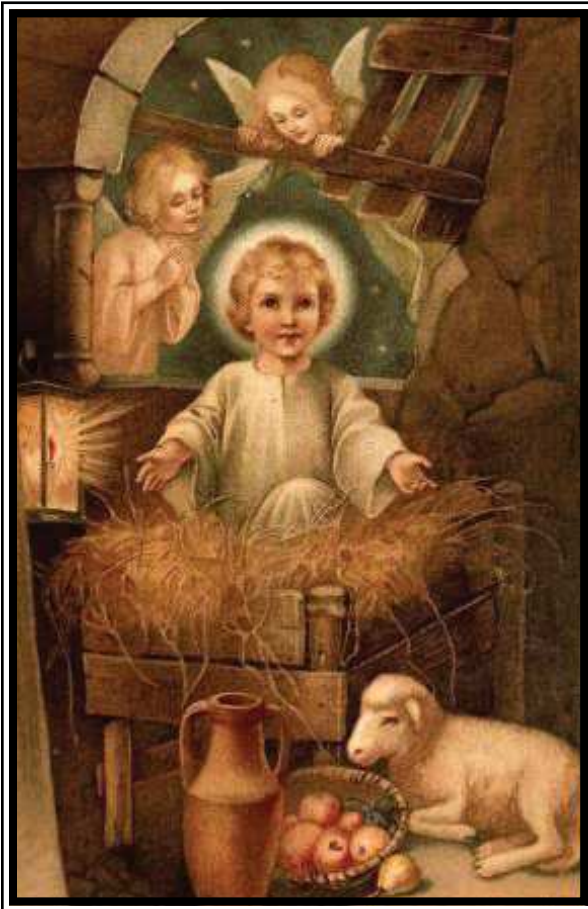


# THE SERAPH

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**The Most Holy Name of Jesus**

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## **EDITORIAL**

### **The Holy Name of Jesus**

According to Abbot Gueranger (The Liturgical Year, Vol. 3), St Bernardine of Sienna (15<sup>th</sup> Century) was the first promoter of the Feast of the Holy Name. “This holy man [St. Bernardine] established the practice of representing the Holy Name of Jesus surrounded with rays, and formed into a monogram of its three first letters, IHS.<sup>1</sup> The custom spread rapidly through Italy, and was zealously propagated by the great St. John of Capestrano, who like St. Bernardine of Sienna, was of the Order of Friars Minors. The Holy See gave its formal approbation to this manner of honoring the Name of Our Savior, and in the early part of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Pope Clement the Sixth, after long entreaties,

<sup>1</sup> The Name was, anciently, often written Ihesus; hence, in its contracted form, the letter H would be given: the E following was virtually included in the aspirate!

granted to the whole Franciscan Order the privilege of keeping a special Feast in honor of the Most Holy Name of Jesus.

“Rome extended the same favor to various Churches; and, at length, the Feast was inserted in the universal Calendar. It was in the year 1721, at the request of Charles the Sixth, Emperor of Germany, that Pope Innocent the Twelfth decreed that the Feast of the Most Holy Name of Jesus should be kept throughout the whole Church; he also chose the Second Sunday after the Epiphany as the day.”

In order to help us fully appreciate the power of the Holy Name, we have reproduced below, the “Fifteenth Sermon on the Canticle of Canticles” by St. Bernard.

The Name of Jesus is Light, and Food, and Medicine. It is Light, when It is preached to us; It is Food, when we think upon It; It is the Medicine that soothes our pains when we

invoke It. Let us say a word on each of these. Tell me, whence came there, into the whole world, so bright and sudden a light, if not from the preaching of the Name of Jesus? Was it not by the light of this Name that God called us unto His admirable Light? Wherewith being enlightened,

and in this light, seeing the Light, we take these words of Paul as truly addressed to ourselves: 'Heretofore you were darkness; but now, light in the Lord' (Eph. 5. 8)

Nor is the Name of Jesus Light only; It is also Food. Art thou not strengthened, as often as thou thinkest of this Name? What is there that so feeds the mind of him that meditates upon this Name? What is there that so restores the wearied faculties, strengthens virtue, gives vigor to good and holy habits, and fosters chastity? Every food of the soul is dry, that is not steeped in this unction; it is insipid, if it be not seasoned with this salt.

If thou write, I relish not thy writing, unless I read there the Name of Jesus. If thou teach me, or converse with me, I



relish not thy worlds, unless I hear thee say the Name of Jesus. Jesus is honey to the mouth, and music to the ear, and gladness to the heart.

It is also Medicine. Is anyone among you sad? Let but Jesus come into his heart, and the mouth echo Him, saying *Jesus!* And lo! The light of that Name disperses every cloud, and brings sunshine back again. Have any of you committed sin? And is despair driving you into the snare of death? Invoke the Name of Life, and life will come back to the soul. Was there ever a man, that hearing this saving Name could keep up that common fault of hardness of heart, or drowsiness of sluggishness, or rancor of soul, or languor of sloth? If anyone, perchance, felt that the fountain of his tears was dry, did it not gush forth

more plentifully than ever, and flow more sweetly than ever, as soon as he invoked the Name of Jesus? If any of us were ever in danger and our heart's beat with fear, did not this Name of power bring us confidence and courage the moment we pronounced It? When we were tossed to and fro by perplexing doubts, did not the evidence of what was right burst on us as we called upon the Name of Light? When we were discouraged, and well nigh crushed, by adversity, did not our heart take courage when our tongue uttered the Name of help? All this is most true; for all these miseries are the sicknesses and fainting of our souls and the Name of Jesus is our Medicine.

But, let us see how all this comes to pass. 'Call upon me in the day of trouble, says the Lord; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.' (Ps 44. 15.) There is nothing which so restrains the impulse of anger, calms the swelling of pride, heals the wound of envy, represses the insatiability of luxury, smothers the flame of lust, quenches the thirst of

avarice, and dispels the fever of uncleanness – as the Name of Jesus. For when I pronounce this Name, I bring before my mind the Man, who, by excellence, is meek and humble of heart, benign, sober, chaste, merciful, and filled with everything that is good and holy, nay, Who is the very God Almighty – Whose example heals me, and Whose assistance strengthens me. I say all this, when I say Jesus. Here have I my Model, for He is Man; and my Help, for He is God; the One provides me with precious drugs, the Other gives them efficacy; and from the Two I make a potion such as no physician knows how to make.

Here is the electuary [*a medicine composed of drugs mixed with honey or syrup to form a paste.*], my soul, hid in the casket of this Name of Jesus; believe me, it is wholesome, and good for every ailment thou canst possibly have. Ever have it with thee, in thy bosom and in thy hand; so that all thy affections and actions may be directed to Jesus.”

