

THE SERAPH

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**St. Augustine contemplates
The City of God.**

Contents

All Saints.....	1
Two Cities.....	5
Franciscans and the Protestant Revolution In England.....	10
The Catholic Home.....	18
Franciscan Saints.....	21
Our Best Friend.....	25

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EDITORIAL

All Saints

The month of November, brings our liturgical year to a close. This month is dedicated to the Poor Souls in Purgatory and reminds us, very somberly, of death. The end of our lives here on earth; and the end of the world is set before us very vividly in November. As things pass away before us, we often feel a sense of sadness and loss. The joys of this liturgical year are gone and never to return. We cannot go back in time to experience the past pleasures; nor can we return to the past to undo the mistakes that we have made. The pangs of conscience and the constant reflection upon the destruction of this life and the suffering in Purgatory instill in many a very real dread of the future.

While it is useful for us to fear the sufferings of Hell and Purgatory, and these are powerful incentives for us to avoid sin, our Holy Mother the Church desires to lift our thoughts to higher and nobler ideas. We begin this month with the Feast of All Saints. In this feast, we contemplate the glory of God in

NOVEMBER 2015



Heaven. We are encouraged to contemplate all the saints united as one with God. They partake of His glory and are eternally happy without any mixture of sadness or suffering.

Following the feast of All Saints, we have the feast of All Souls. In this feast, we contemplate the Poor Souls in Purgatory and their sufferings. We see that their sufferings can no longer merit any greater reward for them, but are only useful in expiating the stain of sin. While their state is next to Hell and is most frightful; they no longer have to fear committing any sin, and know that at the end of their purgation, eternal happiness awaits them.

There is therefore a sense of joy at the passing away of this life and this world. The saints fill up the void in Heaven left by the

fallen angels. This is our destiny and our goal. The sadness that we often feel is because we have not yet spiritually matured. There is still too much love for this world and material things; and not enough love for God and spiritual things. The more that we come to know and love God, so much the more do we become eager to be with Him. The saints understood this well and longed for the day that they could leave this world. St. Paul eagerly looked forward to the dissolution of his body and his union with God. He considered this life on earth as death, and the death of the body as life. The desire of the saints is to be born into Eternal Life. The passing away of this life, is not considered as a loss, but rather as a putting off of a great burden, and being set free. If we love God as we should, above everything – even ourselves, we should be eager to complete our purpose here on earth and then join Him in Heaven.

Every Catholic child who has studied his Catechism knows what our purpose is. “Why did God make us? God made us to: know, love, and serve Him in this world; and to be happy with Him in Heaven.” Our goal or

purpose does not end with this life, but rather it begins when this life ends. While November signals an end, it also signals a beginning. The Last Sunday after Pentecost brings before our minds the end of this world and inspires us to see and understand the temporality of everything that is not God. We are led, not to sadness, but rather to joy. All those who have tasted of the pleasures of this earth, and are honest, will attest with the wise man, that, “all is vanity and a chase after the wind;” or they realize with St. Augustine, that “our hearts are restless, until they rest in God.” This life never satisfies, but always leaves us feeling empty and unfulfilled. Only in God can our hearts feel satisfied and filled. Everything that is not God, is empty, or vain. We were made by God and for God, so nothing less than God can ever satisfy or fulfill us.

Tragically, many try to make gods of things and/or people. These things that are empty of themselves cannot bring true peace and happiness. If we look to them to fill the needs of our hearts and souls, we become frustrated and miserable. Our hearts have an infinite capacity to love and can only be satisfied

with the infinite; and only God is infinite. Temporal things can distract and divert us for a time, but they can never satisfy. They can distract and divert us temporarily because everything is made by God and everything bears some resemblance to Him. It is this resemblance to God that allows us to mistake the creature for the Creator. In doing this however, we become guilty of idolatry, for we have made a god of a creature. In giving our hearts to a creation, rather than to the Creator, we cling to nothingness and turn away from Everything.

As this month progresses and we observe the passing of the times and seasons, may we always remember that all things pass away, and only God remains. The pains and the sufferings of this life are not evils in themselves, they are actually good things given to us by God. They are constant reminders that we must not cling to these things; and that these things are passing away. These only exist in time, and not in eternity. The only real evil is sin, and sin is simply the absence of grace. As long as we are in the state of sin, there is a void in us, and this is the only real evil, because we are

meant to be filled with God and His graces.

Many try to fill this void in them with material and temporal things, only to end up even more miserable than before. By doing this, they just heap sin upon sin; or emptiness upon emptiness. The passing of the seasons is a wonderful opportunity for us to let the emptiness pass away, and to allow God and grace to enter in. Our ultimate goal is to let this material life of ours pass away so that our spiritual life may be made full. We enter into the Mystical Body of Christ to become One with Him, here on earth, and when we leave this world, our union with Him is to be consummated. We will have died to ourselves so that we may live in Him. We accomplish this by letting go of sin and all the empty and passing material things; and filling our hearts, minds and souls with God, through His grace. In this manner, we may truly enjoy and love this life as we ought; but most importantly, we pave the way to eternal peace and happiness with Him in Heaven.



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Two Cities

Bishop Giles OFM



In our civil lives, November calls to our minds the thought of elections and politics. With the recent thought of the feast of Jesus Christ the King fresh in our minds, we are given some things for serious consideration as we prepare to perform our civic duties. There has been a concerted, deliberate, effort to erase all thought of Jesus Christ from society and from even our personal lives.

Under the guise of liberty, we have become enslaved. It is not only the civil laws and legislations that have denied Jesus Christ and made Him of no consideration in the daily operations of the state; but now we have, with the “social media,” a constant barrage of conforming to “political correctness.” Holding to Divine Law and principles is now

considered, “un-educated” and “un-cultivated,” even “un-civilized.” The “social media” sets out to deliberately humiliate or shame anyone with the nerve to stand up for right order. We are watching the very disintegration of morals, and even society as a whole. Freedom and tolerance has become a weapon to control and enslave. By disavowing Jesus Christ as our Lord and King, we have enthroned Satan. Of course our “society” does not openly espouse Satanism, but that is what it has done in fact, through the promotion of “equality” and “liberty” for every perversity and evil. The promoters of the murder of children in the womb, as well as the promoters of perverse sexual relationships, are not given equal rights with those who promote virtue and right order; they are

given preferential privilege and status.

