on July 18, 1870. The writing we have quoted was a leading article in the Catholic Word of July 24, 1870. The style shows signs of the writer's age; our padre was 19.

(3) The Franco-Prussian war broke out few days after.

CHAPTER XVI

LOVE AND OBEDIENCE TO THE SACRED CONGREGATIONS

From the unlimited subordination and subjection to Jesus Christ's vicar I want to draw out a perfect submission of intellect, heart, and will, as well as the highest reputation and respect toward the Roman congregations, their decisions, sentences, opinions, acts, and decrees. Everything a Roman congregation says or decrees or decides upon or manifests will be like an infallible oracle for me. Suffering no theological distinctions between major or minor Importance of the topics, I will accept everything as simply as a child accepts the explanations and the orders from his teacher.

Holding that the Holy Spirit assists, governs, and speaks through the sacred congregations, I will quickly conform my opinions and doctrine to any Roman sacred congregation's opinions and sentences with firm belief.
(1)

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The congregants will also revere the Roman sacred congregations along with their decrees, holding them as the representatives of the supreme pontiff and as the ones the Holy Spirit assists (C.R.).

NOTES

(1) In 1907, when the Abbot Combe's book on La Salette was condemned, our padre wrote exhorting him, who was a friend of his, to submit himself to the authority. Among other things he said: «When we face certain contradictions or admonitions from highest ecclesiastical authorities, such as the Roman congregations, we must highly stand in awe, be profoundly humble, and devoutly prudent because they represent the Holy Father. In these events we must not consider the circumstances that brought about that admonition or contradiction from the Church's prelates. God makes use of so many tools, but the decisions of the Church's high prelates are the work of the Holy Spirit governing the Church. By renouncing our judgment we have to reprove with a will what the Church reproves.» Since the Abbot Combe had a mind to write a biography of Melania, our padre pointed out the outline of the work, but concluded: «The holy Church's judgment excepted, in which I believe more than in my eyes and hands» (Letter, Aug. 15. 1907).

CHAPTER XVII

LOVE AND OBEDIENCE TO THE ECCLESIASTICAL HIERARCHY

I declare that I will hold the ecclesiastical hierarchy as holy and celestial, being highly respectful and subject to the holy Church's prelates, especially the cardinals and the bishops; to the former, as to the Church's princes, and to the latter, as to the apostles' successors, the highest priests of Jesus Christ's Church, the vigilant guardians of the mystical Israel.

I will always speak well of the holy Church's prelates. If someone had evident defects, I will excuse or conceal them. As unworthy as I am, I will pray to God for the holy Church's illustrious prelates, especially for the cardinals and the bishops who are governing.

Since this humble order is endowed with the particular grace and privilege of having the Ecclesiastical Sacred Alliance of the holy Church's most illustrious prelates as well as of the clergy, I declare that I will have at heart this Sacred Alliance In order to foster our Institute as much as I can.

Finally, as a professed member of the Evangelical Rogation of Jesus' Heart, I declare that through the order's prayers I will ask the most holy Heart of Jesus to always send out learned, holy cardinals and prelates along with bishops full of excellent virtues to the holy Church and to the dioceses.

The ecclesiastical hierarchy is the high pyramid God planted on earth. It challenges the centuries, rarefies darkness of human errors with its splendor, watches the generations which file off kneeling humbly before itself along with the multitudes, the princes, kings, and emperors. The steps of these mysterious stairs are steps

of divine, not human glory, implying a mission of great sacrifice and self-denial.

The man God transfers on the ecclesiastical hierarchy's highness, experiences a supernatural transformation and a celestial power in his innermost self. He feels himself connected with divinity; the sevenfold Spirit fulfills, spiritualizes, elates, moves, and thunders as he once did with the prophet Jeremiah: « Look, today I am setting you over nations and over kingdoms, to tear up and to knock down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant » (Jer. 1, 10). The anointed of the Lord may say as the prophet: « God put fire in my bones and taught me the mission » (From the funeral oration on Card. Guarino).

CHAPTER XVIII

OBEDIENCE TO ONE'S OWN BISHOP

In a special way and more than the other bishops I promise to honor, love, respect, and obey with humblest submission the bishop of the diocese where I reside, because the community depends on him canonically. Whether our order is by law diocesan or not, (1) I mean to respect and hold the rights that papal bulls or canon law give to the bishops on the order and its members, because these rights bind me to perfect subjection, esteem, respect, love, and trust. I will hold the bishop as superior general or mayor within the bounds and the exercise of these rights and relative duties, obeying and respecting him by preference.

The congregants will hold the holy Church's most eminent cardinals and prelates as the holy Church's princes and lords.

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They will highly esteem the bishops, holding them as the successors to the apostles as well as the ones that the Holy Spirit appointed to govern Jesus Christ's Church. Above all, they will esteem, revere, and love the bishops of the dioceses where we have houses, obeying and respecting their orders in everything concerning their competence (C.R.).

The superior of the house will show great respect and subjection to the ordinary, paying to him the community's wishes on his saint's day, New Year, Christmas, etc. and respecting his orders humbly, simply, and prudently (R.S.).

NOTES

(1) Keep in mind that our padre was writing in 1910, when the canonical approval of the orders was only a wish; in practical terms, they were pious associations depending on the Messina ordinary.

CHAPTER XIX

OBEDIENCE TO THE INSTITUTE'S SUPERIORS

To conclude the declarations I made in the chapters XV-XVIII about the practice of holy obedience along with subjection, subordination, esteem, and affection toward the ecclesiastical hierarchy, I pledge my obedience, respect, esteem, love, and trust in this institute's superiors as an immediate norm of my actions. The institute's superiors are the superior general and his representatives who have power over me.

Not only will I be a dependent subject, but also a loving son in Jesus Christ, holding dependence and subordination in the highest esteem and considering them as the base of the Institute's existence and of my religious life.

To honor the high order of dependency God established when He created humankind and society, under which the human beings find safety and truth in depending on each other; I will glory in my dependence. I will also glory in it to honor our Lord Jesus Christ, who made himself subject to his creatures, teaching and establishing dependence on ecclesiastical and civil authorities in order to abate human pride, as the psalmist said: « Let the nations know they are only men » (Ps. 10, 21); as well as the apostle: « Every high priest is chosen from his fellow-men and appointed to serve God on their behalf, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins » (Heb. 5. 1).

I will hold my subordination and affection toward the holy Father, the sacred congregations, the holy Church's prelates, and the ordinary as a false subordination, unless I am a perfect subordinate and have sincere filial affection toward my immediate superiors. In reference to the people who have no love for neighbor, St. John says If you do not love your neighbor whom you see, how can you claim that you love God, who Is Invisible? Likewise I will say to myself:

how can I be respectful, obedient, and loving toward the Holy Father and the Church's prelates who are far-off, if I do not esteem, obey, listen to, love, nor want to be subject to my Immediate superiors, who are always with me? I will repute any feeling of reaction to my superiors and their orders as the beginning of a revolt prompted by Lucifer, who rose against the divine power and now upsets the communities by rousing the spirit of pride in the subjects.

If a lay-brother (1) is appointed to the superior's office, as some institutes do for practice of humility and obedience, I declare that I will listen to, obey, and be subject to him with the same spirit of subordination, respect, and humility which is due to any other superior.

I will greatly trust in the superiors, sometimes confiding my pains and temptations to them with simplicity as a son does with his father, believing that by doing so God will bend, giving me his consolations. Great as may be the gifts I was given by God, I will be like a child in my relation with the superiors, putting myself in their hands In order to follow the celestial teaching: « Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will never enter it » (Mc. 10, 15).

By behaving so I mean to avoid seeking consideration from my superiors in order that they may command and direct me freely. On the other hand, I will glory in obeying and listening to them, remembering the words that Jesus spoke to his disciples and to those who are legitimately placed at the head of the Church: « Whoever listens to you, listens to me; whoever rejects you, rejects me » (Lk 10, 16).

I will receive advice and Instructions, admonitions and reproaches or penances from my superiors as though Jesus Christ himself were acting or speaking through their mouth.

When priests or brothers or young students are around me, I will fear setting bad examples of insubordination, and strive to consolidate both the authority and the government of my superiors whenever it is possible, even with my abasement and humiliation. When I see, greet, call, treat, answer my superiors or I receive their orders and the like, I will use the signs of respect that are customary in our institute.

To conclude this important article, I resolve to never long for any power. On the contrary I will try to refuse it with humility and prudence when my superiors want to confer

it on me; however, If holy obedience obliges me, I will accept it- Should the Lord permit my election, and holy obedience compel me to accept any power or jurisdiction on others, since now I declare that I will repute myself as the servant and the last one of all, feeling myself obliged to be the first in the observance, In the practice of religious virtues, in self-denial, and to settling good example. Should It happen, I will hold my office with fear and trembling, praying continuously to the Lord for enlightenment and help. I will keep in mind the holy writers' rules about prudence, discretion, and charity In governing as well as about the zeal and strength necessary to avert or atone offences to God, to eliminate abuse, oppose slackening even In small things, and put down the obstinate.

1. THE DIVINE SUPERIORS

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The present and future Rogationists will hold the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus and the most holy Immaculate Mary as immediate, absolute, effective superiors always present in the midst of them, even though invisible, according to the proclamations on July 1 and 2, 1913. The Rogationists will see them in each order, command, and direction of the superiors who have power over them. Reading the rules and the constitutions, they will learn each article as though Immaculate Mary were reading and instilling them on behalf of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus. Before any common action, they will say the Latin prayer *Sacratissimum*, holding as a secret of the institute the ineffable grace of the double, divine, absolute, effective, immediate, celestial superiority, invisible to the senses, but visible in the external direction of the legitimate superiors. Everyone will keep it in his heart saying: my secret is for me, as well as: it is

right to conceal the secret of the king and of the queen of heaven (Rules according to the two proclamations).

The Daughters of Divine Zeal will never forget that on Dec. 8, 1904 (50th anniversary of Immaculate Conception's dogma) the institute of Divine Zeal elected and solemnly proclaimed Immaculate Mary as the everlasting owner, mother, teacher, as well as the absolute, effective, immediate superior of the Daughters of Divine Zeal's community... From then on, the Daughters of Divine Zeal have been holding and will always hold the most holy Virgin as the effective, absolute, immediate, but invisible superior of this least order. They have sworn to hold the visible superior as Immaculate Mary's vicar, binding themselves to honor, love, and obey her as the most holy Virgin.

The noble, holy office of Immaculate Mary's vicar first resides in the mother superior general; second, in the house mother superiors, who are subject to the mother general. To enjoy the good, singular fortune of having the most holy Virgin as the effective superior, the Daughters of Divine Zeal must honor, love, and obey the house mother superior and the mother general as the most holy Virgin Mary (C.D.D.Z.).

2. RESPECT AND OBEDIENCE

I promise perfect obedience, subordination, holy affection, and profound respect toward the institute's present and future mother superior, holding her as the most holy Virgin's vicar. I promise the same obedience, subordination, respect, and holy affection toward anyone, either sister or layperson, who is appointed to direct or supervise me, holding that the legitimate direction or surveillance is coming from God and the most holy Virgin (D. P.).

The novices will consider their superior as their mother, nurturing filial love and respect for her. First, they will show love and esteem by obeying exactly and by anticipating her thoughts and wishes; second, by recommending her to God particularly; third, by helping her. They will avoid to disgust her even in the least things, knowing that whoever disgusts the superiors, disgusts God. If the mother superior happened to fall into defects, the novices will not wonder nor talk to each other about it, because no one is perfect; they instead will excuse and fervently recommend her to God (R.L.P.).

I promise to put myself under the obedience of the institute's director and his legitimate representatives, whether they are lay-persons or younger than myself or imperfect, holding them as Jesus Christ and behaving like a child with docility and simplicity of heart when they guide, direct, command, admonish, and correct me. I also mean to renounce and silence my will, judgment, and opinion when they are in bad terms with my superior's will, judgment, and opinion.

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Never will I be desirous to command, reaching to be superior over anyone, to be praised, and esteemed. On the contrary, I have a resolute mind to sanctify myself, seek Jesus, and totally belong to him by loving the last place, by being disappointed, ignored, and humiliated (P.D.P.).

3. SEEKING THE LAST PLACE

No one will long for honor and directorship, but will avoid honor, approbation, and superiority because ambition is the soul's death; only when obedience appoints a Rogationist to an office, he will accept it (C.R.).

You shall not desire the superior's office. Desiring

the superior's office and intriguing to have it (God forbid!) would be a serious fault worthy of God's indignation! It would be eternal damnation for you and ruin for the house! Instead, everyone will dislike having the superior's office or any superiority over other people. No one will forget that we have to seek the last place, as our Lord Jesus Christ taught us. Even though he was God, he put himself in the place of the evildoers, dying between two murderers! Only whoever loves the last place, will be told: « Come on up, my friend, to a better place » (Lk. 14, 10). Were a Religious to long for the superior's office or for any superiority, God would give him no help and he would be mistaken over and over again.

When God's will is manifested by ballot, or obedience compels the Religious to accept the superior's office or any position of superiority, the Religious must feel himself unworthy of it and receive it from the Lord's hands as a burden and a punishment of his sins; he must consider the appointment as an office of service toward others, not a superiority. From the very beginning he must conform to God's adorable will and trust in the infinite goodness of the most holy Heart of Jesus for the best execution of his duty, saying specific prayers to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, to the angels and the saints to win the grace and the enlightenment he needs (R.S.).

The mother-superior will meditate on these words of our Lord Jesus Christ: whosoever is first among you, shall be as the last one. On one hand, she will keep the superior's authority in order to train the Religious in the virtues of humility, obedience, and subjection; on the other hand, she will intimately repute herself as the servant of the others, doing everything for them in humility and mortification, giving the best things to the sisters, but keeping the worst for herself. The mother superior

will be careful to always set good example, knowing that this is her chief duty, while her setting of bad example - Jesus forbid! - makes the souls turn aside from the right way of their vocation and herself guilty before God. Specifically, the mother superior will edify the subjects through her exact observance of the rules, through meekness in transacting the institute's business, patience in suffering opposition, perfect obedience to the major superiors, silence, prayer, practice of virtues, and mortification. In short, the mother superior must be more virtuous than the sisters. She will love her subjects as tenderly and strongly as her own daughters, regarding them with indulgence in their faults, and providing them with everything they need. Besides, she will comfort and teach them with love. When they happen to be at fault, she will correct them by penances that are apt to their amendment. At last, she will recommend them to God, the most holy Virgin Mary, and the glorious Patriarch St. Joseph for their perseverance and sanctification (R.L.P.).

4. BEING GOD'S REPRESENTATIVES

Each Rogationist superior will consider in the light of faith that he represents the divine superiors. Fully aware of this truth, he will humbly consider it in his daily prayer and colloquies with our Lord.

By considering the obligation and the duties that the office requires of him, the superior will humble himself before God; every day and in each circumstance, he will implore divine help in the name of Jesus and enlightenment from our Lady of Good Counsel.

He will consider himself the servant of all, directing to the Lord his actions, corrections, exhortations, and everything he does to improve his beloved children in

Jesus Christ spiritually or temporally. In fact, whatever he does in the name of the Lord and the most holy Virgin is a service to the people who depend on him in the house of God. He will be comforted by the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, who said: « Anyone who wants to be great among you must be your servant, and anyone who wants to be first among you must be your slave, just as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve » (Mt. 20, 27-28).

The superior must combine the notion of service with superiority so prudently as to make the subjects pay subjection, obedience, respect, trust, and holy love.

He will demand everything through love, trust, and reverential fear. But he will be unable to inspire such things, unless he is a model of religious virtues, perfect observance, spirit of sacrifice, love, and paternal charity. May each superior meditate on this article, because the success or failure proceeding from his direction depends on it (R.S.).

Be humble, meek, prudent, fervent, recollected in Jesus, observant and diligent in correcting mildly and strongly. Be the last, but demand obedience and observance (D.S.S.).

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Prudence must be one of the superior's chief virtues; it regulates the others and consists in understanding well and in being aware of everything, either spiritual or temporal. It prevents the members of the community from rushing, from going to extremes, leading them to take the happy mean. Prudence dissimulates, is forbearing, patient cautious, wise, vigilant, experienced, and always watchful.

However, the superior must distinguish between holy and profane prudence. As a matter of fact, we find a prudence coming from the Lord's spirit and a false prudence coming from the world's. The former acts for God's

glory and for the good of the souls, controls itself, dissimulates, and counsels. Human prudence instead, acts for human aims and earthly interests. It puts aside God and the good of the souls for human respect and personal attachment. The superior will detest human prudence as a pestilence and shall not seek, think of, or dissimulate for human respect, personal regard and liking. It does not mean, however, that we have to pay no special courtesy toward the people of high rank, because prudence is not a rough virtue and doing otherwise would be imprudence. The prudent superior will never come to terms with his conscience for anyone and for whatever reason, and in dubious cases will resort to prayer and advice. To spare the community serious damages coming from imprudence, the superior will pray for prudence every day to the adorable Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the most holy Virgin Mary, who is called Virgin most prudent. He will often read the wisdom books to know how the Holy Spirit praises the virtue of prudence (R.S.).

Meek, benign zeal and charity's gifts, which are necessary to the people in power, do not prevent him from being unshakable when conscience, rules, and prudence require so. In such a case, after praying, considering things before God, and taking advice, the superior will be impregnable, unless circumstances change substantially and sin does not take place. Meanwhile, he will pray that his consistency be well accepted by those who are concerned with it (R.S.).

NOTES

(1) Our padre said this in 1910. The 1918 Canon Law established that only the priests may be superiors in the priestly orders.

CHAPTER XX

LITURGY OF THE HOURS, HOLY MASS, AND COMMUNION

Until now, as a priest I felt myself obliged to pay particular attention and devotion, as well as to be recollected in the recitation of the holy office and in the celebration of the divine mysteries. From now on, as a congregant of an institute that specifically aims at increasing the Catholic priesthood, I promise with God's help to double my attention, devotion, fervor, and recollection in the recitation of the canonical hours, in the celebration of the holy mass, and the sacred rites.

I will pace the recitation of the prayers with contrite heart, taking delight in the loftiness of the divine expressions, in the prayers, and the readings. I will do my best not to delay any canonical hour to a later time. While reciting the prayers, my intention will be to honor the saint of the day, to win good workers to the holy Church, to obtain divine mercies on our communities and the souls in purgatory as well as to convert sinners and to foster the interests of the most holy Heart of Jesus. When the breviary is becoming worn I will ask the superior for a new one. (1)

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As to the mass, which this institute holds in special esteem, I will consider it as the most sublime mystery, it really is. Because I am unworthy and want to be always aware of my unworthiness of ascending to the altar, I mean to spend all my life in a continuous preparation and thanksgiving for the celebration of the tremendous sacrifice and for the holy Eucharistic Communion. To prepare myself, before the mass I will kneel and pray for some minutes according to our constitutions, avoiding any talk or distraction. While celebrating, I will pace the pronunciation of the words, will be recollected in the divine presence as best I can, and will exactly observe the rubrics without looking at the people.

To avoid making mistakes or leaving out some part or changing things with each other, I will prepare everything before the celebration, following the ordo. Were I at even Involuntary fault. I will charge myself with that, asking the superior for a penance. Mindful of the well proceeding of the mass, I will admonish the altar boy, even severely if it is necessary, when he rushes the words or is distracted.

After the celebration I will make a thanksgiving of at least 20 minutes in the church or in the sacristy. Sometimes, however, I will be available for charity or the works of ministry, never accepting coffee or anything else before ending the thanksgiving. When people offer something, I will refuse by sincerely saying for public edification: « We take nothing before the mass thanksgiving. » I will make part of the thanksgiving by reflection, the remainder either by reflection or by prayer or by recitation of the canonical hours.

While giving thanks for the mass, I will be Intimately recollected in God's divine presence making acts of adoration, offering, contrition, and love In order to win graces for myself, the Institutes, the Church, and all as well as to win from the most holy Heart of Jesus many saints to the Church, to the social classes, and to the clergy. Helped by God, I will celebrate the mass every day, doing my best to do so even when I travel. If health or travel reason prevents me from celebrating, I will be calm and humble before the Lord, conforming to the divine will in peace and receiving Holy Communion if I am able without great prejudice.

I leave the special intention of the holy mass to my superiors, who may dispose of it as they want, unless I am under obligation of conscience to fulfill engagements contracted previous to my entrance in the institute. (2) When the special intention is at the superior's disposal, I will put my own intentions in the general fruit of the mass also under the special intention, but under condition because the probable, common opinion is that the mass' special fruit is infinite, and therefore It may meet all the intentions. My intentions are the ones mentioned above on the recitation of the canonical hours.

Since this institute's priests apply the priceless special fruit of the masses for the institute's spiritual and temporal needs or for the souls in purgatory, I will not seek offerings

for masses, on the contrary I will renounce them. When convenience obliges me to receive such offerings I will hand them over to the superior, specifying the names of the donors, their Intentions, and everything else. (3)

I will be greatly concerned with the celebration of the liturgies, only performing the office that holy obedience assigns to me, but avoiding a better office to satisfy my pride because it would be like profaning holy things. I will also study the rubrics of any religious service, as much as I can.

1. HOLY MASS

Each community of sisters will attend the daily celebration of mass. If daily mass is not available in a place, the sisters will open no house there.

The Daughters of Divine Zeal must hold the sacrifice of the mass in the greatest esteem. They should consider it as the bloodless repetition of Calvary's sacrifice, holding that one mass is enough to redeem millions of worlds owing to its infinite value.

To win spiritual and temporal graces for God's glory, for the good of the holy Church, the whole world, and their own sanctification the sisters will attend the mass with faith and hope.

Through their faith, the sisters will see during the celebration of the holy mass immense rivers of graces and blessings coming out of it and expanding all over the Church and the world. They will see Jesus as victim and priest who repeats the mysteries of his life from the time of his incarnation up to his death, resurrection, and ascension. They will see Jesus who fulfills the aims of the sacrifice such as adoration, propitiation, thanksgiving, and prayer. During the celebration of the holy mass Jesus pays to the most holy Trinity the homage of all creatures,

adores the divine attributes on our behalf, and offers himself to the most holy Trinity as victim of infinite satisfaction for the graces the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit grant. Being the powerful mediator, he implores graces and mercies.

We must contemplate this view of faith during the holy mass, joining Jesus Christ in his adoration, satisfaction, and thanksgiving for any grace we receive, and asking innumerable graces for us and for all.

Since the whole Church (militant, purifying, and triumphant) draws advantage from the mass, we have to offer it in union with the adorable Heart of Jesus for the Church triumphant, for the heavenly beings' honor, glory, and thanksgiving; for the Church militant, so that it may flourish with holiness, that sinners may become converts, that infidels may enter the Church, and that ministers of mystical harvest along with any good work super abound. We should offer the holy mass with feelings of mercy and charity for the Church purifying, for the souls in purgatory so that the prayers may super abound, the Most Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ may overflow, purify the purgatory's prison, and lift to heaven the souls who are longing for it.

Careful attention must be paid to our offerings of the mass for so many intentions as well as to the five Gregorian masses we offer during the year for the liberation of all souls from purgatory. Such masses will be never left out.

Please be united with the adorable Heart of Jesus during the mass and have great faith, great hope, great charity to win innumerable graces for yourselves, the pious institute, the holy Church, souls, and the whole world.

Special attention must be paid to the persons who offer the mass. These people are: our Lord, the celebrant priest, and the faithful attending the mass with faith and love. The sacred authors say that those who do not receive grace during the mass owing to negligence, lack of faith or devotion will never receive any (S.D.D.Z.).

While attending the great sacrifice of the mass, the novices will imagine themselves together with Our Lady in sorrow on Calvary at the foot of the most holy cross. That is the time to offer satisfaction to the Most High for their faults, to adore the divine majesty, to thank him for the, graces they have received, and to humbly petition the graces of sanctification and perseverance for themselves and for all (From Oria Novices' Directory).

The congregants will hold the sacrifice of the mass in the greatest esteem. (4) Holy mass is a main means to win mercies and graces from God as well as to perform one's own duty of adoration and thanksgiving to God. The priests will strive to celebrate mass every day. Even while traveling, they will do their best and manage things in order to say mass. The Rogationists of Jesus' Heart are bound in duty to prepare themselves for the mass celebration through a remote and immediate preparation as well as to do an after-mass-thanksgiving of at least 15 minutes. This pious institute's congregants will offer the special fruit of the holy mass for the order and for its members, living and dead; therefore, they will not seek offerings for the celebration of masses, but will give others priests the offerings they may have. This way the special fruit of the mass may be applied every day for the order's spiritual and temporal needs as well as for the souls in purgatory and for the benefactors. The brothers will attend holy mass with recollection and devotion every day (C.R.).

2. HOLY COMMUNION

What are the dispositions required of the probationers for receiving Holy Communion? To tell the truth, the young candidates to religious life are the sons of men with whom Jesus in the holy Sacrament delights to be (Prov. 8, 31). The most holy Eucharist has been called bread of the angels, and the probationers must be like angels by innocence and purity of life when they receive the most Holy Communion.

This little community's probationers will make of their whole life both a continuous preparation and thanksgiving for the most Holy Communion, because they cannot improve their religious vocation without receiving Communion frequently. The preparation will be in common and in private in the spirit of humility and love.

After purifying and detaching his heart from the world through the observance of the divine law and holy confession, the probationer will excite ardent love for Jesus in the Sacrament as well as intimate acknowledgement of his own misery and unworthiness before receiving Holy Communion.

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What is love all about but longing to possess the beloved? This little community's probationers will prepare themselves to receive Holy Communion by exciting in themselves such a longing to possess the infinite treasure. Jesus in the Eucharist is bread satiating the famishing, but he leaves fasting the unhappy souls that are not hungry and thirsty for him.

After receiving the Eucharist, the probationers will bend profoundly, then will go to their place with eyes down cast and their arms folded. Kneeling upright and recollected as best they can in the presence of God, they will meditate on the living God dwelling within them,

they will adore him in deep silence, will offer themselves as a holocaust, and pour forth their thanksgiving along with expressions of love.

The time after Communion is extremely precious. It is an opportunity to win graces for ourselves and others. The probationers will profit by it. With humility and trust they will implore from the supreme goodness in the Sacrament many graces for their sanctification, the holy Church, the salvation of souls, this institute, this community, and the most holy Heart of Jesus' interests. Both in the feasts and in summer time the probationers will prolong their thanksgiving (P.R.P.).

The aspirants are free to receive Holy Communion on the days suggested by their confessor. They must be convinced that no other means is more efficacious than daily Communion to improve their vocation and sanctification, provided they receive it with pure conscience, due preparation, and thanksgiving. On these conditions, daily Communion is an always burning fire that lightens the flame of divine love.

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The aspirant must consider that if he is so fortunate as to become a priest, he will receive Holy Communion every day in the celebration of the divine mass. Why then shouldn't he start now .this union of love with Jesus, supreme goodness? Of whom is the aspirant depriving himself the day he does not receive Holy Communion? If we considered the infinite treasure, the celestial lover we receive in the Communion, how could we give him up even once? O candidates for the Evangelical Rogation, please approach the Eucharistic table every day. Feed yourselves with the bread of the angels, unite yourselves to Jesus, and you will be holy, good evangelical workers of his Church!

It goes without saying that we should be recollected,

modest, and thankful while receiving Holy Communion. But here we only point out that thanksgiving will last at least 15 minutes, and will start after the prayer: « Here I am, my beloved goad Jesus », etc. At the noon prayer the aspirant will make an additional brief thanksgiving, but during the day he will never forget the priceless gift he has received, being always united in love with Jesus (R.A.)!

a) Dispositions

I call the Daughters of Divine Zeal's full attention to this most important topic, because their sanctification and salvation as well as their institute's improvement and firmness mainly depend on it.

Through living faith and spiritual intelligence the Daughters of Divine Zeal will consider and understand the great mystery of our Lord Jesus Christ, who drawn by excess of divine love becomes bread in order to feed us with himself, becomes one with us in order to transform us in him, giving us his divine life.

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They will understand that the Eucharistic Communion's effects are strictly connected with the individual dispositions. They have to consider this tremendous truth. If one is in the state of mortal sin while receiving Communion, she eats and drinks her condemnation according to the words of the Apostle Paul; she commits sacrilege, and the Eucharistic Communion becomes poison for her.

To avoid at any cost and sacrifice an additional harm which strikes more easily those who receive Holy Communion frequently, we have to consider such harm. It happens when a religious person approaches the Eucharistic table with certain imperfections such as arrogance, pride, stubborn attachment to her own will and opinion, grudge, dislike for the mother superior and unwillingness

to respect, obey, and love her, and she does not want to acknowledge nor to correct these imperfections. To these interior indispositions we also add lack of simplicity and sincerity due to malice, simulation, and falsehood as well as disobedience, negligence, indifference in meditation and prayer, dissipation, lack of internal and external silence, and any deliberate, frequent failure.

How a person may consecrate to the Lord, but full of failings, defects, and indispositions, receive him in the Eucharist? What kind of meeting can the sweetest loving Jesus, who is fond of the soul, and God, who is full of virtues and infinite holiness, have with the alienated person? How displeased Jesus will be! In these conditions, what profit will the person derive from such a meeting? By God's right sentence that person will become more and more blind, responsible and debtor toward God, stubborn, angry, and impatient as well. Thus, that person will go losing spiritual sensibility, going from indifference and dimness to more serious sins and sacrileges, as well as losing her vocation and being lost for ever, unless the Lord shakes her with a stroke of his triumphant grace (which happens seldom) or with a serious tribulation through sickness or the like.

May each Daughter of Divine Zeal watchfully beware of approaching the sacred table and receiving Holy Communion while having an upset conscience or an arrogant, obstinate heart full of even venial sins, because they will lead to mortal ones! Each Daughter of Divine Zeal will receive Holy Communion without having any sin, after purifying herself in the sacrament of reconciliation. She will also delete the daily defects, which are rather involuntary owing to human weakness, by pleading guilty, repenting lovingly, and pledging to amend. She will approach the angels' table with a pure heart, deepest

humility, ardent love, and a living faith, seeing Jesus, who is going to her full of love, through the eyes of the spirit. She will approach the sacred table with loving trust and burning longing in order to receive her supreme goodness, her life, her divine lover, her beloved, the breath of her soul. She will be hungry and thirsty for Jesus. Her natural affections, feelings, faculties, and sensibility must be transformed through this spiritual intelligence, this hunger, and thirst for Jesus! (5)

b) Aridity

Due to complete aridity and languidness, a person sometimes happens to be unable to form even a sensible feeling or desire for Jesus. Whatever it may be, she must meet everything. As much as possible, the intellect must know who is going to be received and the dispositions required for such a reception. The intellect is the will's owner. In other terms, we are the masters of our will because we can perform the acts of will through our free will. Despite aridity of feelings and lack of sensible devotion, the person who wants to receive a profitable Communion is able to produce acts of love, contrition, humility, living faith, desire, hunger and thirst for Jesus, and such a disposition is by no means less meritorious for us or less pleasing to God than the acts of the sensible devotion. Repeating every day the acts of pure will in the preparation for the Communion also deserves from divine goodness the loving fire of sensible devotion as well as holy, loving thirst for Jesus. It can be said with the prophet David: « My soul is thirsting for you, my flesh is longing for you » (Ps. 63, 1-2).

Till now we have considered the state of aridity in itself; now, we are going to consider it in its connection with ourselves, specifically as an effect of our sins as

well as a punishment we deserve. Our lapses and relapses, insincere confession without humility and resolve, behavior diverging from religious perfection, disregard and indifference in prayer, and so many failures and malice are the cause of our aridity. This is the why Jesus withdraws from us. Aridity remains even after a person has received Jesus in the Holy Communion. She needs to examine herself in her innermost, to plead guilty before God, humiliate herself, confess, and amend her life, striving to observe the rules perfectly and to achieve the religious virtues.

Whatever may be the cause of aridity, the Daughter of Divine Zeal will strive to make acts of love, desire, humility and the like when she receives Holy Communion.

Through prayer we may win everything. O soul, if you really want to receive Holy Communion with great fervor, feeling, and understanding of the great mystery of Jesus' love toward you, but you feel arid and unable to anything, pray to Jesus who will have mercy, will forgive, and will grant you love, humility, faith, desire, hunger, and thirst for himself.

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c) Remote preparation (6)

The preparation for the Holy Communion is remote and immediate. Remote preparation consists in a religious irreproachable life. Daughters of Divine Zeal who receive Holy Communion frequently, please strive to be acceptable to the divine spouse Jesus so that he may rest and find pleasure in your heart when you receive him in the holy Eucharistic Communion. You will reach it by perfectly practicing the virtues, aiming at being prepared for the time you receive Jesus supreme goodness in the innermost of your soul. You will direct the daily acts of virtue, patience, work, mortification, prayer, spiritual reading

silence, and everything toward the accomplishment of this goal. By doing so you always remember that you will receive Communion the following day.

If during the day you now and then invite, desire, and sigh for Jesus in the Sacrament through ejaculatory prayers and spiritual communions, you please Jesus very much and help yourself. What's next? Knowing that the following day you will receive Jesus, as a faithful spouse you remember him even in the night, at least spiritually, intending to sigh for him at each breath, to receive him at each beat of heart while sleeping. You will put this intention in the night prayer, before going to sleep. So, you will fall asleep thinking of the holy tabernacle and longing to receive Jesus. By doing so, you can say: « I am sleeping, but my heart is vigilant. »

If you happen to awake in the night, before falling asleep again think a moment, desire, crave for the supreme goodness in the Sacrament, that is looking and waiting to enter your heart.

But to crown your remote preparation, you will profit by a more precious time the following day, when you have Jesus in your heart. While giving thanks to Jesus after Communion, you can make the best preparation for the following Communion. Like two people who love each other very tenderly, after staying together in loving conversation and expressions of love, before parting they make an appointment to see each other again as soon as possible. Jesus and you will do the same in Communion. Jesus will ask you to receive him the following day, and you, full of his love In spite of knowing that you are unworthy to accept such a lovely invitation, will ask him that he himself admit you to the Eucharistic mystical table and prepare you to so great a fortune. You will

also offer the actual Communion as the best remote preparation for tomorrow's Communion.

d) Immediate preparation

If we are as fervent as we are careful in making our remote preparation, we will also act likewise in the immediate one. A person, who has an appointment with the king, thinks of how to dress, how to behave, which words to say, the court formality which she must comply with. But, when she is in the tabby expecting to be introduced to the presence of the king, then she concentrates her thoughts. Having a palpitation of reverential fear, she gathers in her mind everything she has planned: how to introduce herself, how to revere, how to talk.

Will you be indifferent and thoughtless when you are about to receive in your heart the divine lover, your adorable Jesus, your king of love, the sovereign creator of heaven and earth, before whom the powers of heaven tremble, who is waiting and longing for you with sweetness, love, and gentleness? God forbid! Daughter of Divine Zeal, when you enter the church to attend the great sacrifice of the mass, when you are before the tabernacle you must consider that Jesus is there waiting for you - he has been waiting for you for 20 centuries -that his divine Heart is longing to enter your heart through the Communion you are going to receive. Think of him in the tabernacle, staying in that prison of love as waiting for you only, yearning that you will free him by taking him in your heart enlarged by generous love. Please make your immediate preparation with these loving thoughts.

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e) Thanksgiving (7)

The Daughters of Divine Zeal are obliged by rule to give a combination of thanksgiving after the Communion.

Practically, such thanks are going to be prolonged till the next Communion, succeeding each other in the following way, according to our institute's custom and rule:

1. We start speaking of the immediate thanksgiving, which is the most important, beneficial, indispensable, and dutiful.

As soon as the sister has received her divine lover Jesus supreme goodness, she will deeply understand that God of heaven and earth, the omnipotent Jesus, the lover of souls is living in her innermost being. Through the eyes of faith she will see Jesus the way in which her devotion will let her to see him, such as watching and smiling, seeking love, offering grace, working in her soul to correct and purify her. Through the ears of the soul she will listen to him who is saying lovely words, teaching, admonishing sweetly, exhorting to amend as well as to improve in his love, observance, humility, and elect virtues.

What will you do in those fortunate moments, Daughter of Divine Zeal? You will annihilate yourself in the presence of your beloved, sinking in love. Everything will disappear from your mind, but Jesus. Both church and sisters will be as non-existent, because Jesus will form a temple in your heart, where the angels and the saints will adore, exalt, and bless him for the great mercy he granted to you. If devotion allows, you may see in the shrine of your soul your sweetest Virgin Mary as mother of mercy who is hugging, thanking, and praying to beloved Jesus for you.

What will you do in those fortunate moments? You will offer, surrender yourself to Jesus, mourn over your sins and past life perhaps untidy, weep loving tears for your daily imperfections and perhaps hidden malice. You will sink in thanksgiving and protestations of love, asking

ferently to love him as much as he deserves or as much as the saints have loved him or as much as the saints and the angels love him in heaven. You will pray to the sweetest mother of mercy to join you to her love for Jesus. Together with her you will ask Jesus to grant you the virtues necessary to please him in full. Furthermore, you will implore with the greatest fervor and interest the zeal for his glory and the salvation of souls as well as an increasing spirit of the prayer to win good workers to the holy Church. You will be recollected in yourself till the end of the mass, unless obedience, customs, and rules oblige you to say local prayers together with the sisters.

What we have said now concerns the first, most important thanksgiving for the Communion. The sister who practices it carefully will be happy, but miserable will be the one who neglects it! If you have approached the sacred table with relaxed, upset, unrecollected conscience, holding a grudge against someone, being indocile, proud, full of attachment and impatience, dirty with faults, riotous at the admonishments, unworthy, and having nearly mortal sins, what expressions of love can you have with your beloved Jesus? He will come displeased to you, and you will become more and more blind. Oh, daughter, beware of such a dangerous state! Please be converted to Jesus. Humiliate yourself, pray, beg forgiveness for your bad examples. Confess with all contrition, then go to your mother superior, hear her admonitions and exhortations, and at last receive Communion! How pleased Jesus will be! How he will embrace you! And you will be faithful to him!

2. Let us talk of the second thanksgiving. It will be made soon after the mass and the prayer in common to the most holy crucifix to win the plenary indulgence

for purgatory's souls. This prayer will be never neglected.

You will always make the first thanksgiving mentally, but the second one may be done mentally or by reading a booklet or by both in perfect silence, lasting about 15 minutes. In the solemnities it lasts longer. You will repeat the acts of love, humility, repentance, offering, and prayer according to the transport of your devotion.

3. The sisters will make the third thanksgiving in common. A reader will read it, and the others will follow it by mind, recollected and contrite. Usually they will use the one which begins with: « Exalt my heart », etc., but the mother superior may sometimes replace it with others that are expressive and moving.

