

Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J.

A MOST PLEASANT MISSION

(MUNUS SUAVISSIMUM)

Paray-le-Monial - July, 2, 1988

PRESENTATION

The readings in this booklet correspond to the references Father Kolvenbach made in his conference at Paray-le-Monial on July 2, 1988, to the lives, writings and prayer experiences of several Jesuits, to Jesuit General Congregations, to Vatican Two, a number of papal statements, and to other persons and situations significant to his topic. Having the texts of these references at hand should facilitate and enrich the reader's reflection on this conference and the homily Father Kolvenbach preached on the same occasion.

The homily and conference were delivered to around three hundred Jesuits who had gathered from a dozen different countries for the three hundredth anniversary of the apparition in which St. Margaret Mary reported Our Lady's invitation to Blessed Claude La Colombière and his fellow Jesuits to make the devotion to the heart of her son a useful pastoral tool.

The structure Father Kolvenbach gave to his conference suggests five prayerful considerations of certain moments in the history of the Society of Jesus. This structure makes the conference, the homily and the texts referred to good retreat reading.

With this in mind, the outline on the following page is given as one possible way the homily and the parts of the conference could be integrated into the Exercises.

THE APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER

INTEGRATING EXERCISES AND PARAY

EXERCISES

FIRST WEEK

53 Colloquy with Christ on the Cross.

SECOND WEEK

101 The Incarnation.

263 The Visitation.

136 The two standards.

164 Three kinds of humility.

THIRD WEEK

208 Trails, condemnations of Christ.

FOURTH WEEK

305 Apparition to Thomas.

307 Mission to Apostles.

230 Contemplation to obtain love.

CONFERENCE AND HOMILY

Homily:

Contemplation of the pierced side of Christ. Page 5

1st Contemplation:

Our Lady and La Colombière. Page 10

2nd Contemplation: Response of La Colombière and other early promoters. Page 14

3rd Contemplation:

Reluctance of Society and discouragement of first promoters. Page 21

4th Contemplation:

Suppression of the Jesuits. Page 29

5th Contemplation:

23rd General Congregation's pledge to Munus Suavissimum. Page 33

Final colloquy with Claude, Our Lord and Our Lady. Page 35

CONTENTS

	Page
Presentation	2
Integrating Exercises and Paray	3
Fr. Kolvenbach's Homily, July 2, 1988	5
Fr. Kolvenbach's Conference, July 2, 1988	10
Letter of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, NOTE A.....	38
Decrees of S.J. General Congregations, NOTE B	40
Fr. Arrupe's Conference, Feb. 6, 1981, NOTE C.....	45
Letters of John Paul II, and Father Kolvenbach, Oct. 5, 1986, NOTE D.....	50
Letter of Fr. Dezza, Feb. 26, 1982, NOTE E.....	54
Retreat Notes, Bl. Claude La Colombière, NOTE F	58
Early Jesuits' Prayer Experiences, NOTE G.....	62
The First Jesuit Promoters, NOTE H	73
Discourse of John Paul II, June 1, 1980, NOTE I.....	76
From Pius XII's HAURIETIS AQUAS, NOTE J	79
Writings of Hugo and Karl Rahner, NOTE K.....	83
Letters of Fr. Lorenzo Ricci, 1767-1773, NOTE L	94
Apostleship of Prayer Statutes, 1968, NOTE M	99

THE HOMILY

*Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J.
Paray-le-Monial, July 2, 1988*

Since it was the Preparation Day the Jews did not want to have the bodies left on the cross during the sabbath, for that sabbath was a solemn feast day. They asked Pilate that the legs be broken and the bodies be taken away. Accordingly, the soldiers came and broke the legs of the men crucified with Jesus, first of the one, then of the other. When they came to Jesus and saw that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. One of the soldiers thrust a lance into his side, and immediately blood and water flowed out. This testimony has been given by an eyewitness, and his testimony is true. He tells what he knows is true, so that you may believe. These events took place for the fulfillment of Scripture: "Break none of his bones." There is still another Scripture passage which says: "They shall look on him whom they have pierced."

*John 19:31-37, Mass for the
Solemnity of the Sacred Heart, Year B*

Just three centuries ago in this same Paray-le-Monial, it pleased the Lord to confer on the Visitation Sisters and the Jesuits the very pleasant mission of bringing to the attention of all mankind the wounded love of his heart.

The memory of this event invites us to give thanks to the Lord and to go deeper still into its sense of mystery. In order to bring new energy to this mission, guided by St. Margaret Mary and Blessed Claude we shall meditate on the episode which the gospel for this eucharistic celebration proposes.

The event which John proclaims as the solemn end of the whole Passion of the Lord, from whatever perspective it is considered, is profoundly marked by the feast of the Passover.

For the superficial viewer, the main concern is the observance of the law which does not permit the bodies to remain on the crosses over the great Sabbath. The Roman soldiers are responsible for this formality: When one of them pierces the Lord's heart to verify that he is truly dead, he is simply performing the ordinary action by which the fact of death is established. Doesn't this image sum up the whole process against Jesus?

If for the Lord it is the authentic expression of God's boundless love for humanity, for men it is nothing more than a law to be observed with routine indifference. "We have a law, and according to this law he should die." Authority, represented by the Roman Governor, washes its hands to indicate it is in no way responsible for all this innocent blood. Precisely at the moment human beings give proof of their hardness of heart God breaks into human history to reveal the heart of his son whose love gives to the Passion its real meaning.