What is to become of our once great societies? In his book, *The City of God*, St. Augustine points out that there are two cities. There is the eternal city of God, and there is the passing cities of this world. He says: “Two loves formed two cities: the love of self, reaching even to contempt of God, an earthly city; and the love of God, reaching to contempt of self, a heavenly one.” The Catholic Church is the City of God here on earth; and this city is eternal because it continues in Heaven. The civil societies here on earth are temporal and are passing. They rise and fall just as the times and seasons rise and fall. The greatness of a society in this world cannot last, but must pass away; just as all things in this world pass away.

In his *Confessions* (book 4, chapter 10), St. Augustine shows us that there is an order and beauty in the passing away of our lives on this earth. We can expand upon this idea and see that there is a beauty and harmony in the passing of all the material things of this world. St. Augustine uses the analogy of speech. The beauty and harmony

of speech comes about with the succession of sounds, one after another. The first word comes into existence and passes away to make room for the next word. There is a succession of one word after another. If all the words were to come into existence together and remain, there would not be any coherence, beauty or harmony. The same is true with our cities and societies. Worldly societies come into being, rise, fall, and pass away to fulfill the purpose for which God called them into being. Each in turn complementing and completing the revelation of God’s honor and glory.

Many have chosen to resist God and His plan. They see no need to live their lives in knowing and loving God so that they may be eternally happy with Him in Heaven. Many want to deny Him, and live as if there were no God. The childishness of pretending that God does not exist, does not make Him go away. They, nonetheless, will give honor and glory to God, even against their own wills on the Day of Judgment, when the justice of God is made manifest.

Pope Leo XIII in his Encyclical Letter *Humanum Genus* says: “At every period of time, each

(of these cities) has been in conflict with the other, with a variety and multiplicity of weapons, and of warfare, although not always with equal ardor and assault. At this period, however, the partisans of evil seem to be combining together, and to be struggling with united vehemence, led on or assisted by that strongly organized and widespread association called the Freemasons ... Now, the Masonic sect produces fruits that are pernicious and of the bitterest savor.”

We do not fear for the survival of the true Catholic Church, the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ. We know that She is eternal and will continue until the end of time here on earth, and more importantly that She will continue in Heaven, eternally. We do, however, fear for the survival of individual souls. They have been invited to eternal life. The Church is eager to give them all the help they need in the graces of the Sacraments, but many have chosen to ignore and/or despise Her as well as Her Divine Spouse – Jesus Christ.

Catholics do not even fear the evil that these men may do to us, because we hope for an eternal life in Heaven. Our hope is not

limited to a passing happiness on earth, but to an eternal happiness in the presence of God. Those who persecute Christ will pass away and will have to give an account of their lives to Him.

When those who have given themselves over to demonic suggestions and have turned away from God, establish societies or take control of societies, we understand that these societies as well as those who run them will sooner or later pass away also. All the things of this earth will pass away.

The demonic suggestion comes through in the teachings and goals of Freemasonry. A principle tenant of the demons is freedom of religion, and the Protestants are eager to fall for this, because their very foundation is upon “private interpretation” or freedom of choice of religion. Religion to Protestants is purely a private matter and, logically for them, all visible Churches are purely human organizations. Catholics oppose the sectioning of public and private life, because they know that the Mystical Body of Christ is supra-national. Man’s real end is union with God in Supernatural life. The only way to obtain this Supernatural life

is by becoming a member of the Church or Mystical Body of Christ.

Freemasons avow that they have realized a part of their program. The “objects which the men of 1789 as well as those of 1848 ... and of 1869 had set before themselves have been attained or very nearly: Sovereignty of the People, Universal Suffrage, Secular Education obligatory for all, Separation of Church and State, Tax on Revenue, etc.” (Report of the Assembly of the French Grand Orient, 1923). “Let us not forget that we are the Counter-Church. Let us strive in the Lodges to ruin the Influence of religion in every form.” (Masonic Congress of the East of France, Belfort, 1911)

The Masons continue: “The principal tasks of the society of nations are the organization of peace, ... the creation of international notes, ... the extension of pacifist education, relying notably on the spread of an international language, ... the creation of a European spirit, of a patriotism of the League of Nations; in word, the formation of a United States of Europe, or rather of the Federation of the World” (Assembly of the Grande Loge de France, 1922).

We find two main principles in Masonry: social indifference to religion and superiority of the natural organization over the Catholic Church (supernatural organization).

Pope Pius XII, in his encyclical letter, *On the Function of State in the Modern World*, says: “The idea which credits the State with unlimited authority is not simply an error harmful to the internal life of nations, to their prosperity, and to the larger and well-ordered increase in their well-being, but likewise it injures the relations between peoples, for it breaks the unity of supra-national society, robs the law of nations of its foundation and vigor, leads to violation of others’ rights and impedes agreement and peaceful intercourse.” The State has no right to destroy families and consciences. The pope also said: “Goods, blood it (the civil state) can demand; but the soul redeemed by God, never. The charge laid by God on parents to provide for the material and spiritual good of their offspring and to procure for them a suitable training saturated with the true spirit of religion, cannot be wrested from them without grave violation of their rights.”

Our Lord instructed the Apostles and all who would follow Him, that the world hates Him and it will hate those who love and follow Him. We should not be surprised to find the Church today under attack on every front, and moral standards undermined and uprooted through every avenue possible. The city of this earth is at war with the City of God. We know that every city of this earth, no matter to what apparent heights it raises itself to, will pass away. History shows us that every one of them eventually succumbs to its own demise. The demons continue in every age to bring about the destruction of every ordered society. Their instruments have been for many years the secret societies, principally, of Freemasonry. The Masons employ the various “religions” to bring about the undermining of society. At one time it, will be the Jews, at another the Muslims, or the Protestants, or the Modernists; today, it appears that they are all brought into play. Perhaps we are at the pinnacle of the demise? It may be the demise of civil society, but it will never be the demise of the eternal City of God. In their attack against God, they only appear to succeed in

time; they will ultimately fail in eternity.

As Catholics, we pray for our world and the societies that have been formed. We clearly see the undermining of all morality and right order, and therefore the impending demise of the cities of this world. We take solace, in the fact that the Eternal City of God will never fall. God is still in charge; and it is only good and just that the immoral cities of this world should pass away. When the cities of this world turned their backs upon God, it created a shadow of evil in their very souls; the further these societies turned away from God, the darker their souls became. We have, apparently, reached a point of eclipse, where manifest evils are presented as good. It is necessary and just that such societies must cease, and make way for another.