4. The Daughters of Divine Zeal will make the fourth thanksgiving, which must be habitual during the day, by offering their actions, the religious practices, the work, suffering and mortification to the adorable Heart of Jesus as a continuous thanksgiving for the immense grace of having received Jesus along with graces and mercies in their heart. Through this intention, each sister will make the fourth thanksgiving virtually and fruitfully, even though she may be unaware of it during the day.

Who knows how much Jesus is pleased and how many graces he gives to the sister who during the day renews over and over again the intention of a continuous thanksgiving! Jesus will be always present, acting in her heart with his grace and love. But if the sister cannot reach so much because of human weakness, Jesus will be somehow pleased by her good intention and effort.

5. A fifth thanksgiving will be announced after the evening prayers. Recollected, each one will thank the beloved Jesus fervently for the Communion of that day,

will repent for having thanked Jesus unworthily, and will remind herself of the following day's Communion.

f) Most important consideration

In the most holy name of Jesus I urge the present and future Daughters of Divine Zeal to consider that the improvement in the Lord of their humble institute along with its aims depends on receiving frequently the Eucharistic Communion with the dispositions, preparations, and thanksgivings we have expounded above.

The Daughters of Divine Zeal must be convinced that union of love with Jesus in the Communion gives life, existence, growth, fecundity, and firmness to a religious institute. Mutual union with Jesus founds the institute on a firm rock, which hellish powers are unable to throw down nor to impair its beneficial results in the holy Church. A community which joins itself to the celestial spouse through the Eucharistic bonds of holy love delights the divine Heart that will pledge his power and benevolence to protect and improve this community through divine, spiritual, and temporal providence.

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On the contrary, when a community slackens the remote and the immediate preparation for the frequent Holy Communion as well as the adequate thanksgiving, quite the reverse will happen. Jesus is displeased by the indifference of the consecrated people who receive him every day while their hearts are attached to their own ego, while they are full of selfishness, perhaps dirty with serious faults, envy, and grudges. In such a case what are the consequences we have to face? God withdraws his mercies and reduces his graces, and yet he arouses remorse, impulses, and opportunities for conversion. The soul that mixes sins with Communion becomes insensible quickly; hence lukewarmness grows, transgressions

multiply, disease expands making the whole community, or most of it, swerve from the divine spouse. On the other hand, the divine spouse too, withdraws from the community. The observance of the vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity are relaxed; both spiritual and material buildings collapse; prosperity and providence diminish owing to the lack of divine blessings. It is not a surprise if even daily bread fails, because the bread of eternal life is being trampled on.

I heartily recommend that the mother superiors be most watchful, that the sisters receive Holy Communion with the dispositions, devotion, and recollection we have described above, and make the thanksgivings as well.

g) Signs of slackening

The mother superiors have to pay attention to the external signs which reveal the soul's slackening in the good disposition for receiving the Eucharistic Communion. They are: becoming lax in the remote preparation, such as lack of obedience, of silence, and of mutual charity as well as attachment to one's own will and opinion, etc. A close sign is the manifest indifference in approaching the sacred table, even though the people may happen to observe external behavior for human respect, concealing this way the internal indisposition. Slackening is both cause and effect of the Communions received without good disposition. Especially the person who receives Communion after doing wrong by consent and deliberation will easily lapse into anger or impatience with her sisters. She has lost meekness.

The mother superior will ward off so great a disaster by calling the sister to order quickly and gently, charitably and firmly, by making her consider the risk of losing her vocation and becoming lost as well! In such a case, a

good retreat is a good remedy. The mother superior must keep in mind that a sister who does not amend in time, may be contagious. The souls' enemy may cause the same situation to other Religious, and disaster will be complete (S.D.D.Z.).

NOTES

(1) « Each priest will say the canonical hours with great devotion, not by routine. Recollected and contrite in the divine presence, he will meditate on the Holy Spirit's and the Church's divine words, praying for the Christian people* (C.R.).

(2) Remember that our padre was writing to Religious who entered the order when they were already priests.

(3) Obviously, this limitation was valid for that time. The priests were only three and our padre had at heart their offering the holy mass for the institute's particular intentions.

(4) For the new priests: «What does it mean celebrating the mass the first time? It signifies that a most holy aim has been reached as well as that a most sublime, divine action has been accomplished on earth! Each person, however, has a different understanding. The candidate who aspires to the priesthood with no pure intention and recollection, but who was somehow forced and had an imperfect preparation, lacks this alive feeling. On the contrary, the one called kike Aaron to the most high ministry, having a heart full of ardent love, innocence, and virtue, as well as a mind enlightened with the science of prayer and with knowledge of the ecclesiastical disciplines, this candidate desires to feel the innermost relationship with God <in the celebration of his first mass, and longs to continue the redemptive action in the world as though he were to be a new Christ on earth » (For Mons. D'Arrigo's golden priestly jubilee, Sept. 21, 1922)!

(5) Through the decree «Sacred Synod of Trent* Pius X established the conditions to receive frequent or daily Communion. The state of grace and pure intention are the conditions. Pure intention « consists in aiming at pleasing God by receiving Communion, joining Him more

fervently In charity and profiting by that divine medicine against one's own defects and imperfections.» In a preparation prayer on June 28, 1922, our padre gives prominence to the pure intention, which is indispensable for daily Holy Communion. He writes: «I declare that I receive this Holy Communion to please you, because I know you like coming into my heart, not because other people do it nor by routine. I am going to receive this Holy Communion to correct my defects along with my bad inclinations, because you, in the Holy Sacrament, are remedy and health for faulty souls. Since I am frail, I mean to receive you as the divine strength of my soul. Being united with you, may I get enlightenment, strength, and help in order to reach holy virtues. I am going to receive this Holy Communion to become humble, obedient, meek, sincere, and fervent. Since I do not know how to love you, I mean to receive this Holy Communion in order that your Eucharistic Heart, which in the most Holy Sacrament is like the fire of love burning the soul, share your fire of love with me. My beloved Jesus, please come in my heart. I expect, sigh, long for you, please do not be late. Even though I am so fortunate as to receive Holy Communion every day, still I receive today's Communion with as much fervor and love as it were my first Communion or the last one or the viaticum, and then I should present myself before your tribunal for judgment.»

(6) We call the attention on our padre's teaching. He desires that the assiduous care for our individual sanctification be the remote preparation for the most Holy Communion according to the Church's teaching. This page seems an advanced comment on the following declarations and exhortations of Pius XII. The pope teaches that < an abundant rain of grace will come from mass and Holy Communion, if we love the everlasting goods instead of the perishable ones as well as if we bridle our mortal body with voluntary mortifications by imposing what is unpleasant and hard to it » (Mystical Body); furthermore, the pope states that the person willing to share the mysteries of Jesus has to root out from the senses wordy allurements and vices... thus, the ascetic effort aiming at purifying the spirit urges and disposes the faithful's energies to share in the altar's sacrifice with better dispositions and better results... Hence, they come out more enlivened and disposed to prayer and Christian mortification » (God's Mediator).

(7) Be not surprised by our padres's insistence on the thanksgiving for the most Holy Communion. Among the dispositons required in order to receive more abundant fruits from the most Holy Communion, St. Pius X pointed out «a diligent thanksgiving. > Confining ourselves to some quotations from God's Mediator, we report that Pius XII wants us after communion to < linger in intimacy

with the divine Savior... keeping ourselves so close to Christ as to plunge in his most holy soul... in a sweetest, beneficial talk... Liturgy requires people receiving Holy Communion to thank God properly... because thanksgiving is absolutely necessary to enjoy the Eucharist's supernatural treasures, more abundantly.»

Both the saints and the masters of spirit insist so strongly on this point that St. Vincent of Paul sums up their mind in this saying: «Whoever makes the thanksgiving well, does everything well.» In his Inner Life Fr. Dagnino points out the great importance of a most accurate, prolonged thanksgiving, which he wants to be at least of a half an hour; Fr. Colosio, editor of the magazine Asceticism and Mystics, in his preface to this work shares completely the author's idea even as reaction to «some strange pseudo-liturgical well known theories which minimize the value of this natural completion, of this obvious, morally indispensable cooperation aiming at psychologically rooting the Eucharistic graces in the souls.»

CHAPTER XXI

THE DIVINE COMMAND

I declare that I deeply understand our Lord Jesus Christ's divine words which form this humble Institute's distinctive character. The words that our Lord Jesus Christ said more than once when he saw the crowds in Judea abandoned like flock without a shepherd: « There is a large harvest, but few workers to gather it in. Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest. » I will consider these words as addressed to this plows institute's congregants In a particular way and as though the congregants had received them from Jesus Christ's adorable lips. In this spirit, I consider myself fortunate, because I have been called to cultivate this divine word, to which I mean to commit my life. I will often consider the appropriateness of this mission and the vow of obedience to this divine command, to which the institute's members are committed.

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The Church is the great harvest of the people all over the world of any class and condition. I will always consider that most of the harvest In the infidels' lands, in the countries separated from the Catholic Church, in so many Catholic cities and countryside perishes for lack of workers I will feel my heart broken by so great a ruin which knocks down the tender harvest of the new generations, and will share in the most holy Heart of Jesus' intimate pains for such a great, continuous, secular ruin. Remembering the divine words: « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest », I will hold that no remedy is more efficacious than this one commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ to save the people, the nations, society, the Church, especially children and youth as well as to evangelize the poor and to get all spiritual and temporal goods for humankind. Such a command urges us to entreat the

most holy Heart of Jesus, his most holy mother, the angels and the saints so that the Holy Spirit raise powerful vocations, most elect souls, zealous and charitable priests for the salvation of souls, and God, himself, create the most elect apostles and very holy souls in all human classes. I will hold that the efforts of the holy Church's prelates and of the people responsible for forming holy priests is of no avail, unless God himself forms the priests. This does not happen, unless we resort to our Lord Jesus Christ's sovereign remedy, obeying faithfully, zealously, and enthusiastically the divine command: « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest ».

I will dedicate my life and my intentions to the prayer of the « Evangelical Rogation of the most holy Heart of Jesus, » paying careful attention and zeal to it. Following our constitutions I will care that our Lord Jesus Christ's command, so far underestimated, be known and obeyed everywhere. Specifically, I will strive so that the two clergies, the holy Church's prelates, the pious souls, the virgins consecrated to Jesus, the seminarians, the poor, and the children pray to God that he will send out Innumerable perfect workers in the priesthood and laity for the sanctification and salvation of all the peoples. To make this «rogation» universal, with the Lord's help I will be ready to meet any sacrifice, even to give up my life.

1. CARVING IT IN THE HEART

The Little Poor of Jesus' Heart must keep the divine Savior's word in her heart, carve it there, and feel his supreme interest deeply. Like the loving mystical dove, she will wail in the presence of God to win from divine mercy holy vocations to the priesthood and will pray for the sanctification of the priests. To keep this prayer alive and to qualify their mission, the Little Poor of Jesus' Heart will put on their chest a badge in the shape of Jesus' Heart with the words: Pray, therefore, etc. This motto

forms their humble institute's emblem and specifies the zeal to which they are committed for God's glory and the salvation of souls (C.P.).

Beginning with the double proclamation of the divine superiors, the Rogationist of Jesus' Heart will love and respect more his institute's sacred emblem: Pray, therefore, etc. He will imagine the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, the divine superior in the tabernacle, who afflicted for lack of priests shows St. Luke and St. Matthew's verses (Lk. X, 2 - Mt. IX, 37) as well as the souls abandoned like a flock without a shepherd. He invites him to look at the harvest of souls, the people, and the works that are getting lost for lack of workers, and says: « Here is the rule that I and my most holy mother, your sweet, benign, loving superiors give you. Do not get tired of praying in my name to the owner of the harvest (me, the Father, and my most holy mother) to quickly send out numerous, holy workers to the mystical harvest. You yourself strive to become a good worker for my glory and the salvation of souls in whatever mission I will appoint you (From the Little Rules of the Two Proclamations).

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While praying for holy vocations, the Little Poor of Jesus' Heart will ask God to help many poor youths who are longing to become priests and to grant perseverance to those who are answering God's call.

Clerics. The seminaries are the fields of our Lord Jesus Christ's Church, where the mystical plantations are cultivated. The tender buds which will feed all the people on earth are the clerics. Oh, the beautiful hope of the coming harvest! The luxuriant generation of the mystical harvest's future workers! The clerics are the most beautiful, the dearest share of Jesus' Heart! Beautiful is the plantation in bloom, when the fruits begin springing up. Then it is more beautiful and gentle than

after its harvest. Likewise, the generation of the future priests smiles beautifully at the mystical farmer's eyes. With how much love, care, and jealousy the divine lover looks at them! They are the first fruits of his love, the future saviors of, the souls he redeemed by his Most Precious Blood! The fate of millions and millions of souls is bound to their success! Therefore, this elect generation, this hope of the most holy Heart of Jesus will be the most cherished, holy, and pure thought of Jesus Heart's Little Poor (C.P.).

It is necessary to bring into evidence the gratuitous, undeserved predestination of God to form the pious foundation of the two institutes that are dedicated to the adorable Heart of Jesus and are committed to his divine command of the Evangelical Rogation. His command keeps the secret of the world's and of society's salvation, were it made an institution. The institution comes into existence by the vow of obedience to this command, by the rule binding its members to pray, by the emblem decorating the congregants' chest and by the expressive names of the two orders: Rogationists of Jesus' Heart (from the Latin word Rogate) and Daughters of Divine Zeal; either order must follow Jesus' Heart's divine zeal, from which the divine command came forth!

Both institutes are born of, in, and from Rogate. They have almost received these ardent words from the divine teacher's adorable lips, feel themselves intimately penetrated by the Rogate, have absorbed it as the hope of their existence in Jesus and in his longing for the Father's glory along with the salvation of the souls. These institutes are not satisfied by fulfilling the command among themselves, nor following only the prayer's command that the Lord of the harvest send out workers, but they also apply two additional meanings. The point of fact

is that God's word may be applied limitlessly, and the more it is contemplated, the more it is esteemed.

What is the first binding meaning? It flows from the word « workers. » Committed to each word of this mystical decalogue (it is made of ten words: « Rogate - ergo - dominum - messis - ut - mittat - operarios - in - messem - suam »), we should feel ashamed to ask God and the most holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary for good workers to the mystical harvest of the souls, if we ourselves were not striving with all our soul, heart, mind, and body to be good workers with God's help, our good will, and pure intention. The divine words asking for workers to the immense harvest of the souls keep ourselves ready, miserable as we may be, to favor with God's help any charitable, beneficent work, either spiritual or temporal, whenever we may apply our efforts to it.

The second meaning flows from the word ergo. If we meditate on the small word « ergo », which means therefore, the prayer's validity and efficacy gain value. The adverb « therefore » summarizes the precedent reasons, proofs, and reasonableness as well as the application that the people make to the subject.

To understand the therefore's importance when it is related to the prayer's efficacy to win numerous and elect priests to the holy Church, we report the reasons why the divine teacher, thirsty for souls, commanded many times his prayer of his divine zealous Heart to the apostles, to the disciples, and to all the followers.

This therefore binds, urges, almost compels us to answer directly the command to win holy vocations of new priests, new ministers, a new creation of divine omnipotence and mercy, new angels of the divine priestly ministry through insistent, humble, and trustful prayers. Desirous of nothing else but divine glory and salvation

of souls, may these ministers share in the divine thirst of our Lord Jesus Christ, who longed and longs for the eternal salvation of all. May they grow in the most elect virtues and in the beneficial ecclesiastical science, which inclines them to the perfect practice of the holy ministry. As new apostles, may they hurl themselves in the midst of the souls that Jesus Christ redeemed with his Most Precious Blood in order to win them to the virtue, grace, and eternal life through ecclesiastical law, fervor, faith, and charity!

Oh, how happy are those who understand the divine command: Pray, therefore... (From various records of our padre).

2. THE GREAT REVELATION

The evangelists St. Luke and St. Matthew registered our Lord Jesus Christ's great word.

St. Matthew says: As he saw the crowds, his heart was filled with pity for them, because they were worried and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. So he said to his disciples, « There is a large harvest, but few workers to gather it in. Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest » (Mt. 9, 36-38).

St. Luke (10, 2): he said to them, « There is a large harvest, but few workers to gather it in. Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest. »

The meaning of these words is obvious. Harvest means the people; workers means the priests as well as those who are in charge with saving the people entrusted to them: the people are many, but God's ministers few, therefore Jesus said: Pray to the owner of the harvest,

that is to say, pray to God that he will send out numerous priests to his Church for the salvation of all.

Rogate - it means pray - implies both exhortation and command, and each Christian is obliged to obey it; hence all of us have to pray to reach this goal, because Jesus Christ wants it.

These passages from the holy Gospel make a great revelation:

1. First, they manifest the desire of the most holy Heart of Jesus, who was to create the true, eternal priesthood on earth in order to perform the divine cult, to offer forever the victim of infinite value, and to continue on earth his divine ministry of eternal salvation for souls. Thirsty for souls as he was, Jesus could not help letting burst forth this great word, this divine command. To quote a biblical phrase we say that his zeal was devouring his divine Heart far his greatest interest.

2. Second, through those symbolical words Jesus represented the holy Church, the whole world, and each social organization as a harvest which should be cultivated by good workers to fill the mystical barns with copious crops. If the harvest is neglected, it perishes miserably.

3. Third, through these words our Lord Jesus Christ pointed out that his priests are the means of salvation for the mystical harvest of souls; no doubt that obedience to this divine command is the secret key that saves the Church and society. Such a prayer is the holy Church's greatest means to expand the kingdom of God and to reach all goods in time and eternity. (1)

4. Fourth, our Lord wants us to understand that to obtain this priceless good we have to pray to the owner

of the harvest, who is God, who is himself. He taught us that his priests do not come by chance, nor are self-formed, nor are formed by human effort. They come from divine mercy that creates, begets, and gives them to the world. He teaches us that we do not get them, unless we pray! Isn't it obvious? It is God that sends forth the saints on earth. Isn't it a greatest mercy of his? How can we pretend to have it without asking for it? Our Lord Jesus Christ's command is very clear: « There is a large harvest, but few workers to gather it in. Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest. » (2)

In reference to the holy Catholic Church and society, this divine word refers to all goods and salvation in time and eternity. And yet, for about 20 centuries this great word, which is our Lord Jesus Christ's definite, repeated command, has remained almost buried or quite unknown in the gospel, in spite of keeping a great secret of salvation for the Church and society. Oh, God's inexplicable mysteries! Although it was so clear, God kept it secret perhaps to reveal it in our times when religion is depopulated, and when the cities and the peoples are lacking the greatest means of salvation (Preface, Precious Adhesions, 1921).

3. BUT FEW WORKERS...

Jesus makes us hear his painful wail: « There is a large harvest, but few workers to gather it in. » When our Lord Jesus Christ said these words, he was looking through all the centuries at the cities, the peoples, the regions of the world till the end of time, and lamented over the lack of evangelical workers, which at times is worse than other times.

If we look at our pitiable times, we cannot help sharing in the adorable Jesus' Heart's pains for the great lack of people dedicated to the mystical harvest. The Church is impoverished, the souls perish, and the desolation foreseen by Daniel is expanding under the eyes of the shepherds of the Church. All of them experience the lack of priests in the dioceses, cities, and countrysides.

A bishop wrote to me that 42 country parishes of his diocese have no priest. Other bishops complain too, some of them more, some less. What about the people? My God, what an abyss of misery! And yet, the regions lacking ministers perhaps have innocent children who would feel drawn to ecclesiastical vocation, if they were cultivated in piety and the love of God.

The lack of financial means sometimes prevents the parents from encouraging their children to enter the ecclesiastical status; in this case, the seed of piety instilled by the Lord fails to grow, because the children are not cultivated, or are hired for a quick profit, or the families are indifferent. In short, many are the reasons why so many youths remain in the world to the prejudice of their soul and the souls of others, while they might have become holy priests.

Meanwhile, who saves the new generations? Who breaks the bread of God's word to the children who ask for it, but do not find any? Who teaches the poor youths so much betrayed everywhere? « Let the children come to me » (Mc. 10, 14), said Jesus Christ. But, who lets the children go to Jesus? Perhaps the philanthropic societies? Or the civil colleges? Or the protestants, who as richly hired emissaries plunged in everywhere after the European war to open kindergartens - my God! - and schools and colleges and orphanages free of charge

in order to get hold of children and dechristianize them, teaching that Jesus Christ founded no Church, or that the Church is invisible, or that praying to the most holy Mary offends Jesus Christ, or that using sacred images is against the commandments, or that the Eucharistic Sacrament is not Jesus Christ, or that confession has been fabricated by the priests, etc. etc.? My God, what a ruin for the souls!

Oh! How many youths go astray in their prime of life because no good evangelical worker receives them, showing the way of piety through pious unions, associations, good readings, holy industries, and true zeal. The endangered honesty of common and civil young women perishes, for no minister guides them to the sacraments through untiring preaching, hearing confessions, and teaching. No one helps or shelters the poorest among them through resources of charity. How many beggars are immersed in crass ignorance because no priest teaches and relieves them! Who blesses and legitimates marriages? Who safeguard the virgins who long for the mystical wedding, joining them with the divine spouse? Who assists the dying when they are on the threshold of eternity? Oh, how many sick people languish, dying without confession, viaticum, and extreme unction because no priest is available!

Impiety, unbelief, anarchy of any holy principle in faith and civilization make their way more and more into the world. Debauchery, bad press, sects, plots, revolutions, misery, and desperation are increasing.

If we look at the infidels' regions, which are the most extensive, our heart bleeds for the abandoned souls which are of as much value as ours, are redeemed by the adorable blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and

are willing to meet the truth. How many thousands of not-baptized children are eaten by animals or are thrown down by wild parents in a river or at the foot of a tree, still gasping! How many thousands of wild people grow brutalized, dying without knowing God and the why of their existence.

All this happens for lack of workers in the mystical harvest, for the missionaries are not enough for the needs of the infidel's regions.

In short, today we can repeat our Lord Jesus Christ's words: There is a large harvest, but few workers!

4. PRAY, THEREFORE

What is the remedy?

Our Lord pointed to a great, universal remedy by saying: « Pray, THEREFORE, to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest. » This supreme, infallible remedy is tied to prayer. We called this remedy infallible because our Lord cannot be mistaken. If he pointed to prayer as to a remedy, it means that the prayer will be heard, otherwise he would have not recommended it. It is as though he had said: if you ask me for workers for the souls' harvest, I will give them. But, it also means: if you do not ask me for them, you will not have as many good workers as you need. (3)

Several things Jesus commanded in the gospel; experience from centuries teaches that everytime the people followed those divine commands, they reached what God has promised. So, the Lord will bless the dioceses and the seminaries that pray for vocations, solving all their problems, and enabling the world to prepare

itself for the execution of the promise of one flock and one shepherd. (4)

Let us ask the God of mercy and of holiness for phalanxes of apostles. If we pray, he cannot help giving them, since he pledged his word. A radical remedy is at stake: let us apply ourselves to this holy radicalism.

When God punishes a people with the greatest punishment, he deprives it of good priests. This is the worst misfortune for a city. The greatest divine mercy is God's sending out good workers for the salvation of souls as he did when he sent on earth his only Son, whose representatives are the priests.

If both the prayer to win priests according to God and the works to propagate this prayer were coming from a simple inspiration and from the natural consideration of its utility, all the people should preferably answer such an advertisement for its high aim. We know instead that Jesus Christ himself commanded this universal prayer of the highest importance, and we find it remarkable that St. Luke reports Jesus Christ's divine exhortation by using the verb in the imperfect tense, which means - used to say, - pointing out how insistently Jesus inculcated it.

We also remark that since our Lord Jesus Christ commanded us to pray for good priests, the labor of the bishops along with the seminaries' directors only reaches an artificial culture of priests, if such a command is neglected. The Church will have half-priestly vocations for lack of grace, since only the most extensive obedience to that command through the most extensive, interested prayer to win priests according to God may gain such a grace. Oh! Only the Powerful who is able to rouse descendants to Abraham from the rocks, can raise such priests (Lk. 3, 8).

5. THE POPES' CONCERN

Let us remember the work of the last popes who concerned themselves with this spirit of prayer, starting something as the prelude to the worldly increase of obedience to this divine command.

Under the pontificate of Pius X, the writer of these pages who has started three institutions with this divine prayer, gave an account of them to the head of the holy Church, who once said: « I want to champion this prayer. »

Later, through His Eminence Merry del Vail he replied to the director of these institutes, and expressed his pleasure because so many personalities of the ecclesiastical hierarchy had taken to heart this command of Christ, and joined his prayer to the prayer of so many members, with pleasure. (5)

When I submitted a humble petition to His Holiness Benedict XV, he joined the universal pious union of the Evangelical Rogation of Jesus' Heart, and concerned himself with this command by saying that Jesus gave it authoritatively. He praised the institute's aim and on May 10, 1921, spontaneously granted a plenary indulgence to those who would pray before the Holy Sacrament for an hour in order to win holy vocations. Furthermore, considering the great lack of missionaries for the infidels' conversion, all the popes desire, he published a beautiful prayer to win holy missionaries for the blooming harvest of the regions of the infidels, giving prominence to the divine command: Rogate Ergo.

Almost contemporaneously and under the auspices of His Eminence Card. Vicar, a Pious Union committed to pray for the winning of good workers to the holy Church was formed in Rome.

We cannot help enjoying the appearance of the first ray of the rising sun of this spirit of prayer or universal rogation through the working of two popes. This rising from the high began advancing splendidly and shiningly since the early days of Pius XI's pontificate when the Pious Union of prayer was presented to him, and he praised this prayer as the work of the works; which expression is worthy of consideration.

Inspired word: God spoke through his vicar!

Praying for holy vocations is the work par excellence because Jesus Christ commands it and because the Catholic priesthood will bloom in the holy Church by winning holy and powerful vocations from God. Since the Catholic priesthood is Jesus Christ's priesthood, his word comes true: « As the Father sent me, so I send you »... and all good follows, being the priests the salt and the light of the world. The Church, the dioceses, and the history of the regions of the infidels show how much good came from the Catholic priesthood. Aren't the priests the perpetuators of the divine redemption? How many holy priests did we have in all times and how many holy institutions did they found!

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When the prayer commanded by Jesus Christ to win priests to the Church is constituted and organized through an institution, it must be called the work of the works. Well understood, this expression means: « a work dedicated to this aim is the mother of many good works, generator of great, holy activities for the greatest glory of God, the greater salvation of souls, and the amplest fulfillment of the Church's divine mission in the world. As a matter of fact, this is the work that wins the elect of God, bringing about the saints in the Church. »

Pius XI arranged a yearly day of prayer in Rome (as well as in the dioceses all over the world), aiming at

bending the divine clemency to eliminate the lack of priests - what a great punishment! - by enriching the holy Church with plenty of holy vocations.

6. NECESSARY PRAYER

The holy Church and the peoples all over the world need this prayer because God fixed beforehand that the priests guide human beings to the truth and salvation. (6) God also established that even redemption is useless without the priests, since they are entrusted with continuing it and applying its fruits. For that reason Jesus said to the priests: « You are the light of the world, you are the salt of the earth »; but there is no light without the lantern shining on the lamp-stand; there is no way to preserve food from corruption without the salt keeping it.

Both! Church and society are in trouble. Jesus Christ's mystical bride cries for lack of evangelical workers, while society's ruin increases!

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Wherever good appears, faith blooms, the souls find salvation, the youth grow faithful, the poor are relieved, the good works rise. Wherever religion is supported, defended, and protected, error is defeated. Wherever the laity is Catholic and active, there you find the priest's work. It is the work of the bishops, of the holy Church's prelates, and of the clergies that operates all the good you find on earth; but all people receive light and splendor from the supreme pontiff, who is the Church's sun receiving light from God directly. This great ecclesiastical hierarchy is made of elect workers who are appointed by God to the divine ministry. The world receives life from its splendor.

Please imagine for a moment the priesthood dying

out as the sun dies at sunset. Wouldn't the world stay in darkness? Where would you find God's cult, the sacraments, the Eucharist, God's word, faith, and charity? All of them would end!

Now, please imagine the opposite. Suppose that the earth is, full of God's elect ministers, of numerous, holy priests: one for every hundred persons and all of them are as holy as the ancient apostles. Wouldn't you think it would be the sudden salvation and happiness of all souls, no one excepted?

Oh, unfathomable judgments of God! The Most High conditioned plenty of good workers in the mystical harvest to the prayer to win them (News and Registration of the Sacred Allies Supporters).

Praying to the owner of the harvest is also necessary because the sending out of the workers to the harvest as well as the abundant gathering are of utility to all people, whose salvation we must solicit and promote mutually through prayer.

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Let us acknowledge, therefore, that innumerable goods for the holy Church and the peoples may come from the faithful obedience to this divine command as well as from the universal spreading of this universal Rogation.

Like efficacious grace, vocations come from high. If we neglect the command of our Lord Jesus Christ to pray, vocations will not come nor will we achieve the effects of so many works and culture. In fact, we are unable to infuse efficacious, fervent vocations; only the Church's unanimous, fervent prayer is able to do it. If based on prayer, the bishops' work in the seminaries may become immensely useful and efficacious; the same may occur in the religious orders. To conclude, we insist on saying that the remedy is prayer; by making no use

of It, we slight it, and we will suffer the consequences from lack of good vocations.

How is it that priests sometimes abound, while their priestly work is lacking? And yet, the work of priestly formation in the Church is very active. Both dioceses and religious orders have plenty of seminaries for youths along with blooming novitiates. For that reason we make a point of Providence wanting action and prayer combined to produce their effect. Praying to the Lord that he will send out good workers to the holy Church without working according to our duty and possibility to reach such a goal is a vain prayer, it is like a « noisy gong or a clanging bell » (I Cor. 13, 1). Vice versa, working for the priestly formation without praying is a useless work, « wasting its punches » (1 Cor. 9, 26). Aiming at forming priests without asking them from the Lord is cultivating priests artificially. True vocation comes from on high through prayer (Rules for the Sacred Allies Supporters).

7. PRIESTHOOD IS FOUNTAIN OF MERITS

The spreading of this divine prayer brings about many particular graces to souls. Oh! How do they open their mind to understand the priesthood's importance!

A great benefit is the understanding of the merits they may acquire. (7) St. Vincent de Paul thinks that no good work deserves so much as the formation of one priest for the holy Church. Whoever forms a priest for the Church shares in the spiritual maternity of the Church and in the good the priest will operate such as the administration of the sacraments, preaching, and the salvation of souls, profiting spiritually and

temporally because God blesses him in everything. When the priest celebrates the daily sacrifice of the mass, the person who formed him (either alive or dead) will share the best of it.

To cheer ourselves in this spirit of prayer, we should look at the example of our Lord, the most holy Virgin, and the saints.

Jesus Christ « did and taught » (Act. 1, 1). Before ordering his apostles and his disciples to win evangelical workers through prayer, he himself prayed for it. In fact, before calling the holy apostles he prayed all night on a mountain (Lk. 6, 12). (8) Where did the Catholic apostolate of all times come from? Who brought about the apostles, the confessors, the saints, and the untiring workers of all times?

« His mother treasured all these things in her heart » (Lk. 2,51). Did Mary keep her divine son's words idle in her heart, as the lazy servant did with the money? Not at all. She untiringly did what her son commanded, never eating the Eucharistic bread idly, but winning the altar's ministers with her prayer from then on.

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We think that the apostles did the same. When the Holy Spirit reminded them what Jesus had said and commanded, how they obeyed zealously!

Also Alapide thinks so when he explains the above passages from St. Matthew and St. Luke. In fact, before joining the new apostle Matthias to the Sacred College by drawing lots, the apostles prayed (Act. 1, 24).

The holy Church makes us repeat in the apostles' preface the following beautiful, remarkable words: « It is truly worthy, right, convenient, and beneficial that we pray insistently, o Lord eternal shepherd, not to abandon your flock. »

8. PRIESTHOOD IS FOUNTAIN OF GOOD

Only the Catholic priesthood can spread the light of the truth all over the world. Our Lord Jesus Christ said to the priests: « You are like salt for all mankind. But, if salt loses its taste, there is no way to make it salty again... You are like light for the whole world » (Mt. 5, 13-14). It is as though he had said: how can the souls find salvation without ministers?

All complain about the pitiable situation of so many cities and nations. Well then, God made the nations curable, and no means is more beneficial than plenty of evangelical workers.

What institution of faith and charity can be conceived without the Catholic priesthood? Aren't the priests the new Christ sent to the world as Jesus himself was sent by the Father?... Only the priesthood is able both to destroy the kingdom of sin and to change the face of the earth. Its power is unlike the worldly power; it is a divine force, a miraculous secret attracting hearts and making the contrary powers, terrestrial and hellish, impotent. Nineteen centuries of Christianity show and strengthen this truth evidently. Without the priesthood's divine efficacy it is impossible to explain both the supreme prodigy of the apostles, who regenerated humankind through the cross' foolishness, and the wonders that the apostolical men worked to support the Church and save souls. Also the Catholic laity is a fountain of innumerable workers. But, how could the Catholic laity exist without the priesthood which creates it directly or indirectly? And the sacred virgins, who commit themselves to the spiritual and temporal beneficence of the neighbor, are also daughters of the Catholic priesthood.

The divine word is always a sublime synthesis which

holds innumerable mysteries, spreading manifold teachings to us.

The divine Rogate ergo must be considered not only in relation to the priests who are raised by the supreme vocations obtained by the obedience to the divine command, but also in relation to the persons that God raises for the good of his Church and for the souls.

As some persons sow and others harvest, some people water the blooming seed with their tears and others come home happy with the reaped sheaves, some separate wheat from straw and others keep it in the barns and others distribute it, so several agents work for the eternal salvation of the souls in the social classes. (9)

The first agents are the princes of the nations, the kings, the statesmen, and the government or administration high officers, who are able to cooperate with the Church and the Catholic priesthood for the salvation of the souls. Oh, how much the culture of the souls' mystical harvest depends on those who are in power! The Catholic, pious rulers who are children of the holy Church, fearing, loving God, and humbly submitting themselves to Jesus Christ's vicar, are the religion's right hand because they are able to do a very great good in the mystical field of the souls' harvest.

For that reason the holy Church wants the faithful to pray for peace and agreement among the Christian princes, placing suitable prayers in the liturgy; therefore, when they want to carry out that great command of Jesus' Heart's divine zeal by praying to win good workers to the holy Church, they have to put the special intention to win rulers according to God's will.

Good workers of the mystical harvest are also the

educators, because education implies the most holy Heart of Jesus' interests. Plenty of bad educators are the scourge, the hurricane, the storm, the tornado, which overthrows, upsets, and engulfs the earth! Bad educators are the *atheistical* or miscreant or dishonest teachers; poor the pupils who have such teachers!

Obedience to the divine Rogate also implies the duty to ask the divine goodness for sending out teachers, educators, and directors of the institutes who are believers, church-goers, and God-fearing. They can teach the mind and educate the heart of their pupils.

This prayer also helps the parents as those who handle the great harvest of the new generations; through this prayer they receive enlightenment and grace from God, edify their children, keep them away from dangers, educate them in a holy manner, and present them to God in compliance with their mission.

But, how few are the parents such as these, how often house and family are a dreadful enemy of the human being! Education was properly defined: «The most delicate art placed in the most inexpert hands. »

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Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest...

9. PRAYER STRENGTHENING ACTION

What is the value of action without prayer? Do not people work in vain, if they want to build the house without God's help? « Every good gift and every perfect present comes from heaven; it comes down from God, the Creator of heavenly lights » (James 1, 17).

If we want good ministers and holy vocations of elect workers in the mystical harvest, we must pray because the vocation prayer as obedience to the divine command is indispensable. In the first centuries of the Church, commenting on this passage of St. Matthew,

S. Hilary says: «God gives us this gift through prayer. » In his fervent prayer to the Most Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, St. Albert the Great exclaims: « O Most Precious Blood, we adore you in the holy Eucharist where you stay substantially... Please pour out on the Church, fecundate her with the saints, enrich her with angelical souls like flowers in the Father's celestial garden to spread their gentle fragrance all over the world. » Faber commented on this passage of the gospel in his work « Conciones, » quoting St. Jerome (Book 2 on the letter to the Galathians): « Let us pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to harvest, to reap the Christian people's ears of grain which are prepared for the Church's future bread, and to gather them in the granary, never decaying. »

Also Sacy in his comment on the gospel says: « The evangelical workers' mission must be the effect of the Church's prayer.» Blessed Vincent Pallotti published a brief prayer which begins with: « For the sacred mysteries of the human redemption, send, o Lord, workers in your harvest. » And St. Louis M. Grignon de Monfort wrote a long, sublime prayer to bend divine goodness to grant such a matchless mercy. (10)

Always moved by the Holy Spirit, the Church disposes the Ember days in the quarterly three day period of prayer and fasting, which are destined to the sacred ordinations, to ask good workers for the spiritual more than the material harvest. The gospel says that our Lord Jesus Christ prayed all night long before calling the apostles. Thus, he taught us that such a great mercy, which is mother of many mercies, must be obtained through great prayers! It cannot be otherwise. God wanted the people to wish and to pray for the coming of Jesus Christ in the world. Because the priests are

the new Christ, we have to wish and to ask for them through prayer (Speech at the Eucharistic Congress of Catania, 1905).

This prayer also urges to action, because the new clergy must originate both from prayer and action. When the Rogate prayer becomes popular, it will make pious and eminent persons understand the great moment of such a prayer and the great moment of having elect priests according to God, moving them to grant the means (11) necessary to their education and success.

The Catholic institutions which aim at helping the holy missions, strive to collect alms for them, which is praiseworthy. However, it shouldn't be less praiseworthy and beneficial adding an extensive advertisement for the vocation prayer, in obedience to the divine command; thus, they would increase secular and regular clergies through pecuniary, moral, and spiritual means.

In short, we must pray and work to win good workers to the holy Church. When we ask God for a favor, we have to cooperate in order to reach it more easily. For instance, if we pray for the conversion of sinners, our prayer is more efficacious and the conversion is easier if we add our means and work to convert the sinners.

Likewise, we must not be satisfied by only wishing and praying to win good workers to the holy Church, but we must add means and work to achieve them. Oh, how all things are fast bound to each other!

10. REMEDY OUT OF FASHION

I think that this great remedy has been remembered and used very seldom in the last twenty centuries; our Lord Jesus Christ's great word has been almost buried,

unobserved in the Gospel's pages. Perhaps it has been a great punishment that humankind deserved.

Ah! We pray for rain, for year's crop, for liberation from divine punishments, and for so many topics, but we neglect to pray for winning good evangelical workers to the mystical harvest.