# Sister Agnes' Favorites

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## THE SOUL WHEREIN GOD DWELLS (Angelus Silesius [Johann Scheffler] 1624-1677)

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The soul wherein God dwells,  
What church could holier be?  
Becomes a walking-tent  
Of heavenly majesty.  
How far from here to heaven?  
Not very far, my friend,  
A single, hearty step  
Will all the journey end.  
Though Christ a thousand times  
In Bethlehem be born,  
If He's not born in thee,  
Thy soul is still forlorn.  
The cross on Golgotha  
Will never save thy soul:  
The cross in thine own heart  
Alone can make thee whole.  
Hold thou – where runnest thou?

Know heaven is in thee –  
Seek'st thou for God elsewhere,  
His face thou'lt never see.  
Oh, would thy heart but be  
A manger for His birth;  
God would once more become  
A child upon the earth.  
Go out, God will go in;  
Die thou – and let Him live;  
Be not – and He will be;  
Wait, and He'll all things give.  
O shame, a silk-worm works  
And spins till it can fly;  
And thou, my soul, wilt still  
On thine old earth-clod lie!

*Anonymous Translation from the German*



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# Spiritual “Welfare”

Bishop Giles OFM



“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.” (Sermon on the Mount, St. Matthew, chapter 5)

Who are the “poor in spirit?” To be *poor in spirit* is not opposed to spiritual richness. The entire *Sermon on the Mount* is inculcating the means by which we are to amass spiritual wealth that we may enjoy for all eternity in Heaven.

St. Augustine instructs us as follows: “Who has not heard the haughty spoken of as ‘inflated,’ blown up, as it were, with wind? So, too, the expression of the Apostle: *Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.* (Phil. 4, 17) For this reason *the poor in spirit*

are rightly understood here as the humble and those who fear God, that is, those who do not have an inflated spirit.”

We must seek the riches of the spirit, but at the same time remain humble. There was nothing more detestable to Our Lord than the spiritual pride of the Jews. The Jews, and more precisely, the Pharisees, practiced strictness in their observance of the Law of God, and they were very proud of themselves and often despised those who did not observe the letter of the Law as they themselves did. With the instructions of Jesus Christ, we now should understand that all the good that is in us, or that

we do, are the works of God's grace in us. The most that we can attribute to ourselves is our cooperating in allowing God's grace to become fruitful in ourselves. That is, we did not put too many obstacles in His way.

There are however not a lot of observable people that are "poor in spirit," but there are obviously many that are spiritually poor, that is, they are lacking in grace and virtue. In this paucity of grace and virtue, the meaning of the very words of Jesus Christ are often twisted and turned, in such a way, as to give them irrational and contradictory interpretations.

Many have understood material poverty to be that which is blessed by God. While it is true that Jesus holds the materially poor people of this earth near and dear to His Heart; He does not make material poverty a virtue to be sought after by the majority of people. Many years ago the United States of America declared a "War on Poverty," with the express goal to reduce or eliminate poverty. It was an unofficial legislation announced by President Lyndon B. Johnson in a State of the Union address on January 8, 1964.

Material poverty is an evil, and it is a worthwhile pursuit to aid and assist the poor; but it is not something that can ever be eliminated. We have Our Lord's own words as proof of this: "The poor you will always have with you..." (St. Matthew 26, 11) There is never going to be material or physical equality, much less a financial equality among all men. God has deliberately established an inequality in this world. It seems that this inequality is designed to bring us together, to make us one. Jesus prayed for His disciples, and for us all: "Father, I pray that they may be one, as We are One." (St. John 17, 21)

Everyone, no matter how materially poor he may be, has something to give for the betterment of his fellow men. The wealthy may help the less wealthy; and the poor may help the wealthier. Too often, we think only of giving financial assistance. This is easy and convenient for many because we do not have to become involved in the lives (problems) of others. Sadly, however, this financial assistance creates a cycle and perpetuates the problem. Once the financial aid is gone, then the poor are back to where



they started. In the short term financial aid is good, but over the long term it tends towards abuse and corruption. Taking from the rich and giving to the poor may sound good, but it is not. The seventh commandment: “Thou shall not steal” makes no exceptions. It does not matter how rich a person may be, we are never permitted to steal from him.

True charity (love) of our neighbor, is not in “taking care of him,” or in giving him access to a steady stream of financial assistance; but rather in helping him to take care of himself. This may mean providing him with dignified employment. Remember the old saying: “Give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Teach a man to fish and he feeds himself for a lifetime.” The wealthy should provide the capital and the poor should supply the labor and in this the capitalist may maintain and even moderately increase his wealth; and the poor are brought out of their poverty and gain not only self-worth, but even dignity.

Sadly, the society today tells us that labor is an evil to be avoided. Consequently, we find that our youth are encouraged to seek “positions” rather than

“jobs.” Even those who may be classified as “poor” will often refuse to work, because they think that this is demeaning or degrading to them. The Catholic Faith teaches us that all honest labor is good and worthy. St. Joseph was a humble carpenter, and this is the trade that he passed on to Jesus. This negative attitude towards labor has often created conflict between capital and labor. There is not supposed to be war here, but rather cooperation. Each needs the other. The capitalist needs the laborer and should respect and treat him well; the laborer needs the capitalist and should respect and treat him properly. The capitalist should provide the laborer with a living wage that is sufficient to supply the necessities of life for himself and his family; the laborer should provide the capitalist with fair and honest labor. Too often, we see that the employee is constantly striving to be paid more and to do less; and the employer is constantly striving to get more and pay less. Men are divided and in conflict with one another, which is just the opposite of what God desires.

We often attempt to place the burden of aiding our fellow

men upon the government or some organization. It is the duty of government to protect, regulate, guide, and assist its citizens. However, the government should not just give handouts that it has taken from other citizens. This is unjust and as we mentioned above ultimately un-helpful; and often destructive of personal dignity. The government's responsibility would be better served in providing gainful employment, or better yet, promoting individuals or companies so that they may provide just and gainful employment for others.

Welfare doled out from the government is impersonal, bureaucratic; it is therefore not real charity (love); and it often causes an even greater disorder, as those who need the greatest help often get little or none, and those who need the least aid often learn how to manipulate the system and get the most. True charity is practiced by individual men and not by governments. True charity does not attempt to take advantage of others; but rather seeks to help them help themselves. True charity is in opening up our hearts and homes more so than our wallets. When we see our neighbor is hungry

we should give him food, when we see him without shelter we should offer him some, when we see him imprisoned we should visit him.... We can extend these corporal works of mercy to include: when we see our neighbor unemployed, we should employ him, or help him to find gainful employment.

The United States was once a center of invention, development, and production. There were opportunities for anyone who was willing to work. We have allowed so much of the richness that the previous generations have left for us make us grow lax and soft. We have, all too often, developed an attitude of entitlement. The incentive to work has been destroyed in many souls. A welfare check is often just barely enough to subsist upon, but it requires no effort and is often more than some employers are willing to pay. It is therefore more convenient to not work. Employers are likewise in a bind because they are forced to pay higher and higher taxes to support the welfare state, so they cannot afford to pay their own workers a just wage. This created poverty leads to idleness; and this idleness leads to substance abuse and crime; which further

demoralizes and perpetuates the evil.