Let us not fear, the loss of our earthly cities, nor fear the suffering that we may be forced to endure as these cities declare their hatred of God and the servants of God. It will not always be like this. These evils with this world will all pass away. Let us then pray with St. John, “Come Lord Jesus, Come.” (Apocalypse 22, 20)

Franciscans and the Protestant Revolution In England

Francis Borgia Steck, O.F.M.

PART SECOND

UNDER THE STUARTS 1603-1649

CHAPTER I

THE SECOND ENGLISH PROVINCE

(Continued)

At the general chapter, in 1618, the English friars living in Belgium, England, and Scotland were placed under obedience to the commissary general of the Belgian Provinces. Probably that same year, or shortly after, Fr. John Gennings became Vicar of England.¹ It was in this capacity that, in 1625, he sent Fr. Francis Davenport to Rome, that he might interest the general chapter in the cause of the English friars. The result of this mission was a letter from the minister general, Fr. Bernardine de Senis, to Fr. John Gennings,

1 Fr. William Stanney, Commissary of England, was still living at this time. It is probably owing to this fact that Fr. John Gennings was appointed Vicar and not Commissary of England. See Thaddeus, p. 238.



by virtue of which the English Franciscans were associated into a custody, and the zealous vicar was appointed the first custos enjoying the full power of a provincial.² Four years later, the minister general, moved by the entreaties not only of the Fathers but of leading Catholics, commissioned Fr. Joseph Bergagne, who had meanwhile become commissary general, to assemble the English friars for the first provincial chapter.

2 For a copy of this letter see Mason, p. 23; Thaddeus, p. 37.

After some delay, on the first Sunday of Advent, November 14, 1630, the meeting was held in the convent of the Franciscan Sisters at Brussels. First the letters patent of the minister general were read,³ giving the English Province a regular existence and, as is customary in such cases, instituting the first provincial superiors. Fr. John Gennings was declared Minister Provincial, and Fr. Francis Davenport Custos, while FF. Bonaventure Jackson, Nicholas Day, Francis Bel, and Jerome Pickford were appointed Definitors. Thereupon, the assembled Fathers proceeded with the minor appointments, of which a few are of interest. Fr. Francis Bel was elected guardian of St. Bonaventure's friary at Douai and professor of the Hebrew language. FF. Francis Davenport and William a S. Augustine were appointed professors of theology, Fr. Lawrence a S. Edmundo professor of philosophy and master of novices. Among the regulations was a decree providing "that for the better and easier direction of the brethren and despatch of business, the Provincial when residing

3 For a copy of these letters patent see Mason, p. 34 ; Thaddeus, P. 48.

in England, may appoint a commissary, invested with his authority, for our brethren in Belgium; and, when residing in Belgium, he may in like manner provide for England."⁴

During the fifteen years that witnessed the realization of Fr. Genning's project, the missions in England had not been neglected. It was providential that the restoration of the province coincided with the accession of Charles I (1625-1649). Like his predecessor, the king was well disposed toward his Catholic subjects; barring a few of the penal laws which the Puritan party compelled him to revive, the first years of his reign were generally speaking a period of religious peace and toleration. Naturally, Fr. John Gennings and his first companions availed themselves of these favorable conditions and extended the field of their activity. From the report of Panzani, the papal envoy to England, we learn that, in 1634, there were twenty Franciscans in the English missions.⁵ Already at the first chapter, in 1530,

4 For a copy of the official regulations drawn up at this chapter see Thaddeus, pp. 49 seq.

5 *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. V, p. 450.

FF. Bonaventure Jackson and George Perrot could be assigned guardians of the London and Reading districts. By 1640, six new districts had been added; viz., Dorset (Dorchester) and York in 1632, Greenwich in 1634, Leicester in 1637, Oxford and Chichester in 1640.

Seven years later, these vast mission territories were rearranged into eight guardianates; viz., London, York, Cambridge, Bristol, Oxford, Newcastle, Worcester, and Greenwich. Of these, the first seven comprised thirty-eight various shires or counties, while Greenwich, though situated in the London district, had a guardian of its own. These districts were governed by so-called titular guardians, who looked after the friars

and the missions under their jurisdiction and also took part in the provincial chapters. The minister provincial or, in his absence, the commissary resided at London, where, too, after 1637, the provincial chapters were regularly held.⁶

Among the first Franciscans to be affiliated with the province were FF. Nicholas Day, Francis Bel, and John Baptist Bullaker; they were summoned from the Province of the Immaculate Conception in Spain, where they had entered the Order and made



Father John Gennings

their profession. Other recruits, like FF. Jerome Pickford, George Perrot, and Paul Heath, came from the English College and from the neighborhood of Douai. Even on the missions in England, Fr. Gennings succeeded in gaining recruits for the ever

⁶ Thaddeus, pp. 56 seq.

increasing province. Thus we know that Fr. John Talbot, a secular priest, received the habit and spent his year of probation in England. Within a few years, the youthful province grew quite vigorous. This is evident from the fact, that in 1634, at the provincial chapter, the following were approved for preaching and hearing confessions: FF. William Anderton, Peter Cape, Christopher Colman, Augustine East, Lewis of Nazareth, Vincent of St. Blase, Francis of St. Bonaventure, Bonaventure of St. Thomas, Lewis Wrest. In short, before the ill-fated year 1649, the province already numbered fifty-three members, not including the clerics who in that year were still pursuing their studies at Douai. By 1649, however, seventeen members of the province had passed to their eternal reward. Among these were the five who suffered and died for the faith during the Puritan Revolution.⁷

Like their brethren a century before, the members of the second province were faithful and zealous followers of St. Francis. At first they styled themselves *of the Regular*

Observance, but later took the name *of Recollects*. “They were induced to make this change,” says Thaddeus, “chiefly by two considerations. One was that probably all the Provinces over which the Commissary General presided were termed *of Recollects*; the other that there was already an establishment of Recollects at Douai. . . . The people, seeing that the English friars were of the same Order, gave them also the same name. . . . From the year 1676 the term Recollects is inserted in all their documents, and they also had the inscription of the old seal, *Regularis Observantiae*, changed on a new one then made into *Recollectorum*.”⁸ As Parkinson rightly observes, “these Recollects were no separate body distinct from the rest of the Observants, but made up a part of it, giving themselves first to the contemplative life, as the most proper preparation for the better discharging the duties of the active; as also for the recovering their spirit when dissipated by preaching, teaching, ruling as superiors, or other similar exercises of obedience and charity.”⁹ How jealously they guarded the

⁷ The above data have been compiled from Thaddeus’s list of the members of the Second Province, pp. 190-320.