"One of the soldiers pierced his side with a lance, and immediately blood and water flowed out." For the soldier it's no

more than an incident, surprising and perhaps unpleasant, revealing nothing to him but an open chest, leaving him thoroughly unmoved and indifferent. So be it. But this thrust with the lance sets in motion the fulfilment of the promises of the ancient alliance. The bones which have been left unbroken proclaim the Crucified to be the authentic Paschal Lamb. The wound in the side opens the invisible wound of the love of God. The blood and water are the rivers of living water foretold in Scripture and spring from the desert rock which is Christ.

The spectators have seen nothing - no more than we when we hesitate to "look on him whom they pierced," preferring to this contemplation the multiple duties which surround our preparations for a paschal feast according to our own taste, little lived according to the Heart of God.

It is this rejection and indifference which moves God to intervene on many occasions and in different forms to attract our gaze back to the Crucified One with his pierced side so that we may discover the wounded heart of his beloved son against whom man with his heart of stone directs his hatred to the limit of his capability, and in whom the love of God has "loved us to the end," to the limit of his.

So God irrupts on the lives of Saint Margaret Mary and Blessed Claude, the first of the multitude of those who up to the present have assumed the most pleasant task of announcing the riches revealed by the open side of the Crucified - all the breadth and depth and height of God who is Love, all the mystery of the Heart of Jesus. Words that attempt to express it will change, theological perspectives which attempt to explain it will be replaced, and images never quite able to capture artistically its mystery will constantly be recreated. But the "One whom they pierced" will always be among us, there to gaze upon if we wish; so, too, the most pleasant task of witnessing to him, as did the

disciple whom Jesus loved.

John sees what the soldiers don't, and gives witness to it - authentic witness, "that you also may believe." Contemplating what is taking place on Calvary before his very eyes at the same time the celebration of the Great Passover is being prepared, John is moved to the depths of his being. Watching his Lord die, he seems to lose the hope of ever seeing Life vanquish death.

On the first Passover, "with firm hand and vigorous arm" the Lord fought to free his chosen people from slavery. Through his faith in Jesus, the Lamb of God, John would be able to celebrate the Great Passover that destroys forever the power of the prince of this world. As the blood and water flowed from the heart of the Lord struck by the lance, John saw and believed: Passover means, then, that the Lord of Life has conquered death by dying. In the death on the Cross the glory of God is resplendent.

Indeed, from that moment this Jesus whom we contemplate is one who has been crucified, whose body bears wounds but whose bones, thanks to the paschal ritual, have not been broken. It is not a hideous corpse with broken bones the Father offers to our gaze, but a victim whose pierced side, contemplated in the first rays of Easter, reveals the glory of love which is the Heart of God.

The love of his divine heart doesn't allow "the one who loves him see corruption" but rather has Life flow out, the Spirit of love, to be poured out immediately on all who wish to contemplate "him whom they have pierced". Baptized in water and blood, in death and resurrection, they form this new people, the Church, born directly from the pierced side of the Lord.

John, seeing what the lance of the soldier has done, is filled with faith and sings the prophecy of Zacharias according to which the contemplation of the One Pierced announces, as a manifestation

of the love of the Heart of God, joy in sadness, forgiveness in blame, and in the refusal to love, reparation. Yes, reparation! For he who contemplates the One whom they pierced from the vantage point of faith cannot limit himself to being simply an adorer of the mystery of love. This contemplation brings him to live the paschal mystery with the spirit of reparation, to allow his heart of stone to be transformed into a heart of flesh and actively love, by means of this water and this shed blood, the Father and all mankind.

Understood in this manner, the comforting duty of making known the Heart of Jesus is not a quest for suffering cultivated for its own sake. Rather, as the much loved Apostle understood, and as Margaret Mary and Claude La Colombière would later understand, one who believes cannot celebrate the living water of Pentecost without participating also in the spilled blood of Calvary.

So this most pleasing task radiates out through men and women whose hearts are marked by the Heart of Christ, our Passover. His love transforms the paralyzing anguish of death into Paschal confidence in life, the hatred of war into the peace from which springs the civilization of love, and the injustice of men into the justice expected by the commandment of love. True reparation is an active participation in the work of redemption, in the living water and blood which flow continually from the pierced Heart of Jesus.

Celebrating this Eucharist, we give thanks to the Heart of Jesus for all the good that has been done during these three centuries by the men and women who have assumed wholeheartedly the task confided to them. Through the intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, may the Society of Jesus faithfully discharge the mission which Pope John Paul II recalled in this same Paray-le-Monial, to proclaim to the people of our time the love of the Sacred Heart whose fidelity accompanies us from generation to generation.

THE CONFERENCE

*Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J.
Paray-le-Monial, July 2, 1988*

It is good that as companions of Jesus we have gathered here at Paray-le-Monial. According to the Ignatian method, we wish to pray the mystery of this day, the mystery of the Heart of Jesus.

THE "MUNUS SUAVISSIMUM"

"I call to mind the history of the subject I am to contemplate: here it is..." how on the second day of July, on the feast of the Visitation, in the year of our Lord sixteen hundred and eighty-eight, the Society of Jesus received the mission to spread the spirituality of the Heart of Jesus as a most pleasing gift, as "munus suavissimum".