With the destruction of the incentive and motive of working, we see the great falling away. The material attitudes of life bleed over into the spiritual life. “Christianity” has developed an entitlement attitude – as if, we have a right to the graces of God; all the while completely forgetting that the word “grace” implies unmerited gift. The concept of self-sacrifice and penance has become foreign words to the majority who call themselves “Christian.” Charity is seen as “helping the poor.” Few, understand that the word “charity” is the same as “love.” Financially aiding the poor is one manifestation of love; but it often is done not out of love for our neighbors; but rather to ease our consciences. In this manner, a monetary donation, allows us to hold on to the title of “good” “Christians,” but it is far from truly loving our neighbors as ourselves.

There is a lot of material “charity,” but not a lot of true love for one another. Consequently there is much “religiosity,” but not a lot of true Religion. Many talk of Faith, but there are considerably fewer who practice Faith. To

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many, religion is all about feeling good about oneself, even when there is nothing good to feel good about. The many modern “main-line” churches all act as welfare governments – creating a laxity of entitlement and laziness that leads not to God, but to greater spiritual misery and suffering. It looks like they are helping, just as welfare often looks like it is helping; but the reality is that it does more harm than good. Again, we see the sense of entitlement on the spiritual side. What is needed is a profound sense of our unworthiness and instilling of a true sense of humility; and a burning desire to work for our salvation as St. Paul instructs us: “Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.” (Phil. 2, 12) With true humility, we develop the true spirit of poverty, and then we become worthy of Christ’s promise of obtaining the Kingdom of Heaven.



# Franciscans and the Protestant Revolution In England

Francis Borgia Steck, O.F.M.

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## PART SECOND

### UNDER THE STUARTS 1603-1649

#### CHAPTER III

#### FR. CHRISTOPHER COLMAN, O. F. M.

*Of Catholic parentage — Student at the Jesuit College in Douai — Returns to England — The Catholic gentleman — Joins the Franciscans in Douai — Ordained priest — Summoned to England — Arrested and released — Missionary labors — The persecution revived — Fr. Christopher one of the first to be seized — In Newgate — Condemned to death — Execution delayed and prevented by the war — Sufferings and death in prison.*

We have seen how, despite the unsettled times, the English Franciscans united once more into a province and eagerly cast in their lot with the Jesuits and the secular clergy on the missions. Neither the stress of present hardships nor the forebodings of another war on the Church could unman these champions of the Cross. Like their fellow friars a century



before, they were ready to suffer all for the restoration of Christ's kingdom in unhappy England. Their zeal for the furtherance and preservation of the faith brought them in touch with all classes of society. Though their forces were scant, yet it was owing in no small measure to their ever widening activity and influence that the anti-Catholic hatred of the Puritans at last burst forth into an all-consuming flame. Hence, when the news of the martyrdom of the well-known and much-esteemed Tertiary

priest Venerable William Ward reached the friars, they clearly saw what was in store for them and by redoubled prayers and penances prepared themselves for the inevitable conflict. Their provincial at the time was Fr. George Perrot, a man whom the death records of the province commemorate as “a lover of the brethren.”<sup>1</sup> He, too, was aware of the calamity that would soon befall the youthful province; and we may imagine how, like another John Forest, he sounded the alarm among his devoted subjects, exhorting them to remain loyal and steadfast in the hour of trial.

History tells us with what courage the persecuted friars faced the enemy. Only after the executioner’s knife had done its deadly work, did these fearless shepherds of souls cease to labor for the well-being of their beloved flock. Between October, 1642, and August, 1646, four members of the province mounted the scaffold and died for the faith, while one friar at last succumbed to the hardships of prison life.<sup>2</sup> Though small in

1 Thaddeus, *The Franciscans in England*, p. 286.

2 For the life and martyrdom of these five friars, that will engage our attention in the subsequent chapters, our chief source of information is the *Certamen Seraphicum*,

itself, this number must appear considerable, if one remembers that at the time hardly more than thirty Franciscans were engaged on the missions in England, and that before the year 1649, in all only twenty-one Catholics underwent public martyrdom for the faith.<sup>3</sup>

Among the first victims of Puritan animosity and intolerance toward the Church of Rome was Fr. Christopher Colman.<sup>4</sup> He descended from an ancient and prominent Catholic family whose ancestral estate lay at Cannock in Staffordshire.<sup>5</sup> The parents of the future Franciscan friar, whose baptismal name was Walter, remained true to the faith of their forefathers and taught their son from early youth to

written and published in 1649 by their confrere and contemporary, Fr. Angelus Mason.

3 This number is based on Spillmann’s *Katholikenverfolgung in England*, Part IV, pp. 235-320. Of these twenty-one martyrs, nine were secular priests, three Benedictines, four Jesuits, four Franciscans and one a layman.

4 Thaddeus has embellished the *Franciscan Biographies* with an account of this friar, from which we have freely drawn for the present sketch.

5 Thaddeus supposes his grandfather to have been the Walter Colman whom the records of the royal visitation, in 1583, represent as having forfeited the title of armiger and the right to armorial bearings, probably because he rejected the spiritual supremacy of Queen Elizabeth.

value virtue higher than worldly wealth and distinction. Anxious to give him a thoroughly Catholic education, they defied the penal laws and sent him to the English College at Douai. Walter must have been about fifteen years of age when he accompanied F. William Eaton (Eiton), a priest, and two students to the continent. On June 20, 1585, he entered the college and registered, as was customary at the time, under the assumed name of Combe.<sup>6</sup> The ensuing year, however, on November 28, he was called home, perhaps, as Thaddeus suggests, on account of the illness or death of his mother. In 1593, his father entered upon a second marriage. Thereupon, Walter returned to the college at Douai.

After completing his studies, Walter went back to England, probably because his father being advanced in years wished him, as the eldest of his sons, to assume charge of the family estate. Wealth and social standing did not hinder him from closely following the dictates of his faith and conscience. Hence, he soon learned from experience what

difficulties loyal Catholics had to contend with in the exercise of their religion. This knowledge in turn strengthened or, at least, engendered in his heart the desire to devote himself entirely to the service of the Church by renouncing worldly pleasures and promises for the nobler but wearier life of a missionary priest. Apparently, the only obstacle that as yet prevented him from taking this step was a loving and dutiful regard for his aged father.<sup>7</sup> About 1620, however, his father passed to a better life. Now Walter was free to answer what he believed to be a call from above.

It is very probable that during his sojourn in Flanders, Walter heard it told how Edmund Gennings had laid down his life for the faith and how John, the martyr's brother, had thereby been converted to Catholicism. Like him, these two brothers were natives of Staffordshire, a circumstance that must have roused his interest all the more, especially when he learned that John Gennings had become a priest and Franciscan and had undertaken the restoration

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<sup>6</sup> Presumably an abbreviation of Comberford, the name of his mother. See the *Douai Diaries*, pp. 206, 213.