⁸ Thaddeus, p. 59.

⁹ Quoted by Parkinson, p. 215.

Franciscan vow of poverty, we see from the regulations drawn up at the provincial chapter in 1637. According to these, no friar was allowed to keep money about his person, nor to deposit it or to have it deposited without a written permission of the provincial. Furthermore, it was strictly forbidden to accept or to assign for oneself, for the province, or for the friary at Douai any rents given as alms either temporarily or for life. Neither could money be “received as alms for things curious, precious or superfluous, in food, clothing, and the rest which may be called extravagant considering the condition of the mission, according to the judgment of the provincial minister.” “The faithful observance of these regulations,” Thaddeus remarks, “was undoubtedly a great safeguard for the Franciscans on the English mission.”¹⁰ Like all true sons of St. Francis, they also fostered a deep and tender devotion to Mary the Mother of God. To her they recommended the conversion of England; and in 1632, it was decreed that daily on the missions the litany in her honor should be said after the principal Mass and the *Tota*

pulchra after compline.¹¹

No less remarkable than the growth of the youthful province, was the activity its early members unfolded. While a number of them labored in Belgium, especially at Douai,¹² instructing and training the clerics for their future missionary career and ministering to the spiritual and corporal needs of the people, others, after taking the prescribed oath,¹³ set out for the English missions. The scenes of their activity in England were hallowed by the labors and sufferings of their brethren, who a hundred years before had resisted the fury of the first storm against the Church. It was, no doubt, the sacred memory of those Franciscan heroes that made their heirs forget the hardships and privations they encountered in the discharge of their duties. The Catholic faith could not be preached publicly; it was merely tolerated, and that only because the king secretly

11 Ibidem, p. 79.

12 The province had a residence also at Aire and at Bruges. Thaddeus, p. 58.

13 By this oath, which the friars had to swear and sign before departing for the missions in England, they promised “that whenever they should be recalled, or sent back by their superiors, they would obey and conform to the command, circumstances notwithstanding.” See Thaddeus, p. 58.

10 Thaddeus, p. 61.

avored the Catholics and as yet was powerful enough to oppose his Puritan parliaments; while everyone knew that the queen professed and practiced the proscribed religion. Well regulated parishes and schools, of course, there were none. Accordingly, the friars' sphere of activity lay principally within the narrow confines of individual families. These they would visit from time to time and either minister to their spiritual needs or endeavor to bring them back to the faith of their forefathers. Already in 1638, regulations were made strictly obliging the friars frequently to catechize the children and others, either in their own homes or at the priest's residence.

Since these families were often widely scattered over the country, it was impossible for the friars to remain long in one place. Hence there was danger that the fruits of their visit would be lost before their next return. This naturally led to a phase of activity which speaks volumes for the zeal and learning of these early friars. To instruct and strengthen their scattered flock in the faith, they were wont to leave with the families their writings, in which they not only

expounded Catholic doctrine but also defended it against the sectaries who were infesting the country. The literary productions of the friars previous to 1649 number no less than fifty books and pamphlets. These were printed in the friary at Douai where as early as 1638 a printing press was set up and placed in charge of Fr. Bonaventure a S. Thoma.¹⁴ Unquestionably, the most prolific and versatile writer of this period was Fr. Paul Heath. His works, thirty in all, embrace Scotistic philosophy and theology, and many treatises on ascetical, historical, and controversial topics.¹⁵ Fr. Bonaventure Jackson wrote the *Manuduction to the Palace of Truth*, a book of instruction for such as had wandered from the fold of Christ. Worthy of special mention is also the famous *Certamen Seraphicum (Seraphic Conflict)*, written by Fr. Angelus Mason and published at Douai in 1649. It is in the main a detailed account of the five Franciscans who were martyred for the faith during the last years of Charles. The fact that its author was a contemporary and a fellow friar of the men whose life and

14 Thaddeus, pp. 78, 301.

15 For a list of these works see Mason, p. vii ; also Thaddeus, pp. 106 seq.

martyrdom he recounts, makes this work especially valuable to the student of Franciscan history. The same may be said of two translations into English, St. Peter of Alcantara's *On Mental Prayer*, by Fr. Giles Willoughby, and St. Bonaventure's (?) *Stimulus amoris* (The Goad of Divine Love), by Fr. Augustine East. Among the writings of Fr. Christopher Colman we find a didactic poem entitled *Death's Duel*,¹⁶ a book of verse on the religious controversies of the times, and the *Life of St. Angela*, a translation. That the friars were active in behalf of the Third Order of St. Francis is plain from the fact that Fr. Francis Bel wrote a treatise on its Rule, while Fr. Angelus Mason composed a manual in Latin and English for the use of Tertiaries.

Needless to say, the influence of these zealous and learned friars roused the hatred of the Puritans, which in the case of one friar at least broke out into open hostility. As early as 1633, Fr. Bonaventure Jackson, who three years before had been appointed guardian of the London district, was a prisoner in Newgate.