On this day of the feast of the Virgin, Saint Margaret Mary spent the greater part of the day in prayer. In the evening she heard Mary speaking to her. The Virgin, who had brought to Elizabeth the presence of the Lord who "is ever mindful of his mercy," turned first toward her and the Visitandines. Then she turned to the Jesuits represented by Claude La Colombière, "faithful servant of my divine Son." The mission which she entrusted to these two groups of religious was to manifest the merciful love of her Son for all, as revealed in his wounded heart. In her correspondence of the years 1688 and 1689, Saint Margaret Mary¹ repeated that this

¹ Margaret Mary Alacoque was born near Autun in central France on July 22, 1647. Raised on a farm in difficult circumstances, she entered the Visitation Convent in Paray-le-

mission had been confided to the Visitation of Saint Mary and to the Society of Jesus, the contemplative dimension to the Visitandines, the apostolic activity to the Jesuits.

"It is reserved to the Fathers of your Society to show and make known its utility and value... and in proportion as they give him this pleasure, this divine heart, source of blessings and graces, will shower them so abundantly on the works of their ministry that they will produce fruits far beyond their labours and expectations. And this too for their own personal salvation and perfection"².

Without wishing to reserve a monopoly of this mission and without claiming in any exclusive manner credit for the "triumphal progress of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus"³, the Society

Monial in 1671 at twenty-four. She was alternately prefect of the boarders, assistant to the superior, and mistress of novices till her death nineteen years later on October 8, 1690 at forty-three. From the beginning her prayer life was extraordinary, and her superiors insisted she keep a spiritual diary. "Through a special light she came to know the power and beauty of the love of Jesus Christ, contemplating in eucharistic adoration the heart that was pierced for the salvation of the world" (John Paul II, October 5, 1986, Paray-le-Monial). Her experiences and writing have had considerable influence on the development of popular devotion to the Sacred Heart, both private and liturgical. She was beatified in 1864 and canonized in 1920.

² Letter No. 89, Sr. M.M. Alacoque to Mother De Saumaise, July, 1688. See Note A, page 41, for fuller text.

³ Old Roman Breviary for Feast of the Sacred Heart, lectio VI.

more than a century later in the course of the 23rd General Congregation recognized and welcomed from "Our Lord Jesus Christ the most pleasing task entrusted to it", this mission which has found among Jesuits and continues to find a deep and prolonged response⁴.

To the extent that it lives in and for the Church and remains faithful to itself, the Society continues to progress. It is in function of its history, lived in fidelity to its charisma, that the Society acts and reacts. To be sure, the history of devotion to the Sacred Heart is incarnated in human and temporal conditions which are of their very nature changeable. What remains of this mission entrusted to the Society, what remains of this great history in the present is marked by developments in the Church such as the Second Vatican Council and the new experiences of secularization and the blossoming of spiritual movements.

In all honesty we must add that it is possible for us as Jesuits to allow entire sections of the Society's history to disappear by reducing them to the status of mere shadows or passing fervour. We admit that our own heart's lethargy allows us to avoid welcoming the Heart of Jesus into our very existence: for we know well that his love will penetrate the most intimate part of ourselves - our heart - where we prefer to be at home with ourselves rather than "remaining in him." But to discard the living memory of the history lived by the Society according to the will of the Lord, having received the mission to announce the mystery of the love of God revealed in the heart of his only Son, would be to betray the very existence of the Society, especially in view of a real connaturality between the spirituality of the Heart of Jesus and

⁴ 23rd G.C., 1883, Decree 46. See note B.1, page 43, for text.

Ignatian spirituality which explains how, from Saint Margaret Mary to Father Arrupe, one finds the promised link between the vigour of the spirituality of the Heart of Jesus and the apostolic fruitfulness of the Society.

"I am convinced that there would be few proofs of the spiritual renewal of the Society so clear as a widespread and vigorous devotion to the Heart of Jesus. Our apostolate would receive new strength and we would see its effects very soon, both in our personal lives and in our apostolic activities."⁵

Instead of rejecting our history, even supposing that such rejection were possible; instead of betraying consciously or unconsciously this aspect of the spiritual identity of the Society, let us recall the experience our apostolic body has made of the "munus suavissimum" and will make of it again as something belonging to its vocation, if the Society is to follow the wishes Pope John Paul II expressed here at Paray-le-Monial in October of 1986: that the Society, drawing upon its living memory, seek today to guide the modern world toward the new "civilization of the Heart of Jesus," marked by the wounded love of his pierced side.⁶

⁵ One of Father Arrupe's last major conferences before he suffered the stroke which left him an invalid in August, 1981, was delivered at the conclusion of the five-week program on Ignatian spirituality conducted annually at the Jesuit curia in Rome. See Note C, page 48, for a fuller text.