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<sup>7</sup> It is reported that a Walter Colman, presumably the martyr's father, was still living in 1617.

of his Order in England. It was, therefore, natural that he should decide to proceed to Douai and seek admission into the newly founded Franciscan friary. Accordingly, he settled his temporal affairs and about the year 1625<sup>8</sup> left England to execute his design. We can imagine the joy and gratification of Fr. John Gennings, when he was informed by Fr. Francis Davenport, then superior of the friary at Douai, that Walter Colman had arrived and desired to join the Franciscan Order. Needless to say, he readily granted the necessary faculties for his reception, and in due time the superior clothed the worthy postulant with the habit of St. Francis and bestowed on him the name of Christopher of St. Clare.

Despite the fact that he was already over fifty years of age and a man of learning, refinement, and experience, he vied with

the youngest member of the community in ready submission to his superiors. For him the year of novitiate was in very deed a time of probation. Acts of penance and mortification were not wanting to prove his constancy and sincerity. But nothing could be too humiliating for him who had come to serve God and not himself. During his novitiate, an incident occurred that shows how he fostered the spirit of childlike obedience and heroic penance. Endowed by nature with a taste and talent for poetry, he had written for his own edification a number of verses on death. Hearing of this, the novice master told him one day to get the poem and to read it to the community during recreation. Gladly the novice obeyed. Hardly had he finished reading the poem, when he was told to throw it into the fire. That such a demand was mortifying for a man of his age and attainments goes without saying. But, to the edification of the assembled brethren, he obeyed without the least sign of reluctance or discontent. After his novitiate, he spent the next few years in prayer and study. At last, in 1633 (or 1634), he was raised to the priesthood, whereupon Fr.

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8 In support of this date, Thaddeus argues that Mason in his *Certamen Seraphicum*. “seems to use the term *Preses* purposely instead of *Guardian*. Father Bonaventure Jackson was *Guardian* at Douai, in 1624; but, as he was wanted on the English Missions, Father Davenport was appointed to succeed him, apparently with the title of *Preses*, until the year 1626, when, at the meeting of the Officials of the Province, he was made *Guardian*.”

John Gennings summoned him to the missions in England. He had hardly set foot on English soil, when government spies suspecting his character placed him under arrest. Later, on searching him, they found that below the secular dress he wore a queer sort of shirt.

“What kind of man is this,” they exclaimed, “who travels in such clothes?”

How differently the holy man would have fared, had his enemies known that the object of the uncivil remark was the tunic of a Franciscan friar. But his ready wit was equal to the emergency.

“Are you not ashamed,” he fell in with seeming indignation, “thus to display the poverty and distress of a gentleman who has spent all his money in traveling, and now returns poor to his native land?”

This bold rejoinder, however, did not allay the suspicion of his enemies. They would, at least, satisfy themselves as to the religious convictions of the prisoner and demanded that he take the oath of allegiance.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> This oath, enacted with other penal laws in 1606 after the Gunpowder Plot, had

Now, of course, there was no alternative. With equal intrepidity he declared that he was a Catholic and would never swear the tendered oath; whereupon he was led off to prison.

This time, it seems, the confinement of Fr. Christopher was of short duration. The intolerant Puritans were not as yet in full control of affairs. The imprisoned friar found means to communicate with former friends, who readily used their wealth and influence in his behalf. On obtaining his liberty, he immediately proceeded on his journey to London, where he exercised the functions of his sacred ministry. As during the first years of his religious life, so now the earnest truths about death formed the constant topic of his meditations. After his novitiate, he rewrote with the consent of his superiors the poem he had been told to consign to the flames. On the mission, this child of his pensive muse must have still been very dear to him;

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to be taken by all who refused to swear that they were not Catholics. In 1625, the king was forced by the House of Commons to reinforce the oath. It had been condemned by a papal brief as partly derogatory to the rights of the Holy See. Hence, Catholics were bound in conscience to reject it.



for, despite the cares of his sacred calling, he completed the poem and published it. It is entitled *Death's Duel* and is dedicated to the Queen of England, Maria Henrietta. "In this poem," Mason remarks, "he teaches all men the way and manner of dying well; he invites all to meditate earnestly on death; graphically he describes the vanity of this deceitful world and with no little elegance of style vividly depicts how vice must be shunned and virtue practiced."<sup>10</sup>

After laboring a number of years in England, Fr. Christopher yearned for the more retired and regular life of the convent, and obtained leave to return for a time to Douai. Here, apart from the bustle of the world, he divided his time between prayer and study. When free from the religious exercises of the community, he worked at a poem on the controversies of the times and translated the life of St. Angela Merici into English. Apparently, he tarried at Douai only a year or so, and then refreshed in soul and body again departed for the missions. "His wit and brilliant talents," says Hope, "his placid and cheerful temper, and the polished

manners which he had acquired in his social position in the world, made him generally popular, and helped on his missionary work."<sup>11</sup> For a long time, we are told, even professional priest catchers failed to detect the real character of the handsome and well-dressed gentleman whom every now and then they chanced to meet on the streets of the metropolis.

For several years, Fr. Christopher braved the perils that beset his holy profession. The Puritan faction had gradually become more and more aggressive until, in the spring of 1641, the Commons compelled Charles to decree a rigorous enforcement of the penal laws against Catholics. Among the first priests apprehended and imprisoned was Fr. Christopher. After repeated hearings before various magistrates, the zealous friar together with five secular priests and two Benedictines was placed, on December 8 of the same year, at the bar of the Old Bailey. Here, a certain Wadsworth, an apostate Catholic, testified on oath that he knew Fr. Christopher to be a Franciscan and priest, having

<sup>10</sup> Mason, p. 218.

<sup>11</sup> Hope, *Franciscan Martyrs In England*, p. 126.

seen him clad with the habit of the Franciscans in their friary at Douai. On this evidence, the judge declared the accused guilty of treason and condemned him to be hanged, drawn, and quartered on the following Monday. Thereupon the aged friar and his six<sup>12</sup> companions were brought back to Newgate.

During the remainder of the week, while they lay in prison preparing themselves for the final conflict, the French ambassador made efforts for their release. Accordingly, the king reprieved the sentence of the court and asked the advice of both houses of parliament regarding a pardon for the condemned priests, suggesting that it might quiet the rising rebellion in Ireland. The Puritan Commons proved obstinate and demanded that at least four of the priests, among them Fr. Christopher, be dealt with according to the law. Then, after much debating, both houses voted the death of all six,<sup>13</sup> and in the end the king found it expedient to yield. "If you think the execution of these persons," his message read, "so very necessary to the great and pious work of reformation, we refer it

12 One of their number had been acquitted, probably for lack of evidence.

13 One of the condemned priests had already died.

wholly to you, declaring hereby, that upon such your resolution signified to the ministers of justice, our warrant for their reprieve is determined, and the law to have its course." In this way, the weak monarch shook the responsibility from his own shoulders and left the innocent victims of his temporizing policy to the mercy of the Puritans. As yet, however, these were not so well established in power as to proceed without royal sanction. Hence, it seems, the affair was dropped.<sup>14</sup> Soon, also, the Civil War broke out, during which the six priests were either forgotten or purposely left in their dismal dungeon to die a more terrible death by disease and starvation.