This we learn from a letter, dated December 18, 1633, in which the writer, a secular priest laboring in the metropolis, states that Fr. Bonaventure was among the four prisoners "within this fortnight . . . released upon bond." Furthermore, the *Certamen Seraphicum* says of him that "having been called to England by Father Gennings, (he) labored with great fruit of salvation, earning praise and gratitude, and having suffered persecution, affliction and imprisonment, died an eminent confessor."¹⁷

Another Franciscan whose zeal for the true faith and influence over the ruling classes proved a constant menace to Protestantism was Fr. Francis Davenport. He was unquestionably one of the ablest theologians and controversialists of his time. Mason describes him as a most profound and versatile Scotist,¹⁸ while Wood assures us that "he was excellently well versed in school divinity, in the fathers and councils, in philosophers, and in ecclesiastical and profane histories; . . . all which accomplishments made his company acceptable to great and

16 The poem is reprinted *In Franciscan Biographies*, published by the Catholic Truth Society.

17 Thaddeus, p. 75

18 Mason, p. 81.

worthy persons.”¹⁹ As chaplain to Queen Maria Henrietta, the consort of Charles I, he was frequently at court, where on account of his erudition and pleasing manners, he commanded the respect not only of the queen and her Catholic household but also of the king and of Laud, archbishop of Canterbury. So great, indeed, was his influence that, in 1640, the House of Commons sent a complaint to the Lords, deploring the rapid increase of Popery in the realm and ascribing it to the writings and conferences of this formidable friar. The one desire of his heart was to effect a reunion of England with the Holy See. Accordingly, in his *Deus, Natura, Gratia*, a dogmatical treatise on divine grace, he brought by way of appendix an explanation of the Thirty-Nine Articles. In interpreting these, however, he was more zealous than judicious, making certain concessions to heresy and schism which the Church could not countenance. The book was, therefore, severely criticized by both the Catholic and the Protestant party, and the well-meaning friar had to undergo the humiliation of

¹⁹ Quoted by Dodd, *Church History of England*, Vol. III, p. 105.

seeing it placed on the index by the Spanish Inquisition. It would probably have met a similar fate at Rome but for the intervention of Panzani, the papal envoy in London. “Thus,” to quote Stone, “it was possible to go too far even in a good cause; Rome saw what we now see plainly, but what the moving characters in the drama could not see. The nation, instead of being ripe for conversion, was in reality drifting away from the Church, and a Puritan reaction was about to set in, almost as disastrous in its consequences as Henry the Eighth’s schism, or Elizabeth’s apostasy.”²⁰

²⁰ Stone, p. 120.

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The Catholic Home

Fr. Joseph Noonan, OFM



Part 2

I would like to begin the second part of this topic by re-emphasizing the importance of establishing a proper environment in the Catholic home.

The Catholic home must necessarily be different from non-Catholics' homes. One may begin with the externals which are an outward sign of one's belief in the Catholic Faith. A home ought to have numerous religious articles placed reasonably throughout the home. If possible, a crucifix, not simply a cross, ought to hang in each major room. It is not recommended that homes resemble religious goods stores with an overabundance of religious items lining the walls. The externals are an outward symbol of the inward

faith. Outward exaggerations may indicate an inward spiritual imbalance. If there is little in a Catholic home that distinguishes itself from a non-Catholic home, the faith of the parents would seem to be weak at best.

In today's world those things which are allowed or not allowed by parents go a long way in determining the home environment. It has been my experience over a number of years that home settings are quite different according to the priorities of the parents. It simply all centers around the faith of the parents. No one is expecting the home to resemble a convent or monastery on one hand, but neither should it be a disorganized, chaotic place where children lie around and

listen to rock music and play video games, wasting an untold number of hours during the course of the day or night.

The Catholic ideal is for the home to be a place of great supernatural faith, peace and love. All that takes place in it is either a reflection of these virtues or the opposing vices. Parents must be honest with themselves to be able to make an objective judgment as to the status of their own family. Corrections ought to be made accordingly by the father, first, then the mother.

The most important duty of the parents is to teach the Catholic Faith. How many spend the time teaching their children the most important things this side of heaven? How many encourage them to read books on the saints, the Sacraments or most importantly, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass? How many of them speak of and encourage religious vocations? I am convinced we have a problem with a shortage of vocations at least in great part because parents say little or nothing to their children. A vocation does not simply come out of thin air. It must be fostered over time and this can only be accomplished through the spoken and written word. How many of our parents pray for religious vocations in their family? As an extension of this thought do parents pray for priestly vocations among their

sons, or a vocation to the sisterhood among their daughters? If not, why not?

Conversations of this type ought to begin when children are young and still willing to listen to their mother or father. The purpose of these conversations is to plant seeds, not convince or coerce their children. We live in an age where parents are too afraid to gently present the ideas. This can easily be accomplished when parents are fulfilling their teaching responsibilities.

There are undoubtedly some parents who believe they are not qualified to teach the Faith to their children. Sadly, they would be correct. As an adult, are you not able to learn, or is it a case of not being interested enough to learn? It has been said by many that the best way to learn is to teach. So teach, and do it with great joy!

Put aside those things which you may selfishly want to do and spend time with your children. Parents with adult children know how quickly the time passes. Those formative years are the most important years of their lives. It is a mistake to pass off religious education to a lay teacher, sister or priest. Parents ARE the first educators. They will answer to God for their sins of commission and omission in this all-important area of religious education.

Underlining an earlier thought, the need for the LOVE of the Faith cannot be stressed too much. Too many Catholics believe that if you simply know the Faith, this is enough. The conclusion does not follow because it is built upon a false premise. A simple example will provide the necessary proof for this point. Many Catholics have in the past been well educated in the Faith, but because they did not have love of the Faith they fell away. If every Catholic loved the Faith in the manner in which he should, Catholics would not leave the Church. There would then exist a world which is mostly or entirely Catholic. Yes, dear parents, teach your children to love that which should be most dear to us all, i.e., the Holy Roman Catholic Faith.

How many parents understand the dangers of worldliness in the home? How many understand what is meant by worldliness? The first concern of this issue is the worldliness of the parents. It is quite difficult to teach children detachment from this world when the parents may be materialist themselves.

Understood correctly, no one is expecting family members to practice detachment from this world in the same manner as religious, although it can be accomplished by the truly spiritual parents. The ideal is to educate children in such

a way that they understand the things of this world, i.e., material goods, position, money, etc., are only a means to an end, not an end in themselves. Practically, parents should guide children in such a way so they are responsible adults, good citizens and holy Catholics. They should not allow the things of this world to be the reason for which they live, but merely tools by which to live reasonably and decently, always keeping in mind the goal of eternal salvation.

The responsibilities and duties of parents are grave. God provides them with the necessary grace to carry them out each day. The parents, especially the father, must understand the responsibility they have toward their children. The eternity of the children rests largely upon the parents. Parents must, therefore, keep this in mind and especially early in the marriage they should educate themselves as to how to be responsible, holy parents.

Pray to Our Lord, the Blessed Mother and St. Joseph for the grace and intercession to be good Catholics each day.