A servant of God once asked: « Lord, why don't you send numerous priests according to your Heart to the holy Church? » Jesus is said to have answered: « Because the people do not ask enough for them. » This is the reason why today good workers are so rare, why millions and millions of souls are lacking spiritual help and are deprived of the light of truth, which the Catholic priesthood only can give. How few the clerics in the seminaries have become!

Well then, why don't we resort to the infallible remedy our Lord Jesus Christ pointed to with these words: « Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest? » Why don't the souls who love Jesus Christ and his divine heart's interests lift up most fervent prayers to win good workers to the mystical harvest? Why don't the prayer books used by the pious souls overflow with this divine prayer? Why, don't the Eucharistic congresses pick up this prayer as their primary subject? Why don't the preachers of the divine word urge the faithful to obey the divine command that Jesus gave many times? »

Several Pious Unions for the Sanctification of the Clergy are greatly esteemed by the people. Various religious orders of nuns are commanded by rule to pray for that. That's all right. We, however, remark that praying directly and explicitly for new, strong, holy, and powerful vocations is more beneficial and more related to the divine exhortation or command, because we ask

the most holy Heart of Jesus to form his saints. (12) While explaining this saying of our Lord Jesus Christ, Alapide notes that when God hears this prayer, all the workers he sends to the holy Church are saints.

His Eminence Card. Prefect of Propaganda Fide wisely implored and obtained from the Holy Father Pius XI the introduction of a new verse in the Litany of the Saints to reduce the unfaithful and the dissident in the Mother Church's bosom. But, can it happen without increasing the missionaries' number? Can the missionaries' number increase without fervently complying with our Lord's command? Who says this prayer? Whoever does not ask, does not receive; whoever prays little, receives little.

11. PEOPLE MUST PRAY

Which people are obliged to pray for this grace of the graces, this mercy of the mercies?

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They are:

1. The holy Church's bishops and the ecclesiastics.

The divine exhortation was specifically addressed to the ecclesiastical order, or better yet, to the Church, which is represented by the apostles; in fact, Jesus our Lord addressed those words to them: « He said to his disciples. » The Church must pray formally for this purpose, because the prayer's mission to win good workers concerns not only each faithful Christian having at heart the good of souls but concerns specifically the bishops, the shepherds of the mystical flock, to whom the souls are entrusted; in short, the living apostles of Jesus Christ.

2. *The superiors of the religious orders.* They long for holy vocations to their institutes as much as the bishops do for their dioceses.

3. *The priests.* 11 dare to address a warm appeal to the priests, who are my lords. We must get hold of the new generations, generating them to the grace through the holy baptism and defending them from the rapacious wolves. We, however, are very few everywhere. Very few workers! People did not ask them, we ourselves did not. We have not used the remedy commanded by Jesus Christ and, therefore, are suffering the consequences: hundreds of parishes have no priest. We ought to stir ourselves, work, and .pray!

4. *The clerics.* Several bishops asked me for vocation-prayer-books for their dioceses, especially for the religious communities; but, it is of importance that they have introduced the recitation of this prayer in their seminaries; that helps very much the culture and the promotion of holy vocations. When this prayer is organized and enters the seminaries, the clerics will have a specific to follow, understanding which is the success of their vocation and how to reach it. Furthermore, the prayers will make them experience God's work in themselves for the increase of their vocation, knowing that only God may let them become elect priests and holy workers in the great field of the mystical harvest. We cannot have the « chosen race, the king's priests, the holy nation » (1 Peter 2, 9) through a feeble, uncertain, imperfect, artificial, man-made vocation. Such vocations may prompt priests endowed with sacred character, but they will never succeed as experience teaches.

5. *Nuns and sisters.* As loving souls of Jesus

Christ as well as zealous for his glory, nuns and sisters should pray for holy vocations.

O pious souls, souls lovers of Jesus Christ, O souls zealous for the interests of the most holy Heart of Jesus and his Most Precious Blood; O virgins consecrated to Jesus, your divine spouse, bound to promote his glory and the salvation of the souls; you who are willing to sanctify yourselves acquiring merits for the eternal life, please pick up, adopt that divine command in your heart: pray continuously, do not stop praying to win elect priests, holy and numerous workers from divine mercy, because the sound of this prayer is pleasant to God's ears. The Song of the Song's words: « Let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet» (Song 2, 14) suit each of you.

6. *The faithful.* The faithful must understand that the greatest mercy God may have on the people or a city is his sending out elect priests, as he did with his only Son Jesus said to his disciples: « As the Father sent me, so I send you » (Jn. 20, 21). Vice versa, the greatest punishment God may give is depriving the people of his ministers, or better yet, of the priests according to his heart.

The faithful must understand this duty, accustoming themselves to pray that the Lord send out the priests to catechize, to administer the sacraments, and to guide the people to eternal life.

12. EUCHARIST AND PRIESTHOOD

When our Lord Jesus Christ instituted the sacrament of the Eucharist giving it to the apostles at the

last supper, he was keeping in mind the whole Church along with its members, whom he had to feed with the bread of eternal life.

In that event he instituted and conferred his priesthood on the apostles., empowering them to consecrate his body and his Most Precious Blood, as well as to absolve the people from their sins until the end of time. He did and meant it by saying: « Do this in memory of me ». Thus, Christ's priesthood is transmitted from bishops to priests, making the sacramental presence of Jesus remain until the end of time.

So, Eucharist and priesthood are born of the adorable Heart of Jesus by a twin birth. (13) Both sacraments are complementary to each other. The priesthood was called into existence for the consecration and administration of the Eucharist to the people as well as for the absolution of sins. The Eucharist is called into existence by the consecration made by the priests, as established by our Lord at the end of his life, which « ended with marvelous order, » as St. Thomas Aquinas says in the Pange lingua.

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The Eucharistic Congresses should not omit mentioning the great command of Jesus' Heart zeal: « Pray, therefore, etc. » We cannot understand how the Congresses' organizers may exclude from the plans to honor the most Holy Sacrament the plans concerning the formation of numerous, holy priests as well as the plan to make the faithful lovers of Jesus Christ obey this divine command: « Pray, therefore, etc. » (Note to the Hymns on July first, 1926).

NOTES

(1) «We have called this beneficial, most fecund prayer with the name secret, because it contains a great secret: in fact, it can save the holy Church through the spreading of faith, it can save the people, the cities, the nations, and human society through the numerous, elect priests, who like new Christs full of the spirit of God, who uses "the winds as messengers and fiery flames as servants" (Ps. 104, 4), would make humankind one flock under one shepherd. May it be, may it be! Amen.» (Note to the hymns of July first, 1926; this was the last note written by our padre, who through this « may it be» sealed his Eucharistic apostolate on our feast of July first!)

(2) This chapter is from the Pious Union Handbook, save the passages whose sources are quoted.

(3) « With the command "Pray, therefore,..." Jesus Christ pledged to send out persons different from the others; they should be clothed with a divine character and raised by God through a wonder as though they were raised from the rocks. God is powerful to do that, but he will not do so, unless we pray; as a matter of fact, he pledged to do so when we pray for it» (News and Rules for the Sacred Allies Supporters).

(4) «To tell the truth, the good works of the elects, the worship of God, the Church and the faithful's universal prayers earned the kingdom of God and its justice through Jesus Christ and the most holy Virgin's merits and prayers; hence, the mystical harvest has seen evangelical workers, that were like angels of heaven, almost divine beings, wonder of heroism and holiness. Who could deny that? How many are the ministers of God shining in the clergy? How many are the luminaries of science and holiness? It would be a big mistake saying that our Lord Jesus Christ said needlessly: "Pray, therefore, etc." and that obeying perfectly this divine command does not attain more and holier workers to the mystical harvest» (News and rules for the Sacred Allies supporters).

(5) It is a reference to the Sacred Alliance, chapter 6.

(6) «That he will send out workers to gather in his harvest. If the harvest belongs to God, how is it that we must pray God to send out workers to his harvest? The reason is that God has disposed to do everything for our salvation through our prayer; for an unfathomable mystery, God's all-powerful will, to be fulfilled, needs the human being's frail will. God cannot gather the harvest of the souls in order to save them, if they do not pray, if they do not want to pray» (News and rules for the Sacred Allies Supporters).

(7) < Let us consider how many merits the people acquire when they say such a prayer.

They obtain from God what they ask for. For instance, the Lord will send out a powerful vocation to an elect on earth because of the assiduous, humble prayer of someone. A person will hear in his innermost: "Follow me!" Still remaining free, the people cannot oppose God's voice; therefore, the chosen one enters the sanctuary, is endowed with understanding and spirit, is lighted with zeal for the sacred ministry, and becomes an apostle or a missionary, or a pastor or a doctor or a preacher or a savior of souls. He immolates the divine victim every day. Through the divine office he waits between the vestibule and the altar, spreads Christ's presence, edifies the Church; he is different from a common human being. Who knows the good he produces to the world by his ministry? Such good will increase indefinitely until the end of the time. God will reward this elect worker with ineffable prizes, but also the person who obtained that vocation by praying: "Owner of the harvest, owner of the harvest, send workers to your harvest" will share those prizes. St. Vincent de Paul said: "No work can be equal to the formation of one priest"; therefore, anyone who is able to help the formation of priests has to do it with a will; but to win priests according to God, let us pray, let us pray, let us make other people pray the Lord to send them out! "Rogate!" Pray, says the Lord to everyone. Let us pray» (News and rules for the Sacred Allies supporters).

(8) Our divine Savior's example evidently shows the importance of this prayer he suggested almost by commanding. When he was about to call the first ministers of the new law of grace, those who were destined to be the first fecund seed of the Catholic priesthood, what did he do? Which means did he choose to form the 12 apostles' vocation? Before seeking and calling them, he retired on the mountain and prayed! He prayed "on the mountain" to make his ardent prayer ascend to the Father directly; prayed "in the night" so that no human approach distract him from the enterprise he was communicating with the Father; prayed "all night long" in order to implore the Father by sacrifice; prayed "all night long, shedding tears and crying 'to be heard by the Father' because of his reverence!" Still soaked with tears and perspiration, as soon as he came down from the mountain he called the apostles to make the first-fruits of his eternal priesthood. What a great teaching he gave us to make us understand how much we must pray to obtain so great a graces (News and rules for the Sacred Allies supporters).

(9) «The priestly apostolic work produces many coadjutors such as lay persons or sisters or the people working with zeal in the Church for the eternal salvation of the souls. Enlightened by the Lord, Catholic kings and governors, who are children of the Church, may and must be the saviors of the mystical harvest which

is entrusted to them by fulfilling their great civil mission (Note to the hymn of July first, 1926).

(10) In the biography of the Blessed Fr. Gennaro M. Sarneliy written by Fr. Dumartier (translated by Fr. Bozzatra, Festa publisher, page 104), we read a letter he addressed to a Religious, from which we quote: « In the gospel the Lord says to his disciples, my dear, look around, see the nations of the world, see how many souls are ready for the harvest: the harvest is abundant, but the workers are few; pray to the Lord of the harvest that he will send out the workers to his harvest. All of you say often this ejaculatory prayer: Lord of the harvest, Lord of the harvest, Lord of the harvest, send out workers to your harvest. Please join this prayer to the merits of Jesus Christ's Most Precious Blood and to his zeal for the glory of the Father and the salvation of souls. Almighty God, creator of the souls, send out numerous workers to gather in your harvest. We commend the souls, who are so dear to you » (News and rules for the Sacred Allies supporters).

(11) Writing to Blessed Guido M. Conforti, archbishop of Parma and founder of the Xavier's Missionnaires, our padre pointed out the necessity to join prayer with action (In this case begging for the missions), giving preeminence to prayer; after praying we can and must seek contributions. « The matter is to be managed so evidently and clearly that the faithful must know that their alms will be blessed and two cents will be worth 2000 liras when their cents are joined to the prayer commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ... "Pray, therefore!" Please consider the therefore! Our Lord did not say: therefore, work to form the priests; therefore, gather money, etc., but he said: "THEREFORE, PRAY!" Both action and contribution for such an aim are holy because they are implied in the divine thought. But, it is strange that what has been clearly said hardly receives attention, whereas what is supposed to be implied receives full attention.»

(12) «The prayers the religious communities say by rule, not by vow, for the sanctification of the clergy do not concern directly numerous, holy vocations, but the present clergy's sanctification. Surely, this intention is holy, most holy, and those who say this prayer gain merits, but the results of this prayer are scarce because they face the human will which opposes the divine grace. This appears evident in the consecrated persons who do not improve their holiness.

On the contrary, the prayer or rogation, which is based on the Rogate commanded by Jesus Christ, regards directly the sending out of the workers to his harvest. The holy vocations of new priests are contained in the sending out, because it is God's promise to hear such a prayer. He will raise persons favorably disposed, elected youths who are dear to his Heart. He can infuse in them the powerful

breath of holy vocation which comes from the Holy Spirit. This call is irresistible because of the Holy Spirit operating a divine, impulsive force in the person who is called to the divine service and sacrifice; still remaining free, the person is drawn to answer the call and has no quiet, no peace until he accepts and acts upon the powerful impulse.

These are the true called, the priests the Holy Spirit formed on the ground of the divine prayer commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ: "Pray, therefore," etc.» (From various notes by the Padre).

In another letter to Blessed Quido M. Conforti, our padre defines the nature of the Rogate prayer, «which is different from the prayers aiming at the sanctification of the clergy. These prayers are excellent; but Your Excellence know very well which grace is needed to rouse again an unrestrained minister of the Lord and to push him again in the way of sanctification!... Answering, however, the divine command is different! Here, the matter is vocation from the Holy Spirit, who transformed the shy, insecure apostles into powerful vocations after ten days of prayer. God is having such vocations in his hands, but he is expecting that the prayer commanded by him snatches them out of his hands to come down in the hearts well prepared. Who knows how many hundreds of thousands of vocations the Lord keeps in store? But, how can people claim to have them without praying, while God commands us to pray for it? »

(13) Our padre refers to a hymn's stanza in honor of the Madonna: «Remember: in a twin birth — in the mystical rite, he gave the world — the best of him, that is the finest — the Eucharist, the infinite gift — and the eternal priesthood.»

CHAPTER XXII

YOU SHALL NOT SPARE YOURSELF

While praying to God that he may fill the holy Church and the world with good evangelical workers, the congregants of our least Institute will strive with ardent zeal and sacrifice to be good evangelical workers themselves in the Lord's harvest. I see this duty as the Immediate, legitimate consequence which derives from the appreciation, from the untiring culture, and from the meditation on the divine Rogate as well as from the limitless obedience and from the faithful execution of this command.

As a consequence of all this, I will never spare myself in the work for the Lord's glory and the souls' salvation, considering myself unfaithful, lazy, and indifferent when I am not thirsty for souls. Therefore, I will excite in myself hunger and thirst for souls through meditation, fervent prayer, work, and self-denial. But, whether I feel or whether I do not feel this hunger and thirst for souls, with God's help and my constant determination I will never stop working in the mystical harvest of souls.

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To fruitfully work for the sanctification and the salvation of others, first I will endeavor to sanctify myself. Keeping in mind the saints' teaching that our Lord Jesus Christ loves one soul as much as all souls together, and that he would have endured his Passion even for one soul, I will esteem souls so much as to spend my life in suffering, in working, and sacrificing myself even for one soul. Because when I entered the order and when I was ordained priest the Lord endowed me with gifts for my religious and priestly ministry, I will use them for the divine glory and the salvation of souls, knowing that I have to give a strict account of such gifts to God in the judgment day.

1. ENERGETIC ZEAL

Charity produces in itself the fervor and the flame which rise up to God, and draw from God's love and glory the reasons to work more intensely on earth. Charity brings about zeal for God's glory and the souls' salvation. It substitutes the world's selfishness with altruism by involving the people in the work for the good of others. They work continuously for God, for the truth, for the good of their neighbor, and because they are unable to embrace the whole world with their action, they suffer for the evil which overflows in society (On the death of L. Costa Sajja).

The spirit of sacrifice is the outcome of zeal, which should characterize the spirit of each Rogationist. Therefore, he will spare no sacrifice for God's glory and the souls' good, but will face work, suffering, inconvenience, contradictions, humiliation, and everything, giving up Ms time, rest, quiet, health, and himself to sake even one soul (C.R.).

While praying to the owner of the harvest that he will send out numerous, holy workers to the holy Church, the Rogationists of Jesus' Heart strive with all their strength and God's help to become themselves workers of the harvest. They will perform the ecclesiastical ministry, such as: worship, confessions, preaching, missions, teaching Christian doctrine to children..., and will commit themselves to the spiritual and temporal beneficence through the orphanages, the evangelization of the poor, etc. For the glory of God and the good of the souls the pious order will give preference to the education of the youths who aspire to become priests, being ready to help the diocesan seminaries when the bishops ask for it, and the order has members qualified for such important, holy office (C.R.).

With God's help, the Rogationists of Jesus' Heart commit themselves to the work of priestly ministry and to the spiritual and the temporal beneficence.

As to the priestly ministry: 1) The Rogationists will direct the churches and the oratories entrusted to them by attracting the people through assiduous, untiring, holy ministry and through the industries that charity and zeal will suggest. 2) To facilitate the concourse of the people, especially the poor, the seats of the church will be free of charge. 3) They will promote feasts, pious unions for children and adults, general communions, retreats, and the like. 4) They will foster love toward our Lord Jesus Christ in all his mysteries, such as: the child Jesus, the suffering Jesus, and the Holy Sacrament. 5) The center of all devotions and activities will be the Holy Sacrament. Our order will love, honor, and court the Holy Sacrament with such a bliss as to be called a Eucharistic Order. Besides the yearly feasts of the most Holy Sacrament, the spreading of its worship and the daily Communion, the order will celebrate the real presence of the most Holy Sacrament through the Eucharistic Day on July First, as we have been doing from the beginning of the order. 6) Love of the most holy Virgin Mary will be fostered with the same affection and fervor. 7) For a complete and fecund teaching of the Christian doctrine to children, the best programs will be carried out with love and zeal, while catechism contests and rewards will attract and win the love of children. The teaching of catechism to the girls will be entrusted to the sisters, who will organize the first Communions on special holidays. 8) The Rogationists will hold the missions in the abandoned towns and to the unprivileged classes as the worthiest work, using the mission's most reliable systems.

Everytime the Rogationists are called for the dying, they will assist them charitably, giving them the sacraments

and preparing them for the great passage to eternity through holy exhortations. The Rogationists will also concern themselves with legitimatising marriages (C.R).

To answer faithfully their holy vocation, the Little Retreat sisters will strive to achieve their own sanctification through religious virtues as well as to become good workers in the holy Church. Specifically: they will commit themselves to the education of abandoned orphans, to the help and the evangelization of the poor, and to any eventual charitable work, to which they are called. They will perform everything to please our Lord Jesus Christ and his most holy mother, to earn merits for eternal life, and to foster the salvation of souls (R.L.P.).

The sisters who are committed to the education and success of the orphans must begin and persevere in their work with a spirit of sacrifice. They will not spare themselves nor their habits, their spiritual comfort and delight included, because they lose nothing of what they renounce, they rather grow richer in God's eyes (S.I.G.).

To immolate themselves for the glory of God, to please the adorable Heart of Jesus, and to work for the holy Church's needs and for the salvation and the sanctification of souls, the sisters will nurture the spirit of self-denial, considering no work or sacrifice as too heavy. With such a disposition and by renouncing their will and opinion, the sisters will offer themselves as victims of holy obedience, victims of the work they undertake with all their physical and moral strength, as well as victims of the deprivation, humiliation, and suffering that the Lord will permit. They will long for nothing else but to please the most holy Heart of Jesus and to save souls (D.S.S.).

To fulfill their fourth vow, they will combine action with prayer to win good workers to the holy Church. The

action may be: 1) teaching others the vocation prayer; 2) educating and exhorting children; 3) working and begging alms to help the poor clerics the saving will be placed into the Peter's pence box; (1) 4) educating the orphans, praying for everything and for all, assisting the sick, doing works of charity, etc. (Purpose of the fourth vow, July 19, 1888).

Your name is Daughters of Divine Zeal. You are wearing the emblem of the divine Heart along with the evangelical words: « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest. » Both name and evangelical emblem urge you to promote with all your strength and self-denial the adorable Heart of Jesus' interests and everything which concerns his glory and the good of souls. From the time you have committed yourselves to the divine zeal, which made our Lord Jesus Christ exclaim: « Zeal for your house devours me » (Ps. 69, 9), you are called to the office of Martha and Mary Magdalene.

Since the world is full of souls that are being lost, you shall not seek your salvation only, but you shall snatch as many souls as you can from eternal ruin. Please gather the abandoned orphans. Teach, educate, and feed them. Each soul you save is a seed of eternal salvation for many others, who will become your glorious crown in heaven. Please long, be hungry and thirsty for the remnant souls you are unable to save. Be not indifferent in the face of the ruin of even one soul, for Jesus Christ paid out his blood for that soul that is as precious as all souls are together (Speech, St. Joseph 1908).

2. FALSE ZEAL

We must beware of the enemy's deceit, of selfishness, and, particularly, of the false zeal which kills meekness

True zeal is born of charity and is gifted like charity, as St. Paul says: « Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or conceited or proud; love is not ill-mannered or selfish or irritable; love does not keep a record of wrongs; love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth. Love' never gives up: its faith, hope, and patience never fail. » True zeal is a living, ardent, calm, an always industrious flame which is concerned with everything and everyone, but without dash and rashness. Whoever can be more zealous than Jesus Christ, who was devoured by zeal? And yet, he said: « Learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit » (Mt. 11, 29). Did he ever get angry? Once, when he demanded respect for God's house. For the remnant 33 years and in a special way during the ignominy, the injustice, and the suffering of his Passion he let the executioners drive him to Calvary like a lamb, without lamenting. The Psalmist had said that he would behave like one who scolds no one. St. Francis of Sales says that the angels are extremely zealous for the salvation of their proteges, but they are not at all uneasy. When zeal becomes agitated, it shows itself to be false, because it is written: « God was not in the wind, » and our Lord recommended: « Do not be worried and upset » (Jn. 14, 1). False zeal comes from selfishness, not from the love of God or of one's neighbor. Instead of correcting and edifying, false zeal scandalizes, sets bad example, and causes bad results.

Our order has to shine with pure charity. The Rogationists who want to be really concerned with the interest of Jesus' Heart must do their utmost with prayer and action to reach a lively, ardent, calm, and moderate zeal.

The person consecrated to Jesus must be zealous first for punishing and restraining himself as well as for

seeking his own sanctification diligently. When the zeal is practiced interiorly, it may be less moderate, but for exterior acts of humiliation and penance it must follow the rules and obedience. The interior annihilation of selfishness, opinion, will, and egotism must be preferred to the exterior penitential acts.

The Rogationist will long for the sanctification and the eternal salvation of all souls, no one excepted. To reach this goal, he will ask the Lord for numerous, elect priests, numerous saints of heroic virtue, at least two saints for a thousand people on earth. Meantime, he will sacrifice himself for the glory of God and the salvation of souls (R.S.).

3. THE. DIVINE FOUNDER

The loving, fecund, dutiful, and continuous center of this pious institute of Jesus' interests is Jesus in the Holy Sacrament. From now on, the people must know that the true, effective, and immediate founder of this pious institute is Jesus in the Holy Sacrament. Of this foundation we may say: « God did something new. » In fact, usually he puts a flounder rich with his graces and gifts in his institutions. This institute instead, which was born to promote his Heart's divine command that has been neglected for so many centuries, has our Lord himself in the sacred tabernacle as the real founder. Graces, help, enlightenment, and providence poured out from his divine heart in the Sacrament.

The pious institute began rising in the miserable, abject slums of the poor. After a few years since the priest set foot there, a little house was rented and transformed into a little chapel, where the first mass was celebrated on a little wooden altar. Thus, Jesus in the

Holy Sacrament began taking possession of those places, sowing the seed of this new plant in the poor's field. The sporadic celebration of the mass was the sporadic presence of Jesus; but his permanent presence in the Eucharistic Sacrament was indispensable for the seed to take root and fructify.

Then, a singular loving expectation for the Lord in the Sacrament was cultivated among those poor, but especially in the hearts of their children, boys and girls who were attending the school of catechism alternatively, while some of them were already sheltered.

The little chapel was enlarged by joining another house; a better altar with a tabernacle replaced the old one, and the holy expectation for Jesus in the Sacrament was cultivated through more prayers, teachings, and songs. To foster in the people's hearts the wish for the coming of God, who is concealed in the Sacrament, the tabernacle was kept open. The expectation increased for two years.

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It was the expectation for the divine Messiah, who had to be born in this new Bethlehem as God-man concealed in the Eucharist, to dwell among the children of men until the end of time, to find his delights in the pure hearts.

When the common expectation was fully developed, Jesus came. He came on July first, 1886, during the celebration of the holy mass, while the people in the adorned chapel were longing, singing, and praying to him devoutly.

He came to remain permanently. He came as a king to set his kingdom in the midst of his citizens, as a good shepherd to feed the sheep entrusted to him, the flock that had to live with him without fear. He came as the divine farmer to cultivate his little plant, which had the seed of his divine ROGATE in suffering and mortification.

He came as a very loving father in the midst of his

children to form a small family living on his body and blood, and to make it able to receive from his divine lips the command of his heart's divine zeal: « PRAY, THEREFORE, TO THE OWNER OF THE HARVEST THAT HE WILL SEND OUT WORKERS TO GATHER IN HIS HARVEST. »

When Jesus came in the Sacrament, the pious institute was yet a *bambino* in the number of its members, but, it rose as a small caravan to start a very intricate pilgrimage. It was always supported by the true Ark of the Covenant, which was not containing the symbolical manna, but the real bread from heaven.

From that time we have been renewing Jesus' most loving coming to the pious institute through our devoted preparation for the beautiful feast of the Eucharistic Day on July first.

This pious institute's trial sometimes was very sorrowful, and it lasted about 25 years; but its divine founder, Jesus in the Sacrament, supported and helped his foundation in everything. In those times, needs almost suffocated the institute, but we turned to Jesus in the Sacrament and the sky cleared up. Jesus was our providence and our health.

4. PAY ATTENTION!

Please pay attention to the report of the priest, promoter, or better yet, to the priest who set things moving under the Lord's initiative.

The trial became extreme and most suffocating after 22 years. The priest's last means was resorting to Jesus in the Sacrament. He wrote the most fervent, cogent, convincing petition to touch the inmost feelings of Jesus' Heart in the Sacrament as with an arrow. After opening the tabernacle - God forgive, if it happened so - or

perhaps after the Holy Communion during the mass, he placed that petition under the sacred pyx.

Jesus accepted it. Since then, the sky began clearing, and Jesus in the host began spreading new splendors, which became beams of light, grace, and providence. The institute began, increasing.

All this has been written to perpetuate the memory of it, and to make each one bear in mind that Jesus in the Sacrament is the author of this pious institute, which is consecrated to his divine, real heart, always loving and palpitating in the holy tabernacle; that Jesus is always working in the midst of us with the same grace and with the enlightenments he irradiates continuously from the burning furnace of his divine Heart in the Sacrament.

For that reason we have to direct to the adorable Jesus in the Sacrament all our thanks, praises, affections, sighs, desires, thoughts, love, and our being. He must be the center, the life, the existence, the hope, the perseverance, and all things for us and for the future congregants. For the Daughters of Divine Zeal and for those who live with them may Jesus in the Sacrament be the mystical beehive, around which they rotate, resting and producing the sweetest honey of the virtues that please Jesus, supreme goodness.

5. FEAST ON JULY FIRST

This is a first-rate festivity for the pious institute of Jesus' Heart interests.

The order, the congregants, and the houses, no one excepted, offer this yearly tribute of love and faith to the adorable Jesus in the Sacrament, who is the center of the institute's love, sacrifices, atonements, thanksgivings, petitions, prayers, practices of piety, and holy hopes. He

is the fountain of the past and present graces, mercies, and favors as well as of the future graces that he will pour out on this pious institute and its members. This feast is the expression of our gratitude for Jesus' loving sweetest dwelling in the midst of us despite our failings and unfaithfulness, our languid faith and incomplete answer to his love and inspirations.

This festivity is associated to the first permanent coming of Jesus in the Sacrament in the midst of the poor beggars and their children, on July first 1886, when the institute was among the slums of Avignone Houses in Messina. After two years of expectation, which was cultivated by instructions and practices of piety before the empty tabernacle in the temporary oratory, the adorable Lord Jesus Christ, coming down from the right hand of the Father, from heaven of heavens, arrived during the mass, in the solemn moment of the consecration, taking his dwelling in that tabernacle.

Beginning with the first anniversary in 1887, the loving expectation is renewed every year, and we hope it will be always renewed with the Lord's help.

6. EUCHARISTIC PROCESSIONS

On Corpus Christi and on other festivities, the internal procession with the most adorable Eucharistic Sacrament will be organized with the permission of the ecclesiastical authority. These processions may be planned in the houses which have ample rooms, corridors, gardens, and wide terraces.

Beginning with Pangs Lingua, the sacred Latin hymns will be sung in choral manner during the procession. The psalms, Magnificat, Laudate Dominum, and others canticles may be used. If the procession lasts long, also

Italian hymns such as the one of July first may be used. The sacristan or another sister will prepare an altar with lighted candles and corporal at a station. When the procession arrives, the Holy Sacrament will be placed on the altar. After spending some time in adoration and prayer, the sisters will sing again the Tantum Ergo, before the priests gives the blessing.

The procession may return to the church through the same or another or a shorter way, depending on time. Te Deum is the appropriate hymn during the return, unless it is sung in the church or in the oratory.

All must be mindful that our Lord distributes great graces and mercies while he passes through in procession, and that the people may obtain the favors they did not obtain before.

When our Lord passed through the cities of Judea or the streets of Jerusalem accompanied by his disciples, the pious women, and the crowd, how many graces he granted! How many miracles he worked!

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The processions in the holy Church, in the Catholic cities, in the towns, in the houses of the religious communities are the repetition of the processions, travels, and walks that Jesus did in Judea and Jerusalem. Just as the deaf or mute or blind or paralytic or lepers or victims of oppression of Jesus' time were liberated or were granted the favors, so during the processions, when the same Jesus walks concealed in the Holy Sacrament with the same charity and his divine Heart open, the persons who follow him praying with faith, loving trust, and profound humility can obtain the spiritual or temporal graces, on condition that such graces improve the well-being of their soul. The procession is the time to pray for ourselves and for the interests of his divine

Heart. The prayers may be, said mentally or intentionally, even when the people sing psalms or praise.

When our Lord in the Sacrament is placed on the altar, the community may present the petition it prepared beforehand in order to win special graces.

After re-entering the church or the oratory, it is advisable that the priest make an exhortation to the community before the blessing (S.D.D.Z.). (2)

7. EUCHARISTIC CONGRESSES

At your congresses what sublime sights!
You see people and people waving,
Crowds, multitudes, levites,
Even the insecure and the old bending.

We are referring to the sublime Eucharistic congresses that are triumphing all over the Catholic world. They are planned by a commission of high ecclesiastical personalities together with lay Catholics of rank, who gather around the organizing authority to define the best way of honoring Jesus in the Sacrament. This planning is the first phase. The second phase puts the plan in action.

The momentous gathering of the people is planned beforehand by prelates of the holy Church, bishops, archbishops, and cardinals, according to the congress' importance. Usually, the Holy Father entrusts a cardinal with representing him; by so doing the pope leads the people to understand the meaning of the real presence of Jesus Christ, God-man in the consecrated host.

The Eucharistic congress lasts for a few days; the clergy of the various churches strive to prepare the population to the great solemnity through preaching, confessions

and Holy Communion as well as by exposing the Blessed Sacrament for adoration. The main church or the cathedral of the city where the congress takes place exposes the Blessed Sacrament for a few days, even by night. In the last morning, general Communion of the people and first Communion of children are organized with impressive solemnity: Communions are by the thousands. At last, the organization reaches the summit degree with the afternoon procession of the Holy Sacrament escorted by the clergy and imposing concourse of people.

Since the purpose of the Congress is to bring together many people, we note that the concourse and the crowds are always so great that only an obvious concourse of omnipotent grace may explain it. The people of any class and condition who participate in the solemn procession come from far-off towns and cities on foot, by train, cars, etc.; they are gentlemen, workers, ladies, titled persons, members of parliament, and crowds.

Unbelievers are as astounded as they are thoughtful. Some of them even follow the procession, which lasts several hours, and no one gets tired. The participants numbered a million in the Genoa Eucharistic congress, where the Holy Father's Cardinal Legate gave the solemn blessing from a ship, prepared by the government. Also the king was represented by a deputy.

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We put a question: what do people see in the Eucharistic congresses? Do they see a statue of a saint or the Virgin Mary carved by the chief worldly artist such as Michelangelo? Or perhaps a most attractive picture of Our Lady's miraculous image by a painter such as Raphael? Not at all. Nothing fascinates eyes or sense. The people see a wafer of a few centimeters in diameter; which is closed in a monstrance carried by a Lord's minister

We could even say that almost all the people see nothing because of the crowds, and yet they rush, pray, and become excited.

In Chicago, the Americans prepared a Eucharistic Congress, which surpassed all the preceding ones. Preparations such as hotels built at record speed and a choir of 50,000 children, who sang the mass of the angels under the direction of 600 sisters, astounded the crowds. Plenty of bishops and cardinals participated.

We put again the question: what do the people see? They see a baked wafer of flour!

But, God's ardent spirit breathes through these Eucharistic congresses powerfully, and raises such a feeling of faith that attracts, prevails over, and draws. It is the triumph of Jesus Christ as king of the world. The air itself seems to be repeating: Jesus Christ conquers, Jesus Christ reigns, Jesus Christ rules! Without understanding how, everyone knows that the small consecrated wafer has only the appearance of bread, but under that appearance there is Jesus Christ. He passes in the midst of the crowds as he did in Judea and Galilee. Faith makes the people see him benign, sweet, gentle, smiling, and pouring out graces everywhere with inexhaustible abundance! But those who see through his sweetest heart, they feel his sadness for the sins of the world and for the perdition of so many persons Who are obstinate in sin!

Happy are those who attend these Eucharistic Congresses! However, those who are not able to attend them, may follow the programs and the manifestations in spirit and recollection; thus, through faith, devotion, and reception of the sacraments they receive the same abundant graces from, the very loving Jesus in the Holy Sacrament.

We dare say that through the Eucharistic congresses our Lord Jesus Christ makes the world aware of his

presence, and his faith subsists, notwithstanding its increasing unrest (Note to the Hymns on July first, 1926).

8. DAY SCHOOLS

A great deal of good may be done to children with the kindergarten and to young girls with the day boarding school. The sister master will teach the young girls sewing, and cuts of cloth, and the like, but before starting the work they all will say the prayer to invoke the divine help and to direct everything to the glory of God and to their own sanctification. Also the work-time will be closed with a prayer.

The sister will see that silence is preserved in the day boarding school every day. When she needs to speak, she will do so at a low voice, teaching the students to do the same.

She will provide the children with half an hour of spiritual reading during the work, will teach Christian doctrine to those who are able to read from text-books, and by words to the little ones. Another sister will help her (S.D.D.Z.). (3)

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The sisters will fulfill the aims of the foundation by teaching Christian doctrine to the young girls with zeal and holy fervor. (4)

They will teach catechism diligently, in support and in compliance with the parish program by giving appropriate explanations and lessons of history. The sisters will inspire in the children's hearts holy fear of God, horror of sin, love toward our Lord Jesus Christ, the most holy Virgin, St. Joseph, the angels, the saints, the holy Church, the Holy Father, as well as love of their neighbor, mercy on the poor, and fondness of holy virtues. Every day all of them will say specific prayers and will have spiritual

reading, especially on the Passion of our Lord, with a brief explanation. The children will be given careful attention in their preparation for confession and Holy Communion. They will go in group to the Sunday mass, and will be assisted in the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and in the reception of Holy Communion.

To win the children's love, the sisters will be attentive of their well being, giving special attention to those who are in need. They will lead them in singing devout songs, in praying for good workers to the holy Church, and in joining our pious unions. When the children improve with the help of the Lord, the sisters will form the association of Daughters of Mary, engaging them in various activities as, for instance, the festive oratory and by taking walks outdoors (H.S.E.). (5)

The day school, aiming at teaching feminine skills, must guide the students step by step to cut cloth and to sew garments and to master the gentle works of the loom, lace making, and so forth. Fine arts are the splendor of the sister's religious life. Some of them should know music, drawing, painting, modeling, poetry, public speaking, and even carving marble. Those inclined to mechanics are also useful to the houses. The sisters skilled in fine arts may teach the students.

Education. Please accustom the students to obedience, gratitude, mercy on the poor, gentle manners, respect for the older, reverence toward the priests, respect in the church, mutual love and sympathy, and forgiveness of offences. Educate them to escape from idleness, to be modest, to talk moderately, and to bridle gluttony.

Will you receive the students immodestly dressed? If society were modest, surely you should censure, exhort, correct, and even send them home. If society is easygoing, however, you will do your best to repair, for instance

by having the students wear a scholar uniform provided by the parents. But, if immodesty is ostentatious, the young girl must go home.

Building. Rooms and educational facilities must be maintained in hygienic conditions, ample, airy, and sunny; the school must also have an open space or garden for play activity.

Rewards. The children's work, behavior, kindness, and so forth will be recorded. The best students will be rewarded according to their merits with personal prizes, and also with vacation trips (S.D.D.Z.). (6)

9. TEACHING CATECHISM

Teaching Christian doctrine to children is a sublime work held in great esteem by men illustrious for science and holiness in all times. For instance, St. Jerome often stopped his hard study on Holy Scripture to catechize children. St. Augustine wrote two books on Christian Doctrine in high style. Clement of Alexandria and Cyril wrote and taught catechisms. St. Gregory the Great taught children the elements of faith personally, the burden of his pontificate notwithstanding. Clement VIII entrusted the talented Bellarmino with writing an appropriate catechism for children. In France, Gersone taught catechism to the children on holidays, and was praised by Benedict XIV; Bossuet and Fenelon took up writing minor works. In Italy, towards the end of the 19th century, St. Alphonsus M. dei Liguori, renowned for holiness and a doctor of the Church, wrote a small catechism for children and he himself sometimes taught them in the churches.