Well-nigh intolerable must have been the lot of Fr. Christopher, considering his age and character as well as the fearful conditions prevailing in Newgate in those days. Chained down in a gloomy, dank, and fetid dungeon, surrounded by filth and vermin, entirely shut off from the outer world, with nothing to break the grave-like silence but the gnawing of rats and the curses of vicious criminals, the venerable old man must have undergone a thousand martyrdoms. Money, it

14 Thaddeus, on the authority of Clarendon. See also Hope, p. 218 ; and Stone, *Faithful Unto Death*, p. 180.

is true, might have procured him clean straw for bedding or more nutritious food to relieve his hunger and restore his declining strength; but as a poor Franciscan he had not wherewith to secure the good will of the jailer. Friends, too, might have come to his rescue, even though they would thereby imperil their own safety; but the Civil War with all its dangers and hardships for Catholics was now in full swing, while London was in the hands of the parliamentarians. Least of all could Fr. Francis Davenport, by whom he had been received into the Order, and his fellow friars relieve his misery. The welfare of their persecuted flock forbade them to expose themselves to the fury of the Puritans.

Hence, for three or four years, while four of his brethren mounted the scaffold and died a martyr's death for the faith, Fr. Christopher had patiently to wait till God should summon him to his eternal reward. "Not for him," Stone touchingly remarks, "was the glory of shedding his blood for the Faith, surrounded by a crowd of witnesses; for him were only the lingering torments of abandonment and the ignominy of the Cross."<sup>15</sup> At last, however, sickness and

privation had done their work, and his tried soul exchanged the gloom of the prison for the glory of God's blissful mansions. In the *Franciscan Martyrology*, he is commemorated on November 1, in these terms: "In London, Blessed Christopher a Sancta Clara, Martyr, who, having been cast into a loathsome prison for the confession of the Catholic religion and sentenced to death, weakened by squalor and hunger, gave up his soul to God in prayer."<sup>16</sup>

Surely, the last moment had no terrors for one who in life had so diligently studied how to die. Many a time, no doubt, when lying cold and hungry on his bed of straw, he recalled to mind the poem he had written years before and paused to reflect on the words:

Consider wisely what thou hast to  
do  
In this vain world with serious  
meditation,  
How short the time, what's likely to  
ensue,  
And frustrate not the end of thy  
creation.  
Since here is naught whereon thou  
canst rely  
But to be born, to labor, and to die.

<sup>16</sup> His name does not appear, however, on the official list of December 4, 1886. See *Acta Minorum*, Vol. VI (1887), p. 49 seq. Accordingly, the title of Venerable is not prefixed to his name.

<sup>15</sup> Stone, p. 132.

## Christ the King

Fr. Joseph Noonan, OFM



On December 11, 1925, Pope Pius XI published the encyclical *Quas Primas* (On *The Kingship of Christ*), in which he established the feast of Christ the King on the last Sunday of October, and had a Mass and Office written for the feast. Holy Mother Church celebrated the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this encyclical in 2015.

It was his desire to have a yearly reminder of Christ's Kingship over His kingdom on this earth. Pope Pius XI understood the conditions of his time and

wanted to combat the secular humanism which was, and still is, one of the spiritual plagues in the world today.

The Kingship of Christ extends over all people regardless of race, culture, creed or nation. This is, indeed, a common misconception of people everywhere. They erroneously believe Our Lord's Kingship applies only to Catholics.

The importance of Christ's Kingship cannot be overstated for it affects all aspects of one's

life. His Kingship reigns over our private and public lives. The public reign, which includes the lives of those in the public eye as well as the work of governments, is known as the Social Reign of the Kingship of Christ. The public reign is openly rejected by most today and this is precisely what Pope Pius XI observed during his reign.

This rejection may be passive for some individuals, but is an active or conscious one for others. It is the latter rejection which is of grave concern for Holy Mother Church.

The rejection of Our Lord's Kingship began with the Fall of Man. It has displayed itself in a number of different ways, from the rejection of Christ by the Jews to the organized opposition of today.

One can no longer deny the organized spiritual war which has taken place for centuries. It is precisely the ignorance of the masses which allows the enemies of Christ to be so successful. Many will ask just who are these enemies that we may know and combat these haters of Christ? The answers are the Jewish Nation and Freemasonry.

Fr. Denis Fahey in his book *The Mystical Body of Christ and the Reorganization of Society* explains why the Jewish Nation and Freemasonry are the principle visible forces which not only reject the Kingship of Christ but they actively work to overthrow Our Lord's Kingdom on this earth.

*“Up to Calvary, the opposition to the Jewish Nation, which was to be found in the ancient world, was a compound of the self-centered resistance to the Supernatural Life, which is to be found in fallen man, and of the hatred aroused by Jewish pride. Jewish national pride, which culminated in the rejection of Our Lord at the Praetorium and on Calvary, did not arise in a generation. It was a gradual growth and it played its part in the hatred which the Jews drew on themselves before the coming of Our Lord. Still, up to Calvary, salvation was from the Jews, in the sense that He Who was to restore the Real Life of the world was to be of their race and He was to ask them to be the heralds of the Real Life and of the Divine Plan for order. Since Calvary, their self-centeredness and persistent resistance to order draw upon them even*

*greater hatred and opposition from their fellow-members of the naturalistic camp. Their efforts to lead the world to a Messianic era of definitive peace, by the imposition of their national form, are opposed, as we have seen, not only to the Supernatural Life of the Mystical Body of Christ, but also to the natural development of national life. The inevitable result is opposition to and dislike of the Jews. When the nature of their influence becomes manifest to a considerable portion of the population, violent resentment is almost inevitable.”*

*“We may express the truth contained in the preceding paragraph in another way. The man who obstinately resists Divine Grace will not remain an upright natural man. He will sink down to an infra-human level and he will have a debasing influence on those around him. So the Jewish Nation, in its obstinate resistance to the Real Life of the world, has developed unnatural traits and is dragging the world down to an infra-human level. And the poor deluded and debased world, in an effort to save itself, turns upon the Jews who have done so much to lead it astray.”*

*“There is a fundamental difference in origin between opposition to the Jews and opposition to the Catholic Church. Opposition to the Catholic Church is opposition, led by Satan, to the Supernatural Life and to the real order of the world: the particular opposition to the Jews has its origin in a reaction against their pride and against their efforts to impose their domination. This pride and these inordinate ambitions are the consequence of their special resistance to the Supernatural Life and order of the world, at the instigation of Satan. ...”*