Franciscan Saints

NOVEMBER 8

BLESSED
JOHN DUNS SCOTUS
Confessor, First Order

John Duns Scotus was born in Scotland. His parents were poor peasants, and as a youth he was employed in keeping the sheep. One day while he was in the fields, he met two Franciscans who were traveling that way, and who were quite taken up with the childlike innocence of the boy. With the consent of his parents, the friars took the boy with them to educate him, and later, at his urgent request, they gave him the habit of their order.

At first John found it difficult to master philosophy, so he prayed fervently to God and to our Blessed Lady for the gifts of wisdom and knowledge. One day when he had fallen asleep under a tree in the convent garden, our Lady appeared to him and told him that his prayer would be heard. He then promised her to

devote himself entirely to her service and to preach and defend her honor everywhere. Scotus now made such progress in his studies that both his teachers and his fellow students marveled.

When he was only nineteen years of age, the University of Oxford conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Theology and gave him a professor's chair. Ere long thousands of students flocked to him from far and near and listened with great attention to his inspiring lectures. His zeal in defending the prerogatives of our Blessed Lady was such as to merit for him the title of Doctor of Mary.

About this time the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, which was not proclaimed a dogma until 1854, was openly

attacked by certain learned men. Pope Benedict X ordered a public discussion of the matter at the University of Paris. Duns Scotus was sent for from Oxford and appointed to defend the thesis. On the day set aside for the discussion, the opponents, two hundred in number, brought forth their objections.

Duns Scotus, in a truly prodigious feat of memory took them up in the order in which they had been stated and proved each to be without foundation. Then he brought forth many convincing proofs in favor of the prerogative in such subtle and decisive terms, that the entire assembly applauded. The university conferred on him the honorary title of the Subtle Doctor, and forbade the contrary doctrine to be taught there in the future, while every candidate for the doctor's degree had to take an oath to defend the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception.

Legend tells that our Blessed Lady herself had appeared to Scotus and foretold his victory. While he was preparing for the disputation, he stopped before a statue of our Lady on the way and prayed: "Dignare me laudare te, Virgo sacrata. Da mihi virtutem contra hostes tuos. --- Vouchsafe

that I may praise thee, O holy Virgin. Give me strength against thine enemies." And the stone image bowed its head in assent.

Not only with his learning did Scotus distinguish himself, but equally much with the holiness of his life. He observed the rule of the order strictly, and far exceeded its prescriptions as regards vigils, prayers, fasts, and other mortifications. His humility and obedience were remarkable. Once while he was taking a walk with some companions just outside the gates of Paris, a message from the general of the order was delivered to him, in which he was ordered to Cologne, to occupy a chair in the university there. He started out at once without even returning to the city, traveling to Cologne on foot and begging his way to his new appointment.

He was in Cologne but a short time when he died there on November 8, 1308. His remains still rest in the friary church. Duns Scotus bears the title of Venerable, and in the diocese of Nola he is venerated as Blessed. It is the ardent hope of all Franciscans that the universal Church will also soon call him by this title.

ON THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

1. Consider that, like a true son of St. Francis, Venerable Scotus was eager to honor the Mother of God, whom our holy Founder made the mother and patroness of his order. Scotus defended this exceptional privilege, which from the first moment of her conception left Mary free from original sin, whereas it has tainted the soul of all other human beings. Because of this privilege the serpent, whose head she was destined to crush, never had any power over Mary. It was a consolation to the Church, and to the Franciscan Order in particular, when this truth was declared a dogma on December 8, 1854. The Supreme Pontiff extended a great kindness to the Franciscan Order on that occasion. In all Franciscan churches the faithful can gain a plenary indulgence on this feast, and all Franciscan priests have the privilege of saying the Mass of the Immaculate Conception every Saturday throughout the year if no classic feast intervenes. — Let us celebrate this glorious privilege of Mary with great joy today and throughout the year!

2. Consider how we should honor the Immaculate Conception. We

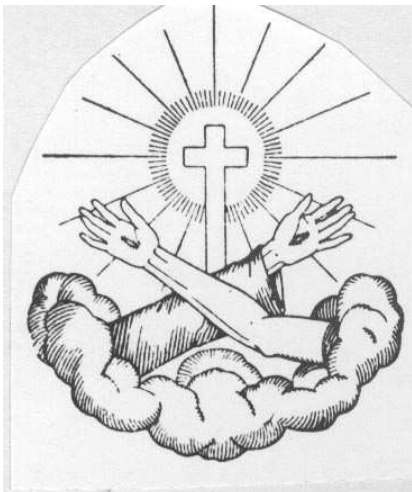
should render her homage and give thanks to God, who for the sake of the merits of Christ preserved her from every stain of sin. But we should also look up to her on account of the great care with which she kept her soul free from every personal sin, even though she was never assailed by any evil inclination. Since we are so filled with evil inclinations, should it not be a matter of particular concern to us to guard against sin? — What care have we used in the past?

3. Consider that the Immaculate Conception should be our special refuge in danger of sin. She who was always free from stain has no greater desire than that her children may preserve their purity of heart. And the prince of darkness, whose power was helpless against her at her very conception, fears her more than the opposition of all men and saints together. Fly to her in the first moments of temptation. Say devoutly the little indulgenced prayers: O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee! Sweet Heart of Mary, be my salvation! O my Queen, O my Mother, remember that I am thine own; keep me, guard me, as thy property and possession! — Whenever you have called on her with a sincere

heart, you may be sure that you have not lost the grace of God. If you faithfully take refuge with her, she will watch over you until you have been assured of a place near her in heaven.

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

O God, who by the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary didst prepare a worthy dwelling place for Thy Divine Son, we beseech Thee that, as foreseeing the death of this Thy Son, Thou didst preserve her from all stain, so Thou wouldst also permit us, purified upon her intercession, to come to Thee. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.



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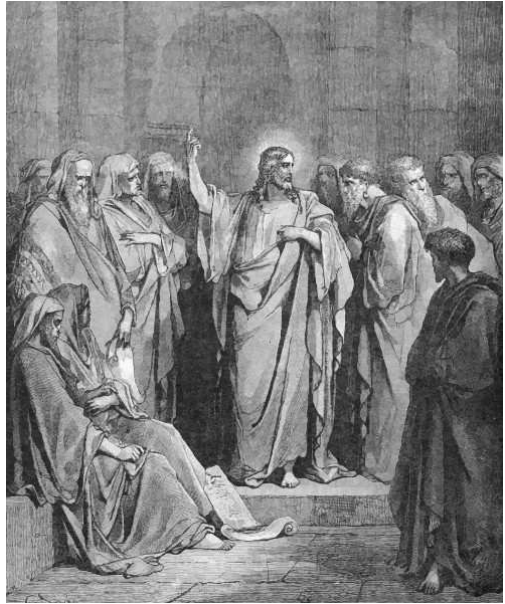
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Our Best Friend

TRANSLATED
BY BERNARD A.
HAUSMANN, S.J.