⁶ In October, 1986, Pope John Paul II made what he called a spiritual pilgrimage to the south of France: He prayed at the tomb of the early martyrs of Lyons; beatified a servant of the Lyonese poor, Father Antoine Chevrier; prayed with Brother Roger and his community at Taize; on October 5, he prayed at the tombs of St. Margaret Mary and Blessed Claude La Colombière in Paray-le-Monial, on which occasion he presented Father Kolvenbach a letter addressed to all Jesuits. (See Note D, page 53, for the full text of

DEVOTION TO THE HEART OF JESUS AND THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES

"I call to mind the history of the subject I am to contemplate: here it is..." the significant fact that the revelations made to Saint Margaret Mary were made public for the first time through the retreat notes of our brother, Claude La Colombière, who thus became the first Jesuit to carry out the munus suavissimum confided by the Lord to the Society.⁷ On inviting the Society to celebrate the third centenary of the death of this "faithful

this letter and Father Kolvenbach's accompanying letter). The Pope concluded his pilgrimage with visits to the shrines of the Cure d'Ars, St. John Mary Vianney, and St. Francis de Sales and St. Jane Frances de Chantal, founders of the Visitation Order, in Annecy.

⁷ Claude La Colombière was born February 2, 1641, in Saint Symphorien d'Ozon, in southern France. After studying with the Jesuits in Lyons, he entered the Jesuit novitiate at Avignon at seventeen. He was ordained in Paris in 1669. After ordination he taught and preached in Lyons. His first assignment after tertianship, in February, 1675, was to the small Jesuit community in Paray-le-Monial as superior. During the following eighteen months, he was spiritual director to St. Margaret Mary. In October, 1676, he went to London as private chaplain to the Duke and Duchess of York. Here he began publicly promoting devotion to the Heart of Christ. Falsely accused of preaching against king and parliament, he was imprisoned in November, 1678, and two months later sent back to France, his health broken. Until August, 1681, he was spiritual father of the scholastics in Lyons. Again assigned to Paray-le-Monial, he died there the following February at forty-one. He was beatified in 1929.

servant and perfect friend," Father Paul Dezza recalled how "the spirituality of the Society, designed by God to deepen the love of the Lord which finds expression in the mystery of the Heart of Christ, from the days of St. Ignatius has raised up outstanding Jesuit apostles of this devotion. The involvement of Blessed Claude in the promotion of devotion to the Heart of Jesus made its mark on the history of the Society"⁸

The link with the Spiritual Exercises, and the consequent connaturality of the spirituality of the Heart of Jesus and Ignatian spirituality is established without explicit reference to the word "heart." In the spiritual Exercises, the Heart of Jesus is never explicitly mentioned. Is not this the way the Church has developed the spirituality of the Heart of God, whose origins are in the contemplative gaze of Saint John, inspired by paschal faith to bear witness to the One they pierced, without using the word "heart"? So, too, the Spiritual Exercises lead one to speak "heart to heart, with him" - cor ad cor loquitur - without Saint Ignatius explicitly using the expression "Heart of Jesus."

Faithful to his principle of "limiting the discourse to a brief, summary statement of its principal points" (E 2), it is with great sobriety that Saint Ignatius urges us to discover the mystery described by Saint John: "His side was pierced with a lance, and blood and water flowed forth" (E 297, John 19:31-37). He does this even if he knew the ample and fervent meditation on this mystery proposed by Ludolph the Carthusian in his *Life of Jesus Christ*. There, in fact, where Saint Ignatius leaves us alone with the pierced heart of the Lord, the Carthusian becomes our interpreter and formulates in our name what Ignatius wishes that we should discover for ourselves: "that you should hasten to enter into the Heart of Christ... thus to unite yourself to Christ out of love in

⁸ See Note E, page 57, for text of Fr. Dezza's Letter.

such a way that your heart enters totally into his... and that our heart is wounded by his wounds."⁹

Here we have in full view the spiritual pedagogy of Saint Ignatius: He points the way to an intimate knowledge of Christ (E 104), and puts one on the path to an encounter where one friend speaks to another (E 54), to the wounded Heart; he magnanimously opens our heart to the Heart of God by a reparative return of love, expressed by Claude la Colombière, the confidant of Saint Margaret Mary, in these terms: "He loves and he is not loved... In reparation for so many outrages and such cruel ingratitude... I offer you my heart... I give myself entirely to you".¹⁰

This spiritual pedagogy of Saint Ignatius allows us to begin a phase which, once left alone with him, the Lord himself completes in us. This Ignatian pedagogy leads to the vision of the

⁹ Ludolph of Saxony was born in northern Germany around the year 1300. First a Dominican, in 1340 he joined the Carthusians in Strasbourg, where he died in 1378. His writings reveal both a deep knowledge of Scripture and great respect for the apostolic life. His "Life of Christ" was probably written soon after he became a Carthusian. Father Jerome Nadal stated shortly after St. Ignatius' death that it was Ludolph's life of Christ that Ignatius read at Loyola during his recuperation. The quotation here is from VC, II, 58. For a recent and complete study of Ludolph's contemplation of the side of Christ, see Father Juan Ochagavia's article in the April, 1988, special issue of PRAYER AND SERVICE on the Exercises and the Heart of Christ.

¹⁰ See Note F.1, page 61, for La Colombière's act of consecration to the Heart of Christ.

Heart of Jesus of Peter Canisius, to Saint Francis Borgia's prayer to the sacred wound in the side, to the ecstasy of Blessed Peter Favre at Mainz before the cross of the Lord. Later this pedagogy will lead Saint Alfonsus Rodriguez from the contemplation of the suffering countenance of the Crucified to the secret depths revealed in this Face: the mystery of the heart.¹¹ Later still, this same Ignatian pedagogy will bring one to take to heart this mystery of the Heart of Jesus -a mystery which in the Church became explicit through a process which begins with its very origins, and for the Society is condensed and clearly focused by the message of 1688.