Fr. Fahey adds these comments to what has been previously been said. “... They refused and, as a nation, continue to refuse to admit the reality of the Supernatural Life of Grace and to acknowledge Christ as its unique source. As a nation, they continue down the ages to war against the idea of there being any higher social entity than the Jewish Nation. Their national policy, in so far as it is coordinated, is based on the idea that unity is to come to the world, not through the supranational Mystical Body of Christ, but through their own nation. Their unyielding opposition to the

*Supernatural Life of Grace and to the Divine Plan for order has meant the existence of additional weakness and division amongst the European nations and in the rest of the world. Because the nations of Europe had acknowledged the Mystical Body of Christ, they were charged with a special mission to draw the rest of the world into the unity of that Body.”*

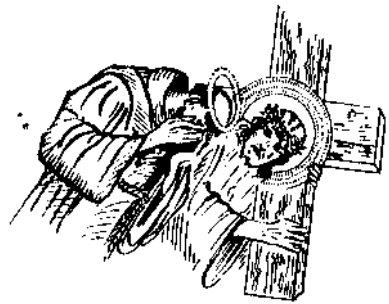
*“If the Jewish nation as such had humbled itself and sincerely repented any time for the last 1,900 years, it would have immediately meant an enormous increase in the numbers of members of Christ in the world, for they would have put their restless energy into missionary work for Him. But alas: ‘All the day long have I spread my hands to a people that believeth not and contradicteth me.’ (Romans: 10, 21) and (Isaias 65, 2) ‘The Messiah,’ writes Fr. Libermann, C. S. Sp., ‘appeared among amongst the Jews. They did not accept Him. On the contrary, they persecuted Him. ...’”*

The problems which exist today concerning the Jewish Nation are such that they have amassed such power and influence there is hardly anyone who is willing

to speak up against their evil work. Between the constant drum of the “holocaust lie” and their near complete control of the media, Hollywood and the economy, rarely is anyone able to expose these men of iniquity who simply are the agents of Satan.

Their opposition to the Social Reign of Christ necessarily promotes a naturalism which has as its goal the elimination of the Catholic Faith and the hastening of the Reign of the Antichrist.

To be Continued



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# Franciscan Saints

JANUARY 4

BLESSED ANGELA OF  
FOLIGNO

*Widow, Third Order*

Angela was born in 1248 of a prominent family in Foligno, three leagues from Assisi. As a young woman, and also as a wife and mother, she lived only for the world and its vain pleasures. But the grace of God intended to make of her a vessel of election for the comfort and salvation of many. A ray of the Divine Mercy touched her soul and so strongly affected her as to bring about a conversion.

At the command of her confessor she committed to writing the manner of her conversion in eighteen spiritual steps. "Enlightened by grace," she wrote in this account, "I realized my sinfulness; I was seized with a great fear of being damned, and I shed a flood of tears. I went to confession

to be relieved of my sins, but through shame I concealed the most grievous ones, but still I went to Communion. Now my conscience tortured me day and night. I called upon St. Francis for help, and, moved by an inner impulse, I went into a church where a Franciscan Father was then preaching.

"I gathered courage to confess all my sins to him, and I did this immediately after the sermon. With zeal and perseverance I performed the penance he imposed, but my heart continued to be full of bitterness and shame. I recognized that the Divine Mercy had saved me from hell, hence I resolved to do rigorous penance; nothing seemed too difficult for me, because I felt I belonged in hell. I called upon



the saints, and especially upon the Blessed Virgin, to intercede with God for me.

“It appeared to me now as if they had compassion on me, and I felt the fire of Divine Love enkindled within me so that I could pray as I never prayed before. I had also received a special grace to contemplate the cross on which Christ had suffered so much for my sins. Sorrow, love, and the desire to sacrifice everything for Him filled my soul.”

About this time God hearkened to the earnest desire of the penitent: her mother died, then her husband, and soon afterwards all her children. These tragic events were very painful to her, but she made the sacrifice with resignation to the Will of God. Being freed from these ties, she dispossessed herself of all her temporal goods with the consent of her confessor, so that being poor herself, she might walk in the footsteps of her poor Savior. She also entered the Third Order of St. Francis, and presently found herself the superior and guide of others who followed in her path. Many women joined her, even to the point of taking the three vows. She encouraged them in works of charity, in

nursing the sick, and in going personally from door to door to beg for the needs of the poor.

Meanwhile, Angela became still more immersed in the contemplation of the Passion of Christ, and she chose the Sorrowful Mother and the faithful disciple John as her patrons. The sight of the wounds which her Lord suffered for her sins urged her to the practice of still greater austerities. Once our Lord showed her that His Heart is a safe refuge in all the storms of life. She was soon to be in need of such a refuge.

God permitted her to be afflicted with severe temptations. The most horrible and loathsome representations distressed her soul. The fire of concupiscence raged so furiously that she said: “I would rather have beheld myself surrounded with flames and permitted myself to be continually roasted than to endure such things.” Still, she called out to God: “Glory be to Thee, O Lord! Thy cross is my resting place.” These painful trials lasted over two years; but then the purified and tried servant of the Lord was filled with great consolations. She obtained a marvelous insight into divine

things and was very frequently found in ecstasy. For many years Holy Communion was her only food, until at last, completely purified, she entered into the eternal joy of the Supreme Good on January 4, 1309.

Pope Innocent XII approved the continual devotion paid to her at her tomb in Foligno. He beatified her in 1693. The Franciscan Order celebrates her feast on January fourth.

#### ON THE BENEFIT OF TEMPTATIONS

1. Consider how Blessed Angela had to pass through many painful steps in order to arrive at true conversion. True conversion is not accomplished as easily and as soon as many people believe. One of these steps consisted in enduring temptations. This was one of the most painful stations, but it is in such wise that God wishes to try the fidelity of His servants. Moses spoke thus to the chosen people of God: "The Lord your God trieth you that it may appear whether you love Him with all your soul, or no." (5 Mos. 13:3) What pleasure it is when the temptation has been overcome, to know that one has stood the test! -- Have you ever

partaken of this joy after your temptations?

2. Consider that temptations are also a means by which we may learn to know ourselves and our weaknesses. Thomas a Kempis (1:13) says: "Temptations show us what we are." Sometimes we do not think it possible that we could fall into this or that sin into which a fellowman has fallen. But if severe temptation assails us, we readily join with the Psalmist in declaring: "Unless the Lord had been my helper, my soul had almost dwelt in hell." (Ps. 93:17) Temptation does not make us weak, it merely shows us how weak we are. Such experiences cause us to be kinder in our judgments of others and more cautious in our own conduct. If David became an adulterer and a murderer through a glance at Bethsabee, may we then play with danger like a gnat flying about a glowing flame? "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." (Matth. 26:41)

3. Consider that temptations impel us to draw nearer to God and to unite ourselves more closely to Him. As a child runs to its mother when danger threatens, and hides itself in her lap, so a Christian who loves his

soul will have recourse to God in time of danger. And just as the tree strikes its roots deeper into the earth when storms whip its crown, so does the Christian attach himself more firmly to God during the storm of temptation. While we acknowledge in the time of temptation that of ourselves we are nothing, we also acknowledge that God is our all: our only hope, our support, our salvation. This acknowledgment is a great boon. Blessed Angela says: "To know oneself and to know God, that is the perfection of man; without this knowledge, visions and the greatest gifts are of no account."