FROM THE GERMAN BY
CHRISTIAN PESCH, S.J.



CHAPTER XXVII

A Request of Our Best Friend

*According to Thy own heart
Thou hast done all these great
things to Thy servant (cf. 2 Kings
7:21).*

1. *The practice of the devotion to the Sacred Heart.* Our Divine Savior loves men with a love whose greatness and intimacy surpasses comprehension, as St. Paul tells us in his letter to the Ephesians (3:19). Many men return this love with indifference, ingratitude, contempt, and insult. It follows naturally, therefore, that everyone who wishes to be a friend of the Savior must make serious efforts to return

with love the love of his Divine Friend, and to atone for the injuries inflicted by others. Love and reparation are the substance, the soul of the devotion to the Sacred Heart. Veneration of the physical heart which is represented with the symbols of love and of the passion is a help to put before us the principal object, love, in a sensible form and to offer us a stimulus that is conformable to our nature. The heart, the wound, the flames, the crown of thorns, the cross, tell us of love and suffering, and remind us of the sweet duty of love and reparation.

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque writes: “My Divine Master

revealed to me that the great desire that animates Him, to be perfectly loved by men, suggested to Him the expedient of revealing to them His heart. . . . He wished by means of this devotion to give men an object and a means which was to urge them to love Him and to love Him efficaciously.” Our Savior demanded that the saint do all in her power to make amends for the ingratitude with which men return His love. Above all she was to attempt to spread everywhere the devotion to His Sacred Heart and, the better to accomplish this, to enlist the assistance of Father de la Colombiere. To further this twofold end, love and reparation, the Church has instituted the feast of the Sacred Heart. Pope Pius IX declared on August 23, 1856, that he extended the feast of the Sacred Heart to the universal Church “in order to give the faithful a new impetus to love Him who loved us and who has washed away our sins in His Blood.” Leo XIII designed as the object of this devotion atonement for the ingratitude of so many by the exercise of acts of love and piety.

But love of Our Savior and reparation for the injuries He

suffers at the hands of men are exercises of virtue which flourished centuries before the devotion to the Sacred Heart. Hence the question arises, and it must be answered satisfactorily: What are the exercises that are peculiar to this devotion insofar as it is a new devotion, one, that is, which has but recently been added to the list of the public devotions of the Church and is recent even as an approved and recommended private devotion? It is of importance to answer this question clearly, because, on the one hand, the exercises of this devotion appear so simple and easy that doubts may arise as to their efficacy in producing such wonderful spiritual fruits; and, on the other hand, some spiritual writers have described the practices proper to this devotion in such a manner that they appeared suitable only for saints with the result that beginners in the spiritual life were afraid to adopt them. Both views are correct: the devotion to the Sacred Heart is something exceedingly simple, but its perfect practice involves the highest perfection. The reason for this must be sought in the nature of the love of God. This virtue is at one and the same

time a necessary means of our progress and the highest aim toward which we can tend. Without love of God, a truly virtuous life is impossible. St. Paul says: "If I spoke with the tongues of angels, if I should have all faith so that I could remove mountains, if I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profits me nothing" (cf. 1 Cor. 13:1 ff.). Love is, therefore, the necessary prerequisite for every life deserving of heaven, even for the first beginnings of such a life. Nevertheless, the same Apostle tells us that charity is the greatest treasure we can strive after; that it is greater than all else (cf. 1 Cor. 13:13). Charity is the bond of perfection (cf. Col. 3:14). Every exercise of the love of God produces an increase of love, and every increase of love prompts to new exercises of love. The same is true of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, which, after all, is but a special practice of love for Our Savior. Even in its most elementary form, suited to meet the requirements of the least proficient, it is love for Our Savior and increases love for Him; this increased love effects in all who persevere

greater devotion, and this greater devotion, in turn, increases love; and thus, all those who perseveringly cultivate this devotion to the Sacred Heart advance toward perfection.

What are the exercises of devotion which should, according to the wish of Our Savior, be common to all those who honor His Sacred Heart, beginners and proficient alike? Let us begin with externals. St. Margaret Mary tells us that Christ showed her His Sacred Heart enveloped in flames, with the wound which had opened it on the cross visible, with a crown of thorns surrounding it, and with a cross surmounting it. Our Savior explained to her that these were the symbols of His love and of the sufferings He had endured through love; that He desired that the picture of this heart should be exposed for public veneration in order to move the hard hearts of men; that He was prepared to lavish His choicest blessings on all those who should comply with His request. It is Our Savior's wish, therefore, that this picture of His Sacred Heart should be exposed publicly and not merely kept in a book or hidden away in a drawer. It need not be an

expensive painting. The first picture of the Sacred Heart was a simple sketch made by St. Margaret Mary. Excellent pictures can be had today for a modest sum. But the picture is not to be used as a decoration; it is to be exposed for veneration. Its object is to remind us of the love and sufferings of Our Savior; to move us to love Him; to prompt us to offer Him our efforts and our works; to encourage us to ask Him for His assistance. Where it can easily be done, we ought every morning or evening to say a prayer in common before the picture.

The second request of Our Savior, and this one is the more important, was that the first Friday after the octave of the feast of Corpus Christi be celebrated as a feast in honor of His Divine Heart; that the faithful should receive Holy Communion on that day in His honor and should make reparation by ardent and reverent prayer for all the insults which He receives while exposed in the Blessed Sacrament on our altars. The Church has established this feast throughout the world, and it is everywhere celebrated by special devotions of reparation. Because many, for various reasons, cannot

attend these devotions on the day of the feast, the solemnity and the indulgences have, in some places, been transferred to the following Sunday. One, therefore, who receives Holy Communion on the prescribed day in the proper manner and with a right intention, and fervently recites some prayers of reparation, has complied with the essential request of Our Lord in regard to the devotion to His Sacred Heart.