Such geniuses esteemed this work apparently so humble. In fact, what is the Catholic catechism all about? It is a summery of the Christian doctrine. Considered in

its dogmas, Christian doctrine is the best means to elevate the human intellect. Considered in its precepts, it is the most efficacious means to moralize the heart. It is not an earthly doctrine, but a heavenly one. It was not a man nor a prophet nor a philosopher, but the eternal Word of God, God himself that revealed it. The most learned persons could never imagine such a doctrine... Made of mysteries, themselves obscure, but clear and obvious in their wording, this doctrine reveals where the person comes from, who is the Creator, which is the creature's destination. Consisting of principles contrary to human passions but consistent with the needs of the human heart, this doctrine gives peace to the people by making them delight in the sweetness of true happiness. It solves the greatest problems of human life, the same problems on which the most learned persons of Portico and Academy struggled hard in vain; the problems which form the absurdity and the contradiction of the behind Alps' schools, because they unbridle reason to the most dreadful frenzies by excluding Christ.

Teaching catechism is a noble ministry for the doctrine itself and for charity which makes such a doctrine possible. Together with St. Paul we could say that the charity of Christ urges us; only charity may induce the Christians to teach the rudiments of faith to uncouth and ragged children, because such a work is humble, full of difficulties, and does not attract selfishness by fostering the feeling of glory. The Christian educator who spends his time in a little temple together with poor children who are unable to value his sacrifices, must arm himself with patience in order to teach, and with meekness in order to correct. He has to continuously insist on the easiest prayers for months and years without getting tired of the humble, assiduous work! So much self-denial is the

daughter of charity. It is through charity that the Christian loves his neighbor as himself, willing to bestow the treasure of his faith on others, to suffer and to bear everything, feeling himself rewarded when he succeeds in making a poor child know that there is one God who created everything.

I know that the world displays the works of philanthropy instead of the Catholic charitable institutions. But, may we compare them? Is it possible to compare God with human beings? Philanthropy is pure love of man toward man; charity is love of man toward God. Now then, because true love of man is impossible without God. Philanthropy does not really love man, but pretends to; it is, therefore, the counterfeit money of charity in the hands of those who, pose as the people's benefactors. The philanthropic institutions which are supported by a false principle of beneficence or by pride, are unfruitful and flail very quickly, because they are not based on virtue. On the contrary, the charitable institutions supported by sacrifice and self-denial overcome any difficulty, are very fruitful, defy time, and face fortunes.

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If we look at the aims of philanthropy and charity, what unfathomable differences we see between them! Philanthropy aims at the. natural good, which becomes unattainable when it is separated from the supernatural one. Charity instead aims at a divine goal: at forming a human being worth of his fate, which implies the good a human being is able to reach in the physical intellectual, and moral sphere.

You easily perceive that teaching catechism to children is a sublime work both for its reason and aim. The aim is the eternal salvation of the souls, which brought about the eternal Word of God to become a man, to work

and to suffer so much. By teaching children the doctrine that educates them to avoid evil and to do good, we give them the means for their sanctification and eternal salvation. Can you show me an aim nobler or more important than this?

a) Advantages

After considering how excellent this work is, we consider its advantages.

Is the Catholic catechism's content an unfruitful, ineffective doctrine, barren of results, or is it a doctrine fecund of immense effects and rich with supreme advantages?

Look at Christianity's story to find the answer. You will see that this powerful doctrine overcame the most tremendous difficulties through its apparently weak means. It was so fecund of results as to reform entire nations quickly. The apostles preached it from the threshold of the supper-room, and thousands of Jews were converted. They preached it in Thrace and in Scythia, and the untamed people were converted. They preached it in India, Ethiopia, Armenia, and regenerated the people to a new life. They preached it in Rome in the presence of the emperors like Nero, and in spite of being persecuted, silenced, and banished in various ways this doctrine overcame persecutions, prevailed over the tyrants, and exposed the sham of the false gods, raising the cross of the divine teacher on their ruins. Isn't this doctrine bringing peace in the families by opening the afflicted heart to hope, by defending the rights of the poor, by freeing the oppressed from 'barbarity, by breaking the blocks to the prisoners? Even though unknown to so many persons of the world, this doctrine helps everyone, even those who do not know it! Since it has been taught by the Creator of all things, this doctrine is by itself fecund.

This doctrine has never lost its divine efficacy. Continuing through the centuries its great apostolate, the Church never stops preaching Christ from generation to generation, also teaching the children about God and his Church through the Catholic catechism.

b) Sure advantages

Teaching Catholic catechism to children brings about certain advantages like the sowing of the seed in a fertile soil. To learn and profit by it, however, it is indispensable that the pupil have docility in receiving the lesson and intelligence to understand it.

Docility. Owing to his pure heart which does not know malice, duplicity and doubts, the child's docility is great. We can tell you with how much certainty children receive even our mysterious teaching, the one which is unintelligible to the human intellect. For instance, we say that God is one and triune, that Jesus is in the Eucharist under the form of bread and wine, that the whole Jesus is in each host, many as they may be; they object to nothing, they rather compete to receive these truths as quickly as they can. Oh, children's divine simplicity! Surely, they deserve the familiarity of the celestial Father, who conceals his secrets to the great but reveals them to children! How different instead are the hearts of the worldly persons! Talk with them of the great mysteries of faith, and you will see their riotous pride and impurity forging a thousand sophisms in order to reject the sublime truths of the Christian doctrine!

Someone might put this question: is a child so developed as to understand what you teach?

If you talk of the mysteries' contents, the answer is no, because no human intelligence is able to understand them; but, if you talk of the formula through which the mysteries and the moral truths of divine revelation are

expressed, the answer is yes, because nothing is so clear as the Christian doctrine. God's word bestows on the people a deep understanding through simplicity of expression, because God is simplest spirit, even though mysterious for human understanding. He encloses one thousand truths in a word or in one saying, whereas human beings use many circumlocutions to express one idea. This is the reason we easily teach children the summary of the mysteries, the philosophy of all philosophies, the code of all codes, which is the Catholic catechism.

c) For the individuals

Which are the certain advantages that children draw from the teaching of Christian doctrine? We aim at teaching and educating children, whose advantages are learning and education. But the learning I am talking about is different from the one of the world. The mundane person considers us as ignorant, because he knows the secrets of electricity and steam; he considers us reactionary, but himself civilized, because he has set his mind at rest through dual standards. Talking about evangelical learning and Christian education through which we teach children their duties toward God, neighbor, and themselves, we educate them to forgive insults, to obey their elders, and to bear with each other mutually. In short: we teach the fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom.

Compared with one of our children, what are the French encyclopedists or the modern rationalists or even the philosophers of old, the wise men of Greece, and the learned scholars of Rome? When Jesus entered the temple of Jerusalem and met the doctors of the law, he was twelve, shared the discussion, and prevailed over them. A child who knows the Christian doctrine would do the same with the worldly wise. He could resolve doubts

with a word! He could correct errors, solve difficulties, and confute opinions! They should conclude by saying: we are ignorant; this child is wise!

Such is the teaching and the education we give the children through the Catholic catechism. But we make it more efficacious by combining doctrine with practice, by making the children to learn the gospel and to practice it. In the evening school of the Christian doctrine we settle their quarrels, we correct their defects, we guide them in the way of honesty through counsels and exhortations, instilling a horror of sin and a love of virtue; we accustom them to pray to Jesus and Mary, to thank God for his mercies, and to praise him by singing devout songs. They begin approaching the sacrament of reconciliation in order to approach the Eucharistic table and to feed on the bread of the angels. Instructed and educated, they become honest citizens, industrious workers who will not curse their condition, nor covet the goods of others through destruction and robbery. They will form the Catholic people who will maintain their faith even in the presence of the seduction and the allurements, through which the mundane persons dupe the crowds to achieve their own personal aim.

It is true that some of the students who attend Christian doctrine sometimes abandon its celestial wisdom. However, to call back a person on the right path, nothing is more efficacious than his Christian childhood's memories. What inexpressible memories! Recollection of past happiness is so dear to the persons that they feel being born again because of it! A person living far from God is unable to be in peace; he becomes afflicted, restless, troubled by remorse. But happy is he if the recollection of his childhood, nurtured by the word of God, will catch him. He will remember the time when he with other children

learned Hail Mary, when he listened to the speech on Jesus Christ crucified, when he burst with joy at the sight of sacred figures, when... Oh, human heart is so natured that it lives as much on memories as it lives on hope! Just as the prodigal son in -his misfortune called to mind the bread he had eaten in the house of his father for so long, thus this person who is misled, tossed, and afflicted by his own passions will think over the divine food he enjoyed in the house of God, and will say: «I will get up and go to my Father » (Lk. 15, 18)!

d) For society

Teaching Christian doctrine to children brings about universal advantages to the individuals, to the families, and to society.

Unfortunately, the world mocker has fed the population with fateful allurements and bitter disappointments, masking its aims under fine sentences and passwords! The world dares to tempt the people, which is so religious by nature, to be irreligious, and it succeeds sometimes! But, what happens when it succeeds? By taking away religion from the families, everything is taken away because religion remedies even the want of basic needs, faith is also bread giving life and perseverance in work, patience in misfortunes, order and thrift in the administration of the daily salary.

By teaching Christian doctrine we reverse what the world does: we help the families to be religious. By instructing and educating their children, we win their trust. They look at the Catholic priest as at the real minister of the Lord, recommend their children to him, respect and revere him because they know that he is moved by charity in such a humble, but important work. The families send us their children that are vivacious and restless, and take them home docile and obedient. The mothers themselves

say that their children become always more docile, respectful,, devout, and diligent at work when they frequently attend the Christian doctrine.

The advantages of teaching Christian doctrine go from the families to society, which cannot reach perfection without religion. Religious and sociable persons emerge only from the Catholic catechism school, where the new generation is trained to live in a Christian manner. There, so many children gather in one agreement; they feed on the same wisdom, accustom themselves to pray together, to be religious and devout, and to look at themselves as at the Christian society protected by the Catholic priesthood, receiving the most beneficial, ineffaceable impressions.

When children mature and meet again in their activities, they will recognize themselves as brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ, because they learned the same celestial wisdom. As a matter of fact, didn't they learn the social rules at the same school? There, children are not told that property is a theft; on the contrary, they are told that they must not steal, nor covet the property of others; they are not told that equality may be reached by destroying the hierarchy; they are not taught how to throw down the government and how to escape from any authority; on the contrary, they are told to give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God. In short, we avoid forming human beings who are contrary to any real society, because we aim at forming persons who will comply with their duty by obeying divine and human law.

Please consider how the advantages coming from teaching Christian doctrine go from individuals to families, from families to society, and from generation to generation.

Look at those children who will become fathers and mothers in the near future. They, the new parents, will cope with their children as we have done with them. They will educate their children with the same rules of the Catholic catechism. They will perhaps see on their grandchildren the beneficial fruits of the divine teaching they have received at our school; and when helped by the Catholic priesthood that watched over their childhood, they will close their eyes to this world, they will leave the sublime inheritance of faith to the new generations.

Thus, that Hail Mary, that Our Father, that small Catholic catechism we teach to children becomes the real mustard seed which is planted in the pure hearts, which is fostered by the grace of the divine farmer, which develops, grows, and becomes a marvelous tree (From the speech for catechism reward, Feb. 5, 1878).

10. FOREIGN MISSIONS

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I have started the evening missions in the refectory by explaining to the communities the importance of helping the work of the foreign missions both by prayer and means. We need to introduce this spirit of zeal in our communities, because our Lord Jesus Christ may want a group of Rogationists and Daughters of Divine Zeal to go to foreign missions in the future! Please read to the community the mission pamphlets' that I will mail to you and to the Rogationists (Letter to the Mother Superior Nazzarena, May 25, 1921).

Nurture the holy ideal of foreign missions in the infidels' lands such as Africa, China, Americas, Oceania, Indies, Russia, etc. Foster the hope of gathering and educating the Holy Childhood and the savage children in order to practice the works of charity, instruction, and

civilization; to make Jesus known and loved by the infidels; and to set the slaves free.

Only the mission enthusiasts who are firmly resolved to face travels, inconveniences, want, and perils; who feel the divine impulse to bear witness of their love toward Jesus through martyrdom will be appointed to such an apostolate.

May Jesus our supreme goodness raise such souls among the Daughters of Divine Zeal, and may these generous souls shed their blood for the propagation of the Catholic faith, for the eternal salvation of the souls and for the love of Jesus, who shed his Most Precious Blood for us!

From heaven, these elect souls would be the institute's pillars and the burning fire of charity and zeal for the Daughters of Divine Zeal on earth (S.D.D.Z.).

a) Holy Childhood

I am mailing these pamphlets of the great, tender Holy Childhood to you, who are concerned with holy things and are increasing your desires for winning souls to Jesus Christ! That so many children in the savages and infidels' lands perish in the streets, or at the foot of the trees, or are drowned in the rivers by their cruel parents; that their souls fall into Limbo instead of going to heaven, never seeing God, make us cry with emotion!

But, that hundreds of thousands of souls go straight to heaven when the Catholic world takes interest in them by giving generous alms to the missionaries fills our soul with joy. They spread the light of faith among the cruel, superstitious crowds, make them know Jesus Christ, make the parents be kind with their children, baptize the dying, snatch them even from the mouth of the dogs or pigs, and open for them the doors of the eternal glory through the redemptive baptismal water! Who knows how

the most holy Heart of Jesus is delighted by so celestial gains? These souls from heaven will repay with their prayer the heroic missionaries, the priests, the catechists, the sisters, and the helpers.

We are giving our spiritual contribution through the Rogation by winning the workers for the rich harvest of the mystical barns and for the eternal kingdom! But for the sake of divine mercy we are also obliged to pledge our monetary contributions for such a holy, marvelous work! Isn't this the best use of the means that St. Anthony lavishes on us? Isn't this the best way to please him? The name of Holy Childhood is due to the holiness of the work and to its dedication to the child Jesus, the most tender love of the hearts which are created to love God, not earthly foolishness! Holy Childhood is entrusted to the child God! Please imagine how St. Anthony and the child Jesus are pleased by our contributions for the saviors of so many souls that are redeemed by the Most Precious Blood. I am not saying that one of those souls is more worthy than the cosmos with all its marvels; I am saying that one of those souls is worth as much as all souls together are worthy, is worthy as much as the adorable blood of Jesus Christ is worthy; that the entrance of one of those souls into heaven cheers the whole paradise, the angels, the saints, and, the most holy Virgin who meet and consign that soul to the most holy Trinity!

Oh, infinite mysteries of love revealed by faith! Those little souls never offended God, never shared human foolishness, but were created to be saved by the elects who had to practice faith, charity, zeal, and other virtues for their own salvation!

Was our adorable God bound to create us in conditions so different from those of the children who are born of savage parents in corrupted regions? We are born

instead in the holy Church's womb, we are baptized, instructed in the holy religion, guided to the holy altars. We are called to the religious life, to the divine service. We are supported by so many celestial means for our sanctification! And yet, we have to love all souls as much as ours concerning ourselves with them as with ours. Cod wants it!

I am writing these lines to all communities, beginning with you who are the chosen seed, (7) our hope, and the favorite of Jesus' Heart; (I would say, of my bad heart too)!

I am not urging you to contribute to this holy work through alms. If you could, you would with great pleasure. I am more concerned with fostering charity and zeal for winning souls to Jesus, because if you were apathetic, you were not Rogationists of Jesus' Heart nor Daughters of Divine Zeal...

To associate you in this tender, beautiful, touching institution, I mail the Holy Childhood's pamphlets to you. You can read all or the best of them as a spiritual reading or in the refectory. You will find in my mail figures of the child Jesus with children of those lands, and many more. I will see to it that the Holy Childhood's pamphlets be delivered to you every month. I bless you. Let us belong totally to Jesus together with your beloved director, Canon Vitale, and me, who long for so great a fortune (Letter, March 15, 1922).

b) Preparation to the missions

If the Daughters of Divine Zeal long for the holy missions, they must have the pure intention of winning souls to our Lord Jesus Christ and of favoring the popes, who earnestly care the increasing of the missionaries. The sisters will never long the mission for spiritual pride.

Were the sisters drawn to the missions by stimulus

of ambition and novelty, they wouldn't be able to resist and to comply with so high a work of charity and zeal for lack of grace, they would instead slacken, jeopardizing their perseverance in time of persecutions. It is necessary, therefore, that those who long for the holy missions pray to the Lord for enlightenment, for fervor, and for pure intention, seeking the glory of God and the good of souls.

After praying, they will submit their intention to the superiors. The mother general together with her assistants will pray and examine the request. When the missionary candidate's qualities such as: good nature, character, health, and age give assurances for the holy missions, the mother general will accept the request, and will assign the sister to the missionary house for an appropriate preparation.

When the Daughters of Divine Zeal institute is formed and holy vocations for missions are ready with God's help, a Missionary House will be formed. The candidates for the missions will prepare themselves for the task they will undertake with the Lord's help, and with holy obedience to ecclesiastical authority and their own superiors. They will observe the following topics:

1. They will attend to assiduous prayer.
2. They will say specific prayers.
3. They will practice penance and austerity in food, schedule, and sleep, sleeping even on the straw or on the ground and making nightly vigils.
4. They will catechize children with great zeal and love. As good catechists, they will teach the formulas, will explain them, and will narrate some stories from the Bible or from illustrated catechisms, training themselves accurately in the missionary house.
5. They will acquaint themselves with the mission

lands, specifically with the lands where they will go such as: Africa, China, America, Indies, etc.

6. Besides French, teachers and polyglot books will help them learn the language of the people among whom they have to work.

7. To foster the missionary spirit, they will read books and magazines from holy missions.

8. They will be acquainted with hygiene, medicine, and pharmacy. Some sisters should also be graduated, because they have to cure the infidels in the missions.

9. The mother superiors will provide the candidates for the Missions with special lectures.

Their training will last two or three years to be ready for the new life of sacrifice and apostolate. The missionary house will be in a place where spiritual and intellectual help is available. If the institute has no house for this training, the candidates for the holy missions will train themselves in a separated section of the institute (S.D.D.Z.).

NOTES

(1) When the Padre was writing, the Rogationists did not exist.

(2) Let us call to mind one of our padre's genial inventions. He wanted all the communities to spiritually share in the Eucharistic Congress' closing, which was celebrated in Lourdes in 1914. We quote from his circular of July 22, 1914. After prescribing a Eucharistic procession, he added: «In the solemn procession of Lourdes on 26 instant, many sick from various cities of the world will greet the most Holy Sacrament from both sides of the street, exclaiming aloud: O Lord Jesus in the Sacrament, have mercy on us, please heal us, heal us! Probably, sudden healings may happen during the procession as it happened in the past; thus, our Lord will renew the miraculous healings he worked in Jerusalem and the cities of Judea...

Well, we all are sick in the soul more than in the body. We have to long for healing the spiritual more than the bodily sickness. For that reason, several persons will place themselves on the right and the left side of the places through which the Holy Sacrament will pass in procession in our houses. One will represent the Pious Institute of Jesus' Heart's interests, and will say: Lord Jesus in the Sacrament, have mercy on me, please heal me, heal me! Two persons will represent our Anthonian orphanages for boys, and will say: Lord Jesus in the Sacrament, have mercy on us, please heal, heal, heal us.. Two persons will represent the male religious communities, and will say: Lord Jesus in the Sacrament, have mercy on us, please heal, heal us! One person will represent the poor, and will say: Lord Jesus in the Sacrament, have mercy on us, please heal, heal us. Another person will represent the absent people who are willing to be represented, and will cry in the same way. Then, all the people going in procession will cry: Lord Jesus in the Sacrament, have mercy on us, 'please heal, heal us.

In the day schools, some of the students standing on the right and left side, will represent their fellows and will exclaim as above when the procession is passing through.

These invocations will be spoken now and then with raised hands, in a loud, plaintive voice during the procession, beginning from the time it starts. The two rows of the representatives will face each other so that the Holy Sacrament will pass through, without interference of the general public.

Each representative may wear a badge with the name of those who are represented such as Pious Institute or Anthonian Orphanages or Religious Community of the Rogationists.

If the procession is public, nothing hinders this devout, effective practice from being done. Done with faith, humility and love, it will obtain spiritual healing from Jesus in the Sacrament!»

(3) «Please celebrate together with the children the following devotions: the most holy name of Jesus in January, St. Joseph in March, the most holy Virgin in May, the Sacred Heart of Jesus in June, our Lady of the Rosary in October, all souls in November. The spiritual reading from the best booklets, which will be submitted to the superiors, will help you» (S.D.D.Z.).

(4) He is talking of the house in St. Eufemia of Aspromonte.

(5) «The sisters running the day schools have to prepare the girls for the first Communion with diligent care. They will instruct the students about this most admirable Sacrament of the Eucharist, explaining and making them learn by heart what the catechism says about it. If you have gifted students, they should be told about the Old Testament's symbols concerning the most holy Eucharist, such as the tree of life in Eden, the manna, the bread of Elijah,

and everything we find in the sacred history. They should be told about the chief points of the Old and New Testament. Later, the sisters will explain the multiplication of the bread by Jesus as a symbol of the Eucharist, and the promises Jesus made in John, chapter VI. At last, they will narrate the Eucharist's institution on Holy Thursday night, at the supper. It takes months to prepare the children this way. By reading some chapter of Practice to love Jesus Christ by St. Alphonsus de' Liguori, the sisters will excite in the children the wish to receive Jesus in the Eucharist. During the preparation, they will lead the children to say some wish prayer to our Lord. When the time of the first Communion is at hand, the sisters will premise some novena to our Lord, and will help the children to offer little sacrifices such as abstaining from drinking or fruits or cookies.

On the day of the first Communion, the children will be disposed in the church under the careful attention of the sisters, who will appear so cheered by the holy liturgy as to impress, edify, and foster in the children the wish to receive Jesus in the Eucharist.» After speaking about the preparation and the thanksgiving, our padre adds: « 1) It is helpful to have the day school students in the institute for a three day preparation for Holy Communion. 2) The sisters will find ways to make the children always remember their first Communion. 3) They will accustom the children to receive Holy Communion once a week with the same devotion, recollection, and fervor they had in their first Communion; preparation and thanksgiving will be given special attention. 4) When following the confessor's counsel fervent children wish to receive Holy Communion more often, the sisters will assist them to receive Jesus with increasing fervor and devotion. If children are deprived of this special attention, it is better for them to receive the Eucharist every Sunday and chief feasts after a good preparation, making an appropriate thanksgiving as well» (S.D.D.Z.).

(6) Remunerate the work. « The sisters will remember and practice the following suggestion. To keep the day school blooming in number, care, and profit, the sisters must install remunerating works such as selling embroidery and the like. Practically, the sisters will pay the young girls half of the sale income, every month» (S.D.D.Z.).

(7) The letter is addressed to the Rogationist clerics.

CHAPTER XXIII

SACRED HEART-PASSION-INTIMATE SORROWS

To increase our zeal for the divine glory and the salvation of souls, to foster the understanding of our mission and carry it out perfectly, our constitutions urge us to a particular devotion to the most holy Heart of Jesus and to the meditation on his mysteries of love and suffering, especially on his intimate sorrows.

I declare that the outstanding devotion of the order to the most holy Heart of Jesus is very sweet, gentle, and dear to me. I consecrate myself to the adorable Heart and to its most holy desires, wishing to promote its interests as though they were mine. I will glory in offering myself as a lover, son, slave, and victim of this divine Heart, striving to make people know and love it all over the world. But it is in the Eucharistic Communion that I will be so close to it as to never be separated from it. I will say: « Jesus is mine and I belong to him; I have caught him to never lose him. » My duty is to live the life of his Heart.

For that reason I will meditate every day on the mysteries of his life, Passion, death, and above all on the intimate sorrows of the most holy Heart, prolonging the meditation when I am able to. Considering his profound, hidden torments from the time of his incarnation for all sins, for human ingratitude, the failure of elect souls, and for the eternal loss of many souls, I will search thoroughly the most holy Heart of Jesus' Incommensurable sorrows, which surpass those of his most holy humanity beyond any description, but are meditated upon by a few people. As for myself, I will feel the divine Redeemer's sorrows in my heart and will contemplate Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, as I was deeply sharing in his agony.

Because the most holy Virgin Mary is the only one who penetrated, knew, and shared the sorrows and the agony

of our Lord Jesus Christ, I will unite the meditation on the Intimate sorrows of the most holy Heart of Jesus with the meditation on the Intimate sorrows of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

These meditations will give me courage and strength for any sacrifice, for the greatest glory of God, for the good of all souls, and for the infinite consolation of the most holy Heart of Jesus.

1. THE SACRED HEART

From the beginning to the end, the rules of this pious institute demand that the sisters perform everything for a greater consolation of Jesus' Heart. Amen (Oct. 6, 1897).

The divine Heart is everything for us: we, the foundation, our poor work, the intentions, the houses, the orphanages, and the schools are consecrated and belong to it. (1) For that reason the novena and the feast of the Sacred Heart are of primary importance to us, and we warmly recommend our communities to celebrate them with a particular affection, devotion, and transport of love (Letter, May 13, 1913).

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Rogationists of Jesus' Heart! I have meditated on the beauty of this name: it means prayer and action. Action also includes the personal financial cooperation to continue our work. The specification « of Jesus Heart » crowns everything!

This title will form our decorum, our ambition, our honor, and the rule of our duties. It makes our devotion to the Heart of Jesus very tender, lovable, and delightful; that Heart which holds the fortunes of our institute and disposes of them as he desires.

Let us consider the divine Heart's actions and operations, what Jesus did and said during his life, and what

he is doing in the Holy Sacrament. When we say Heart of Jesus we mean infinite goodness, love, charity, and mercy. Our divine Redeemer is love. Out of love he allowed himself to be formed in Mary's womb like one of us with a human nature. Out of love he cried in the manger, and drew to himself the hearts of mankind. Out of love he spoke, prayed, hid himself, and worked miracles. In his Passion, out of love 'he allowed people to put him in the press, oppressing and transforming him into the man of suffering. At last, the crucified Jesus is the invincible proof of God's love for man.

As long as we look at Jesus being formed in his mother's womb, in the manger, in his hidden life, in his Passion, or while performing miracles, we look at the external manifestations of his love. This, however, is not the best contemplation. The best contemplation is searching the most holy humanity of Jesus, discovering his Heart, because it is in his Heart that we find his whole love.

In the love of Jesus' Heart we find the characteristics of true love. True love is strong, stands up against obstacles. Love is strong as death; love is never jealous... rude or selfish; love is patient and kind; love is endless. The love of Jesus' Heart is strong in his poverty and in his Passion, and always magnanimous. Even though Jesus does not need us, he faithfully helps us in everything, and when we offend him, he waits for us.

2. CONSECRATION TO THE SACRED HEART

O most charitable Heart of Jesus, we wish you to reign in this pious institute with your virtues, love, and glory for the safety of the souls. Dispose of us and of our things as you like; see to it that we work for your

most holy aims, but never for our Limited, earthly designs. Strengthen us in your holy fear and love so that we may prefer dying a thousand times rather than offending you with even the least deliberate fault. Please give us the flames of your divine charity and zeal so that these communities may become hearths enflamed with holy fervor, with works and with continuous prayers for your Sacred Heart's interests as well as for winning numerous evangelical workers to the holy Church. Please place this institute along with its members in your most sacred wounds. Infuse your life and your spirit in us: life and spirit of true humility, love, affection, celestial wisdom, divine zeal, and untiring industry for your glory and for the salvation of the souls, for a greater consolation of your Heart, o Jesus! (2)

3. A SYMBOLICAL PAINTING

Wishing to put in action an idea of mine (3) in order to attract a greater protection of the adorable Heart of Jesus on our institute, I have entrusted an artist of Toronto (4) with painting a picture, size cm. 178 x 126, whose photos I am mailing to each of our houses. The original painting has been allotted to the mother-house, the Holy Spirit, in Messing.

In the photo, the Blessed Margaret Alacoque is kneeling on the altar's steps holding in her hands a little picture of the Sacred Heart with our divine motto: « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest. » The Blessed Margaret is giving a new message to the Catholic world by inviting the Visitation Daughters to contemplate the Sacred Heart in the painting. On the other side of the picture the Daughters of Divine Zeal are kneeling, wearing

the Heart of Jesus with the Rogate on their chest. The seven Visitation Daughters represent the seven novices whom the Blessed Margaret inspired with fervor in the devotion to the adorable Heart of Jesus. Now, this devotion is spread in the Church. On the other side of the painting seven Daughters of Divine Zeal represent their order which shares the love and the worship toward the most holy Heart of Jesus. Thus, the painting shows that the divine Heart of Jesus turned his loving attention to the Daughters of Divine Zeal from the beginning, and received their devotion and love together with the love of the Blessed Margaret and her Daughters. We think that ever since the most loving Heart of Jesus destined to us the command of his Heart's divine zeal, and communicated this spirit of prayer to his beloved Visitation order.

The Holy Sacrament, whence the devotion to the Sacred Heart came forth, and where all devotions converge, is on the altar. The celestial Rogationist St. Francis de Sales and the celestial Daughter of Divine Zeal St. Joan de Chantal, founders of the Visitation order, kneel before the most holy Sacrament, hinting at the two communities. They seem to recommend them to the adorable Heart of Jesus, imploring for the Daughters of Divine Zeal the virtues of the Visitation Daughters such as: love for the Sacred Heart, humility, simplicity, and meekness. They implore for the Visitation Daughters a new flame and the spirit of zeal for the divine Heart's greatest interest, which is enclosed in the divine saying: « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest. »

At the foot of the Holy Sacrament, we see the sacred image of Immaculate Mary, who is the real Foundress of the Visitation order and the divine mother superior of

the Daughters of Divine Zeal, as well as very concerned protectress of the Evangelical Rogation.

At the foot of the altar also a priest is kneeling in adoration before the Holy Sacrament, the divine Heart of Jesus, and Immaculate Mary. He could be the Blessed Fr. De la Colombiere, an intimate cooperator of the Blessed Margaret for the spreading of the devotion to the adorable Heart. But he may represent all the Rogationists, because he is praying to the most holy Heart of Jesus to send out good workers to the holy Church.

It is our hope that the present and future community of the Daughters of Divine Zeal grow in the devotion, worship, love, and zeal for the Sacred Heart of Jesus, imitate his divine virtues, and go deeply into zeal for the Sacred Heart of Jesus, imitate his divine virtues, and go deeply into zeal for the interests of the divine Rogate. This consists in understanding the importance and efficacy of the divine prayer, the need of the Church for holy vocations in the mystical harvest, and the immense utility that the numerous, holy Catholic priests, the religious orders, and the mystical workers may bring to the holy Church in the world.

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For this reason, we wish the Daughters of Divine Zeal to make a present, future, and I would also say a past spiritual union with the Visitation order, which is so cherished by the sweetest Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

To more easily reach the goal expressed by the painting, please frame the enclosed photo and expose it where the community gathers comfortably, but out of the church and of the oratory. Every Friday, or at least every first Friday of the month, the community will say a prayer before the image of the Sacred Heart, invoking the Blessed Margaret's intercession. We wish you to say the litany of the Sacred Heart and one Our Father, Hail

Mary, Glory, and Hail, holy Queen, to the most holy Virgin, concluding with the consecration-prayer of the Blessed Margaret and with a song. During the novena and on the feast of the most holy Heart of Jesus other prayers will be added. On Friday, one Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory will be added for the glorification of the Blessed Margaret. (5)

I have in mind to mail the photo and the above declaration to Paray-le-Monial Visitation convent and to some other communities of the same order, asking them for affiliation.

By so doing and by striving to reach our sanctification in perfect union with the adorable Heart of Jesus, we expect that our least institute will be more pleasing to his sweetest Heart! May no one lose holy fervor, the diligent practice of the most elect virtues, and the loving attention to please God in everything, but may each one avoid sin, even in the least, and promote the interest of the divine Heart at any cost! Please consider how, despite fights and obstacles, the adorable Heart of Jesus has formed and fulfilled you with spiritual and temporal goods; I would say that with the help of his most holy mother, he has been carrying you in his divine arms as beloved daughters. He has characterized you and has sifted you up to the rank of spiritual mothers of the Catholic priesthood with the divine Rogate, giving you an exceptional beneficial mission; at last, he has filled you with plenty of blessings.

How grateful you must be and how faithfully you must answer the call of the divine Heart, you yourselves may judge! Keep in mind that if you humble yourselves for so many undeserved gifts and serve Jesus with an always more increasing fidelity of love, he will prepare

greater graces and favors for you! Amen (Circular, September 13, 1919).

4. SPIRITUAL PILGRIMAGE TO PARAY-LE-MONIAL (6)

June 8 (1923), Friday, after the octave of Corpus Christi, is dedicated to the most holy Heart of Jesus. On this feast, the Italian Pilgrimage Committee has planned a pilgrimage to Paray-le-Monial, at the fact of the adorable Heart of Jesus.

Many people will be fortunate to go there. But everyone has the same opportunity to spiritually join the devout pilgrims at the renowned sanctuary, where our Lord showed his sweetest Heart to the Blessed Margaret Alacoque, making her an apostle of the sublime redeeming devotion. The aim of such a singular manifestation in modern times was not to reach out to Margaret Alacoque alone, but to all souls. It aimed at inspiring with fervor all loving souls, opening to them new light, grace, and holiness; at cabling sinners to repentance, saving them from perdition and guiding them to eternal life. Jesus continues saying: I did not come to call the just, but the sinners.

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Dearest children, we too will spiritually go to Paray-le-Monial, which we have been wishing to visit for many years. To make our pilgrimage more fervent and acceptable to the adorable Heart of Jesus, we have planned the following:

1. On May 30, before the novena, we will form a little procession at six in the morning. While entering the oratory for the holy mass, we will sing the song: Pilgrims, come an...; (7) then we say the novena and the pilgrimage prayer, as well as one Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory

to St. Francis de Sales, to St. Joan de Chantal, and to St. Margaret Mary;

2. On June 7, eve of the feast, besides the morning procession, we will have the afternoon procession, 5 to 6;

3. To prepare themselves for the feast, the participants will receive the sacrament of reconciliation during the novena and will practice special virtues and devotions.

The aims of the pilgrimage are the following:

1. That the most holy Heart of Jesus free our society from spiritual and temporal evils as well as from divine punishments;

2. That the holy Church grow in holiness and freedom;

3. That the dissident nations return to the holy Church;

4. To save and sanctify the Catholic nations, especially Italy and France;

5. That the missionary institutions flourish for the salvation of the people who do not know Jesus Christ;

6. To dissipate the heresies and the sects which oppose the holy Church and the divine truths;

7. For the Holy Father, for his freedom, and for the freedom of his successors until the end of the world; (8)

8. For the souls in purgatory, especially those we are bound in duty to remember;

9. For the clergy, that they may flourish in holiness and knowledge;

10. Each person may add his own intention (From the circular).

5. MEDITATION ON THE PASSION

The novices will train themselves in the practice of holy meditation... Without adhering strictly to a topic,

they will meditate on the mysteries to which they feel drawn, giving the preference to God's greatness and his divine attributes, to the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the Holy Sacrament. While meditating on the Passion, they will pay their loving attention to the intimate, ineffable sorrows of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (R.L.P.). (9)

The morning meditation will be entirely on the most holy Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ. The meditation book should be touching and illuminating as, for instance, « The School of the Passionate Jesus » by venerable Thomas of Jesus. Do not change the meditation book frequently; when you find that one is effective, repeat it several times, because you will not lose holy impressions and loving feelings by repeating. It may happen in profane readings, but usually not in the spiritual ones concerning the mysteries of our faith. The more you read these books with devotion, the more you are enlightened, the more deeply impressed you grow in the knowledge of God. The mysteries of our faith are a mine of infinite wisdom, which can be meditated upon for centuries.

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As for the adorable Lord Jesus Christ and his mysteries, such as: the incarnation, Christmas, his divine infancy, his hidden life, his public ministry, and especially his most holy Passion and death on the cross and the most holy Eucharist, they form the infinite abyss about which the Apostle Paul wrote: « How long and broad and high and deep is Christ's love! » (Eph. 3, 18). The more the soul meditates with love, humility, and purity on Jesus Christ and his mysteries, especially the ineffable mystery of his Passion - even with the same book and the same words - the more the soul experiences the intimate, sorrowful, and loving impression of our divine Savior's limitless pain and love. The more the soul discovers the hidden mysteries of that divine love, the more it is

caught (10) by the wounds of the most holy humanity of Jesus tortured and bleeding. In union with the divine soul and the most loving Heart of Jesus, the faithful will expatiate in the limitless abyss of charity that made the Son of God a man, who was immolated for the Father's glory and for the salvation of souls.

These inevitable results will be achieved by those who meditate with faith and love on the divine Savior's ineffable suffering. Therefore, we exhort our children in Jesus Christ to never neglect the meditation on the Passion of our Lord, because it produces immense fruits to the souls who are favorably disposed. The daily, continuous, constant meditation produces love for Jesus, our supreme goodness, 'hate of the present, past, and future sins, and strengthens one in holy detachment, desire to be united with God, holy virtues, and charity toward the afflicted and the suffering. We must always keep in mind that meditation on our Lord Jesus Christ's Passion is a necessary, very happy condition for the soul to approach the sacred table with compunction, fervor, and a profitable love, because the Passion and the Eucharist cannot be separated. Our Lord said that the most holy Eucharist is the memorial of his Passion and death. It is during the mass that the sacrifice of Calvary is renewed mystically, but really, and Jesus comes down from heaven at the consecration of the bread to feed his dear souls with his immaculate body and his most precious blood.

Preparation for meditation on the most holy Passion of our Lord ought to be each one's immediate preparation for Holy Communion. During the meditation the angels will clothe the soul in the wedding dress of our Lord Jesus Christ's infinite merits to share in the great supper. The sister will be happy, because she will not be told: « Friend, how did you get in here without wedding

attire? Tie up hand and foot and throw her outside in the dark. There she will cry and gnash her teeth » (Mt. 22, 13). On the contrary, the divine spouse will meet her joyfully saying: « You are really beautiful, my dear, you are clothed in the merits of my Passion and death: faithful daughter, enter the glory of your Lord, because I am, in the Holy Sacrament, your heaven on earth » (S.D.D.Z.).

6. THE INTIMATE SORROWS

The meditation on the intimate sorrows of the most holy Heart of Jesus is of a great importance for the Daughters of Divine Zeal. During his life - the nine months in his mother's womb included - Jesus suffered in his divine Heart an abyss of interior sorrows so intense that he could have died at any moment of pure pain if his divine omnipotence had not maintained his life up to the last moment. The prophets announced beforehand such a suffering through expressive terms and images. The most bitter waters that flooded Jesus Christ's most holy soul derived from several sources. According to the revelation granted to the Blessed Villani, the main sources were: 1) The sight of all sins that Jesus took on himself as if he were responsible for them in the eyes of his Father's justice. 2) Human ingratitude for his love and suffering, of which the prophet David had said: « What has the shedding of my blood gained? » 3) The sight of so many souls who are lost eternally, which made him say through the mouth of the prophet: « The pains of hell surrounded me! » 4) The fearful sight of his coming Passion and death, which were always present in his mind through the divine vision in such a way that he suffered them all his life. To these sorrows that oppressed his divine Heart other sorrows were joined, such as: the

sight of his most holy Mother's sorrows, the Queen of Martyrs, who was the only one able to penetrate in depth the abyss of his intimate sorrows: the sorrows and the torments that the elects on earth and in purgatory had to suffer the ingratitude, ruin, and dispersion of his beloved people Israel; the ingratitude, obstinacy, and loss of Judas, and so many other causes which oppressed the Heart of Jesus!