Fidelity to this Ignatian pedagogy inspired Father Arrupe to note that in communicating the spirituality of the Heart of Jesus, "there is no question of seeking to force or impose anything in an area where love precisely is involved"¹² This warning echos the advice given by Saint Margaret Mary: "The devotion cannot be forced, but seeks to penetrate gently and sweetly by the holy unction of charity"¹³. Only love is credible, and the Spiritual Exercises show the way to lead one's neighbor to love: it is not in showing oneself harsh or severe but in leading one to prepare and dispose oneself to receive the consolation given by knowledge of the mystery of the Heart of God in Jesus (E 8).

HISTORY OF THE MUNUS SUAVISSIMUM

The first Jesuits who carried out the munus suavissimum were not fanatics, although they were on fire; they were not

¹¹ See Note G, page 65, for descriptions of the spiritual experiences of the early Jesuits mentioned here.

¹² Pedro Arrupe, Feb. 6, 1981, Note C, page 48.

¹³ Letter 112, St. Margaret Mary to Mother de Saumaise, December 22, 1689.

controversialists although they were aware that they carried a message. During his Retreat of 1677, Claude La Colombière described the devotion which the Lord "had suggested to a certain person -Margaret Mary - and how he, Claude, whom the Lord wished to make use of in spite of his weakness, "had already suggested it to a good many people in England."¹⁴ There was a whole network of friends whom Claude inspired, person to person, with the spirituality of the heart of Jesus. Claude recognized certainly the limits of this personalized way of acting: "Why cannot I be everywhere, dear God, and make it known that you are waiting for your servants and friends!" But that this personalized apostolate was indeed contagious we see in the testimony of an English Franciscan, Father Wall, who was to die a martyr shortly thereafter and, having met Claude and talked with him one night, wrote: "I believed I was dealing with the apostle Saint John returned to this earth to enkindle the burning love of the Heart of Jesus..."¹⁵

¹⁴ See Note F.2, page 63, for La Colombière's 1677 English retreat note references to Margaret Mary. These constituted the first publicity given to her extraordinary prayer graces; even the members of her own community first learned of them from these notes.

¹⁵ St. John Wall was born in Lancashire in 1620, studied for the priesthood at Douai and Rome, ordained at 25. Joined the Franciscans, served as novice master, sent to England at 36 in 1656 and ministered to the Catholics of Worcestershire for 22 years. Two weeks before Colombière's arrest, he had this exchange with Blessed Claude: "Father, I am a poor minor of St. Francis. I have come to you to seek strength and advice in the Heart of Jesus. We know everywhere in the land that you are its apostle... "My friend, you have indeed come to the fount of graces for the strength you need. No one can penetrate the mysteries of this heart without tasting the cup of bitterness which Jesus drained

The discrete charity by which the impassioned love of Claude La Colombière drew so many people to the Heart of Jesus would not always be shared by those who took over in carrying out the munus suavissimum. Fathers Francis Froment and John Croiset, recruited by Saint Margaret Mary; Father Joseph-François de Galliffet, in contact with Blessed Claude la Colombière; all burning with fire for the new devotion, often insisted more than necessary on an imagery which was not essential. In the ardour of spreading the communal and public practices of the new devotion to the Heart of Christ, these promoters risked giving too little attention to the donation of oneself to the Heart of Christ through intimate knowledge of the Lord (E 104).¹⁶

For no formula of consecration, no practise of devotion of itself can produce the least increase in the love of Christ: all these forms derive their value from the heart which responds to the invitation to enter by degrees into the mystery of the open side. No expression of devotion to the Heart of Jesus is an end in itself. These practises possess in common with the Spiritual Exercises a pedagogical value. This was the insight of Pius XII who did not hesitate to present devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus as "the most efficacious school of divine love."¹⁷

so completely at Gethsemane. Friends of Christ, when they take up his cross and follow him, even though they receive in consolations the hundredfold he promises cannot escape the painful sword of persecution..." Father Wall was arrested nine months later in Worcester, hanged, drawn and quartered. He was canonized in 1970. Father Young's translation of Guitton's life of La Colombière, "Perfect Friend", reports this incident, on page 288.

¹⁶ For a bit of the history of the Jesuits mentioned here, see Note H, page 75.

¹⁷ Pius XII, HAURIETIS AQUAS, May, 1956, No. 15ff. (See Note J, page 81): "Impelled by the desire to set up a firm defense

Just as for one who makes the Exercises, so also for one who practices devotion to the Heart of Jesus, it will be very profitable to enter "with magnanimity and generosity toward the Creator and Lord, offering him his entire will and liberty, that his Divine Majesty may make use of his person and all possesses according to his most holy will" (E 5). Devotion to the Heart of Jesus is no more outdated than is the language of the Exercises. If the Exercises are engendering today throughout the Society a new surge of confidence, will it not be the same with practices of devotion to the Heart of Jesus when, well adapted and above all humbly practiced, they show how to attain the love (E 230) which is revealed in the heart of the Saviour? One can only conclude that the updating of devotion to the Heart of Jesus in the hearts of Jesuits today consists in following the pedagogy of the Exercises "to remove the barriers between God and man so that the Spirit speaks directly with man."¹⁸ Reciprocally it is by submitting oneself to the Heart of Jesus who is the source of the Spirit that the Exercises, given spiritually, become in their turn an effusion of the

against the evil activities of the enemies of God and his church, and at the same time to lead back domestic and civil society to the love of God and neighbor, we do not hesitate to state emphatically that devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is the most effective school of divine charity, on which the Kingdom of God to be established in the souls of individuals, families and nations must rest. As Leo XIII teaches in his Encyclical TAMETSI, "The Kingdom of Jesus Christ draws its power and distinctive characteristic from divine love; its foundation and chief doctrine is to love holily and in proper order. From this it necessarily follows, that we must fulfill obligations faithfully, not infringe on the rights of others, consider human affairs inferior to divine, and place love of God above everything."