#### *PRAYER OF THE CHURCH*

*O God, Thou sweetness of hearts and Light of the inhabitants of Heaven, Who didst refresh Blessed Angela, Thy servant, with a marvelous insight into heavenly things, grant us through her merits and intercession so to know Thee upon earth, that we may be found worthy to rejoice in the vision of Thy glory in Heaven. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

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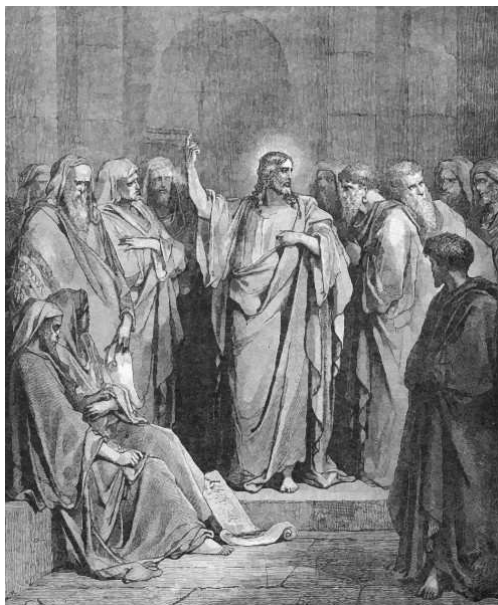
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HAUSMANN, S.J.

FROM THE GERMAN BY  
CHRISTIAN PESCH, S.J.



## CHAPTER XXIX

### The Promises of the Sacred Heart

*“He has given us most great and precious promises.” (2 Pet. 1:4)*

1. *Meaning of the promises in favor of the devotion to the Sacred Heart.* While Our Divine Savior still dwelt on earth in our midst, He promised to all who should accept His doctrine and observe His commandments blessings which cannot be surpassed. “He who believes and is baptized, shall be saved.” (Mk. 16:16) “As I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.” (Jn. 6:58) “He who has My commandments, and keeps them, he it is who loves Me. But he

who loves Me, will be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and manifest Myself to him.” (Jn. 14:21) These and all the other glorious promises which we read in Holy Scripture are matters of faith. We are obliged to accept them and to make them the guiding principles of our lives. Such promises were not given in later centuries, for God has so ordained that the revelation obligatory on all Christians was to be closed with the death of the apostles. This does not mean that it is impossible for God to make further revelations; but simply that it is His will that we are not to esteem these later revelations as much as — not to say more than — those recorded in Scripture.

Later revelations are either intended only for particular individuals or, if intended for all, it is not necessary that all accept them or follow their dictates as though they were commandments. The certitude which we possess regarding such revelations rests mainly on the fact that the Church, after careful investigation, has approved them as worthy of belief. The Church has thus investigated and approved the revelations of the devotion to the Sacred Heart and the promises attached to the practice of this devotion. She has not only declared that there is nothing contrary to faith or morals in these revelations and promises, but has, as a result of them, instituted the feast of the Sacred Heart and encouraged all the faithful to practice this devotion. She has, moreover, canonized Margaret Mary Alacoque. Hence, we can have full confidence in the revelation of the devotion to the Sacred Heart and in the promises attached to it; it would be neither reasonable nor useful to neglect them.

Now even though our Divine Savior has attached many great promises to the devotion to His Sacred Heart, nevertheless these promises should not be our

chief motive in cultivating this devotion fervently. St. Margaret Mary writes: "If Christians only knew how pleasing this devotion is to Jesus, not one of them, no matter how weak the love which he bears our most loving Savior, but would practice it." Because of His love for us, our Savior earnestly desires that we honor His Sacred Heart. We wish to be true friends of Jesus: then let us comply with His request. This should be our main reason for cultivating devotion to His Sacred Heart, since this devotion is that proof of our love for Him which He Himself has demanded. O Jesus, Thou hast loved us so unselfishly, share with us a little of the nobility of Thy Divine Heart so that in the practice of this devotion we may desire rather to procure Thy honor and to give Thee pleasure than to promote our own advantage.

Nevertheless, we must not neglect the promises of Our Savior; for He has made them in view of our weakness. In the Gospel He commands us, when we meet with difficulties in His service, to think of the reward which will one day be ours (cf. Lk. 6:23). He even promises us temporal blessings; but the

very manner in which He makes these promises shows clearly that we are not to attach our heart to them, but only hope for them confidently while we serve Him faithfully. "Seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things (of which you have need) will be given you besides" (Mt. 6:33).

The same is true of the promises made in favor of the devotion to the Sacred Heart. Here, too, Jesus promises divine aid in temporal wants. On this point St. Margaret writes: "As regards lay people, they will obtain by means of this sweet devotion all the help that they need in their state of life, that is, domestic peace, a sweetening of their labors, the blessing of heaven upon all their undertakings, and consolation in distress." But all these blessings are secondary matters and are granted only insofar as they may be useful in promoting salvation. For this reason the Saint adds at once: "They will find a refuge in this adorable heart during their whole earthly pilgrimage, but especially in the hour of death. Oh, how sweet the death of those who have perseveringly cultivated devotion to the Heart of Him who is to be their Judge."

2. *The spiritual advantages which are granted to those who cultivate this devotion* are worthy of very special consideration. The nature of the promise is always in keeping with the practice of the devotion. Just as Our Savior while on earth made general promises to those who accepted His doctrine and observed His commandments, and special promises to those who for love of Him left all and dedicated their lives to apostolic activities, so likewise He has made general promises to all those who shall honor His Sacred Heart and special promises to those who consecrate themselves to Him in a special manner and strive to promote this devotion to the best of their ability.

When Our Savior promises that "He will pour out the graces of His Divine Love from the abundance of His Heart" on all those who celebrate the feast of the Sacred Heart, He is making a general promise. So, likewise, when He says that He will pour out generously the treasures in which His heart abounds upon those who honor the picture of the Sacred Heart. The Church refers to this general promise when she declares in the office of the feast of the Sacred Heart that this feast

has been instituted in order that the faithful, by venerating the picture of this Most Holy Heart, may more devoutly venerate the love which Christ has shown us in His passion, in His death on the cross, in the institution of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, and as a result participate more fully in the blessings of this love: Growth in love for Our Savior is a very natural fruit of the proper exercise of this devotion to the Sacred Heart; it is also the noblest fruit which it can produce in us. All other graces are significant only insofar as they tend to preserve and increase this love. Hence, St. Margaret Mary writes: "The main purpose of Our Savior in instituting this devotion was to convert the world to His love." "I know of no other devotion which is so well calculated to lead a soul in a short time to perfection, and to allow it to taste that true sweetness which is peculiar to the service of Christ." Perfection is nothing else than the love of God dominant in all our acts. The devotion to the Sacred Heart is an exceptional means to enkindle in us such a living, energetic love. We need no further argument urgently to recommend this devotion.