Our Lord somehow showed his divine Heart's abyss of anguish in the garden, where he sweats drops of blood on the ground. He suffered this inexpressible agony up to Calvary and his last breath. This intimate Passion of Jesus' Heart, called also mental pains in the revelation to the Blessed Villani, surpasses the hardships, the pains, and the torments that Jesus suffered in his most holy humanity.

The loving Daughters of Divine Zeal must never neglect the meditation on the intimate sorrows of the divine Heart of Jesus. Each sister will go deeply into them, will sympathize with the most loving Heart of Jesus so suffering, and will become inflamed with zeal and fervor to console him, as much as she can, through her own sanctification and the salvation of souls. She will be zealous to win from the most holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary elect ministers, apostles of faith and charity, holy souls in all social classes so that the kingdom of God may be spread on the ruin of the kingdom of sin, and the adorable Heart of Jesus may be assuaged and infinitely consoled (S.D.D.Z.).

The novices will meditate on and pray for a particular topic, which forms the special character of this humble, small institute, considering it as a special gift of the Lord. Specifically, they will meditate on the Passion that the Heart of Jesus suffered in his innermost, which is little

considered and quite unknown, but was more painful than the Passion Jesus suffered in his most holy body. This Passion includes the intimate, ineffable sorrows and sadness that our divine Redeemer felt in his Heart, all his life long. Beginning with his first heart-beat until his last one, the adorable Heart suffered and agonized bath at the sight of all sins that he was going to expiate, and whose malice and horror he knew perfectly, and at the sight of all human ingratitude and of the eternal loss of so many souls! Going deeply into this singular, ceaseless, inexpressible suffering of the most holy Heart of Jesus is a great gift and mercy of God, who moves the soul to a great compassion, gratitude, and love. This institute's particular spirit, which conforms to the saying of our Lord Jesus Christ, « Pray, therefore, » is bound to the meditation on the intimate sorrows of Jesus' Heart. By going deeply in these sorrows the congregants cannot be apathetic before the interests of the divine Heart. They instead feel and share them, and are moved to sacrifice themselves for the divine interests. The divine saying resounds to their ears and makes them obey that command to console the most holy Heart of Jesus in his sorrows. This prayer aims directly at the greater glory of God and at the sanctification of souls in the interests of the most holy Heart of Jesus (R.N.).

7. OUR LADY IN SORROW

Daughters, behold our most holy mother full of sorrows and anguishes. Let us stop contemplating her in the kingdom of glory, where she is sharing the same joy of the most holy Trinity at the right hand of her divine Son, but let us contemplate her in the kingdom of affliction, where she shared the pains of her divine son Jesus.

She is the queen of heaven and earth as well as the queen of martyrs. Just as she surpasses the angels and the saints in holiness and dignity, so she surpasses the sufferers and the martyrs in sorrows.

With the Lord's help, in heaven we will enjoy the glory of Jesus and Mary, seeing them face to face; but in this valley of tears, we have to shed our tears with Jesus and Mary; we have to contemplate their suffering, relating to our Lady in sorrow our devotion to her under any title. In any image of Mary we have to see Our Lady in sorrow! If we look at the Virgin in sorrow, we cannot be apathetic! Please observe her pale and pitiful face, her anguish of heart, the seven swords, the violet cloak... she seems to say: « Daughters, sympathize with me, because I am the most afflicted mother » (Preaching, Sept. 28, 1913).

8. THE DESOLATE

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« All you who pass this way, look and see. Is any sorrow like the sorrow that afflicts me, with which Yahweh has struck me on the day of his burning anger » (Lam. 1, 12)?

The holy Church and the sacred writers often apply to Our Lady in sorrow these words that the plaintive Jeremiah said on the ruin of Jerusalem conquered and reduced to extreme desolation by the enemies. The sight of the desolate Jerusalem was a pale figure of the true Daughter of Zion, Immaculate Virgin Mary, in her incomparable desolation for the death of her only son Jesus...

The most august lady was first afflicted, then went through desolation; for this reason we contemplate Our Lady in sorrow and Our Lady Desolate. When Our Lady is suffering together with her son Jesus, she shares his

pains, his bitter cup, she is in sorrow. When Jesus dies, she becomes desolate, and the cup of her sorrows reaches the brim, overflowing.

My faithful, what mysteries! I see Our Lady in sorrow in each pain of our Lord Jesus Christ. I see her in the Passion as plunged into all pains together with Jesus! But, in her desolation she suffers without Jesus! I see the wounds of her heart opening again, but Jesus is not with her! I see her scourged by the painful memories, but Jesus is not with her! I see her crucified in 'her heart and mind, where the nails are deeply driven in, but Jesus is not with her! She can cry out, « the light of my eyes itself has left me » (Ps. 38, 10).

This is worth our consideration! Just as in the human fall, sin began with a woman, so in the work of human redemption, atonement had to end with a woman! « Jesus bowed his head and died » (Jn. 19, 30). In that moment his pain ended: Jesus, the man of suffering, stopped suffering. But, the partner of his suffering, the co-redeemer of humankind did not stop suffering. Rather she entered a more bitter, ample, deep, stormy sea of anguishes: she entered the endless sea of desolation!...

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The devotion to the most holy Mary Desolate is most moving and tender. It is an expression of the innermost, filial affection toward the most holy Virgin Mother of God and ours. This devotion consists in keeping company with the Mother Desolate from the time the body of Jesus is buried until Easter dawn, when our Lord Jesus Christ rises from the dead and appears to his most holy mother. It is a period of 36 hours. If in our human fragility we cannot keep company with the Mother Desolate for 36 hours, at least let us keep her company in these very painful hours when she has lost her divine son.

When Martha and Magdalene lost Lazarus, many

people went to them to sympathize. But, here is the Virgin Mary, who is greater than Martha and Magdalene; she has lost one who is greater than Lazarus; she has lost the one who raised Lazarus from the grave by a word; she has lost not a brother, but her only son, the Son of God! Let us go and sympathize with her. This devotion began with the pious women who remained with the desolate lady after the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. How those spiritual daughters of the Nazarene mourned together with the Virgin Mary! How they were united in sharing the desolation of her motherly heart! St. Bernard says: « They saw the pious Mother lacking any relief, so they mourned more for her than for the Lord who had died » (Preaching on the Desolate, 1904)!

NOTES

(1) Padre Oi Francia consecrated the Institute to the most holy Heart of Jesus more than once. Here we quote a passage from the consecration he made in 1903: « O most sacred Heart of Jesus... we present the fortunes of this least institute along with its events, works, tribulations, fights, sorrows, distress, success, progress, expectations, hesitations, wishes, religious feast, personnel, educators and children, individuals, either alive or dead, spiritual and temporal benefactors, either alive or dead, and the people who opposed it in any way. In this solemn moment, we also present the wishes, the works, and the hope about the institute's future. As object of your compassion and mercy, we submit to you our human failings along with the failings of those who shared this pious institute.

From its beginning, this institute was consecrated to your most loving Heart... Kneeling and having one mind and one heart, we want to make an additional consecration of the Evangelical Rogation along with the charitable institutions for the orphans and the poor, as well as the consecration of ourselves as a community and as individuals. O most loving Heart, please accept the consecration of

this pious institute of your interests along with our hope, labors, pious wishes and prayers... We found all our hope in such a consecration.

Enlivened by great trust in your infinite charity and the charity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, yours and our divine mother..., we call upon the blessed in heaven and the just on earth to bear witness that we are making a complete, entire, and solemn consecration of this pious institute to your most loving Heart through the Heart of Immaculate Mary. We also consecrate the houses and ourselves along with our interests, labors, hope, wishes, petitions, prayers, pious intentions, and sorrows; as well as all things regarding the institute and the shaping, the improvement, and the firmness of the Pious Union of the Evangelical Rogation. We do so for your sweetest Heart, for the sanctification and the salvation of souls, as well as for their relief from temporal needs.

For the Immaculate Heart of Mary's sake, please welcome this solemn consecration of the Institute along with its members in the innermost of your great Heart, locking it in, sealing, and making the consecration irrevocable! »

(2) To please and to help the readers, we report two prayers that Padre Di Francia wrote to the Sacred Heart to obtain his divine love and holy virtues:

1) «O my Lord's most loving Heart, I appeal and surrender myself to you confidently... I am at your divine will's disposal; O my Jesus, see to it that I serve you faithfully. Please make me fit for your divine service by giving me holy virtues, especially humility, obedience, and holy detachment from terrestrial things. Give me holy fear of you, your love, and a great wish to sanctify myself in order to belong to you totally. O my Jesus, help me to be recollected in your divine presence when I pray. — Mother Mary, let me belong to Jesus completely.

2) Humblest Heart, remove the pride from our hearts and fill them up with holy humility and affection to it. O meekest Heart, quench the irascibility of our heart by making us mild, serene, and calm. Immaculate Heart, candor of eternal light, do not allow our mind to be darkened nor our hearts to be tarnished by even the least sin. You who cherish the lilies, make us worthy of our angelical ministry! As clerics, infuse in our heart the zeal for your glory and for the salvation of souls. Let us share your zeal for God and your thirst for souls!... Jesus, pleasure of the souls, give us your holy love... wound our heart! Let us love you by making ourselves enamored of you. O beloved Jesus, how can we lead the people to know and love you. if you do not yet enkindle in us the fire of your love? How can we become the light of the world, if you do not enkindle in us your love? How can we be the salt of the earth,

if you do not transform us into yourself out of love?... Please give us your love along with the most beautiful love of Immaculate Mother Mary! Please see to it that we may live enamored of this beautiful Lady and that your love and the love of Mary may be the only loves of our heart. Amen!»

(3) Our padre is making reference to the spiritual union with the Visitation sisters. He was making arrangements for it in that time.

(4) Teresa Basile.

(5) She was canonized on May 13, 1920.

(6) We know that the spiritual pilgrimages were a dearest and most effective spiritual industry of our padre. In 1923, on the occasion of the pilgrimage to Paray-le-Monial organized by the Italian committee (Which planned that the destination be reached on June 8) for the feast of the Sacred Heart, the padre organized a spiritual one that turned out to be one of the best. He mailed a printed circular to the houses, explaining the various intentions: adoration, praise, thanksgiving, atonement, prayer for the Church's triumph, for the salvation of the souls, for winning good workers to the Church, for the missions, etc... spiritually they would remain at Paray for 5 days.

They had to spend those days honoring the Sacred Heart of Jesus with special visits, songs, sacrifices, etc.; from there they would go to Lourdes, where the Italian pilgrimage went every year. Much to the satisfaction of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, this spiritual journey had wonderful effects. (Fr. Mary Hannibal Di Francia — his life and works — pages 299-300).

In those days we had to spiritually visit the novitiate, where Jesus' Heart had the first worshipers, the choir where the community honored the Sacred Heart for the first time, the niche built on the novitiate's stairs, the first little temple dedicated to the Sacred Heart in the monastery's garden at the beginning of 1687, and the human remains of St. Margaret. Everything was accompanied by particular prayers, pious practices, and spiritual reading mostly from St. Margaret's writings.

(7) Please hear the padre's heart's desire in these stanzas:

No mountain, no sea,
No obstacle whatsoever
Is able to flee
The trip of our love!
We are carried by the Heart,
The Heart of his love.
No hunger, no pain,
No thirst exhaust us.
Our hunger is God,

Our thirst is Jesus. Take care, never stop. Hasten to Jesus!

(8) Remember that the Holy Father recovered freedom through the concordat of Feb. 11, 1929. In 1923 the concordat seemed to be impossible.

(9) They will take care of three things: affections, prayers, and resolves. As to affection, they will prefer acts of love towards Jesus, offering themselves along with their wishes for the divine glory, for their sanctification, for the sanctification of souls, and for everything concerning Jesus' Heart's interests. As for the prayers, they will always ask for the love for Jesus, holy perseverance, virtues, and help to observe the rules. They will pray for the interests of Jesus' Heart, that the owner of the harvest send out workers to his harvest, for the needs of the holy Church and the ecclesiastical superiors, for the innocent, for the conversion of sinners, and for all souls. They will pray for their sisters, the mother superior, and the pious institute to grow in the most holy Heart of Jesus. They may also pray for the writer of these rules. As to the resolves, they have to prepare themselves for the daily occurrences, promising to avoid their usual defects and to practice the virtues they need, especially the exact execution of their office, silence, and good example. They must consider how much God is pleased by faithfulness in the little things! Through prayer and firm resolve, they will accustom themselves to be faithful» (R.L.P.).

(10) See how our Padre meditates on the loving plans of Jesus in his Passion: «Jesus wanted to diversify his Passion's mystery so that you might find every sort of nourishment in each of his torments. If you do not surrender to the first torment, for instance, to the agony in the garden, he submits his cruel capture to you. If you resist, he takes you to the tribunal, making you ponder how his most venerable, majestic person was outraged with blows, slaps, fists, spittle... But, if you are hard and still resist, he shows to you his dreadful scourging, his most delicate flesh mercilessly torn for your sake, to win your heart. And yet, he is eternal, infinite, omnipotent God, the king and the Lord of heaven and earth, while you are nothing, a pitiable small worm! To be happy for ever, did

'he need you? But, if you will resist and do not surrender to his love, he chooses another more terrible suffering to convince and move you to repentance and love; such a suffering is the crowning with thorns, whose inconceivable pains are renewed by the executioners every time they hit the crown. The more the dreadful thorny crown is driven in the head, the more the pains become horrible! Which thorn will pierce your heart? Which of the torments that Jesus endured for you, will make you surrender?

If you did not yet surrender, Jesus will undergo new torments. He lets the authority condemn him to the capital punishment of the criminals, who are to be taken out of society to protect it. Let us suppose that at this point your cold heart starts being touched. Your Jesus takes courage to conquer you. He embraces the cross with a joyous heart, wearing the crown of his love to really become spouse of blood, and starts going to the Calvary in the hope that you will follow him.

To win and make you belong to him entirely, in this painful way he undergoes various pains, such as: falls, meeting with his most holy mother, the choice of the Cyrenaic, the plaintive mourning of the women to whom he wants you to join, the stamp of his bloody, unrecognizable face on Veronica's veil, and the incredible cruelty of the executioners who drag him. In his pains, he looks at you through the centuries; because you are weak in loving him, he calls you to watch the last terrifying event of his life: the crucifixion and the three hours of agony. He assails your heart to win it to his love. His wounds are arrows, his adorable blood a besieging fire, his divine words thunder apt to shake the mountains, his dying looks that watch you through the centuries are lightnings even on the darkness of hell; the least motions and the painful contractions of his most holy members on the cross are most loving calls; the giving of his most holy mother to you as your mother and his saying « I am thirsty,» are stratagems to win you; the abandonment by all, even by his eternal Father, aims at touching you in order to surrender to his love completely, to leave worldly matters, your will, and your judgment that oppose his pure love. It also aims at making you abandon yourself to his adorable will. This is the last stroke at your heart's hardness.

At the end, he cried out: «It is finished!» This cry has two meanings for you.

To much satisfaction of his Heart, by crying «it is finished» Jesus could mean: I have won my beloved's heart; I have guided her through the incredible pains that I have conceived and chosen to make her surrender, which she did by leaving everything, even herself; she repressed her passions by washing herself in my blood; she is mine for ever.

God forbid that by crying «it is finished * Jesus might have meant: I have done all I could to win her to my love, I have undergone incredible pains to win her, but she resisted me until the end! She seemed to surrender in the presence of new pains and of the sweetest voice of my loving, suffering heart, but she did not. She followed her passions, the world, and my enemy's cheating voice. I have nothing more to do. « It is finished!»

And yet, as though Jesus wanted to make his last effort to win your unfaithfulness and hardness, he almost gathers all his

pains. Passion and death; he gathers his loving stratagems to give you the finishing blow. While the sky is darkening, the earth is trembling, the nature is terrified, mourning for your hardness and unfaithfulness, Jesus opens his most holy mouth, cries out in a loud agonizing voice, and makes all the people hear it during the centuries until the end of time. This is the last stratagem to win you to his most loving Heart. Then he joins his cry with the following words: «Father, into your hands I commend my spirit!» Just as he had said: Father, my spirit of love and charity for each person, for the sanctification and for the salvation of each soul is also for that soul (Jesus was talking of you). I put my spirit in your divine, merciful hands so that my pains and my precious blood may always invoke mercy on that hard, unfaithful soul. In my divine mind, I was unable to conceive a torment apt to win her to my Heart as my beloved bride and Daughter of Divine Zeal! Father, through your divine power see to it that my suffering and blood, my Passion and death, my body, blood, soul, and divinity that I give her in the Eucharist may win her completely. Father, do not stop this work, because my spirit of eternal charity always implores mercy on this person you created, and for whom I gave myself. My spirit cannot find rest in your hands until she breathes her last!

I leave these considerations, which conform to the truth and are perhaps inspired by the Lord, to my beloved Daughters of Divine Zeal so that they meditate on the Passion and death of our most loving Lord Jesus Christ* (S.D.D.Z.).

CHAPTER XXIV

THE STUDY

To help the institute and souls as much as I can in my priestly ministry, I will love and cultivate study.

Besides applying myself to the study of moral theology, dogma, canon law, ascetism, the mystics, and to my favorite Holy Scripture, I will also devote myself to sound readings such as: the holy Fathers, the saints, the sacred authors, and ecclesiastical history, avoiding the study à la moderne which lacks spirit.

For the glory of God and the salvation of souls, I will apply myself to study with the utmost care, aiming at preparing myself for the priestly ministry of confessions, preaching, and teaching, always bearing in mind the Holy Spirit's sayings: « knowledge puffs one up » (1 Cor. 8, 1), and « be modest in your thinking » (Rom. 12, 3).

If I happen to study profane science or letters, I will do it by holy obedience for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, avoiding to apply myself in them with passion lest I loose fervor or the application to the study of the saints' wisdom and knowledge.

If by the Lord's grace I am inclined to fine arts, I will apply myself to them by obedience for the glory of God, for the good of souls and of the institute, because fine arts are gifts of the Lord, which may achieve holy aims. We, however, will give a strict account of them to Him.

1. FOR THE PRIESTS

The aspirant will consider study both as a means qualifying for the priesthood, if the grace of the Lord and holy obedience call for it, as well as a duty and a command from the superiors; therefore, he will take the utmost care to profit by it, because an aspirant who is slothful to study shows no vocation for the priesthood. After invoking the Lord, the most holy Virgin, and the guardian angel, the aspirants will concentrate their attention on the study at hand, applying themselves to it in perfect silence (R.A.).

What is the priesthood all about? It is the light of the world, the mysterious lantern lit on the bushel, whence it gushes out flashes of light to clear away the darkness of the earth, pointing the way to heaven. This mystical light must illuminate people with the rays of science and of holiness.

As to science, we premise that the priest is a minister of God, a distributor of his mysteries to the people, a salvation bridge between heaven and earth, a mediator between the Creator and the creature; therefore his science must be drawn from the pure sources of the truth, from the eternal principles of God, of his attributes, mysteries, and law. This eminent science is theology. The priest must be full of it. If he enriched his mind with other sciences but this one, he would fail his mission. He might be a scholar, a philosopher, a mathematician, but if he lacks theology, he has failed his sacred duty.

Theology is a vast science about God and dogmas, as well as the application of divine law in human life, and the worship we owe to God; hence the triple distinction between dogmatic, moral, and canon theology. The priest is called into this field to know God and to lead the people

to know and to worship him (Funeral oration on Canon Ardoino).

2. FOR THE SISTERS

To form the sisters is a very hard enterprise for me, because I imagine the modern sisters in a very high ideal! The sister is not closed between four walls today. She is in the midst of society to cope with a censorious, mocking, and miscreant world. She must honor her garb with virtues such as: modesty, prudence, charity as well as with intelligence and knowledge (Speech, August 20, 1906). (1)

The sisters will provide themselves with proper education, and some of them will acquire the credentials necessary for teaching the orphans. The candidates and the probationers who are inclined to literature will attend advanced courses upon the subject (R.L.P.). (2)

We entreat the mother superiors, and above all the mother general, to foster diversified education in each house. The first education must be the religious education through the continuous teaching of the little catechism, the illustrated catechisms, the summary of dogmatic theology, and the school of sacred, ecclesiastical history.

Such courses of four to five years with good teachers, mature prudent pious priests, and a board of examiners should be agreed upon with the bishop. The sisters would receive the diploma at the end of the course, after appropriate exams.

The advantages of these courses would be great, because the sisters would teach religion to many young women in the day schools, in the boarding schools and

in the colleges. They would also teach in our institutes, and the spreading of their teaching would create a special reputation for the Daughters of Divine Zeal. Oh, how pleased our Lord would be by this instruction! If religious education does not matter to the government, it matters very much to us and to each religious community!

The mother superior will also foster literary education, which helps the minds to open and qualify young women for our offices, for our typographies, and for administration. Regarding the credentials for teaching, we need sisters qualified for the day and the boarding elementary schools, and for the orphans as well. Therefore, it is necessary to foster these courses.

If we have smart students with the opportunity to attend the universities, we should encourage them. They could help other sisters to obtain teaching credentials, to form a boarding school recognized by the government. Teaching many young women would be a great good, which would help the institution of the Daughters of Divine Zeal.

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Those responsible for the studies will accept wholesome young girls of twelve years who show signs of vocation, to lead them to the study. Because they are young, they have the potential to achieve good results (S.D.D.Z.). (3)

The mother general, who enjoys fostering the progress of the institute for the Lord's glory and the good of souls, will foster the fine arts. These form virtue and the splendor of the garb, since they raise the admiration of the world and attract people to the good. A prophet says that the fine arts are the « Strings of Adam » because they unite the heart to truth and to goodness. By altering the nature of the fine arts and by conforming them to human passions, the world drags souls to vice

and perdition; we instead must use them to entice souls to holiness.

With regard to the fine arts, those who are not inclined to them should not be expected to apply themselves to them. Frankly, many people have natural dispositions to the fine arts without realizing it. If they cultivate those dispositions with good teachers and with practice, they might become excellent artists.

The mother superior who desires that the fine arts bloom, will probe the particular dispositions of the young women by asking them to which fine art they feel inclined, such as: music, sculpture, painting, etc. But before granting anyone the permission to study fine arts, the mother superior will suggest that they pray and she herself will do the same.

The mother superior should know that literary studies open the mind to the people, helping them to succeed in the fine arts. Many persons fail for lack of talent and education, their good disposition notwithstanding. So, if a person is inclined to a fine art and applies herself without having the necessary education, she may not achieve perfection, nor will she become an artist. On the contrary, if a person is inclined to a fine art and is also experienced in grammar, history, mathematics or is a teacher, she will become an artist if she applies herself to it. To help a person improve her good taste and be successful in painting or in sculpture, etc. let her contemplate the masterpieces in Florence, Rome, and other cities. For this reason we should open a house in a city where teachers of fine arts abound (Ibidem).

3. A DRAWBACK TO BE AVOIDED

I have observed in various houses the world's habit of displaying embroidery and the like, thus covering the

beauty of the holy objects, instead of beautifying them. For instance: if you embroider a cross with gold by interweaving many designs, in the end you see the designs only, not the cross. Or if you make the corporals with large and denticulate fringes, they stick to the alb sleeves of the priest and are drawn by the movements of the priest's hands. Or if you lace the alb from the flank to the feet or lace the whole sleeve, you do it against the rubrics. Or if you make the veil of the tabernacle with strong solid fabric embroidered in gold, it becomes unbending, and the priest can hardly open the tabernacle. When he succeeds in opening it, the veil presses against it and closes the door again, making the priest feel uneasy.

The persons who make such works feel proud of them; they instead should be aware of deserving blame, because they use the holy objects to display their own style.

We expressly forbid such works. The cross must be entirely visible in the embroidery; only some rays may be added at the four corners. The corporals must be very simple, having no fringes at the border. The alb must have the lace a span long, and the surplice half a span. The veil for the tabernacle must be thin, flexible, and easy to roll at the opening of the little door. Fashionable embroidery is only suitable when it conforms to these rules. The corporals with internal embroidery and with holes are forbidden, because the sacred fragments pass through and are lost (Notes for a circular).

NOTES

(1) He also speaks of the studies introduced at the Holy Spirit convent: «About 30 young aspirants to religious life from various towns are attending various courses, such as: Italian literature, history, geography, mathematics, and French language. Since I consider that fine arts are the garb's splendor, we let our youths learn drawing, painting, and music.

(2) Either to run our orphanages' schools or to open day schools with our religious teachers, our students must attend regular courses in order to get the teaching credentials. We must train the young candidates for religious life to become skilled and promising for our institute, such as those (about ten) who are in Messina, and provide them with study opportunities. For this reason we would like the superior of each house to transfer at least some of their youths to Messina to study» (Circular, January 1925).

(3) Here, our padre is a forerunner; when he was writing such things, the seminaries for sisters did not exist.

CHAPTER XXV

BEING HUMBLE IN SUCCESS

While succeeding in study or in fine arts or in anything, I will avoid pride, ambition, and selfishness, which make our work appear to us a hundred times greater. I will refer the glory of any success to God, but the reproach to myself, not only because I must be convinced that my work is little but also because of my fault I do not produce what I should. If Jesus said: « When you have done all you have been told to do, say we are ordinary servants; we have only done our duty » (Lk. 17, 10), what can I say of myself and of my spiritual or intellectual or material work, which is always less than what I should do? I will say therefore: « Why should I go on using up the soil » (Lk. 13, 7)?

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1. BEWARING OF PRIDE

We recommend the candidates for religious life to beware of envy and pride, because the devil exploits such vices in the industrious youth. No candidate for religious life will envy the fellows, nor will he become so enamored of the study as to neglect the religious practices, nor will he behave like the students for any civil profession, but will study for the glory of God, for the good of his soul, and for the good of others (R.A.).

What is knowledge without holiness? It is vanity of vanities. A learned priest without holiness is a fateful

ruin. A priest who knows perfectly the moral law, but does not observe it, is an inconsistent priest (Funeral oration on Canon Ardoino).

2. THANKSGIVING

The mother superior will see to it that anyone who succeeds in fine arts avoid pride. To preserve her from vainglory, she will warn her strongly, helping her understand that everything is a gift from God and that everything must be referred to him and to the adorable Lord Jesus Christ. When the mother superior perceives that her warnings are useless, she will interrupt the vainglorious person's study in fine arts, regardless of her success, until she repents. In case of obstinacy, the mother superior will remove her from the study for ever. The Lord will be pleased by that. To keep a youth humble and to dispel vainglory, the mother superior will help her consider how many persons are by far better than she is in fine arts!

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When the sisters are advanced in fine arts and have already produced good works, the mother superior will organize the exhibition every now and then to foster the institute's reputation, to let the people know the youth's achievements, and to win esteem, respect, and admiration. On the whole, the exhibition helps the institutes of active life to progress. Introducing the exhibition with an appropriate speech in the presence of reporters is important and convenient, for they recount the manifestation to the people at large. During the exposition the mother superior will pay careful attention to refer the good success to God, to the adorable Lord Jesus Christ, to the most holy Virgin, the angels, and the saints, helping the sisters to keep in mind this great truth as well

as to remain humble by attributing their free gifts to God, by praising and by cheering him alone.

To direct everything to God, at the end of the exposition the mother superior will lead the community to praise God through a thanksgiving in the church and the offering of a holy mass.

Convenience suggests that the community write the thanksgiving to the sweetest Heart of Jesus and to the most holy divine mother superior for the enlightenment and graces they have granted, such as: they helped us accomplish the works and moved many persons to visit the exposition to their great satisfaction, our failures notwithstanding. The thanksgiving will end with an act of humility, for instance, by saying: ((We confess before you, O Lord, that we are good for nothing... See to it that everything may be beneficial to our soul and that we do not usurp your gifts as if they were ours; please help us to improve our sanctification, etc.)) We should also remember that many people in the world are doing better than we are!

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This way God will bless the exposition for the institute's spiritual, and temporal progress, and will prepare new graces for his glory and the good of souls. Amen.

3. LITTLE THEATER (1)

The mother superior can allow theatrical performances in the institutes, orphanages, and boarding schools. She will pay careful attention at the following:

1. Dramas, comedies, farces, and other performances must be very honest. On the whole, dramas must regard lives of martyrs and the like; by exception, not too much passionate family love, such as between mother

and children having a marked religious characteristic, may be allowed. (2)

2. Because women are not allowed to represent male characters, dramas of this kind will be avoided.

3. Anyone, either adult or child, is absolutely forbidden to dress somehow immodestly, despite the character she is portraying.

4. Before approving a drama or a comedy or a farce, the mother superior will eliminate the unbecoming words. For instance, sometimes the devil is called in interjections; that is improper, because we must always detest his name; or the most holy name of God is called out of purpose, in vain; it must be corrected. If intelligent and of religious taste, the examiner of the contents will choose good dramas, comedies, farces, soliloquies etc., (3) adding or modifying something or dismissing dull, irrelevant performances. In fact, she must also pay attention to the fact that while moralizing, performances must delight, please and move the audience (S.D.D.Z.).

NOTES

(1) About the little theater, our padre touches upon details which are worth remembering: «Because it is of importance to have the audience happy and admired, the little theater must be arranged well. It should be wide enough, having a proportionate background and the stage slightly inclined but high enough so that the audience may see everything while sitting down. Where it is possible, the theater's hall may be also used for the exposition of works, fine arts, distribution of prizes, and the like. If the theater's orchestra were inclined opposite to the stage, it would be better, because the performance would be under the eyes of all the people and would prevent the guests who are sitting in the last seats from standing in order to see better. The little theater will be provided with common scenes, which are suitable for various

performances, and with particular ones; at least two curtains representing views of a little temple in the distance or hermitages or ships carrying missionaries will be part of the apparatus, etc. A happy event of our institute or a scene of sanctuaries, which belong to the city where the educational institute stands, is also appropriate. Curtains, scenes, wings, proscenium, etc., must be painted by experts. The lights will be disposed in such a way as to enhance the scenes. Both curtains and scenes must be placed in a firm cage to avoid any obstruction when they are lifted up or are lowered, otherwise they bother the audience and embarrass the actresses. Dresses will be smooth, various in color, and fitting to the performance (S.D.D.Z.).

(2) As to the censure of the script, our padre was severe. In the circular of Oct. 22, 1923, he wrote: «Passion dramas, such as mothers in search of their daughters, are not allowed in our theater, because we must avoid teaching our orphans about passionate affection, as experience taught us. These dramas are also unfitting for the sisters, since they must be fond of our Lord only, whereas these dramas avert their attention from him for excess of family affection.

More than once love expressions of husbands or lovers were in the dramas; we cannot allow it, not even by allusion. For this reason, if the drama of the farce lacks the approval of our institute, it will be sent to the direction for it.»

(3) So that the performance may be effective, it needs:

a) A good choice of characters as to be in harmony with their roles;

b) Good rehearsal. After choosing the characters, a director of good taste for such education gathers them to read the drama many times until they are well impressed. Then, she tells them to transcribe their role and to learn it by heart. Each character will recite its role to the director. When all of them are prepared, the general rehearsal may start. The director will demand of each to speak loud and clearly, because children and young women who did not learn how to read well, usually recite fast at a faint voice clipping their speech, and without taking care of punctuation. The teacher will not go ahead until they amend. To overcome this serious difficulty, the director will demand of each character to read, to declaim the script, and to gesture in her presence in order to improve them. After this preparation, the rehearsal will be easy, and will take less time; otherwise, it takes more time without guaranteeing success. In the ultimate rehearsals, particular attention will be given to the two last acts of the drama, because if they are ill performed, they ruin the effect of the whole drama» (S.D.O.Z.).

CHAPTER XXVI

SACRED PREACHING

If my superiors destine me to preaching, I will give preference to the humblest one, such as: the evangelization of the poor and of children as well as the catechetical instruction to the people, avoiding to preach myself Instead of Jesus crucified. While preaching or giving instructions or panegyrics or sermons, my topics will be always about morals in order to fight sin under any form. I will remind the people of the eternal truths and the need to pray, as well as our Lord Jesus Christ's love and sorrows, the holy Sacraments, and the Eucharist, striving to spread the practice of frequent and daily Communion according to the decree by the Congregation of the Council. (1) I will use Holy Scripture, the Fathers and the Doctors of the Church, as well as the lives of the saints. I will spread the devotion to the most holy Virgin under any title, including that to Our Lady of the Evangelical Rogation and to Our Lady of Divine Zeal (when they are approved), the devotion to the Patriarch St. Joseph, to the angels and the saints. I will promote the devotion to St. Michael the archangel, to the seven angels of the divine presence, to the guardian angels, to the holy apostles, the martyrs, the patron saints and to St. Anthony of Padua.

Even though I may sometimes use a higher style due to the supernatural themes I treat, nonetheless I must be very clear so that everyone, even children, uncouth and ignorant people may understand the spirit of my preaching when they cannot understand the words. Before preaching, I will prepare my sermon and will pray to the Most High to give success to the divine word, also making a special Invocation to the most holy Virgin of Good Counsel and to my guardian angel.

Being detached from any compensation for my preaching, I will receive the offering the people give me spontaneously, which I will consign to my superiors.

1. PREACHING APOSTOLICALLY

The priests destined to the preaching will often preach Jesus Christ' crucified with holy apostolical simplicity and unction, keeping in mind the decree by the Holy Father Leo XIII in order to reach the apostolical goal. They must be clear, accurate, and brief (C. R.). (2)

2. THE TRUE ELOQUENCE

We hope that many persons are convinced, about the real value of the gospel preachers. Please reject the vain boasting of the entangled scholasticism and of the nebulous philosophy. When a parable of the gospel is explained well, it is more worthy than all the redundant declamations. The Christian morals are so rich that you can always draw from them successfully with a little work.

The prophet says that the declaration of God's word ,lightens and gives understanding to the children. Wasn't it through the practical treatment of morals that many preachers reached the top of Christian eloquence, as Massillon, Bourdaloue, and Bossuet in France, Segneri, Tornielli, Venini, Ventura and others in Italy? It was through the explanations of the gospel and the teaching of morals to the people that Tertulian, St. Augustine, St. Basil, and St. John Chrysostom, an everlasting miracle of Christian eloquence, reached the top of oratory.

Please accustom yourselves to these morals; draw the sound theological doctrine from the Bible, the Fathers, and the gospel: Plan the contents of your preaching. Beautify and make them pleasant. Cope with the ministry of the divine word with pure intention, contrition of heart,

order, clarity, opportunity, sobriety of decoration, and you will improve the soul's! We must keep in mind that we must preach Jesus Christ crucified, not ourselves (From the Catholic Word, Jan. 2, 1878)!

NOTES

(1) The decree on the daily Communion was published a few years before our padre wrote these lines.

(2) Today we have many pontifical documents on sacred preaching. We remember *Humani generis* by Pius XII along with his talks to the parish priests and the Lenten preachers of Rome as well as John XXIII's various speeches.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE MINISTRY OF CONFESSION

I will strive to be available to hear confessions and to practice such a ministry with caution and spirit of sacrifice.

I will often study moral theology, will attend the monthly moral case after examining it thoroughly, and will be acquainted with the censures, the cases reserved to the Ordinary, the dispositions of the Holy See about the administration of the sacraments, the fasting, and the like. Instead of hearing the confessions of prominent people I will prefer hearing the confessions of children, of the abandoned poor, and of the sick, being always available to welcome everyone, rich, poor, and those who seldom go to confession.

As to the confessions of women, young girls included, I will be very cautious. I will never let them kiss my hand nor will I stare at their face nor will I lengthen out the speech; on the contrary I will keep in mind the suggestion of St. Augustine, « talk with women must be brief and austere. »

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If I am told to hear the confessions of the twin institute's sisters, the Daughters of Divine Zeal, I will study their constitutions or declarations. Realizing that their rule demands of them to be brief in the confession, I will not lengthen them out, but I will expedite them.

Aware of the great difficulties which hinder from exactly fulfilling the duty of hearing the sacramental confessions, I will resort to study, to God, and to the most holy Virgin for graces, enlightenment, help, and virtue in order to perform everything in a holy manner.

Priests must be always available at the confessionals to hear the confessions of women and men, giving no preference to anyone (C.R.).

Because the moral theology leads the human actions toward God for the eternal salvation of the people, the priest will study moral theology thoroughly. It teaches which actions are good, which are neutral in quality, which lead to ruin or to salvation. By giving the rules of living according to divine law, moral theology guides the people by hand to eternal salvation. Therefore, it is an indispensable science for the priests, who must study it under strict obligation of conscience. Knowledge of moral theology is as important and indispensable as it is difficult, because it is not so pleasant as dogmatics, which lifts human minds to the sublime regions of the infinite. The priests have to strive hard to learn it by heart. This study requires a special disposition, a singular insight, perseverance of good will, and untiring patience (On the death of Canon Ardoino).

CHAPTER XXVIII

MY CONFESSION

After speaking of the ministry of holy confession to which I must attend as a confessor, now as a penitent I consider the importance of practicing such a sacrament to profit by it. Following our constitutions, I will go every week to confession after preparing myself attentively. I will prefer the confessors of the same institute, but for good reasons I can ask the superiors to provide me with an external one.

Since the sacrament of reconciliation has been established to forgive sins, to become reconciled with God, and to improve the spiritual life, I will strive to have a humble, contrite, sincere, and resolute heart at the feet of the confessor.

After kneeling humbly and after saying the « I confess... », I will manifest, with contrite heart and voice, the sins I have committed in thoughts, words, and works as well as my defects and offences against these declarations and against our rules, adding the aggravating circumstances. I will not justify myself, nor will I hide even the least defects, nor will I lay the blame on others; on the contrary, I will charge myself with fault.

By considering how much a priest displeases God even through his venial sins and how dangerous these sins are, I will excite a deep sorrow in my heart for my offences against God, firmly proposing to amend as though my confession were the last one and I were dying. I will profit by the words, admonitions, and counsels of the confessor as if Jesus Christ himself were speaking to me, and will do the penance and the thanksgiving prayer for the confession shortly after it. Were I to commit a somewhat grave fault, I will go to confession before going to sleep: I pledge this in the most solemn and outspoken way. Were it impossible for me to confess the same day (but I will find a way to do so), I will concentrate myself with acts of sorrow and love at the foot of the Holy

Sacrament in the evening, and the next day I will hasten to make my confession.