¹⁸ CG 32, D. 4, No. 57. See Note B. 4, page 46.

Spirit for the building up of the apostolic body of the Society.

THE HUMAN HEART OF GOD

"I call to mind the history of the subject I am to contemplate: here it is..." the slowness with which the Society publicized the munus suavissimum. The first apostles of the Heart of Jesus experienced the discouraging difficulties which the Lord had announced to Saint Margaret Mary. Blessed Claude La Colombière became in his own words "a useless burden in any house I may live".¹⁹ Father John Croiset experienced the disgrace

¹⁹ After leaving Paray-Le-Monial, La Colombière corresponded extensively from London and later from Lyons with Mother Françoise de Saumaise, St. Margaret Mary's superior when he was stationed in Paray. "I have been here (Lyons) since the eleventh and worse than I have been since leaving England... Everywhere I see so great a harvest that I have trouble restraining myself. However, silence has been imposed on me and, as you advise, I am resolved to keep it. If Providence calls me to the land of crosses, I am quite ready to leave. For some days our Lord has been teaching me to make Him a still greater sacrifice, to make up my mind to do nothing at all, if that is his will. To die the first day and by death extinguish the zeal and grand desires I have to work for the sanctification of souls or to drag on in silence the life of a sick and listless man, being no more than a useless burden in any house I may live in... I was ill when I arrived in Paray, but I recovered much in two days... I found everything in fine shape... I was able to see Sister Alacoque only once and had much consolation in the visit. I found her as always extremely humble and submissive, with a great love of the cross and of contempt. These are the marks of the good Spirit who is leading her, marks which have never deceived anyone." Letter 43, Works of Bl. Claude La Colombière.

in the Society and in Rome of having his work placed on the Index. A premature death seemed to put an end to the burning word and pen of the young Father Bernard de Hoyos and, despite his gifts as a teacher for developing a theology of the Heart of Jesus, it seemed in vain that Father Joseph-Francis de Galliffet was so impassioned for the new devotion. The Generals of the Society of Jesus, Fathers Thyrus Gonzalez and Michelangelo Tamburini, for their part were reticent, not certainly in regard to a spirituality of the heart as such, but to the forms in which they wished to express the devotion to the Heart of Jesus.²⁰

Also today our apostolic concern ought to be to free devotion to the Sacred Heart from all that is parasitic, to bring it back once again beyond all emotionalism and even beyond all sentimentality, to that which is essential. But the essential, spiritual and sublime as it is, must be incarnated to be Christian. This incarnation means first of all that, far from being a purely instinctive inclination, love is a conscious decision, an election of the human heart, moving by a long and exhausting process of going out of self toward others, in him who loves us all with an human heart and yet is Totally Other.²¹ The encyclical HAURIETIS AQUAS has clearly noted that the love of God is not only spiritual. Whereas the Old Testament reveals the completely spiritual love of God for his people, the New Testament brings us face to face not only with divine love but with this love under its

²⁰ See Note H, page 75, on Fathers Croiset, de Hoyos, and de Galliffet.

²¹ During his 1980 visit to France, John Paul II was unable to deliver the discourse he had prepared for a June first encounter with young people in Paris. See Note I, page 78, for the section of this papal statement to which Father Kolvenbach alludes here.

incarnate and sensible form, that of a human love.²²

In lapidary form the Apostolic Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* takes up this message of salvation: Christ, the Word incarnate, loved us with a human heart.²³ This message of the human Heart of Christ, explains Vatican Council II, far from diminishing man, serves his progress by bringing light life, and liberty, whilst apart from him nothing can satisfy the human heart.²⁴ Pope John Paul II takes up this Christocentric anthropology

²² Pius XII, *HAURIETIS AQUAS*, No. 15ff. See Note J, page 81.

²³ *GAUDIUM ET SPES*, No. 22.2: "He who is "the image of the invisible God" (Col 1:15, 2Co 4:4) is himself the perfect man. To the sons of Adam he restores the divine likeness which had been disfigured from the first sin onward. Since human nature as he assumed it was not annulled, by that very fact it has been raised up to a divine dignity in our respect too. For by his incarnation the Son of God has united Himself in some fashion with every man. He worked with human hands, he thought with a human mind, acted by human choice, and loved with a human heart. Born of the Virgin Mary, he has truly been made one of us, like us in all things except sin."