Our Lord has made special

promises to those who consecrate themselves to His Divine Heart. St. Margaret Mary writes: "Our Savior has told me that the pleasure He experiences when He is known, loved, and honored by a creature is so great that, if I am not mistaken, He has made the promise that all those who dedicate and consecrate themselves to Him will not be lost." She says the same in another place: "All those who are consecrated to this Heart will not be lost."

What is meant by this consecration, we can gather from the formula of consecration composed by St. Margaret Mary and approved and indulgenced by Pope Leo XIII. It begins with the words: "I, N.N., give and consecrate myself, my person, my life, my labors, my sufferings to the Sacred Heart of Our Lord Jesus Christ in order that I may use all that I am and have only for His honor, love, and glory. It is my irrevocable determination to belong wholly to Him, to do everything for love of Him, and to renounce with my whole heart everything which might be displeasing to this Divine Heart." The consecration, therefore, consists in the complete dedication to the Sacred Heart with the firm determination to live in the future only for His honor. To all those who are animated by this desire,

Our Savior has made the promise that they will not be lost. Essentially the same promise is already found in Holy Writ, where we read: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them everlasting life; and they shall never perish, neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand." (Jn. 10:27, 28) If Jesus, therefore, assures all those who consecrate themselves entirely to His Divine Heart that they shall not perish, it is in perfect accord with the promises which He made during His temporal life on earth in favor of His sheep who know His voice and follow Him.

And this promise is especially true of those who consecrate themselves to this Divine Heart not only that they may practice this devotion themselves, but that they may spread it among others to the best of their ability. One year before her death, the Saint wrote to a religious (P. Croiset): "Our Savior is consumed with an ardent desire to be known, loved, and honored by men in atonement for the many bitter and humiliating experiences He has suffered at their hands. So great is this desire, that He has promised that all those who consecrate and dedicate themselves to Him, in order to afford Him this pleasure — that

is, to love, honor, and glorify Him and to strive, as far as they can according to the measure of the means He will put at their disposal, that others also honor Him in this way — will not be lost; that He will be their secure refuge from all the snares of their enemies, but especially in the hour of death; that He will receive them lovingly into His Divine Heart and thus assure their salvation; that He will take care to sanctify and glorify them before His Heavenly Father to the same extent to which they procured the spread of the kingdom of His love in the hearts of men."

The Saint says of herself: "I feel entirely lost in this Divine Heart as though in a bottomless abyss, where the Lord discloses to me treasures of love and of grace destined for those persons who will consecrate and dedicate themselves to Him in order to give and procure for Him as much love and glory as they can; but these treasures are so great that words fail when I attempt to describe them." Apostolic love and enthusiasm for the practice and the spread of the devotion to the Sacred Heart is, therefore, a sign of predestination and an earnest of great glory and happiness in Heaven. Yet we must not forget the words of warning



which St. Margaret has added. Our Savior is indeed anxious to give us precious gifts; “but from those — and these are His words — who do not use them and do not permit them to operate in their souls, they will again be withdrawn; for this is the precious heritage of salvation, which is tendered us by our Heavenly Father as a final means to cure our ills.”

3. *But what shall we say of that so-called “great promise”?* Its wording is as follows: “I promise thee in the unfathomable mercy of My Heart that My omnipotent love will procure the grace of final penitence for all those who communicate on nine successive first Fridays of the month; they will not die in My disfavor, or without having received their sacraments, since My Divine Heart will be their sure refuge in the last moments of their life.”

In brief, the grace of a happy death is here promised all those who will worthily receive Holy Communion on nine successive first Fridays of the month in honor of the Sacred Heart. This revelation does not enjoy the certainty of an article of faith, any more than the other revelations made to St. Margaret Mary or to other saints; yet it has been examined by the Church and has not been rejected; hence,

it is worthy of belief. No man, however, can say with certainty: “I have satisfied the conditions of the nine first Fridays and hence I shall infallibly be saved.” With absolute certainty he does not even know that he has received Holy Communion worthily each of those nine times. He may hope that he has if the voice of his conscience thus testifies; but absolute certainty he can never have.

Let us, then, do what we can and leave the rest in perfect confidence to Our Savior; this confidence in Jesus will certainly not prove to our disadvantage. The Church has approved this practice of the nine first Fridays and has granted a plenary indulgence on each of the nine Fridays.<sup>1</sup>

What is paramount for us is that we strive to comply with the wish of Our Divine Savior as perfectly as possible and afford Him this pleasure. The more generous we show ourselves toward Him, the more generous He will be toward us; the less we think of ourselves and the more we think of Him, the more will He think of us. Let us strive to live only for Him, then we shall certainly die a happy death in Him. The devotion to the Sacred Heart is

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<sup>1</sup> *Enchiridion Indulgentiarum*, No. 252. See also *English Raccolta*, No. 252.

a special form of prayer. But persevering prayer is the means instituted by Christ to obtain final perseverance, as all theologians teach with St. Augustine<sup>2</sup> and St. Thomas Aquinas.<sup>3</sup>

If we remain faithful in the practice of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, we are persevering in prayer. But perseverance in prayer is inseparably connected with final perseverance, therefore also with the reception of the last sacraments, insofar as they are necessary for salvation. If a man dies in the state

of sanctifying grace, he is saved, even though he has not received the last sacraments through no fault of his own. This is why we read in that promise made to St. Margaret Mary: “They will not die without having received *their sacraments*,” that is, without those sacraments that they need to obtain salvation. Let us encourage ourselves to a fervent practice of the devotion to the Sacred Heart by considering these promises which Our Savior has made to those who practice this devotion; but let us be influenced even more by the desire to do everything, as far as we can, that is pleasing to Him.

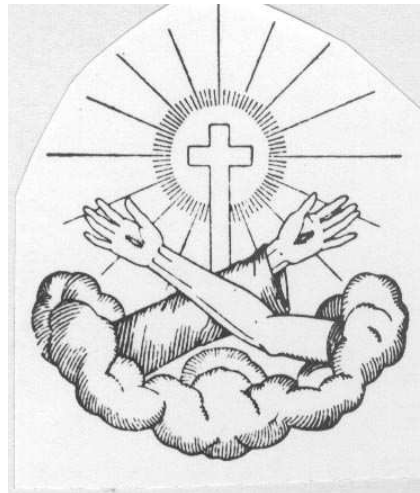
2 St. Augustine, *De dono Persev.* C. 16, n. 39.

3 St. Thomas, *Summa Theol.* I, 2ae, q. 114, a. 9 ad 1.



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