The third request of Our Savior is contained in the promise that He will bestow extraordinary graces on all those who will receive Holy Communion on the first Friday of nine successive months in honor of His Divine Heart. We have this promise on the authority of St. Margaret Mary. The custom of receiving Holy Communion every first Friday or, if that be impossible, on the succeeding Sunday, has its origin in a counsel which

Christ gave the saint for her personal advancement.

Fervent clients of the Sacred Heart have introduced other good works and pious practices which have been approved and recommended by the Church; but we are at present striving to determine what practices our Savior Himself has designated for all those who would honor His Divine Heart. We have seen that they are three in number: first, the celebration of the feast of the Sacred Heart in conformity with His instructions; second, the devotion of the first Fridays; third, veneration of the picture of the Sacred Heart. All the great promises which our Savior has made to those who honor His Sacred Heart are therefore attached to these three exercises.

2. Why is the practice of this devotion so meritorious? It might appear at first that the exercises enumerated are not at all very special and do not excel those of many another devotion. Now, it is certain that our Savior, who wishes that this devotion to His Sacred Heart be practiced by people in all walks and of all conditions of life, would not prescribe something which cannot easily be done by

all those who are of good will. Hence, He could not prescribe works which would presuppose a high degree of perfection. For this reason the devotion to the Sacred Heart prescribes nothing extraordinary.

Meanwhile we must remember that the exercises prescribed by Our Lord do not consist in mere external observances, but must be practiced seriously and in accordance with the spirit of the devotion to His Sacred Heart. A reception of Holy Communion which does not differ from the customary reception of ordinary days is not sufficient, nor the mere reading or recital of an act of reparation and consecration to the Sacred Heart without penetrating to the sense and purpose of the prayer. Our Savior demands that we perform these exercises animated by the desire to return as best we can the love of His Divine Heart, and that filled with grief we strive to atone for all the sins and irreverences of which we ourselves as well as others have been guilty. It was not without purpose that Our Savior in His revelations showed His Heart surrounded with the symbols of love and sufferings. The burning Heart symbolizes the

growing, grace-giving love of Christ; the crown of thorns and the cross, His suffering, self-sacrificing love; the wound in His Heart, His love as it exhausts and consumes itself in death. Christ offers us these symbols of His love in order to excite in us the corresponding sentiments and resolutions: for love, a return of love; for His sufferings, sympathy; for the sacrifice of His life, fidelity unto death. For it is characteristic of the devotion to the Sacred Heart that we are to honor the love and sufferings of Our Savior under the symbols of His Heart pierced with a lance and wounded by ridicule and torture.

Consequently, nothing is farther removed from the spirit of this devotion than external formalism. The heart is a symbol of the interior life of the soul, where external events first become man's spiritual possession; this life it is which gives moral worth to all man's external acts. Any act in which the heart has no part has only material value; personal value is found only in those acts which come from the heart and go to the heart. God rebuked the Israelites, saying: "This people

draw near Me with their mouth, and with their lips glorify Me, but their heart is far from Me" (Isa. 29:13). Our Savior reproached the Pharisees in similar language (cf. Mt. 15:8), because their teaching consisted of hairsplitting subtleties and their piety in external formalism. To save us from such worthless lip service and religious hypocrisy, Christ offers us His heart and asks us to penetrate into the interior life of love and suffering of this heart and to mold the sentiments of our hearts on those of His. This must be our attitude toward the celebration of the feast of the Sacred Heart, toward the devotions of reparation held in our churches on the first Friday of every month, toward the veneration of the picture of the Sacred Heart. All should help and encourage us to understand better the Soul life of Our Savior, to participate intimately and thoughtfully in this most precious and glorious life as far as with the grace of God we are able. To understand our Savior we need neither great learning nor many profound thoughts. A humble and contrite heart, a heart that hungers and thirsts for knowledge and love of Him, will open the door into His

Heart, and make the devotion to His Sacred Heart a source of the richest blessings for us.

3. Hence we see how unfounded are the objections which have been raised against this devotion. It is remarkable that a devotion which is so essentially an interior devotion should have been calumniated on the ground that by it men venerated a dead heart separated from the Body and the divinity of Christ, as though its object were something purely material. As a matter of fact, the devotion to the Sacred Heart is not a devotion to the Heart of Jesus, insofar as His Heart is only an integral part of His Body, or may be conceived as not animated by the Soul or united hypostatically to the Divinity. We rather honor the living Heart inseparably united to the Person of the Son of God and not the Heart in the dead Body of Christ in the tomb, which, however, would be worthy of honor. In the devotion to the Sacred Heart, therefore, we honor first, the living Heart of Christ and secondly, His physical Heart as a symbol of the higher life of His Soul, more especially of His life of love and sacrifice. To guard

against all misapprehension, the Apostolic See has decided that the picture representing only the heart of Christ and not also His Person may not be exposed for public veneration on our altars. Devotion to the Sacred Heart, then, is veneration for the Person of Our Savior, of His love for men, a love symbolized by His physical Heart. Therefore, no objection is less to the point than that of externalism.

No less undeserved is that other objection which has at times been raised against this devotion on the ground that it is a devotion of tender emotions which possibly might be suited for sensitive souls, but hardly for men. Our Lord's request that we honor His Sacred Heart is directed to all, therefore, also to men. Or is it perhaps a man's privilege and prerogative to spend himself wholly in external affairs and to have no time for the cultivation of his soul, his heart, his sentiments? Christ surely is a Man who deserves the admiration and enthusiasm of men. Any man who wants to know manhood in its highest perfection must study the life of Christ. There he will find love devoid of all self-seeking, devotion to the

interests of the individual and of the many, self-sacrifice, loyalty, and steadfastness unto death. Are these qualities that do not enhance a man? Our Heavenly Father addressed these words to men also: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye Him" (Mt. 17:5). To know Jesus, not merely the external facts of His life, but the sentiments which animated Him, and to conform our lives to these sentiments, is not a matter which may be

relinquished in favor of women, religious, and priests, but is something which is necessary for anyone who wishes to deserve the name of Christian. In every Christian, Christ is to be formed anew (cf. Gal. 4:19). For all those whom God has predestined for the kingdom of His Son, He also predestined to be made conformable to the image of His Son (cf. Rom. 8:29). This is what the devotion to the Sacred Heart is to effect in us.

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