²⁴ *GAUDIUM ET SPES*, No. 21.7: "The church knows that her message is in harmony with the most secret desires of the human heart when she champions the dignity of the human vocation, restoring hope to those who have already despaired of anything higher than their present lot. Far from diminishing man, her message brings to his development light, life and freedom.

of GAUDIUM ET SPES in his first encyclical REDEMPTOR HOMINIS. The human heart has everything to learn from the Heart of Christ, because he has loved us with a human heart. "Close to the Heart of Christ, the human heart comes to know the true and only meaning of his life and destiny, to understand the value of an authentically Christian life, to protect himself from certain perversions of the human heart, to unite filial love for God with love for the neighbor."²⁵

DIFFICULTIES CONCERNING DEVOTION TO THE HEART OF JESUS

Why has this spirituality of the heart encountered difficulties from the very beginning? There are two principal reasons for this. The first is that, if the human person must have zest of spirit, without which the zest of the senses is so much straw, Christian spirituality in no way excludes feelings, by referring to the image of God himself, revealed as God with a heart. In an atmosphere of pure rational and technological pragmatism, devotion to the Heart of Jesus cannot but suffer depreciation of the emotional, which forms such an integral part of rich human experience, and can only be patient with that disdain for pathos, which is itself pathologically emotional beyond all sense and measure. Paraphrasing an observation of Father Karl Rahner, who, with his brother Father Hugo Rahner, have most laudably fulfilled their obligations to the munus suavissimum, one can say that by contemning sentiment, Christians are on the way to making Christianity an abstraction, even a gnosis. "Abstractions do

Apart from this message nothing will avail to fill up the heart of man: "Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless till they rest in thee" (St. Augustine, Confessions I,1)."

²⁵ John Paul II, Letter to Jesuits. See Note D, page 53.

not need a heart."²⁶

The Second Vatican Council has renewed the liturgy of the people of God, reopened the biblical message, deepened the life of the Church and taken on new responsibilities in the world. We have been so occupied with this renewal that we run the risk of forgetting that liturgy and Bible, church and mission, are but gestures of God's love, incarnate in the Heart of his Son, who continues his work of love in this world, calling for our heart's response, our return of love. Notwithstanding the demands such would entail, a renewal of the spirituality of the Heart to the love of Christ, could be a significant form of "the new evangelization," indeed, the only form truly significant.²⁷

²⁶ Hugo and Karl Rahner, middle two of seven children in a college professor's family, were born and raised in the Black Forest of West Germany, Hugo in 1900 in Baden and Karl in 1904 in Freiburg. Hugo entered the Jesuit novitiate at Feldkirch at 19, and Karl followed at 18, in 1922. After studies in Pullach, Valkenburg and Innsbruck, and ordination in '29 and '32, their priestly lives were spent almost entirely in the theology departments of the Universities of Innsbruck and Munich. Hugo's field was patrology and church history, but he soon became world-reknowned as an authority in Ignatian spirituality. Karl, a dogmatic theologian, spent the war years doing pastoral work in Vienna and Bavaria, served as a theological adviser, to the Second Vatican council and, in addition to his teaching and lecturing, produced over four thousand written works, covering almost every significant theological topic. Karl died in Innsbruck in 1984, sixteen years after Hugo's death in Munich in 1968. For selections from their writings, see Note K, page 85.

²⁷ The impetus for a "new evangelization" unquestionably comes from Vatican Two and more recently from the 1974 Synod of Bishops on Evangelization in the Modern World. The document

But there is a second reason, perhaps a more powerful one, for the resistance that devotion to the Heart of Jesus has encountered from the beginning: it is that this spirituality, to be lived and to take shape, must be concretized in practices, considered as too novel at the time of the first apostles of the "munus suavissimum" and today considered outdated and beset with theological ambiguities. The reticence the message of Paray encountered in the Society from the beginning concerns less the

it produced, EVANGELII NUNTIANDI, states in No. 52: "This first proclamation is addressed especially to those who have never heard the Good News of Jesus Christ, or to children. However, as a result of the frequent situations of dechristianization in our day, it also proves equally necessary for innumerable people who have been baptized but who live quite outside Christian life, for simple people who have a certain faith but an imperfect knowledge of the foundations of that faith, for intellectuals who feel the need to know Jesus Christ in a light different from the instruction they received as children, and for many others." It concludes, No. 80, "Let us preserve our fervour of spirit, the delightful and comforting joy of evangelizing, even when it is with tears that we must do so... may the world of our time, which is searching, sometimes with anguish, sometimes with hope, be enabled to receive the Good News not from evangelizers who are dejected, discouraged, impatient or anxious, but from ministers of the Gospel whose lives glow with fervor, who have first received the joy of Christ and are willing to risk their lives so that the Kingdom may be proclaimed and his church established in the midst of the world." John Paul II has made this new evangelization one of the cornerstones of his itinerant pontificate, stressing especially the need for a re-evangelization of the secularized cultures of Christian Europe and a renewed effort in Latin America on the occasion the fifth centennial of the first preaching of the Gospel in that continent.

spirituality of the Heart of Jesus than the practices of this devotion.²⁸

In the letter he sent the Jesuits from Paray-le-Monial, John Paul II, after presenting the spirituality of the Heart of Jesus, concretely recommends the monthly practice of the First Friday: "Expressing itself in particular through the practice of the holy hour, confession and communion on the first Friday of the month, devotion to the Heart of Jesus has encouraged generations of Christians to pray more and to participate more frequently in the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist. Those are ways still appropriate for proposing to the faithful of today."²⁹