I acknowledge that going to confession often, even twice or three times a week, is a great means of sanctification; I am firmly convinced that if I were really convinced of this truth, I would go to confession more than once a week. Were the scruples, however, to move me to do so, I will follow the confessor's advice and commands as well as the moderators of my conscience.

1. THE OBLIGATION

On the day of their weekly confession, while meditating in the morning, the novices will ask the most holy Heart of Jesus to grant them the grace of a good confession, to understand deeply and entirely their defects along with malice, and to confess them to the priest with a humble, docile, contrite heart. Before going to confession, following St. Francis of Sales' suggestion, they will gather in the choir or in another place in order to make the examination of conscience for 15 minutes, the act of contrition, and the promise to never sin again. That day, the novices will be more contrite and recollected, and will make their confession by speaking briefly and concisely. They will consider the confessor as our Lord Jesus Christ; therefore, they will respect him and will receive each of his words as the word of God, calling to mind that our Lord Jesus Christ said to his priests, «Whoever listens to you, listens to me » (Lk. 10, 16). I recommend it to my spiritual daughters, the Little Retreat novices, and exhort them to keep it in their mind in order to practice it with our Lord Jesus Christ's help. They will receive the confessor that holy obedience gives them as he were given by God; therefore, they will not change

him, because changing the confessor without a good reason is to the prejudice of the spirit (R.L.P.). (1)

Established by our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive sins, the sacrament of reconciliation is also a most effective means for the people to achieve Christian perfection. The probationers will hold it in great esteem, striving to use it with the due dispositions. They will go to confession every week, after preparing themselves in common through the examination of conscience over even the least defects, and after fostering a deep sorrow and contrition. They are recommended to do it with a humble, sincere, contrite heart: *Humble* means going to the feet of the priest with inner feelings of humility in order to confess not only the faulty actions but also the intentions, not only the defects, but also the passions that are the roots of the defects, without justifying themselves, according to St. Francis of Sales' suggestions. Humility in confession requires of the penitent to charge himself with fault, not others, as well as to follow in everything the confessor's counsels, warnings, and admonitions. The probationers are forbidden to say things concerning the confession (P.R.P.). (2)

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2. THE PRACTICE

The sacrament of reconciliation is a priceless gift of the most holy Heart of Jesus. May everyone profit by it! This divine sacrament not only forgives sins, but also helps wonderfully those who are willing to improve holy virtues and to achieve perfection. When a Religious goes to confession in the spirit of penance and humility, she receives a very special grace, which prevents her from lapsing and from falling in the daily imperfections.

To attain the effects of this very precious sacrament,

the person consecrated to the Lord should receive it with the due dispositions. While going to confession, she will have a mind to go to the tribunal of penance in order to purify herself from even the least sin, and to adorn herself with the merits of our Lord Jesus Christ's Most Precious Blood, which overflows in this sacrament. The Daughters of Divine Zeal will go to the sacrament of reconciliation with this holy aim, and will practice the five requirements of the holy confession.

1. Examination of conscience. We cannot suffer a hasty, shallow examination of conscience. After imploring enlightenment and graces in order to remember the faults committed since the last confession, as well as to resolve, to repent, and to confess with great humility, clearness, and simplicity, the examination of conscience must last at least 15 minutes. After the preparation, each one will think over even her venial sins, the number of them and the circumstances. No person consecrated to the Lord and willing to sanctify herself is allowed to confess a sin without specifying how many times it was committed as well as its circumstances. To tell the truth, theologically speaking the people are not required necessarily to confess venial sins; but a person who is willing to belong totally to God, who detests any offence against Him, who strives to amend from any imperfection and bad habit, who absolutely wants to avoid indifference; who wants to improve the love of Jesus and the religious virtues, this person feels very obliged to confess the venial sins in order to achieve perfection. Every one knows that negligence in avoiding venial sins is the first step for falling in serious faults.

Mindful of the words that our Lord addressed to all, but especially to the Religious and to the persons consecrated to him: « You must be perfect - just as your

Father in heaven is perfect » (Mt. 5, 48), the Daughters of Divine Zeal must be aware of the least imperfection. Another time Jesus said: « You will give account even of an idle word! » Therefore, the sisters will confess the least imperfections along with number and circumstances, (3) after making a good examination of conscience. I submit some examples to you. Suppose that one is at fault with obedience; she will think both over how many times she disobeyed and over the circumstances, which are important in the process of spiritual improvement; or a sister disobeyed after her another superior had told her to do something urgent, or she knew beforehand that disobedience could cause bad effects; or a sister failed in her important office, causing inconveniences and much grief to the mother superior, and so on.

Bad example is a circumstance which must be never neglected in the examination of conscience and in confession. Saying, for instance, « I kept some unnecessary objects, against the rule of poverty, » is not complete. The sister has to specify how many and what the objects were, when she felt the remorse, and when despite the remorse she did not hand them over to the mother superior. Or, if the sister received the objects from fellows, she has to specify that she set a bad example to them by receiving the objects.

The root means the passion or the internal malice which pushes people to do ill. For instance, if a sister received the objects from a fellow under the pressure of false courtesy more than by ambition, the fault is due to her own inordinate esteem, because she avoided to appear rude. Let us suppose instead that she received

the objects because she was tied by a particular friendship and she did not wish to displease her friend in order to maintain her friendship. Here, the root is the inordinate attachment to a creature. Now, let us suppose that the appropriation happened without the cooperation of others. Here we find two sins: embezzlement and infringement of poverty. But the main root is greed. We said main, because we may find other roots generating a sin; for instance, if the sister took the objects in order to use them, she did so because of her attachment to comfort.

In the examination of conscience also the aim of our actions is to be considered. For instance, if a sister took or retained the objects in order to figure in some occasion, such an aim shows that the root or passion is vainglory.

Oh! If the Lord enlightened us to perceive and define our sins and our light imperfections as they really are, how many roots of hidden passions we would discover in ourselves! Hence the necessity of making a very accurate examination of conscience with recollection and divine enlightenment, instead of making it on the surface, as some do! If both examination of conscience and confession were made in full, the people would improve very much! They would kill their hidden passions by a renewal of spirit and by adorning themselves in the sacrament of reconciliation. They would share the Lord's supper while wearing the wedding dress and the splendid jewels of divine kindness, and would appear beautiful and immaculate to the eyes of the celestial spouse!

During the examination of conscience, careful attention must be also paid to the habit of the sin, because the habit is the cause of relapse; therefore it must be withdrawn. The consideration of the habit and of the relapse helps the persons to repent and to confess in

order to destroy their bad habits with the Lord's help. The purification of the person should be the real profit derived from confession.

To conclude this topic, we suppose another case. If a person had a mortal sin - (God forbid it) - but she did not confess it for serious lack of examination of conscience, the confession would be invalid.

2. Repentance. Repentance of one's own sins and resolution to never sin again are most important; they matter much more than the examination of conscience. It is obvious that those who do not repent sincerely of their faults are unwilling to amend. Well then, what's the use of confession for them? They must pay careful attention to repentance and resolution.

A consecrated person who pledged fidelity to God as to her divine spouse, and received innumerable graces from him cannot help repenting deeply after making a good examination of conscience and discovering so many venial sins.

We have said venial sins; but they are offence against God. They are the cause of very deep sorrow to the Heart of Jesus, because he requires greatest faithfulness and perfection of his brides, who have pledged so many times to never displease him.

Please let us consider the two following truths:

First, if all souls who are in hell would be liberated by committing even a venial deliberate sin, such a sin should not be committed. The reason is that all creatures, compared with God, are as nothing, as though they did not exist, says the Scripture.

Second, our Lord takes into much consideration the deliberate venialities and negligences of the persons who are consecrated to him, because he asks of them compensation for the sins of the world. When he finds no

compensation, we say that he suffers more the venial sins committed -by the consecrated persons than the mortal sins committed by the mundane people. The Lord excuses more the mundane, because they have less knowledge and less spiritual help than the persons-consecrated to him. For the sinners who are ire the world, Jesus can repeat the words he said on the cross: « Forgive them, Father! They don't know what they are doing » (Lk. 23, 34). Can he say the same for you, O soul, who received instructions, spiritual readings, exhortations, and teachings? Who listened to many preachings, who have been granted many graces, who were enlightened so often, and who have rules and additional helps? Hove can Jesus say of you, Daughter of Divine Zeal, « Forgive her, Father! She does not know what she is doing » (Lk. 23, 34)? You are fully aware of how Jesus is displeased for the venial sins you commit deliberately or by negligence, owing to not retracted habits or to bad roots of not mortified passions. If Jesus were subject to death, he would die of affliction at the sight of your faults and relapses, because they render you lukewarm and push you on the edge of grave faults and eternal perdition!

These reasons give you ground far a deep, intimate, loving, and mournful repentance for any imperfection and sin that you acknowledge in your accurate examination of conscience, before going to confession. Through your faith, you will see Jesus shedding tears for your sins, showing you his adorable wounds bleeding for your offences against him, and asking you to pour balm on the wounds you caused. The tears of your sincere repentance will be the balm. While preparing yourself for the sacrament of reconciliation by considering these notes, you will raise your sincere repentance and will show it to Jesus through the inner, beautiful words that the love

of Jesus will suggest to you. You will imagine yourself as dropping down at his feet to ask forgiveness with the most tender voices of your heart, and to promise with his help that you will never offend him again at any cost.

Your resolution consists in this promise.

3. *Resolution.* *Repentance* of one's own sins without the resolution to never sin again is a false, fictitious, deceitful repentance. Wouldn't it be another offense against God? Making such a confession and receiving the absolution would be a sacrilege.

Helped by divine grace, which never fails the persons who ask for it, each Religious of this community must pay careful attention to raise a sincere repentance and to make the resolution to sin no more. Everyone should imagine her confession as the last one of her life and herself as a dying. How contrite and resolute to never sin she would be in the tribunal of penance! And yet, no one knows if she is about to die soon after the confession or in the following days. Hasn't it happened so to many people who went to confession without thinking that it might be the last one? Had they known it, with how much repentance they would have made their confession! Couldn't it happen to you?

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While preparing yourself, see to it that your repentance and resolution be just as Jesus requires them! In fact, if Jesus does not absolve you from heaven, the priest's absolution is useless or sacrilegious. In this case you become more inclined to evil, and by approaching the great banquet of the angels without the wedding dress you attract the condemnation and the rejection of Jesus as a just judge. You do not receive him as a loving spouse! Instead of being medicine and salvation, the beneficial sacrament of reconciliation would be for you poison and ruin.

4. *Confession.* Each one will approach the sacrament of reconciliation to confess her sins to the minister of God, being prepared, contrite, and with her eyes cast down.

She will hold the confessor as the deputy of Jesus Christ without making any distinction between the various confessors, and will begin her confession by saying: Father, forgive me, because I have sinned. After the prayer I confess... (possibly in Latin), she will tell the father her sins, making her confession entire, humble, clear, simple, contrite, and sorrowful.

Entire confession means that the penitent has to confess her sins along with the number, the species, and the circumstances, denouncing the root and everything we have said in the examination of conscience. A Religious who takes care both of amending bad inclinations and of improving holiness, confesses even the least defects she has found in her examination, without leaving out anything.

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Humble confession: the Religious must beware of justifying her defects; instead of diminishing her responsibility or laying part of the blame on others, she has to increase her fault, laying the blame on herself. The more she pleads guilty (she has already said through my own fault in the I confess), the more she finds mercy and forgiveness in the adorable Jesus. This is the humble confession.

Humble confession also demands that the penitent listen to the confessor's advice and reproaches respectfully, profiting by them as though our Lord himself were speaking and admonishing.

Clear confession regarding the speech: the pronunciation must be clear so that the priest may understand everything without being compelled to ask you: please

speaking clearly. This fact requires a proper distance between the persons who are making confession and the others who are waiting outside. The confessional must be done in such a way as to prevent the outsiders from hearing.

Simple confession: holy simplicity in pleading guilty in the confession demands avoidance of useless words. The penitents will follow our Lord Jesus Christ's saying, « Just say, "Yes" or "No" » (Mt. 5, 37).

Simplicity helps the confession to be short: which we recommend to the Daughters of Divine Zeal. They will avoid the bad habit of prolonging the confession beyond necessity by practicing St. Theresa's suggestion: « Be long at the feet of the Crucifix, but short at the feet of the confessor. » We do not deny, however, that either the confessor or the penitent sometimes needs to prolong the confession beyond the ordinary time. The matter is: we must avoid to give free play to selfishness as well as to lose time and simplicity of spirit. The confessor is under the control of God alone; the results of abuses are perceptible however. Generally, those who spend more time at the confessional are the less observant and the less earnest, the crack-brained who are the most troublesome in many circumstances.

Simplicity is also concerned with the Daughters of Divine Zeal's prudence. A sister who loves the institute, the house, and the superiors, will avoid saying things which discredit the community or scandalize the confessor. The sisters who give free play by selfishness make the confessor believe that they are treated uncharitably or are compelled to overwork or are not cured properly in their sickness. They do not behave as daughters of the institute, but as strangers who harm the institute and hinder vocations. In this case the confessor feels himself obliged to impede some sisters from continuing

in the religious life. May Jesus free this humble community of the Daughters of Divine Zeal from such individuals! These unfaithful persons are self-confident because the superiors do not know what has been said in confession, nor they can contradict it, nor can they justify themselves. Should it happen (God forbid it), these individuals must consider that God knows everything, will punish them, and will deliver the community from their charges.

Contrite confession: compunction requires of the penitents to express their contrite mood in the confession. Even the tone of the voice is apt to express the inner feelings, the sorrow, and humiliation.

The, sorrowful confession concerns the repentance and the resolution which the penitent made during the examination of conscience and expressed in the act of contrition, before receiving the absolution. The penitent will say it with deep humility, compunction, and repentance, expressing the resolution to never sin again with internal conviction.

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5. *Penance or satisfaction.* After the accusation of her sins, the penitent will conclude by saying: « Father, forgive me, and give me the penance. » After receiving the penance with humility, she will return contrite and modest, will kneel, and will do her penance. Soon after she will make the thanksgiving for the forgiveness of her sins and for the graces she has received in the sacrament of reconciliation.

Warning: We prevent everyone from becoming disheartened on the suggestion of the evil for the fact that after the sorrowful confession and the resolution to never sin again she commits the same faults.

When a sister commits without deliberation the faults she has confessed with sorrow and with the resolution to never commit them again, she must not be afraid nor

discouraged; instead, she has to humble herself, sweetly renewing her resolution. In fact, even though the Lord is displeased by these defects, yet he finds satisfaction in the humility and in the resolution of the person who is willing to amend. If while receiving the absolution or while making the resolution to never sin again the penitent foresees that she will relapse, this fact does not prevent her sorrow and resolution from being true. Here is the rub: the sister must really want her sanctification and her amendment from even the least imperfections. Who finds herself in these conditions, must be calm. She must not become disheartened, nor lose trust, nor listen to the hellish enemy, who fosters distrust and discouragement, but will humble herself and will ask her spouse to forgive and to help. She will atone with penance and love, and all this will help her to be closer to the Lord. Thus, the saying of the apostle « We know that in all things God works for good with those who love him » (Rom. 8, 28), comes true (S.D.D.Z.). (4)

NOTES

(1) Because in the confession we have to say only the things regarding the sacrament, I promise to observe the following rule: I will spend at the confessional the time necessary for the confession without speaking of the direction and of the discipline which rule the institute. Still less will I escape the regular observance by using the confessor's counsel or consent, because the confessor is not qualified to interfere in the direction and the discipline of the institute; therefore, I will behave according to the mother superior's orders, counsels, and guide according to the institute's rules (D.P.).

(2) « Each congregant will go to confession every week, either with the ordinary or the extraordinary confessors of the community. Holding in great esteem the sacrament of reconciliation, everyone

will prepare himself and will confess his defects along with the cause of them with great humility, as required by religious perfection. After exciting a sharpest sorrow for his sins, he will make a firm resolve to sin no more, will follow the confessor's counsels, doing at last his penance faithfully. During the confession no one will apologize for his-defects nor will he speak of things which have nothing to do with the sacrament. The confession will be brief, simple, umble, and sincere; such a confession will bring out great profits (C.R.).

(3) Our padre wrote the following formula to help the sisters have a good examination of conscience:

« Have you neglected the meditatoin under some pretext or for laziness or to avoid inconveniences? — Were you languid, absent-minded, slothful? — Did you say the vocal prayers correctly? — Did you keep the perfect silence? — Were you angry or rude with your fellows? — Did you hold a grudge? — Did you gossip with other people? — Against whom did you gossip? — Did you gossip by yourself in your innermost? — Did you take pleasure in hearing people speaking ill of others? — Did you plot with fellows against the rules and the religious virtues? — Did you hush up the community's disorders instead of referring them to the mother superior in order to avoid prejudice to the house or to souls? — Did you make your confession with repentance, resolve, humility, sincerity, simplicity, without useless speech and without apology? — Did you really repent and resolve? — Did you make the examination of conscience well? — Did you make the penance? Did you answer quickly the bell's chime for the acts in common, beginning from reveille? — Have you been always veracious or did you tell lies or did you simulate in order to conceal the truth? — Did you mail letters, messages, notes to your parents or to priests or to others in secret? — Or did you receive them in secret? — Do you have a particular attachment to a fellow or to a girl or to other persons? — Did you have relationship with persons of the orphanage or with outsiders without permission? — Did you say or confide things of the community to outsiders? — Have you been disobedient or late to obey or fickle to the orders that you received? — Did you obey exteriorly only, being unwilling to conform your judgment to the mother superior's judgement? — Did you eat or drink between meals without permission? — Did you give food or drink to anyone in secret? — Did you pick up clothes from the community without permission? — Did you accomplish your duty with diligence or with negligence? — When a minor superior denied a permission, did you ask a major superior for it, hushing up the refusal from the minor one? — Have you done with care the works assigned to you, or have you been lazy? — Have you been gluttonous? — Did you despise providence by complaining about food? — Did you make

believe you were sick? — If you have been admonished or reproached or punished, did you act humbly or did you feel offended or did you apologize over again? — Did you react to it by pretending to be sick? — Did you falsely charge your fellows or any person? — Did you entertain unbecoming thoughts in your mind? — Either you took vow or you promised, examine yourself on chastity.»

(4) a) < Each one will avoid to busy the confessor with the community's regime nor will she seek advice from him about it.

The confessor is not the institute's director. Had the Religious to follow the confessor's advice about the institute's regime, each confessor would give his own counsel, following his way of thinking; the rules of the institute, therefore, should be changed continuously, which is unacceptable.

b) No one will talk about things regarding the confession, such as the ones said by the penitent or the confessor, etc.» (S.D.D.Z.).

CHAPTER XXIX

PERSEVERANCE IN THE INSTITUTE

Because I entered this pious Institute by my own free will, and received a hearty welcome when I joined this religious group, I feel obliged to love and consider it as my spiritual family.

I declare that I want to persevere in it faithfully and lovingly, and even though any congregant can freely leave the Institute before taking the perpetual vows, I flee from this thought because Jesus said: « Anyone who starts to plow and then keeps looking back is of no use for the kingdom of God » (Lk. 9, 62), Ecclesiasticus has also: « Stand firm in the lot set before thee. »

Were a real reason to suggest itself to leave the Institute before taking the perpetual vows, the reason should be the serious decline of the whole order. The decline of a single community, the difficulty to observe the rule or these promises, the inconveniences of holy poverty, being on bad terms with someone, personal oppositions, the sacrifice required to face work, the insinuations or the difficulties to follow holy obedience, pretext of health, and the like are not a good reason to leave the institute. Therefore, I will consider these motivations as temptations of the hellish enemy, and will manifest them to the superior in order to get rid of them.

An additional dangerous snare of the devil is the suggestion to seek advice from priests who are not committed to holy perfection, nor are they acquainted with religious life; on the contrary, they oppose this institute by instinct, and do not trust it.

If reasons of general decline oppose my perseverance, I will not make any decision before submitting everything to the superiors, before praying to the Heart of Jesus and the most holy Virgin Mary, and before taking advice from holy wise priests, especially the religious ones.

1. LET US LOVE OUR INSTITUTE

I promise to exactly observe not only this institute's rule but also its present and future customs along with its practices. As a member of this institute by the grace of the Lord, I will cherish and consider it as the house of my spiritual activity and as my spiritual family; its interests will be mine (D.P.).

The probationers will consider the religious community as their real family, and from now on they will love it strongly, constantly, and invincibly, dedicating themselves to it for ever with all their strength (R.P.).

One who has left his family home to devote himself to the religious institute, must love it with great respect, affection, and interest considering it as his own native abode, where he has been born again spiritually; therefore, it is his real spiritual family, whose pains, joys, and fortunes he must feel and share with a strong, constant love (C.R.).

The holy cross, suffering, and want are necessary means to form an institution, but happy is she who immolates herself for the consolation of the most holy Heart of Jesus! The Daughter of Divine Zeal must carry the cross and immolate herself for the sanctification and the salvation of souls (Letter without date)!

Let us love our institute; let us give ourselves to it in order to build its spiritual structure... Let us not be disheartened... Let us love the institute and its dear name: Rogation of Jesus' Heart. Jesus loves it; he gave us the most beautiful hopes for its future; if we reflect on it, we realize that God wants it!

Even though our institute is small, still its aim and mission are such that belonging to it and sharing in it make us happy! I am not speaking of the poor, nor of the

orphans, but of the banner, « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest... » What a mercy, what a gift! What an honor is our being appointed to pick up, spread, and point out this word to Christianity. It is like saying: behold, people, here is the remedy to all evils! Such a mission is so sublime that I feel like annihilating myself (Speech, April 21, 1907)!

The vocation to a religious institute is a great gift of God, through which you can assure your salvation and sanctification! But, what merit did you have? « I loved Jacob, but I hated Esau » (Rom. 9, 13). How many people God has left out! You were a poor child, but behold! God chose you (Speech, Feb. 1, 1912). Who were you? Which were your wishes? What was your infancy? What the fortunes of your life? Oh, how far you were from thinking of such a great honor! Perhaps the doors of the religious houses would have never opened for you, if the Lord had not raised this least institute! The Lord formed it to take you away from the world and to place you here (Speech, April 21, 1907)..

Let us consider the great present the Lord made to us by calling us to this institute, and by making us become most particular because of two special reasons. The Lord, however, wants us to esteem it, to be grateful, and to answer so a great mercy.

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a) The first reason resides in the beginning of the foundation. What is a religious foundation all about? It is a mystery of grace and salvation! A new harbor, a new ladder of Jacob, a work pleasing the angels.

b) The first vocations are privileged. When an institute is already formed and spread, the persons who go to it find everything ready, and they somehow enjoy the fruit of the work of the previous vocations. The first vocations instead, are called to form the institute, to lay

down its foundations; if they answer the call, their merits will be great before the Lord, because they are the founders, and deserve the praise of the future vocations! Well then, the Lord called us first to form the institute, to be the foundation stones. Oh, what a gift!

Small as it may be a community, each member has two main obligations: 1) he has to strive to achieve personal perfection; 2) he has to strive together with the fellows to achieve the perfection of the community, and of the institute.

Dearest brothers, it is Gads will that each of us sanctify himself; that all the members form this least institute as God wants it; and that it last for his glory and for the good of souls. In other words, the Lard wants us not to hinder, but to foster his aims and ways (Speech, April 21, 1925).

2. WE ARE FORTUNATE

The formation of an institute pleases God so much, and gladdens the Heart of Jesus, the most holy Mary, the angels, and the saints. All of them help us, but hell shudders and persecutes nothing else so much as the formation of a religious institute.

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Let us work! We cannot form it with flying colors, but difficulties will not dishearten us... Please let us strive for our sanctification, seeking the institute's formation as God wants it! Please let us perform all things as well as we can to sanctify ourselves, let us sanctify ourselves in order to perform what we can... Let us answer our call It depends on our faithfulness if the Lord will carry out his loving aims on us and on the institute.

In his infinite goodness our Lord gave us so -many graces and the hope that he will fulfill his loving aims

and our wishes, if we are faithful. Let us remember the marvelous ways through which he guided us: we reached the present position from almost nothing; he gave us plenty of means, helping us to overcome several obstacles; everytime we were prostrated, he raised us. He gave us many spiritual favors through many illustrious prelates...

If the Lord has decided to form this institute, we must be the first stones with his help, as it happens in the foundations: the first members deserve the foundation's merit. See, therefore, of how great importance is striving to achieve; our sanctification by answering our call!

How much the most holy Heart of Jesus rejoices when we work for the formation of a small religious community! How much he rejoices when we strive to spread the Rogate, because the Rogate will prepare the new generations of Levites. Let us trust in the most holy Heart of Jesus. Isn't he interested in developing the institute?

Let us also trust in the most holy Mary, because she shares the interests of Jesus' Heart. Jesus is with us in the Holy Sacrament, and the most holy Mary is with us because we are consecrated to her, as her children and slaves, through a continuous devotion. Jesus and Mary are with us, or better yet, we are with Jesus and Mary from the time we have proclaimed them as our absolute, effective, and immediate superiors, invoking them as such.

At last, let us trust in St. Joseph. Besides being the universal patron, he too is concerned with the Rogate! In fact, it is under his auspices that we renew the vows every year, asking him for inner virtue.

Because we have children and poor persons, we must pay careful attention to edify them. Let us be vigilant so that sin may not enter; it would be the ruin! We would see providence fail!

Children and brothers in Jesus Christ, if we are faithful, if we strive to improve holiness, to seek the salvation of the souls, and to spread the Rogate; if we are patient, if we have a pure intention and the spirit of sacrifice, and if we pray, sooner or later God will look upon us and upon the institute to fulfill his loving aims, which are beyond our thoughts (Ibidem).

Your fortune is that you are one who leaves her native house out of love for Jesus, and detaches herself from everything, renouncing eventual positions in the world in order to choose the best part, the Creator of heaven and earth, to whom she offers herself as an everlasting holocaust of love! This happiness has various degrees, this wedding with the supreme goodness has several functions. The more your spiritual intelligence is piercing, and the more your affections of faith are intimate and delicate, the more the band of your mystical wedding is tightened. The more you imitate his divine humility, feel the living burning flame of his love, savor his pains along with the mysteries of his suffering that the world does not appreciate, and like Moses' wife say to him, « bridegroom of blood you are for me » (Ex. 4, 26), the more you can call yourself a bride of the Nazarene Lord.

Such a happiness, before which the highest earthly happiness is dust and misery; such a happiness of the virgin consecrated to the divine spouse is only the beginning of the inconceivable happiness which is stored for her in the kingdom of glory, if she remains faithful to her vows and perseveres in her religious life... God's word in the mysterious book of revelation lifts up a curtain to show the future mystery of glory and happiness, telling us that the virgins consecrated to God are privileged souls around the throne of the immaculate lamb,

Jesus Christ, singing a new song that others cannot sing. O daughter, how the spouse will welcome you when you pass from the night of this world to the everlasting day of his kingdom! When the angels will tell you at the end of your life: « Behold! The spouse is coming! » , your lamp will be full of the tail of the good works. Oh, what a splendor will gird you in the kingdom of glory! What precious crowns will be placed on your head! What joy will flood you, what flood of purest celestial pleasure will enrapture you forever! Then, you will bless forever the most generous love that chose you from the thousands who were more worthy than you to enter the religious life, you will bless the moment you said good-bye to your parents, friends, and birth-place in order to embrace a humble, mortified, contradicted, fatiguing life!

Labor! Sacrifice! But, what labor, what sacrifice very different from the ones the world demands of its followers or its victims! In the house of the Lord, his words « the yoke I will give you is easy, and the load I will put on you is light » (Mt. 11, 30), come true! Everything turns out to be gentle and light in the religious life, because everything is sprinkled by the interior sweetness of grace and love and enhanced by the delightful practices of piety; everything is full of the will which seeks to please the celestial spouse, and of the hope of being rewarded in heaven (Speech, 1908).

3. LET US BE FAITHFUL

I raise my voice to pass from the canticle of joy and delight to the mournful woes of divine threats! The spouse who chose you is sweet, gentle, lovable, but she is also terrible and dreadful as the apostle says, « God is indeed a destroying fire » (Hebr. 12, 29). The spouse who chose

you for his mystical wedding, despite your unworthiness, demands of you a perfect response and faithfulness to his call. Woe to you, if you are negligent! The more mercy he had on you, the more he will punish you. Then, the following words of the gospel which decided your call, « Two women will be at the mill grinding meal: one will be taken away, the other will be left behind » (Mt. 24, 41), will burden you with complete ruin. Like Ahasuerus who rejected his wife Vasti for a slight disobedience and chose the humble, charming Esther, so Jesus Christ will do with you, if you are unfaithful and disobedient. He will reject you, and will choose another to replace you. This terrible inversion changes the roles fatefully. You will be the abandoned, the rejected from the house of the Lord, the one given to perdition, while the other will rise to the mystical wedding of the everlasting king. May no one of you incur such a great misfortune, dearest daughters: be vigilant and faithful brides of your divine groom (Ibiden)!

Please stand firm on your good will, and the grace of God will not fail you. The continuous prayers of the brethren as well as the exhortations, the rules, and other assistance will help you; but you must be resolute, strong, and constant. Do not deceive yourselves by thinking of enjoying satisfaction and pleasure, but think of embracing penance and sacrifice. If you wish consolations, these will be the ones coming from the cross, because the cross has a secret joy... May you be able to suffer some trouble, opposition, mortification, and sacrifice for Jesus, our supreme goodness. Be sure that the joy gushing out of the cross surpasses the world's pleasures; that the sacrifices you undertake in order to please God, to be holy and to save souls, include a joy beyond all understanding. Most faithful is God, who chose you. He asks you to carry his cross. He himself places it on your

shoulders. He sometimes overcharges it to make it felt, but if you are faithful, he will give you the consolations, the joy, and the peace which are an anticipation of the eternal reward (Speech, Oct. 24, 1909). (1)

4. THE DOORS OF DECLINE

To help the superior to prevent decline, we indicate the doors through which decline enters a community; it sometimes enters through one person by the hellish enemy's help.

1. *Neglecting the holy meditation* by not sharing the morning meditation or by giving up the daily one on the most holy Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, is the first door of decline. The faithlessness in spiritual readings and the emission of them also belongs to this door. The superior will see to it that the Religious attend the daily meditation, and when someone is unable to make it in the appointed time, he will later be provided with a proper time.

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2. *Receiving Holy Communion without the proper dispositions* is the second door, somehow hidden, and which causes saddest results, especially when one receives the Eucharist with many defects and voluntary venial sins! When a person commits voluntary sins, gives bad examples, is distracted, and indifferent; when this person receives the Holy Communion in such a state of conscience, he grows lukewarm day by day, becomes more unobservant, declines in a short time, and makes others follow his example. The superior shall be very attentive that all receive Holy Communion with the due dispositions of remote preparation - avoidance of voluntary sins, even venial ones - and of immediate preparation;

he will see to it that a proper thanksgiving will never be omitted.

3. *Lukewarmth in the spirit of vocal prayer.* This is the third door of decline. The superior will prevent it by seeing that each person says the prayers established by the rule with a contrite, quiet voice.

4. *The key of the fourth door of decline is in the hands of the mute devil;* this door is the grumbling against the institute, the superiors, and their orders. It creeps into the people's souls in order to lead them astray, to make them rebellious, and then hushes up everything. In such a situation even those who seem observant may hush up the increasing infractions which they see, or listen to, or know. These people are the institute's betrayers, not the faithful sons! How very attentive the superior must be! He shall teach and exhort his subjects on purpose. In case of suspicions, he will question the most faithful members, by asking them whether they know of any infractions or not. Above all, following our Lord's suggestion, « Pray and be vigilant » the superior will pray and will be vigilant to prevent the devil from sowing dissension in the elect harvest. The Holy Spirit tells each superior: « Know your flocks' condition well, take good care of your herds; since riches do not last for ever, wealth is not handed down from age to age » (Prov. 27, 23-24). (2)

5. To lead everything in perfect observance and to avoid lukewarmness in the community, each superior will carefully correct the *little defects*, *considering* them as momentous. Woe to the superior who begins neglecting same little defects, passing over them in silence, almost approving them through his silence and indifference or by committing them himself! Bit by bit, the destroying

fire will be lighted! The superior must remember that the Holy Spirit says, « He who despises trifles will sink down little by little » (Ecclesiasticus 19, 1). When a person disregards a little defect, it becomes habitual gangrene, increases, and pollutes others, unless it is corrected. That person declines spiritually, receives Holy Communion with indifference, and does not profit by it as he should. The grace of the Lord increases, temptations grow, hidden passions rouse again, seep in the spirit, and try to retake their place; distractions assail the soul, the spirit of prayer dissipates, and that person falls from the venial sins into the grave ones! This, however, is not the worst evil! At once, that defect is imitated by others who achieve the same results; the fire bursts into flames! Guilty before God for having passed over his subjects' defects, the superior declines first. Punishment results in his becoming worse than the others, and he is a model of bad examples to them! Too many good, observant communities were ruined this way! The superior, therefore, must prevent and repress the little defects to ward off decline from the community. He will always remember that our Lord Jesus Christ said: « I tell you this: on the judgment day everyone will have to give account of every useless word he has ever spoken » (Mt. 12, 36).

6. *Vocations*. As to vocations, they are of great importance in warding off lukewarmth and in maintaining the exact observance in the community. The superiors, therefore, will carefully prevent the unproved vocations from entering the order. Keeping in mind that the devil induces some persons to enter the institute in order to ruin it, the superiors will be vigilant and strong sentinels in order to discover the hellish snares and to repel the hellish attacks vigorously.

7. A big door of decline is *angry talk*. Meekness and

calm help the hearts to be united in charity, whereas anger destroys mutual charity. Angry talk is barn of the heart prone to anger, but hard to mercy. It is, like a polluting disease. Woe to the superior who is prone to anger and to hateful talk even about ordinary things. The community will follow his behavior, destroying the union of hearts! He must be meekest in words and action; even when he raises, his voice to speak with vigor, his heart must be always calm and self-controlled.

8. *Decrease of holy, mutual love* is a most fateful door of general decline! The superior will be very attentive in this matter. First, he will love his subjects *much, much, much* with tender affection, showing it by facts. He will often remember what our Lord Jesus Christ said with pressing invitation: « A new commandment I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another » (Jn. 13, 34), as well as: « if you have love for one another, then all will know that you are my disciples » (Jn. 13, 35). He will foster spiritual readings on mutual charity, paying attention to the practice of it. Such practice consists:

a) In sympathizing and consoling the afflicted as much as obedience allows;

b) In easing the brother of his burden by helping him;

c) In rejoicing for the brethren's good;

d) In praying sincerely for one another, especially when someone is in danger of losing his virtue or his vocation. The Religious who cries before God to obtain grace for the tottering brother will become most acceptable, whereas the community's indifference before a tottering vocation is very pitiable! In such a case, the superior may

tell the community to pray for an intention, without specifying it.

The superior will also take care that love for one another be love of charity with no personal sympathy or friendship, but each one will love everyone equally. He will love all, especially the needy, and when they are humble in heart, he will show his love for them publicly. Love of charity also consists in having mercy on the sick, and in serving them heartily.

e) Holy love consists in bearing the faults of and in excusing the brethren, when they give some offense. The superior will keep a special watch on this topic, which we call door opened by the devil to weaken the whole community.

When a Religious is touchy by nature, unless he amends, he is rude to others, or he charges them of some offense, or he is lacking in charity and courtesy. In such a case the devil is on the look-out to infuse indignation and grudge in the offended person! Fateful moment! If that person yields to the temptation by lack of virtue, the hearts are divided, and grumble, suspicion, and bad example follow. Here, the superior will take care of the offended person rather than of the offender. He will appease him by reminding him of the holy principles and by praying for him. On the other hand, he will do his best so that the offender acknowledge his wrong and apologize so as to settle everything in peace. We shave to cut down disorders at their very beginning.

9. *Infringement of silence* is another door the devil opens to slacken and to invade the community. The superior will be very watchful on it. He first will observe silence perfectly, and will demand observance of the perfect and of the moderate silence, and avoid the hellish deceit of

correcting the infringement of silence on the spot by raising his voice. It would be as to throw straw on the fire to blow it out. Instead, when he wants to correct the infringement of silence on the spot, the most suitable and efficacious means is to demand silence by reproaching by signs, or in a very low voice. This demand or reproach is also a very effective example of observance. Morning silence must be observed in a special way, because it gives the tune to the whole day. Talking before the holy mass and the most Holy Communion causes dissipation.

10. Each superior will see to it that each rule be observed. To avoid decline, he will be responsible for the community's schedule, will equip the building to the community's needs, and will provide his subjects with everything they need to insure neatness and order.

11. If someone is the cause of decline, the superior will do his best to correct him gently or bluntly, beginning with praying to our Lord and to the most holy Virgin. If at the end, the Religious appears unwilling to amend, the superior will defer the case to the major superior (R.S.).

NOTES

(1) The young sisters must always keep in mind the rules and the promises they have made. By remembering the retreat where they have been formed, they will be spiritually united to the mother house, and will commend the institute and its members to the Lord in order that it may improve, be firm, and acceptable to God for the greater consolation of Jesus' Heart. While working to educate the others, they will strive to sanctify themselves according to the spirit of their institute, which consists in the zeal for the most holy Heart of Jesus' interests. They will strive to achieve the virtues,

seeking Jesus alone and longing for holy profession in compliance with the will of God... Their behavior and the success of the orphans depend on their spiritual life. If they behave religiously, they will be meritorious, and the new house will proceed well; if they lack virtue, everything will stop progressing, and other persons will replace them. With the Lord's help, they will be the founders of the institute and the saviors of the orphans. Were they to leave the practice of the virtues, or to nurture secret defects, or to cause scandal and lukewarmness, they should be guilty of serious damages! The adorable Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Mary, to whom they will recommend themselves as to their mother superior, owner, and teacher, forbid it. Amen» (For Taormina's house).

(2) Our padre will touch upon this topic in chapter XXXI.

CHAPTER XXX

HELPING THE INSTITUTE DEVELOP

I will always nurture a loving affection for my own institute, whose interests I will consider as mine, striving to make it known to the people. I will also help it to develop through my feeble capacity, work, sacrifice, and humble prayers as well as by incessantly seeking my own sanctification of the brethren.

To win good vocations, I will pray to God and will seize the opportunities to attract those according to the Heart of Jesus, who are suited for the Daughters of Divine Zeal's institute. I will jealously and faithfully keep the secrets of the institute and of its members, even In case I should leave the order for a just reason, just as I have said above.

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1. LET US RENEW OURSELVES DOING OUR UTMOST

My little children! God entrusted a great treasure to us! But, we must fear of being deprived of it, unless we observe well the religious life.

The time has come to spread the command of the Rogate; God entrusted this mission to us. But, we must observe the religious life, lest this mission perish in our hands. What did I say? Will it perish? Not at all! If we do not observe thus religious life, we will perish, but the Rogate will triumph! God will snatch out of our hands this treasure, and will give it to others. He will rent the vineyard out to other tenants, who will give him his share of the harvest at the right time (Mt. 21, 41). Oh, little children! How can we think of such a misfortune without

dying of pain? Oh, we will never become unworthy of so a great ineffable mercy. To be worthy of it, however, implies that we must be perfect Religious through the observance of the vows and the rules, because advertisement and pious union are inadequate if we do not belong totally to Jesus, if we do not form an observant community dearest to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary through the practice of the vows and the virtues!

Unless we are men of prayer, mortified, detached, lovers of Jesus and Mary as well as of the cross and sacrifice; unless we are sober in words, obedient, observant, and men of interior life, our writing, printing, and being zealous are useless. But, if we are observant Religious, God will bless the little seed and the vocations will come. Ah, let us renew ourselves, doing our utmost! Let us say: Now I begin (Speech, 1908)! (1)

2. CULTURE OF THE VOCATIONS

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The order of the Rogationist Fathers by the Heart of Jesus will aim at winning holy vocations to religious and priestly life for the divine glory, the good of the whole Church, and for souls.

To achieve this goal, they will make unceasing petitions to God in order to win good workers to the holy Church, will spread this beneficial prayer, and will acknowledge that more worthy persons can win this grace of graces, this mercy of mercies better than they do. While praying for vocations and while spreading the vocation prayer, they will have the following two intentions:

First: that the most holy Heart of Jesus create, raise, and send out apostolical persons, holy priests according to his Heart, and elect workers of the mystical harvest

to the whole Church, to the dioceses, to the religious orders, and to the sacred congregations.

Second: that the most holy Heart of Jesus raise and send out blessed youth and priests according to his Heart to the institute of the Rogationist Fathers by the Heart of Jesus, as the one to which the divine unintelligible mercy and the Spirit that « blows wherever he wishes » (Jn. 3, 8) gave the understanding and the mission of the divine word: « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest. »

The Rogationists will combine prayers, intentions, and works. When qualified Rogationists are available, and the bishops ask for them, they will commit themselves to the culture and to the education of the clerics in the seminaries, reputedly this work as the best of their ministry.

To attract holy vocations to the Rogationist institute, the order will aim at cultivating piety in the youth, at educating the children in Christian doctrine, and at forming youth groups, under the protection of the most holy Heart of Jesus, the most holy Virgin, St. Joseph, St. Anthony of Padua, and St. Louis. The festive oratories along with play activities, theater, walks etc. are also a very efficient means, but holy confession and Communion are the prominent means.

The order will be very attentive in cultivating its vocations in the Lord, helping them persevere. The common and private prayer of the priests along with their good example in observance and practice of holy virtues helps the youth, because they can hardly be formed when they are surrounded by bad examples and indifference of the chiefs. Therefore, the order must pay full attention to form the youth in piety and religious virtues, and will help those of talent to study to become priests of the order. The superiors will take care of them, paying heed

that their whole education be in the institute, and will avoid sending them to the seminary's school together with the diocesan clerics. Do not be hasty in ordering them priests; when they have completed their education and are founded well in religious virtues, then they are ready for the ordination to the priesthood. The superiors will also see that the candidates for the priesthood give no priority to study over piety and to education over virtue, but base themselves on holy humility, prayer, and internal virtue (C.R.).

The chance of vocations from the day school for girls turns out to be very profitable. The drawing of the girls to holy vacation is surely a pious activity, but the sisters must be very cautious, evading to pressure the girls even by saying that the sisters mean to call them to religious life. It would alarm their parents. Such a work is to be done indirectly through spiritual education, piety, and pure holy affection.

a) *The spiritual education* developed on the basis of Christian doctrine, sacred history, and spiritual readings leads to holy vacation indirectly. To teach religion effectively to the girls, the sisters should attend four-five year courses of catechism, history criticism, principles of theology, (2) and Sacred Scripture. At the end of the courses, a team of learned, pious priests headed by the Ordinary would confer a diploma after the examination. Thus, the sisters would be qualified to form the students through strong, sound principles of religion. (3)

b) *Piety*: the sisters will form the Daughters of Immaculate Mary's pious union and will be responsible for it, because various vocations may rise spontaneously when it flourishes. The reception of the sacraments, especially of the Holy Communion with the due dispositions

and thanksgiving, the readings from ascetic books, the meditation on the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ and on the last truths, the devotions in the months of May and June, the feasts of our Lord and the most holy Virgin, etc... raise vocations without fail!

c) *Affection: the sisters'* pure, holy love for the girls exercises a potent influence on them to follow the same vocation, because love tends by itself to make lovers alike; a girl who is loved in a holy manner by the sisters aims at becoming like them.

Vocations from the orphans. The sisters will never speak of vocation to the orphans in order to attract them to becoming sisters, on the contrary they will say indirectly to the orphans that they would be unworthy of it. If someone of the orphans shows signs of vocation, the sister will not cultivate it immediately, but will let it develop by itself, praying to the Lord. When a *wise, pious, good* natured, meek orphan is detached from the relatives and from the world and is affectionate to the institute; when she is introduced well in the study and the works, and shows signs of vocation, the sisters will pray and take advice before submitting the case to the mother general in order to receive the orphan in the religious community.

3. DEVELOPMENT OF THE ORDER

The mother superior will carefully form the sisters' spirit and mind to improve their skill in good works, the execution, of their office, and everything that helps them to become perfect sisters.

The mother superior must be convinced that when the spiritual, intellectual, and domestic formation is well done, our Lord continues sending good vocations, because

the institute becomes an ark of salvation and of sanctification for the congregants. When the vocations grow in number and the youth are well formed, they will be ready for new foundations, avoiding to wish them for ambition, levity, vanity, and vainglory, which would prevent the Lord from blessing them.

Ready as soldiers at the command of the headquarter, the mother superior and the sisters will be ready to found new communities when the will of the Lord manifests itself. They will work in the holy Church and in the mystical harvest of God for the divine glory, for the consolation of the most holy Heart of Jesus, and for the salvation of souls.

When we are invited to found a new house, the invitation must be, somehow delayed by writing and re-writing in order to know the necessary information about the distance, the means of communication, the country or the city, the place, what the people offer and demand, the income they promise, etc.; we must know beforehand what is necessary to the new house before giving our definite answer.

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After obtaining the information, the sisters need some more time for prayer; therefore, the community will begin novenas, prayers, and celebration of masses for a least one month.

To check the written information, the superior or two experienced sisters will go to see the place of the foundation. If they consider the proposal acceptable, they may give a favorable opinion to the persons responsible for the foundation, without entering into any engagement. Once back home, they will report everything to the mother superior.

When by divine help the new house may start and be promising, the council gathers again to discuss the

proposal and the convention in order to find out the best way to achieve the aim of the foundation.

Before accepting a house, the superiors have to form an idea of the actual and of the eventual income for the sisters' livelihood and for the maintenance of the house, considering the furniture, the remodeling, the laboratories, etc.

Fixed income for the whole maintenance of the orphans cannot be claimed, because we have to fulfill the gap by work and divine providence, in which we have to trust. On the other hand, we won't tempt God by founding orphanages in places where, humanly speaking, there is little or no hope to succeed. We must follow the right middle way in everything.

As for the day schools, which require four or five sisters, their foundation and maintenance are easier, unless the buildings are unsuitable; in such a case, remodeling, enlargement, and the like must be taken into consideration before making the contract.

While considering the environmental suitability for the foundation's success, you have also to think of the institutions already existent in that place, which live by contributions. If the people are committed to them, it would be unwise to put an additional institution without having some sure income.

Can foundations be started without invitation? Of course they can, they even should when qualified sisters had at disposal financial means to buy suitable buildings, to open schools or laboratories in cities or towns, to receive orphans, etc. On the contrary case it is better waiting for an invitation in order to profit by convenient terms; nevertheless, if despite our good will and trust in divine providence we are notable to meet the request, the invitation is to be declined.

When an orphanage ends its activity, the sisters will do their best to take the orphans, at least the more affectionate and promising, to other orphanages of the order. If children are all good, the sisters will provide to take them all.

4. WHICH FOUNDATIONS

Which foundations can the Daughters of Divine Zeal foster?

The sacred, expressive name of Daughters of Divine Zeal compels us to promote the divine Heart of Jesus' interests, that is to say, whatsoever charitable institution, because the zeal is the charity's fervor. As special supporters of the divine command: « Pray, therefore, etc., » by God's help and our good will we have to be energetic workers in the mystical harvest, in any field of the spiritual and temporal culture in order to win souls to the most holy Heart of Jesus for his glory and consolation.

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The Daughters of Divine Zeal can open orphanages, kindergartens, asylums for the poor, hospitals, laboratories for outside students, any charitable foundation for girls, boarding schools from elementary schools to colleges, depending on their financial means and on the number of the qualified sisters.

Do we exclude the foundations in little towns?

Suppose that an orphanage or day school in a little town is guaranteed by means or by development of work and industries. The foundation should be preferred, even though the little town may have another institution which is not run by sisters. Our Lord wants us to operate for the good of the souls who are more in need, and perhaps more docile, than those who live in big cities or are daughters to the great of this world.

We repeat: we must avoid seeking to found any house by ambition, seeking big cities for a worldly reputation or for large profits; on the contrary, we must work for our Lord Jesus Christ's glory and for the poor who are not cared for by other institutions. Do the missionary sisters go to the infidels' lands for their own convenience? A foundation which operates in a humble, poor town is a true mission pleasing the good shepherd Jesus, who seeks here and there, on the mountains and in the fields the dispersed abandoned sheep, which are easy prey for the hellish wolves. If the sisters of such a foundation are faithful to their vocation and rule, always living in the original fervor and in the spirit of sanctification, improving themselves and the souls entrusted to them, these sisters will be blessed and be helped by the Lord.

Both the mother superior and the superior general must pay careful attention to all this.

5. CHRONICLE OF THE HOUSE AND OF THE DIVINE BENEFITS

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Each house will write its own chronicle in a special book, beginning with its foundation, with the plans, and everything preceding the formal entrance of the community in it. The chronicle will describe the entrance, the number of the sisters, and their first acquaintances. Then, the daybook will register any event, such as: change of things, the granted graces, the notable visits, the troubles, the transfer of the sisters or vocations, and anything worth mentioning. When nothing special occurred, the writer will write after the date: ordinary course of business or the contracted form O. C. B. The historiographer will pay attention to date any event, sometimes

recording even the hours, about everything will be narrated briefly, the special events excepted. The chronicle of the house is a coefficient of the house's existence. Outstanding actions of virtues will be also recorded.

The mother superior will pay careful attention that the historiographer record the special graces, the divine mercies, and the spiritual or temporal benefits concerning the house. She can do it in the same book or in another one. If the record is taken in the chronicle of the house, the record will be headed by the title: divine Mercy or Divine Grace or Divine Benefit. The historiographer will record the granted graces in details, and will write the date. At the end of the year, the records of the special graces will be read during the thanksgiving triduo. It is praiseworthy to record the divine benefits in a special book. In such a case, the special grace will be recorded so: « Today, special grace from the Lord, see book of the divine benefits, year... page... »

The records must be preserved jealously in the archives to be at the disposal of our institute's future generations; thus, the present and the future houses will nurture great, continuous gratitude to the divine infinite goodness not only for the general but also for the special graces which were granted to each house. Likewise, following her devotion, each sister will record or keep in mind the memories of the special graces, for which she feels obliged toward the divine amorous lover, Jesus (S.D.D.Z.).

Some events, or special graces, or preservations from perils and evils must be remembered during the year. The commemoration will be done this way: the notable events will be written in the calendar, and will be read at refectory on the eve of their anniversary (S.D.D.Z.). (4)

6. THE ROGATIONIST BULLETIN

Every two or three months, the priests residing at the mother house in Messina publish a Bulletin to keep alive and foster the interest for the institute through the remark of the main events and through the remembrance of the sacred memories and the particular traditions. It would be unpleasant if the houses gave little regard to the bulletin that the young priests are running with love, labor, and sacrifice under the wise guide of our most Rev. Canon Vitale. For that reason we exhort the mother superior or vicar of each house and dependencies to make the religious community read it in the most suitable time; the orphans will not share this reading. We exhort to pay a full attention to it, nurturing an always more affection to our institute that the Lord has blessed in many ways. We are sure that the Lord will do even more, on condition that all of us are faithful, which we want for ever at the cost of our blood and life.

To foster fervor and union among the houses, each house may report; to the bulletin its main events, the mercies of the Lord, the good results, the new developments, and the like (Circular, Jan. 1925).

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NOTES

(1) «The order is made of priests and lay-brothers living under the same rule and with the same advantages, but with different duties.

As members of the same religious family, the lay-brothers are to be esteemed as much as the priests, profiting by the same spiritual and temporal goods. Save the personal fulfillment of duty, they will share the acts in common, but in places different from the ones assigned to the priests. The lay-brothers will be humble and will glory in serving all of the Lord's house, accomplishing their duty with care and applying themselves to arts and crafts. If someone is

inclined to fine arts or to mechanics, he will cultivate them in the Lord, because fine arts are the splendor of the religious garb, and mechanics is of great help to the institute. As to music, the lay brothers will not study it without a special permission, which will be granted in exceptional cases* (C.R.).

(2) Regarding this subject, our padre wrote: «St. Thomas' Summa Theologica, translated into Italian and summarized in questions and answers, Marietti edition, Turin, may be of help.»

(3) Today, school of religion for the sisters is obligatory; it was not in our padre's time. He was a forerunner.

(4) After noting defaults on this matter, our padre wrote a circular on July 14, 1915, saying that he was «obliged to command by obedience a topic of importance for the moral quality of a religious foundation.» He continued: «It is long since I am recommending to write the *house chronicle* and it has never been made; now I command the mother superior of this house or her vicar to prepare a book of foolscap paper,» to date it and to write the story, following these rules:

1) As to the present chronicle, the mother superior herself or a sister will write the daily events before going to sleep.

2) As to the past chronicle, the mother superior will gather, note, and write the chief events of the house beginning from the time of its foundation. She may question the sisters who are acquainted with it.

3) Please write the date of the past events precisely.

4) Leaving out present and past trifles, write the chief events; meantime each sister will pray to the most holy Virgin to give her enlightenment.

The Daughters of the Sacred Side of Jesus were also told to write the house chronicle.

« I warmly recommend the chronicle of the house. Write it as soon as possible, noting its foundation date, its progress, difficulties, tribulations, persecutions, and want. Write the sisters by their full name, the transfer of directions, the day school along with its fortunes, the taking of the habit, and everything until you up-date it. Later, you will write the chief events of every week. When I call upon you by the Lord's help, you will let me read it. Please use a filing cabinet for documents, titles, main letters, notes, etc. All these things form the houses, and God blesses them because he likes order» (D.S.S.).

CHAPTER XXXI

INFORMATION

I recognize as exact and indispensable the institute's rule that demands of the congregants to faithfully refer to the superiors the brethren's defects and anything which is spiritually or materially harmful to even one person. For that reason I promise to be most faithful in referring everything to the superiors, but when the matter is about the brethren's defects, I will observe these rules:

1. I will refer the *serious defects and the habitual ones*, either hidden or unobserved, even though they are not serious.

2. When I am able to remedy the brethren's hidden, irrelevant, unobserved defects, I will do it through the humble brotherly correction once or twice. If I do not succeed in it, I will refer it to the superior.

3. I will never inform for personal reasons or for grudge, but for charity and with pure intention, avoiding over-statements or addition.

As to the rule of information, I will do my duty regardless of human respect, or fear of displeasing the brother and of losing his affection and esteem. (1)

The aspirants are not allowed to charge each other with personal trifles, but are obliged by obedience to give information to the superior in these two following cases: 1) when they know something which is harmful to the community or to a person; 2) when they are questioned

by the superior about conversations or facts they may have about others in question.

These rules are so important that the aspirant who does not inform the superior about anything which hiddenly harms the persons or the institute, will be considered as an unfaithful traitor, because he hushes up in agreement with the devil, allowing the trouble to grow in proportion. If a youth conceals something to the superior who questions him, he is no longer an aspirant to religious life, but an aspirant to a gang of malefactors, and is worthy of being punished with rigor immediately, and even of being expelled. The aspirants, therefore, are obliged to answer sincerely to the superior, and when they know of infractions of rules and obligations they are bound an duty to inform him (R.A.). (2)

The congregants' duty to faithfully refer to the superior the serious inconveniences that might harm the community or even one person is a chief point of discipline. The probationers must know that when the hellish enemy plots against the people, he demands perfect silence: this is what we call the mute devil. Charity instead urges us to inform the superior, who is able and must remedy the situation. The information, however, must be done with charity and with purest intention. Light violations of this rule, which can cause serious damage, are considered serious inconveniences. If a probationer comes to know that he has been charged with something, he must not become angry nor complain. Getting angry or complaining about such a matter is a symptom of deplorable obstinacy in one's own makeup; on the contrary, he must be grateful toward the people who informed the superior (R.P.).

Each congregant is strictly obliged to faithfully inform the superiors about any infraction in the community, any damage even to one person, the fellow's defect which

harms him or others, as well as any temptation of decline or defection. Everything must be referred faithfully; whoever keeps silent about these cases, is a traitor of his own religious family.

The informer will act for charity's sake as well as for the fellow's and for the whole community's good, but never for personal reason. If the fellow who is charged happens to know the informer, he must be grateful to him, and will even take pleasure in what he did; were he to do otherwise, he would show no religious spirit. But, the superior will act with greatest prudence to let the informer remain unknown, while acting quickly and strongly to remedy the situation (C.R.).

Each novice is obliged by obedience to inform the mother superior about another's defects and also about the students' actions that require correction. The breaker of this rule is guilty of disobedience. Only when the matter is a personal offense, the offended novice may be more reserved. As for light faults, the novice may use once or twice the charitable advice, and the novice who is advised will behave humbly. If he refuses the correction, the duty to inform the mother superior remains. The informer, who complies with holy obedience in such a case, must behave charitably, only aiming at helping the offending person and the whole community. The novices are recommended to take the rule of information do good part, avoiding any complaint about each other and being mutually grateful, because the rule of information is for their good (R.L.P.).

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By informing the superior, people do not offend holy charity. On the contrary, people offend justice, obedience, and charity by not informing the superior (Letter, April 1, 1912).

Be sure that the leader of a community is practicing

charity when he expels the subversive; on the contrary, he offends charity when he hesitates to expel them (Letter, May 23, 1913).

NOTES

(1) To prevail over the mute devil, our padre ordered the following prayer to the most holy Virgin: «O divine, lovable, invisible, absolute, immediate mother superior, Immaculate Mary, kneeling at your foot, I humbly beg you to forgive me for all the times I was won by the mute devil to my own and to others' prejudice, because I did not inform the superiors. O most holy Virgin, I promise that I will never do so again; regardless of human respect I will inform our padre (or the mother superior or the teacher) about anything which is harmful to the individuals or to the community. O most holy Mother, please help me prevail over the mute devil when I have to talk to the superiors or when I have to be silent with my fellow Religious. Hail Mary.»

(2) «Knowing that the institute's rule commands us to inform the mother superior about the defects of others as well as anything which is harmful to the community or to any person, I promise to conceal nothing, being most faithful in referring everything for the individuals and the community's sake. When I am charged with something, I will consider it as a great favor, because my brothers are providin me with the appropriate admonitions and corrections. J will also consider these brothers as my guardian angels, praying that they may inform the mother superior of the teacher for my correction and for God's sake* (D.P.).

CHAPTER XXXII

RELATIONS AMONG THE INSTITUTE'S CLASSES OF PEOPLE

Since the Institute has several classes of persons, such as the priests, the brothers, the students, and the orphans, I promise to communicate with these persons within the bounds of the office to which I will be appointed by the superiors.

I will avoid meddling with matters concerning these persons or their office without a legitimate authorization.

When an orphanage or a school or a laboratory is connected with the institute, or groups of girls gather within it, I will have no relationship with the outside girls or with the orphans or with the students or with the apprentices, and the like. Even when I am obliged to stay near them, I will not watch, nor will I talk, nor will I give them gifts or souvenirs; nor will I let them give me messages or will I take errands. When someone tries to do so, I will warn her; if the same person tries to do so again, I will warn and repulse her, threatening her with informing the mother superior; if she persists, I will inform the mother superior or the master (D.P.).

CHAPTER XXXIII

DISCIPLINARY OBSERVANCE

I will not receive persons, acquaintances, and friends in the Institute without the permission, at least presumed, of the superiors. I will also ask the permission of the superior to leave. While outside the Institute, I will avoid speaking idly with other persons, or calling upon individuals without the permission of the superiors, or at least without informing them.

When I am walking or interacting with people, I will avoid curiosity, idle talk, and everything not edifying; on the contrary, I will be always in the presence of God, behaving as a priest and as a Religious.

1. DISCIPLINE, SUPPORT OF THE COMMUNITY

I recommend you to be fond of discipline, because it supports the community, and no community can progress without it. Discipline means observance of the rules, of the schedule, and of the silence! Rule, Schedule, Silence. What a responsibility they take upon themselves those daughters who disregard discipline, causing others to do the same! From now on, each of you may be like a bee making honey in silence. Purposely, recommend yourselves to the most holy Virgin Mary and to your father and patron St. Joseph (Letter, May 13, 1889).

May no one disregard the community's duties. If someone is at fault or is late for a good reason, he will go to the assistant to apologize (R.A.).

Be not moved by tenderness or by inopportune piety for X, because I doubt that this person will succeed. Let us pray and be vigilant, letting me know her behavior. Please encourage and treat her with true charity, but demand her to behave! In the community we must seek the common more than the individual good. It is better to be few in number and good, than having false vocations, which ruin the communities (Letter, Aug. 14, 1913).

Discipline means perfect obedience. Obedience! To become dear to God and to the people, and to become worth advancing in religious Life, the aspirant has to practice this virtue.

An aspirant must not seek to escape the obedience of the immediate superior under the pretext of the absent major superiors' obedience. He must subject himself to the present one, and follow his decision, because it is he who takes over the responsibility (R.A.).

The Daughters of Divine Zeal will obey every article of their rule as if they were the legitimate superiors' voice, and will participate in the acts in common, which are usually announced by the bell's chime. The Daughters of Divine Zeal will do nothing without obedience, not even drinking a cup of water between meals (C.D.D.Z.).

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The practice of obedience is also a practice of religious discipline, which must be performed in everything. No one by arbitrary initiative can give an obedience, or a command, or a commission to others without agreeing beforehand with the superior; those who are aware of such undue orders, or commissions, will not obey. In little things, however, one can help by charity. Also the fulfillment of the office belongs to discipline (C.R.).

St. Joseph Little Retreat novices will not be fond of going to the parlor, but will go only when necessary. When obliged by necessity, they will do so expeditiously. If the

novices go to the parlor without permission, or without a chaperon, they commit a serious fault.

When a novice is sent to the parlor, she will invoke Jesus Christ our Lord, asking him for help before going there. She will also see to it that her speech be edifying, exhorting the persons she meets to do good, and avoiding to speak about the private affairs of the community to the outsiders (R.L.P.). (1)

During the play activities, the aspirants will avoid causing any disorder, laying hands on others, saying offensive words, talking secretly (what is forbidden in any time), and leaving without permission (R.A.).

A modest, joyous, daily recreation is necessary for the sisters. They are exhorted to be always cheerful, driving away sadness and melancholy. No one will cry for trifles, but will keep their tears for serious motives, such as: for our Lord, for the holy Church, for its needs, and for the whole humankind! During play activities, joy and holy happiness have to transpire in order that all may praise and bless the Lord; and yet, they will beware of immoderate splay (D.S.C.). (2)

2. DISCIPLINE AND OBEDIENCE

The first virtue the aspirants must practice is perfect subordination not only to the chief superior's authority but also to the minor superiors, and especially to the immediate one, whoever the may be.

This subordination must be humble and perfect in any case and circumstance; therefore, if the aspirants are warned or admonished, they will listen humbly, bowing their head eyes downcast and keeping silence. During the reprehension they cannot apologize, unless the superior requires it or they themselves ask, and are granted it. In

either case, the aspirants will do it in a low voice, fine manners, and once. If their apology is refused, they will not reply, but will receive the reprehension in silence, saying at the end of the reprehension: « I am at fault and wrong; I will never do it again, » which deserves great merit. If they do not say it at the end of the reprehension, they will do so later, after retiring into themselves. During the reprehension, any emotional sign such as anger, annoyance, or amusement is considered a serious insubordination.

What we have said of the reprehension is also true of the orders. To oppose them with replying, or with being agitated, or with murmuring, is a serious fault of insubordination. An aspirant behaving so, shows that he is full of pride. If penances or punishments are given, they must be accepted humbly and submissively.

When the aspirant receives penances or is corrected, he has to combine external with internal humility and submission, acknowledging before God that he deserves the reprehension or the punishment, because reprehension and punishment are given to him for his good.

Unless he has these interior dispositions, he will never improve, because the Holy Spirit says: « Taking pleasure in evil earns condemnation » (Eccl. 19, 5).

Discipline builds up order, peace, and wealth; lack of discipline turns everything upside down... The aspirants will refrain from commanding and obeying each other, because it is against discipline, save particular momentary cases in which the petitioner will say: Please... No one will interfere with the ether's office. The aspirants are forbidden to speak to each other of things that happened before their entrance in the institute as well as to refer to words or events regarding their parents, who came to the parlor, or who wrote letters (R.A.).

The practice of obedience implies perfect discipline; it is useful, therefore, to touch upon some disciplinary points, because the community founds its orderly life on the observance of them.

Regular discipline demands perfect observance of the rule. To be exact in discipline, the probationers must keep in mind the rule by reading part of it every day of the week; they will pay serious attention to it, and will make an examination of conscience on their faults, repenting and making resolutions.

The actions in common belong to discipline, and are announced by the bell's chime, which is the voice of obedience for the probationers. Remembering the words of the apostle: « Everything must be done in a proper and orderly way » (Cor. 14, 40), as well as St. Ambrose's saying: « The Spirit does not knave ill-timed things », the probationers will not waste time between the various actions, because time is most precious. Passing from one place to another, the probationers will proceed modestly by two (P.R.P.).

For external discipline we mean the practical rules which regulate the actions of the community and of its members.

a) *Schedule*: The community needs to perform the actions in common on fixed time, and when the schedule has been established, it must be observed. Modifications according to seasons and circumstances may be made by the mother superior; for remarkable things, however, the major superior's advice is required.

b) *Actions in common* are the ones the members perform together, such as: reveille, meditation, mass, refectory, recreation activities, and the like. No one can pass over the actions in common without the mother superior's permission, who will grant it for legitimate reasons. The bell's chime will be like the voice of obedience (D.S.S.).

3. THE SUPERIOR MUST BE VIGILANT

The superior will be the first in the observance of the actions in common, such as: reveille, meditation, schedule, silence, work, and everything; but due to visits, audiences, and business, he may depart from the schedule. But, he will pay careful attention to establish good example, and will pray to succeed in it, business notwithstanding. Our Lord will help him to participate in the actions in common, and when he is unable, his involuntary absence will not damage, nor will it establish bad example. When his absence is due to sickness, the superior will not let himself be won by temptation. A person full of faith and zeal can participate in the actions in common, at least partially, even when he is feverish; the good Jesus will give a helping hand! In such cases, the subjects themselves will ask the superior for exemption. We, however, do not want the superior to observe all the actions in common even when he is sick, but we are exhorting him to behave according to faith, zeal, trust in Jesus, sacrifice, and prudence. When he is forced to be bedridden, never mind! He will participate in the actions in common after healing. Meanwhile, he will pray to Jesus for help in order to participate in the actions in common, and Jesus will see to this important matter of his glory (R.S.).

Each superior will foster the spiritual progress of the community entrusted to him by taking care of the various groups and of the whole community. This will be the tap list interest. He will carefully strive to prevent lukewarmness from influencing the community, especially in the religious actions, in the meditation, and in the reception of the sacraments. He will be most vigilant to prevent the community from committing even a slight deliberate sin, and will take care of the persons entrusted to him as the

most cherished, knowing that he is responsible for them, and will give an account to the Lord (R.S.).

So that no rule falls into disuse, the superior will demand observance of all of them, seeing also that the institute's uses and customs, especially the feasts and the religious practices be observed. He will have at heart the sacred decorous worship of God, the veneration of the most holy Virgin, and of the saints, as well as the practices of piety and the religious virtues, such as: humility, obedience, and mortification. He will teach the people the love for Jesus and Mary, detachment, mutual charity, and piety along with the spiritual and temporal love for neighbor.

Each superior will bear in mind that without God's blessing nothing succeeds, nothing improves, and that God blesses only when he is worshipped and loved, when the community is guided and cultivated well. In such a case the Lord's blessings pour out on that community, which will bloom spiritually and temporally, because the most holy Heart of Jesus is also infinitely effusive and generous with temporal wealth, when the goods are directed to his glory (R.S.). (3)

NOTES

(1) «The sisters will not be fond of going to the parlor. When convenience or necessity obliges them to go, they will beware of wasting time by prolonging the visit. Time is so precious that not even a moment must be wasted. The sisters will regulate both the time and the speech according to the persons and to the circumstances. As to the strictest relations's visit, the sister listener will not allow worldly talks. While talking with her parents, either the sister or the probationer will be edifying, exhorting them to attend the sacraments and to do good. Young men are not allowed to visit the house. If young ladies dress immodestly, they will politely

be given veils. When authorities or benefactors call upon the house, they will be welcomed even with drinks, etc.» (S.D.D.Z.).

(2) «The Little Retreat novices will not be fond of going out: when they have to, they will leave in little groups in order to avoid the people's attention. Walking modestly, they will avoid talking with other people, and will greet others seldom; for instance, if the sisters meet priests, they will make a little bow only. Should they go to some house with the mother superior's permission, they will behave with fine manners, making the people feel the presence of Jesus Christ» (R.L.P.).

(3) «I warmly recommend the superiors and the counselors to keep secret the decisions, the defects of the Religious, and the inconveniences which must remain unknown. When a person is prone to say such things, he shows levity, of which we must beware » (R.S.).

CHAPTER XXXIV

PARTISAN SPIRIT

I will avoid the partisan spirit as a pestilence, as the beginning of the institute's full ruin. If I perceive it appearing, I will fight it through good exhortation, example, sacrifice, and by resorting to the superiors.

When I have to vote on some report or on the institute's business, I will pray fervently and will ponder the matter; then I will vote honestly in the presence of God, avoiding the partisan spirit, human respect, and personal motives. I entreat the most holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary to free me and my brethren in Jesus Christ from the partisan spirit.

Because this institute may open several houses with the Lord's blessing, the sisters will branch off to form various centers of ruling communities. With all my heart and for our Lord Jesus Christ's innermost feelings I exhort St. Joseph Retreat sisters to never separate themselves spiritually from each other, since the spiritual separation ruins the institute. They must remain united in the spirit through the mutual bonds of charity, help, and support, as members of the same body. May they stand aloof from the partisan spirit in order to form one mind and one heart by praying for each other. I warmly recommend this rule to the sisters, because their existence and progress depend on its observance (C.D.D.Z.).

A most malignant evil to be avoided is the partisan spirit as the one which ruins any religious community, old and observant as it may be. Woe, if two or three agree secretly or clearly to oppose authority, speaking ill of the brethren, grumbling, disapproving, plotting, and winning

followers. By so doing, various parties rise, and they confirm the gospel's saying: « A family divided against itself falls apart » (Lk. 11, 17). The observance of the rule, the practice of the virtues, and the avoidance of contradiction help to maintain the union of hearts. We must follow the counsel of the Holy Spirit: « Avoid stupid arguments... and fights » (Tit. 3, 9). (C.R.).

The formation of parties opens a fateful door to the devil, who does not aim at the decline, but at the full ruin of a community! The superior will carefully prevent it at any cost. Grumbles, grudges, and partiality cause the formation of the parties. Partialities or bad direction by the superior may also cause their ruse. Therefore, he will be most vigilant to avoid it, and will pray and act to blow out this fire from its very beginning.

Caution. The superior must avoid giving a name to what does not exist, or is feared to exist, or is rising. For instance, when the party does not exist, but the superior is fearful of its rising, he must beware of pronouncing the word party even while he is remedying some inconvenience. The only utterance of the noun party could cause its rising, because the names have a great power of creating ideas. Prudence demands of the superior to blow out the spark without making a noise, as well as without scolding, admonishing, and pointing to what he fears.

This is also true for jealousy. To avoid its rising, or to make it die at its rising, it is better not to mention it (R.S.).

CHAPTER XXXV

HOLY INDIFFERENCE TO TRANSFER

I will not be attached to any house or person of the Institute; but, in spiritual freedom I will be always ready to transfer to any house and to accept any office to which I will be appointed, seeking God alone and the good of the order.

Since the institute has already several houses and it is likely to found others with the Lord's help, I declare that I am ready to transfer to any of them, even when I do not know why, if obedience demands that of me. I will live happily in any community, as in the mother-house, by observing these promises and protestations. When I have a good reason to humbly ask the superiors for transferring me or for going into retirement, I will keep calm even if the superiors deny my request. If through deliberate misbehavior I happen to force the superiors to retire me, I agree that I would be at fault with faithfulness toward God and obedience, becoming an unworthy Religious who sets bad example by placing herself under the devil's obedience; therefore, I would deserve the expulsion, unless I repent (D.P.).

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Daughter in Jesus Christ, please see whether the indisposition you plead depends on the regret that you live in Altamura, far from the house of Trani. The air is excellent in Altamura. You have no disease. Your physical weakness is increased by prostration because you live in this house with regret. It is homesickness, due too lack of submission and of virtue. You are not making a steady

resolution to live where obedience wants you to. You are not praying to the Lord and the most holy Virgin to help you to live where the divine will has placed you. You are like a child crying and seeking mom. Daughter, you must know that when a youth dislikes being in a house, she is affected by homesickness. It is a moral disease causing other diseases apparently. It can cause even fever! When a young Religious understands that holy obedience and the Lord's will want her to stay in a place, she stands fast against the temptations of the devil and of nature. She does not fall sick but is full of peace, strength, and health! How can you feel sorry for yourself because you dwell in this house, whose church is dedicated to the most holy Immaculate Mary? In a house situated better than that of Trani, which is the most unhappy among ours for its position? The walk in the beautiful gardens refreshes the spirit. Meanwhile, I am sorry that your voluntary prostration, which is due to lack of consideration, sets bad examples to the community, to the probationers and to the children. Blessed daughter, be calm, take courage, be in a happy mood, do not behave like a child. As a Religious, show faithfulness to your celestial spouse. Resume your work little by little, and be, perfectly obedient to your good mother superior. God helps all the obedient souls (Letter, May 12, 1923).

I regret to inform you that some persons of the religious community have been sorry and reluctant at the order of transfer from a house to another. For that reason we have thought of mailing a specific formula of obedience to the houses so that the persons who take the habit or the vows, recite it with all their heart at the foot of the great Mother of God. First, they will recite it to ask the Divine Superior for admittance; second, they will recite it during the religious service in the church, at the foot

of the Holy Sacrament, before the taking of the habit or the vows; third, they will sign it. (1) The copies will be preserved in the archives along with the documents. Everyone must be convinced that this chief point, whose violation may become a serious fault through the only internal approbation, may prevent the culprit from receiving Holy Communion. Please note, however, that we are not talking about a fleeing thought that crosses the mind without consideration (2) (Circular, March 10, 1926).

NOTES

(1) «I undersigned... declare in the presence of God and of the most holy Virgin Mary to always observe my vows exactly. Specifically. I will observe perfect obedience not only in general, but also when the superiors will order me to transfer from a house to another. I will observe it in the following way:

1) I will receive the notice of transfer happily, making no resistance;

2) Once I am transferred, I will be in a happy mood, subjecting myself to the new mother superior;

3) I will not try to be called back or to be transferred to another house. Should I do it after consideration, I would be at serious fault with this declaration, and I would give bad example.»

(2) Our padre calls to mind what has been said in the foot-note to the article 13 of Declarations and Promises: «Everytime the reading in common of the 19 declaration reaches this point, all the people will stand to read it together.» Then, he adds: «While reading this article, they will exactly observe what has been prescribed in the foot-note.» It is obvious that such an order was of great importance for our padre.

CHAPTER XXXVI

FALLING SICK

If I do not feel well or I need medical care, I will beware of failing because of sickness. I will rely patiently on the superiors and on the brethren's charity, holding that even a sick Religious has to observe holy poverty and to suffer some want or negligence as permitted by God in order to set better examples. As a matter of fact, the good soldier is tested in the battle.

1. DO NOT BECOME LUKEWARM IN SICKNESS

While entering this institute, I promise once and for ever to hand over to the mother superior everything I have without keeping anything secretly, not even the medals or the scapulars, still less ear-rings, jewels, money, souvenir of friends or of relatives, photos, letters, and the like. By so doing I mean to embrace holy poverty; hence, I will not complain of eventual want, not even when I am sick, but I will be satisfied with the mother superiors' charity. (D.P.).

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The novice cook will be most diligent in preparing the food for the sick at the right time.

The sister nurse will attend to the sick with charitable feelings, bringing the food in time and providing medical care. To respond to the demands of the sick patiently, the sister nurse will foster charity, patience, meekness, and holy humility. She will treat their physical disease,

and will also raise their spirit by visiting and comforting them as much as it is allowed (R.L.P.).

Both nurse and assistant will observe the community's devotion, recollection, and piety in the infirmary, even when there is only one patient; they will foster good feelings, will schedule the morning, noon, and evening prayers together with the mother superior, and will read the meditation on the intimate sorrows of Jesus in the morning and the evening; likewise they will help the sick say the prayer before and after the meal. An hour of silence must be established during the day, but everything must be done in order to meet the needs of the sick. In case of epidemic, the utmost must be done with the Lord's help (S.D.D.Z.).

When the sisters fall sick, they should not fail in the spirit of poverty; on the contrary, they will seize that opportunity to practice poverty by practicing patience. They may humbly submit their needs to the mother superior, relying on her generosity, without claiming the treatment which is due to the rich (C.D.D.Z.).

2. TAKING CARE OF THE SICK

Nurse. A patient and charitable Religious, expert in how to take care of the sick and how to receive, keep, and treat them through hygiene and medicine will be the male nurse. He will perceive the people who do not feel well, even when they conceal it, and in agreement with the superiors he will take care of them in the infirmary. Attending to the sick means care of the bed, of the room, of hygiene and of cleanness. Treating the sick requires that he send for the doctor, carry out the prescriptions, and be responsible during the course of their illness, for the food, and for everything required.

The male nurse will also see to it that devotion and piety be observed in the infirmary. Paying careful attention that the Holy Communion be available to the sick every day, he will read spiritual passages for those who are able to listen, will exhort the sick to cheerfulness and patience, will prevent defects and idle talk, making them bear in mind that the devil makes the sick relax when bodily health only is cared for.

Since the male nurse must take care of the sick by day and by night, he will the given some helpers. He will set apart the contagious sick with due precaution, and will take care of all the patients during their convalescence until they recover.

If a sick grow worse, the male nurse is obliged under strict obligation of conscience to inform the superiors about the administration of the holy sacraments and about the appropriate assistance. He will see that the place for the most holy Viaticum be prepared with the greatest decorum, that holy confession, extreme unction, and the most holy Viaticum be available in time so that the sick person may be spiritually prepared and may also heal naturally (C.R.).

The nurse will be a charitable sister who is compassionate, loving, sympathetic, and who sees Jesus Christ suffering in the sick persons. Fully aware of her delicate office, which deserves a great reward, she will cope with the sick as she herself would like to be treated. The nurse helpers will do the same. The nurse will often inform the mother superior about the sick, especially the serious ones, and will be most vigilant that the holy sacraments of the confession, Viaticum, and extreme unction be available to them, according to the Church's teaching. Besides forgiving sins and their vestiges, extreme unction heals the body without fail at these two conditions:

1. That the sick receive the extreme unction when a decisive change may occur in the course of disease without a miracle; if the sacrament is given when such a change cannot occur without a miracle, the extreme unction has no effect on the body, because it does not work through miracles.

2. That the sick improve in spiritual life after recovering; in fact, if recovery were to the prejudice of the soul, God would deprive the extreme unction of its healing power. Therefore, so that the extreme unction may heal the sick, it must be received in time, when the disease is serious, but death is not unavoidable; and the sick must make resolves of behaving in a new, perfect, holy manner through the amending of defects and bad inclinations as well as through the practice of holy virtues and the perfect observance of divine law.

If extreme unction is given in time and the sick will keep his resolves, the sacrament will heal without fail.

The mother superior and the nurse are warmly recommended to prepare the sick for extreme unction in time; on the other hand, each sister must be mindful of asking for this sacrament when she is struck by serious disease. Because extreme unction has frequently healed when it was received in time, the sacrament has been called Anointing of the Sick; also the prayers of this sacrament implore the healing of the sick who are receiving it. (S.D.D.Z.).

3. SPIRITUAL MEANS

The chief spiritual means to recover from sickness is the use of Holy Oil. Additional means are the community's prayers, novenas or triduos, especially when the sick suffers a great deal.

Another spiritual means is the invocation of the most holy name of Jesus by saying one Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory before and after the sick swallow a slip of paper on which the name of Jesus is written. When this most holy, powerful name was given and was received with faith, it healed many times.

Oil from the tabernacle's lamp may be used together with the prayers from the Riva Filotea, or with other prayers and pious practices; but the community and the sick will perform everything, conforming perfectly to the divine will.

These means must be used for the sick in the same way, without preference; by so doing, we please our Lord, who will heal the persons, especially those who are more concerned with the community's interests. While using these means, the sick are also prepared to trust in the divine will and to conform to it.

When even the least among the Religious is seriously sick, all earthly and celestial means will be used to make her recover (S.D.D.Z.).

CHAPTER XXXVII

ACCEPTING THE CHANGES IN THE DECLARATIONS

I am signing these declarations and promises with a free will after examining and considering them carefully. I acknowledge that the spirit of the institute, of the rules, and of the constitutions is contained in them.

From now on I accept any addition or change that the legitimate authority will consider just to ameliorate them, or to make them more fitting to the observance, or more effective for the Institute and the congregants. In view of what may arise in the future, I will follow the superiors' advice and directives as well as the usages and customs of the institute.

I also declare to accept the rules and the constitutions that the legitimate authority will make for the congregants of this pious Institute.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

READING THESE DECLARATIONS

I will take care to read daily, with full attention from the book of declarations and promises that the superiors will give me, at least one article a day and try to conform my behavior to it. I will also pay careful attention to the reading of the declarations in the community in order to profit by them.

I promise to be attentive to the reading of these protests, promises, and declarations in order to keep them in my mind, and to avoid any excuse when my behavior does not conform to them. Furthermore, I consent and accept that the mother superior admonish me on the ground of these promises, especially if I am so negligent as to be at fault with some of the protests and declarations that I have made and signed (D.P.).

CHAPTER XXXIX

DUTY TO OBSERVE THE DECLARATIONS

As to the duty to observe the declarations, I conform to the religious orders' constitutions written by saints: they declare that the rules themselves do not oblige the congregants to the observance under pain of sin. For instance: the rules command to keep silence during certain hours; It is understood that the command does not oblige under pain of sin; likewise, mortifications, life in common, and so on, are commanded without pain of sin.

However, I know that the holy writers, among them St. Francis of Sales and St. Alphonsus de' Liguori, doctors of the holy Church and founders of orders, teach that the congregants may sin even gravely against the rules in the following cases:

1. When they transgress the rules which coincide with divine or natural or ecclesiastical law, such as: the duty to set good example, the devout celebration of the mysteries, and the fasting commanded by the Church.

2. When they transgress the rules by contempt.

3. When the repeated transgression of the rules scandalizes or upsets the community.

4. When the transgressor runs the risk of losing his vocation or of relaxing to such a degree as to fall into serious faults, because of his repeated transgressions against the rules.

Given all this, since now I entreat my superiors to warn, to admonish, or to reproach me with these promises and declarations that I sign, when I am at fault with some of them either for human frailty or for the hellish enemy's suggestion; I deposit them in their hands as in the adorable Lord Jesus

Christ's hands, to be in their power. Furthermore, If I happen to contradict the superiors' warnings, or admonitions, or reproofs, or if I happen to excuse myself, or to break these sacred pacts, I declare that all this may only happen because of my fault, by mind's blindness, the hellish suggestion, and my own pride, despite the false reasons, or the sophisms, or the expedients that I may use to justify myself.

I repeat what I have said in passing at the article 28: If I happen to be at fault with these declarations and promises, I will go to confess my fault in the sacrament of reconciliation.

CHAPTER XL

PRAYER FOR PERSEVERANCE

Because I feel myself too needy of the divine help I order to observe these holy promises and to faithfully persevere until my last breath, I humbly entreat my superior and brethren to implore divine help for me from the Lon Jesus and from the most holy Virgin, as I myself promise to do. Since now, I put this Intention in the prayer of the divine office, in the holy mass, in the rosary, as well as in any work of charity and religion that I will perform with the divine help, and in any sorrow that the Lord will let me suffer. (1)

I acknowledge that this divine help will never fail as long as I keep these intentions and persevere in my good will; but, if my will fails, everything will fail for my own fault. God forbid It!

I wrote these declarations and promises in San Pier Niceto, during the novena of the Assumption; I finished them on August 15, 1910, Monday, at 4:00 p.m.

**The unworthy priest,
Mary Hannibal Di Francia.**

At last, to observe these promises, protests, any declarations, from now on I will implore humbly and perseveringly the most holy Heart of Jesus, the immaculate Heart of Mary, the great Patriarch St. Joseph, St. Michael the archangel, the angels, the holy apostles, and my patron saints, especially St. Anthony of Padua. I am convinced that as long as I have good will, the divine help will not fail; but, if I break these promises, protests, and declarations in such a way as to lose perseverance or to compel the superiors to expel me from the institute (God

forbid it), since now I acknowledge that this ruin will happen for my own bad will. Amen (D.P.).

1. SPIRITUAL UNION AMONG THE MOST INDUSTRIOUS PERSONS OF THE PIOUS INSTITUTE OF THE POOR BY THE HEART OF JESUS. (2)

Messina, Sept. 25 (Sunday, feast of Our Lady of Lourdes), 1898.

Owing to the moral and to the material circumstances which threaten the institute with death, the ruling staff of the institute along with the elders and the more faithful members have made the following resolutions in the name of Jesus and Immaculate Mary.

I. - By the Lord's help, the individuals of this spiritual union promise to redouble their trust in God's infinite goodness, in the most holy Heart of Jesus' infinite mercy, and in the most holy Mary's, in the angels', and in the patron saints' powerful intercession. The greater the growth of tribulations, the want, the human suspicions, the perils of dissolution of this Institute, the more the members of this spiritual union will trust in God. They choose as their motto the Apostle Paul's saying: «We hope against hope. »

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II. - So that their hope and trust be truly Christian, the members of the spiritual union decide:

1. To receive everything from God. They will consider all happenings, as coming from him through his reigning or permitting will, not from human beings or by chance; they will find a reason, therefore, to humble themselves, to praise, and to bless the divine will in any event.

2. They will rectify their intention in order to seek in this institute the glory of God, the sanctification, and

the salvation of souls, for the greater consolation of Jesus' Heart.

3. They will give all their cooperation through prayer, work, and sacrifice for the salvation of the institute.

4. They first will suffer with holy conformity the penury permitted by God; will embrace the community's most difficult work, and will sacrifice themselves as victims of charity for God's glory and for the souls' good.

5. They will pray in private and in common every day for the institute; if the circumstances allow it, they will also pray in the night. Their prayer and work will be combined with mortification and fasting;

6. They will redouble their attention to the practice of holy virtues, setting good example with the Lord's help in order to avoid sin. Avoidance of sin will appease God, who will be merciful to us.

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7. They will receive Holy Communion every day with the Lord's help, if it is possible. (3)

8. The members of the spiritual union renew explicitly their resolution to persevere in the service to God in this institute in spite of persecutions, failure, discouragement, tribulations, want, and oppositions, unless the Lord shows manifestly through the ecclesiastical authority that he does not want this institute any longer.

NOTES

(1) Our padre wrote this prayer:

«O Mother of the holy perseverance, we appeal to your motherly love. Please grant us this great grace that crowns the others: help us to persevere, to grow in religious virtues, and to die a good death for eternal salvation.

O glorious St. Joseph, we also put our perseverance in your hands; pray for us. Amen.

Ejaculatory prayer: Lord Jesus, save us from mortal and venial sin, giving us holy perseverance. Amen.»

(2) Our padre gave this, title. Keep in mind the date Sept. 25, 1898: the institute was surviving the painful trial that threatened it with death. Melania was going to leave Messina and our padre was compelled to resort to the older persons' generosity, who were more faithful and affectionate to the institute: to guarantee the institute's future, he excited their zeal for their sanctification. In that time, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes was not universal and was perhaps celebrated on that day in Messina,

(3) Be not amazed at this article. In those times, the decrees by St. Pious X on the daily communion had not come out yet; our padre, however, was a forerunner.

APPENDIX

1. THREE VOWS OF TRUST

A) About forgiveness of sins

My Lord Jesus Christ, kneeling in your divine presence like the prodigal son at the foot of his father and helped by your divine grace, I protest through my vows to never distrust your infinite goodness, clemency, and mercy in spite of my past, present, and future iniquities, either grave or light, in which I might fall. As for my past sins, I protest through my vows that I will be always confident that you have forgiven them, even though I do not give up the holy fear and the sad remembrance of them. As for the future faults in which I may fall, I protest through my vows that I will never distrust your mercy, even though I might fall in the most serious iniquities of the world; I will always trust to be forgiven in full by falling down at your feet and by asking pardon for your sweetest Heart's sake.

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Were I to fall seventy seven times seven in the same iniquities which I committed in the past or in worse ones, I protest through my vows that I will always trust in your infinite goodness, imploring your pardon in the same way, sure that your sweetest Heart's superabundant piety shall forgive me in full as though I had never offended you before. Therefore, I take my vows that in any case, and in any relapse, I will come to you as though that fault were the first one, sure that you will receive me with open arms, on condition that my repentance be true, sincere, and loving.

B) As to the prayer's efficacy

San Pier Niceto, May 5, 1905 (Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ)

My beloved Lord Jesus Christ, kneeling in your divine presence, in the abyss of my nothingness I protest through my vows that I always want to trust in your infinite goodness as well as in your divine promises that you hear our prayers. You said: «The Father will give you whatever you ask of him in my name » (Jn. 15, 16); «Ask, and you will receive; seek, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you» (Mt. 7, 7); « Until now you have not asked for anything in my name; ask and you will receive, so that your happiness may be complete» (Jn. 16, 24). Likewise, I intend to confide in the expressive parable of the friend knocking at another friend's door in the night and asking for three loaves to welcome other persons - the friend is you, my supreme goodness. -Even though the friend was unwilling to get up to give the loaves, still he surrendered because of the importunity of the situation, and gave the three loaves. Also in the parable of the woman seeking justice from an unjust judge -not from a judge friend, what a wonder! - and the unjust judge - you are not, my supreme goodness - satisfied that woman because of her importunity!

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In the presence of these ineffable and surprising promises, I take my vow to always trust in you, in your adorable Heart, in your infinite goodness and liberality, as well as in your most holy mother, in your angels and saints, whom I implore in your name. I trust that you will infallibly grant me the graces I have asked, the ones I am used to ask, and will ask for your glory, for the salvation of the souls, for me the miserable and for my relatives, as well as for the Rogation's and for Divine Zeal's institutes along with their charitable and religious works.

If I ask you or your most holy mother or the angels or the saints for these graces, mercies, and celestial favors with pure intention, humility, holy fervor, pious insistence, and perseverance, conforming to your adorable merciful will, I trust that you will hear me.

My beloved love, if after praying with all the good disposition and with the greatest trust I do not receive these graces and mercies, or I think of not receiving them, all this notwithstanding I take vows to always believe your true, infallible, divine promises, imputing to my unworthiness and ill-dispositions the cause for not obtaining these graces and the mercies that I ask for myself and for others. Therefore, I will humble myself, will hope and strive to become worthy, making my petitions through your merits, through the merits of your most holy mother, the angels, and the saints, as well as through the merits of the just and innocent souls. I will always firmly believe that you, most liberal Lord, can and want and will grant the graces, the mercies, and the celestial favors that I have asked, I am asking, and will ask.

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Sweet Heart of my Jesus, even though you or your most holy mother or the angels or the saints do not hear, or repel my prayers seventy seven times seven, and quite the reverse of my petitions happens to me, I take my vow that my trust will not fail with your help. I will hope against hope, always asking and waiting for the divine mercies; to do homage to your infallible promises, I trust and will trust that you will always grant me more abundant graces than the ones I wish, hope, and ask.

I base this unlimited vow of trust in your infinite goodness upon your divine merits, on your most holy mother's, on the angels', and on the saints' merits as well as upon the just and innocent souls. My Jesus, please accept this vow and lock it in your sweetest, most merciful

Heart as well as in the most loving, pure Heart of your most holy mother. Look at this vow benignly and mercifully every time I ask, wish, long for, and cry, but do not obtain or do not seem to obtain the graces I am asking. Look at this vow every time your most just and holy motives prevent you from granting what I am asking, or you do otherwise, or I do not understand that you are granting the favors.

O most loving sweet Heart of Jesus, O most immaculate Heart of Mary, be merciful to me and to the persons for whom I wail, sigh, and pray! Have mercy! I am a poor man in need, and my years fail in lamentations, etc.

Angels and saints, please have mercy on me and on my petitions!... Celestial friends... Souls of the just on earth, may your prayers help me. Amen.

C) In the Institute's distress

My sweetest Lord Jesus Christ, in the sorrows and tribulations, in the doubts and want surrounding me, I come at your feet, expecting your help and the appropriate providence with humble, loving confidence. So that my confidence may never fail, because of my frail nature, at your feet I take explicit vow of never distrusting, nor yielding to diffidence in the midst of want, disappointments, failure, and persecutions, On the contrary, I bind myself through vow to redouble my humble, loving trust in the sweetest, superabundant, divine piety of your most benign Heart, as well as in the gentlest motherly charity and in the compassion of the immaculate Heart of Mary, who is your mother and ours.

Helped by your grace and by my own good will, I bind myself by vow to have a steady faith and hope that you and your most holy mother can and want to free us

from any situation and risk of dispersion; that you and your most holy mother can and want to maintain, help, provide, shelter; want to assist, protect, free, and save so many orphans, priests, virgins, and poor that you have supported by mercy, as well as these nascent institutes that are decorated with your divine word: « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest» and are committed to spread this word; these institutes that you have guided and protected until now with many wonders of your power and mercy.

Meanwhile, my Lord, I bind myself to never be disheartened in the fulfillment of this vow, because of my sins and of this institute's. On the contrary, I will trust in your infinite clemency that you will pass over our indignity by covering it with your divine merits and by atoning it with your Most Precious Blood.

My beloved Lord, please accept this vow and lock it in your most loving Heart and in the immaculate Heart of Mary; please help me observe it exactly in the most embarrassing situations, even when you have brought us to the hell's doors and almost to nothing; then, please see to it that full of humble trust, hope, and confidence I may have the living faith that you can, want and will save us unexpectedly even by working miracles of omnipotence and mercy! Amen!

I say one Hail Mary to the most holy Virgin, asking her to bless this vow, to help me fulfill it faithfully, to hope against hope, and to present it to the most holy Heart of Jesus. Amen.

Messina, July 5, 1905

2. THE DIVINE SUPERIORS (1)

A) PETITION to the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus so that he may constitute himself absolute, immediate, and effective superior of the least order of the Rogationists by the Heart of Jesus.

Most adorable Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, always alive, true, real, and palpitating with infinite love for us in the most Holy Sacrament, we kneel at your foot, worship you from the abyss of our nothingness, and protest that you are all our love, our good, and our treasure! In this solemn day, in which you come lovingly with the title of Lonely Dweller of the Holy Tabernacles, we trust in your infinite goodness and entreat you for a special grace.

Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, you are the heart of God-man in the Holy Sacrament, our creator, savior, supreme and absolute owner and Lord, because we are created through you and redeemed by you. Many are the reasons why we are yours. We are your creatures, acquisition, children, subjects, and slave out of love. We all are subject to your most adorable will, because if we escape from your loving reigning will, we fall in your just permitting will. O Lord, we glory in being subject to your most adorable will, and in being yours for all reasons. We are not fully satisfied by that, however; we wish and desire that your mastery and sovereignty over us, as well as our being perfectly under your orders, have a special and effective mark.

We form a little community or order which has the government and the direction concentrated in a superior command, as it is in any order. We identify your superior command in any of your representatives who are legitimately constituted as our rector, or superior, or guide according to the office to which they are appointed.

O sweetest Heart of Jesus palpitating with infinite love for us in the solitude of the holy tabernacle; O Eucharistic Heart, we beseech you to be our effective, immediate, and absolute superior, as well as our director, guide, and teacher in a most particular way, leading us imperiously to the perfect fulfillment of your divine will.

Before heaven and earth, the angels and the saints, from the innermost of our heart we proclaim you, Eucharistic Heart, our supreme, effective, immediate, and absolute superior, as well as our director, guide, and teacher. Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, please accept our proclamation and our pious intention. From now on, please put in motion our proclamation, direct, and guide us in the spiritual and temporal life, in the observance of your law, in the exercises of holy virtues, in the works, thoughts, words, and intentions. Guide us in every least action, in the community's acts, in the observance of discipline, in the offices, studies, vigil, sleep, and in everything.

Sweetest Eucharistic Heart, because we know and perform your will through holy obedience, we promise to stay in everything under holy obedience in order to attain the great favor we are asking. We will perform everything we are told or commanded to do as it were commanded or told by yourself. We will see your divine presence in each of our superiors, holding them as your representatives. We will consider our major superior as your vicar, obeying, respecting, and loving him as such with reverent, filial, and confident affection, because you have established the direction of the souls on earth so, in your infinite wisdom, and we are pleased by that.

Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, from now on we will do nothing, not even to take a step, nor make a gesture, nor breathe a sigh without being perfectly dependent on you. Sweetest Eucharistic Heart of our beloved Lord,

please accept this proclamation. Direct everything according to this absolute, supreme, immediate, effective direction and regency. You are superior, father, teacher, and guide of all the present and future Rogationists, whose order is consecrated to charity and to your divine word: « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest. »

Entrusted to your infinite goodness, O Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, we ask for an additional favor in order to crown the ineffable grace we have implored.

We know that the most holy Virgin Mary, our mother, is one with you, and her immaculate Heart is one with your most holy Heart; that your flesh in the most holy Eucharistic is Mary's flesh, and your blood is Mary's blood; and that the mysteries of your grace and love are brought about in the holy Church through Immaculate Mary. For that reason we ask you to confirm Our Lady as our sweetest mother, as you did from the cross; we also beseech you to give us Immaculate Mary as our absolute, immediate, and effective superior, as well as our guide and teacher so that she may guide, correct, teach, and lead us in your name and behalf, making us fulfill your divine will. By doing your most holy mother's will in everything, and by living under her obedience, we will perform everything according to your most holy will, O Eucharistic Heart of Jesus.

O most adorable Lord Jesus Christ, the graces we are asking with this petition are sublime; and yet, despite our demerits and indignity, we hope to receive them from the sweetest, infinite goodness of your Eucharistic Heart we are entreating in the greatest manifestations of its love and mercy, firmly hoping that you will hear our prayer. Amen. Amen!

Oria, July 1, 1913. St. Paschal's church
The present and the future Rogationists by the Heart of
Jesus.

B) PETITION to the Immaculate Mary so that she may constitute herself for ever absolute, effective, immediate guide and teacher of the Rogationists by the Heart of Jesus, for the Eucharistic Heart's sake.

O sweetest, loving Immaculate Mary our mother, you come to dwell with us through this sacred, beautiful, and merciful statue on the solemn day when we commemorate your gentle visit to St. Elizabeth, greeting you as the Mystical Dove in the cleft of the rock. As humble congregants of the least order of the Evangelical Rogation by the Heart of Jesus, we kneel at your motherly feet and entreat you to present our petition to the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus so that he may constitute himself as our immediate, absolute, and effective superior, as well as our guide and teacher. Please present this petition to him. Ask him to accept it at the height of his infinite mercy, and to place it in the opened, wound of his loving Heart blazing with eternal charity in the sacred pyx. Please tell him to grant it in full.

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We entreat you, O immaculate mother, to crown this ineffable grace by obtaining from your adorable son that you too may constitute yourself as our immediate, effective mother superior, as well as our guide and teacher. O beautiful Mother of God and our mother, we know that you are God's own will, lighter than a down, moving at any light breeze of the divine absolute power. Please place us under your immediate, effective direction, guide, and command as well as under the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus' command. Immaculate Mary, behold! We put ourselves, the present and the future Rogationists in your hands. We promise perfect subjection and obedience to

you, who are our loving, absolute, effective, and immediate superior. By so doing, we mean to obey the most sacred Eucharistic Heart. Because we know that no subjection nor obedience is appreciated by you, unless we obey our legitimate superiors, we promise to consider them as the representatives of the most holy Heart of Jesus and your representatives. As for the government of this least order, we promise to hold the major superior, whoever he may be, as the vicar of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus and your vicar, and the other directors, as vice-vicars.

O most holy Immaculate Mother, please ratify and confirm our complete surrender; take complete, immediate, and effective possession. We know that 9 years ago, on Dec. 8, fifty years after your Immaculate Conception's dogma, the houses of the Daughters of Divine Zeal by the interests of Jesus' Heart proclaimed you, O Immaculate Mother, absolute, effective, and immediate owner, superior, and teacher, but always mother. Since then, you have shown through several signs that you have accepted that proclamation by constituting yourself owner, teacher, and superior general and particular of that community and of the future ones. What about the miracle you worked in the house of the Daughters of Divine Zeal in Trani, (2) through this sacred statue Then, you showers yourself to be really mother, teacher, and immediate superior: mother, because you rushed to help a wailing creature struck by an incurable disease. You said: « Daughter, get up; I have healed you. » Then, you signed her with the cross, adding: « I bless and restore you to health. » In a moment, the sick daughter was free from disease. Teacher, because you brought everything to a successful conclusion through holy teachings of prudence and discipline. Effective and immediate superior,

because you called one sister by name at midnight, telling her to wake up in order to inform the sisters about the wonder, and to praise the Lord all night long before the Holy Sacrament, which they did.

O sweetest, loving Immaculate Mother, not once but a thousand times we proclaim you absolute, immediate, and effective mother, owner, teacher, and superior together with the most holy Eucharistic Heart of Jesus. We firmly trust in your motherly sweetest charity, being sure that you will not repel this humblest petition on this day, which is three times most solemn for us. On the contrary, we trust that you will accept it, as you accepted the Daughters of Divine Zeal's proclamation some years ago. To tell the truth, we do not deserve such an ineffable grace, but we exhibit the divine word which came from the divine zeal of Jesus' Heart: « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest, » which is flashing on our chest. (3) O most holy mother, Mother and Queen of the holy Church, for all your interest in promoting the holy Catholic priesthood, whose scarcity forms the innermost, secret sorrow of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, please receive in full our double petition; together with Jesus in the Holy Sacrament please rule, direct, govern, guide, teach, and correct us with divine, effective, immediate superiority and directorship. We are a little seed springing up right now from the soil. Please make us grow in the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus and in your Immaculate Heart.

To be sure that the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus along with you has accepted and granted our petition through your powerful intercession, we ask no supernatural signs like the miracle you worked in Trani. We ask you instead to heal our souls from the bad inclinations, to purify us from sins, to enlighten our intellect with the light of divine

wisdom, to kindle our heart with the flames of divine love, to strengthen our will, and to increase our religious affection toward the institute. O mother, we beseech you to work the wonders of grace in us, such as: conversion to Jesus, our supreme good, acquisition of the virtues, especially humility, holy meekness, detachment, perfect obedience, and pure zeal for the interests of the most holy Heart of Jesus. O beautiful Immaculate Lady, please see to it that we become always more fond of Jesus in the Holy Sacrament and that he may be our love and our goal for ever. Immaculate Lady, owner, mother, and teacher, give us holy perseverance in good, and eternal life at the end.

Meanwhile, our superior general on his and our behalf as well as on behalf of the mother-house of Messina along with the present and future Rogationists, and in confirmation of our surrender to the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus and to you, hand over to you everything and each person, asking you to transfer them to the most adorable Eucharistic Heart of Jesus.

Delivery

Immaculate Mother Mary, I most unworthy, useless servant of your Son our Lord, superior general of this institute, and the Rogationists of Oria and of Messina have firm confidence that the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus and you have accepted the double proclamation by constituting yourselves immediate, effective, and absolute superiors of the present and future Rogationists. According to our petition, I put my directorship in your most holy hands; please transfer it to the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus. Meanwhile, I make the following delivery to you:

1. I entrust these children, the lay-brothers, the Rogationists of the mother-house in Messina along with

the orphans and the poor of our houses, who already belong to you;

2. This former convent along with its atriums and gardens;

3. The Church and the houses' keys;

4. The registers along with the book-keeping, and the school books;

5. The community's furniture and clothing;

6. The doves, the winged creatures, the lambs, and everything concerning the community's sustenance;

7. The present and the future income; they are at your disposal;

8. The industries' machineries and the machineries we are going to buy under the guide of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus and yours;

9. The factories and industries' tools;

10. The present and the future victuals;

11. That you may crown everything by transferring all things to the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, I entrust St. Paschal's beautiful, venerable church; please let it be a center of faith and apostolate, a house of prayer and sanctification;

12. O mother, I include your house of Messina and myself in this delivery; miserable as I am, through the sweetest Eucharistic Heart of Jesus I surrender myself to you as victim of the divine will for the present, past, and future consolation of the loving, merciful Heart of Jesus;

13. Is there anything else to be delivered to you, O most holy mother? Yes, I have to make another delivery to you as to our absolute, effective, and immediate owner and superior. All together we hand over to you the spiritual

good, the good of grace, the merits of our labor as well as of our troubles, works, and wishes; these present, past, and future celestial goods we hand over to you. Please deliver them to the most holy Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, because they come from him.

Our immediate, absolute, and effective superior, please accept our delivery in full. In addition, tell the most holy Eucharistic Heart of Jesus to accept it. Bless and command us, while we kiss your sacred, motherly feet, reverently and lovingly.

Oria, July 2, 1913

Fr. H. M. Di Francis - former superior general -from henceforth most unworthy vicar of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Mary, who are absolute, effective, and immediate superiors of the present and future order of the Evangelical Rogation by the Heart of Jesus.

The present and the future congregants of the Rogationist order by the Heart of Jesus.

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C) LITTLE RULE in compliance with the proclamations on July 1 and 2, 1913.

1. The present and the future Rogationists will have the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Mary as immediate, absolute, effective superiors, who are always present in the midst of them, although invisible, according to the proclamations;

2. The Rogationists will see the divine superiors in any order, command, and direction given by those having power on them;

3. While reading the rules and the constitutions, they will learn each article as if Immaculate Mary were reading on behalf of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus;

4. They will say the brief Latin prayer *Sacratissimum Cor...* (most sacred Heart), before any action in common;

5. They will hold as a holy secret of the institute the ineffable grace of the double, divine, celestial, absolute, effective, and immediate superiority, which is invisible to the senses but visible in the legitimate external relations; they will say secretly in their heart: it is a secret of mine. Calling to mind the words of Raphael the archangel, they will say: «It is good concealing the king's secret»;

6. Before making an important decision, the rectors will appeal to the divine superiors, submitting the case to them and imploring enlightenment and direction in order to work out the divine will in everything;

7. In minor cases, before making a decision, the rectors or overseers will appeal privately by internal prayer to the divine superiors;

8. They will make the renovation of the happy proclamations through appropriate formulas more than once a year;

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9. When each Rogationist receives Holy Communion, he will receive the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus as the celestial, divine superior with intimate, proper, and due love. He will offer himself as a son, subject, slave out of love, and disciple, promising perfect obedience to his most holy will in everything; he will honor and obey the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus with faith and, love through his representatives;

10. Beginning with the happy double proclamation, the Rogationist by the Heart of Jesus will have a special affection and respect toward his institute's holy emblem: « Pray, therefore, to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest. » He will see

in the holy tabernacles the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, who is afflicted for lack of clergy, as pointing to St. Luke's (10, 2) and to St. Matthew's (9, 37) verses, showing the people abandoned like sheep without a shepherd, and inviting to watch the ample harvest in ruin for lack of workers. He is saying: « As sweet, benign, and loving superiors, I and my most holy mother give you a rule. Pray continuously in my name to the owner of the harvest (me and my father) as well as to my most holy mother that we hasten to send out copious and holy workers to the mystical harvest. Strive to become a good worker for my glory and for the salvation of the souls, whatever it may be the office to which I will appoint you in this institute.»

NOTES

(1) The Divine Superiors proclamation is of a chief importance in the padre's life and in the institute's story. We deem to publish the two formulas, where the padre states his thought and teaches how to live under the spirit of subjection to the Divine Superiors. (See Vitale, Fr. Mary Hannibal Di Francia — his life and works — chapter LIII).

(2) See Vitale, Father Mary Hannibal Di Francia — his life and works — chapter LII.

(3) At that time, the Rogationists were wearing on the chest the Sacred Heart's emblem with the Rogate.

3. SPIRITUAL INFANCY

Resolves and prayers to the child Jesus

O sweet Jesus, you exhorted us to become like children to be worth entering the kingdom of God. We make any resolve and effort to become children by innocence and simplicity. Please help us with your grace!

1. Children believe everything.

O my adorable child Jesus, I firmly believe what you have revealed and the holy Church teaches; I also believe the legitimate superiors and counselors that instruct and guide me. O Lord, confirm me in the simple, pure faith. Amen. Glory.

2. Children keep no grudge.

O my beloved child Jesus, I promise to never keep the least grudge or malevolence against those who displease, contradict, offend, trouble, oppose, or persecute me. On the contrary, on occasion I will return good for evil. Please confirm me in this holy resolve! Amen. Glory.

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3. Children do and think of what they are told.

O beloved child Jesus, I want to be docile and manageable like a child in the moves of your grace and in the inspirations of your divine will. I want to do quickly and docilely what I am told by those who direct and govern me in your name. Amen. Glory.

4. Children love very much their parents, brothers, and sisters.

O my beloved Jesus, according to your command I promise to love you with all my mind, with all my heart, and above all things, as well as my sweetest mother Mary, the angels, the saints, and my neighbor as myself. O

Lord, infuse and increase this most holy love in me. Amen. Glory.

5. Children do not mind worldly matter.

O my divine savior, child Jesus, I declare that worldly matter, which concerns so much the mundane is as non-existent or like dissipating smoke for me; you alone are my treasure. My Jesus, let it be so for ever. Amen. Glory.

6. Children say things with simplicity and sincerity.

My beloved Jesus, I propose to never lie, to confess my faults candidly, and to conceal no wrong with excuses or deceit. O Lord, help me always to speak and work with simplicity. Amen. Glory.

7. Children forget insults.

O my Jesus., I promise to never remember any wrong that people can commit against me; when such a thought crosses my mind, I will drive it away immediately; furthermore, I will behave with the people who eventually wronged me as though they did nothing to me. Please confirm my resolve! Amen. Glory.

8. When children are given gifts, they rejoice innocently and are fond of the donors.

O beloved Jesus, I promise to rejoice in you for any spiritual or temporal good given to me by your charity; I will seize this opportunity to love you more with perfect gratitude. My Jesus, let it be so! Amen. Glory.

9. When children are attacked, they rush to the bosom of their parents.

O my adorable savior Jesus, I firmly resolve to appeal to your sweetest Heart and to our most holy mother Mary's Immaculate Heart when the hellish enemy assails me and when my soul runs any risk. My beloved Lord, help me keep my word. Amen. Glory.

10. Children cry when they do not see their parents.

My beloved sweetest Jesus, I will never stop crying for the least of my faults which take you away from me. Please return to me everytime I call upon you with contrition. Now I promise to do my best to let you always stay with me. Please help me to always do so! Amen. Glory.

11. When children see their parents crying, they too cry; when they see their parents rejoicing, they too rejoice.

O my supreme good, child Jesus, I wish my eyes were a fountain of tears to bewail together with you and with Our Lady in sorrow my sins, the sins of the whole world, and the ruin of so many souls! I want to feel no other joy in my heart but the joy because you are known and loved by all the hearts. Amen. Glory.

12. Children want to stay with their parents.

O my soul's love, I want to always stay with you and with your most holy mother, keeping and embracing you in pure faith; I also want to go with you and with the most holy Virgin to the places where you have been, beginning with Bethlehem up to the Calvary. I wish I were with you in all the tabernacles. Please accept such a company on earth in order that I may be always with you and with the divine mother in paradise. Amen. Glory.

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13. Children imitate their parents.

O divine child Jesus, help me to imitate in everything your divine virtues, such as: humility, obedience, innocence, simplicity, charity, and your divine Heart's meekness. I promise to do it with all my heart, all life long. Please help it come true! Amen. Glory.

14. Children learn their father's language.

My beloved child Jesus, you and your most holy mother have always said holiest words. Your talk is truth and charity. I too want to speak according to truth and charity, but never against these divine virtues. O adorable Jesus, divine teacher, teach me to always speak justly and rightly, especially when I meditate and pray before your divine majesty. Amen. Glory.

15. Children keep the baptismal innocence.

O child Jesus, I will never stop bewailing the loss of holy innocence you gave me in baptism. O divine child, please return it to me, because I am ready to do the sacramental penance and any other penance which is necessary to regain my lost innocence. Amen. Glory.

16. Children do not know worldly malice.

O most adorable child Jesus, I want to know nothing of the world's false allurements, nor of its foolish principles. O Lord, please root out of my mind, of my heart, and of my memory any worldly impression, or image, or imagination. Amen. Glory.

17. Children form no bad opinion of others, because they are simple.

O child Jesus, only you may judge my heart, because you are the only one who knows the hearts; to tell the truth, I would deserve a sentence for several faults and for my bad innermost. I promise to form no bad opinion of the people, and when I am unable to excuse their actions, at least I will excuse their intention. Please help me keep my word! Amen. Glory.

18. Children do not speak ill of anyone.

My sweetest child, I know that you are displeased when we speak ill of our neighbor and when we communicate our neighbor's defects. You are very strict about

that. For this reason I want to keep silent about my neighbor's defects. I promise to keep my word with your grace. Amen. Glory.

19. Children sleep soundly in the bosom of their mother.

O my beloved child, please accept my protestation. From now on I surrender myself to your infinite goodness and to Immaculate Mary's sweetest protection. I will be confident and serene in any event and circumstance, because your mother is also my mother. Amen. Glory.

20. Children are not ambitious.

O my Lord and God, from now on I will choose the last place, because I do not want to be appreciated, nor preferred to others. My Jesus, let it be so. Amen. Glory.

21. When children are corrected of their natural defects, they amend quickly.

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My worshiped child God, I bewail my disregard in amending my defects and bad inclinations in spite of so many admonitions, readings, preachings, inspirations, and warnings. My adorable child, please forgive me. I want to start a new life by promising to be most vigilant over myself, by striving to avoid the least defect, and by improving through your good inspirations and through the beneficial admonishments and corrections that I may receive. May your powerful help and the help of your most holy mother sustain me. Amen. Glory.

22. Children are docile, easily yielding to their parents' will.

O divine child, my Lord and God, forgive me for my opposing your divine will so many times! I am very, very sorry; I declare before heaven and earth to never do so again. May your divine will govern me; I hand over myself

to you along with my past, present, and future existence. O sweet, amiable child Jesus, help me keep my word for ever! Amen. Glory.

23. Children are endowed with a childish beauty and charm, which move the people to love them.

O most gracious child Jesus, I want to esteem nothing, but your divine grace; may it adorn and beautify my soul! Unfortunately, my soul has become ugly in your eyes for so many faults! O beloved Jesus, beautify me with your grace. Help me to achieve the most beautiful union of love with you for ever. Amen. Glory.

24. Children learn the prayers from their parents, and pray graciously in the morning and in the night.

O my adored child Jesus, I promise to never leave out my prayer in the morning and in the evening, as well as the other prayers along with the practices of piety. Please grant me true spirit of prayer and devotion so that I may please you! Amen. Glory.

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25. Children kiss their parents tenderly, and like to be kissed and caressed.

O my sweetest child Jesus, please let me be a child, even though I do not deserve your caresses; but I would rather wish to share your pain and the hidden pleasure of your holy cross! Still I beg you, o my divine lover, to let me share the mystical kiss of the enamored bride of the Song of Solomon, which is your union of love through the perfect, loving transformation in your divine, most loving will. Amen. Glory.

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