²⁸ For an objective listing of the more common theological difficulties cited with regard to the practices of devotion to the Sacred Heart, see Richard Gutzwiller's essay, "The Opposition", pp 1-15 of HEART OF THE SAVIOR, edited by Josef Stierli. Some of these difficulties: confusion with regard to the object of the devotion (the bodily heart? The heart of the mystical Body? the love of Christ? physical Heart as symbol of love? Divinity of Christ, along with human soul and physical heart?); S H as manifestation of Jesus rather than the Father; concentration on the sorrowing heart of Our Lord (who is in glory, incapable of suffering in body or soul); scriptural difficulties with the limitations inherent in concentrating on S H language and imagery; the risks of producing a melancholic, pessimistic, escapist attitude, or an individualistic, egocentric frame of mind; failure to incorporate properly and definitively the cult of the S H into the liturgy; rigid fidelity to traditional forms and values of the cult which don't permit evolution to newer theological needs and developments.

²⁹ John Paul II's letter to Jesuits, Note D, page 53.

This insistence on a popular practice has surprised and even irritated some persons. Still, John Paul II is content to affirm that a renewed spirituality of the Heart of Jesus must express itself in practices. Without imposing the words or the images, the form or mode of expression, he retains in a long list of practices only what is essential: more assiduous prayer to know better, beginning from the heart, the interior riches of the Heart of Christ by means of a generous participation in the sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist, so as to unite oneself to the Heart of Jesus in his acts of offering and reparation.

Here we recall the words of Father Pedro Arrupe: "The Society needs the dynamism contained in this symbol and in the reality that it proclaims: the love of the Heart of Christ. Perhaps what we need is an attitude of ecclesial humility, to accept what the Supreme Pontiffs, the General Congregations and the Generals of the Society have incessantly repeated."

From the beginning, the devotion at Paray-le-Monial until today, the specific problem of the image of the heart has remained the ultimate question on which many Jesuits disagree. There have not been lacking attempts on the part of well intentioned and competent Jesuits to maintain divine love as the essential of the devotion, but without the "heart." In the Church can we not profess in a particular manner the merciful love of God without always turning explicitly to the Heart of Christ? But Father Arrupe invited us not to be presumptions and consider ourselves superior to a devotion expressed in a symbol or in a graphic representation of it. He did not want the Society to withdraw even further from a popular pastoral reality which is frequently reborn before our eyes as spectators. "You keep on saying so often that the poor have taught you more than many books; learn from them, then, this very simple lesson: acknowledge my love in my heart."³⁰

³⁰ Father Arrupe, February '81, Note C, page 51.

The entire problem of the indispensable image of the Heart of Jesus has been summed up very well in a text scarcely suspect of being devotional, namely, decree 4 of the 32nd General Congregation: "For our own sake, as much as for the sake of our contemporaries, we must find a new language, a new set of symbols, that will enable us to leave our fallen idols behind and rediscover the true God: The God who, in Jesus Christ, chose to share our human pilgrimage and make our human destiny irrevocably his own. To live our lives "in memory of Jesus" requires of us this creative effort of faith."³¹

To what does the letter John Paul II sent us from Paray-le-Monial invite us if not to this creative effort which, faithfully reflecting biblical language, will resolutely focus on the heart in a spiritual approach centered on the mystery of Love reaching our to modern man? The apostolic energy of the Society thus stimulated will constitute in its turn a renewed exercise of the munus suavissimum.

REPARATION

"I call to mind the history of the subject I am to contemplate: here it is..." the, moment when the apostolic body of the Society as such discovered the devotion of the Heart of the Saviour. In 1766, the General at that time, Father Lorenzo Ricci, aided by Father Dominic Calvi and his incredible zeal for the munus suavissimum obtained authorization to celebrate the feast of the Sacred Heart. On June 3, 1767, during the very painful period through which the Society was then passing, Father Ricci invited the entire Society to find refuge in the Heart of Jesus - "in no other

³¹ 32nd G.C. 1975, Decree 4, No. 26. Note B.4, page 46.

place can it rest more securely." If Father Ricci recognized that much of the responsibility for the persecution it was suffering rested on the Society itself because of its infidelity to the interior life and its proper spirit, he also saw in the sufferings of Jesuits a participation in the passion of Christ, continued today in his humanity. The Society is united to the Heart of Jesus, whose love is being rejected.³²

Later, Father John Baptist Roothaan would recall, in a letter addressed to the Society in 1848, that the providential rebirth of the Society in Prussia and in White Russia, while suppressed throughout the rest of the world, signified its participation in the

³² Lorenzo Ricci was 53 when he was elected the eighteenth General of the Society of Jesus in 1757, fifteen years before the Suppression. A Florentine noble, he was an outstanding professor of rhetoric at the colleges in Siena and Rome before his assignment as spiritual father and professor of theology at the Roman College. Never a superior before his election as General of twenty-three thousand Jesuits, he had been Secretary of the Society for two years prior to his election and was well aware of the antipathy towards the Society which had for decades been forging a strong political coalition around Europe. Jesuits were expelled or imprisoned, first in Portugal and its colonies in 1759, then disbanded in France in 1763, and overnight in Spain on April 2, 1767, and in its colonies the following summer. Through it all, Ricci was a steady source of counsel and consolation to superiors and their communities struggling to best and finally simply survive the storm. Demands for the total suppression of the Society pressured the Pope elected in 1769, Clement XIV, and he finally capitulated in July, 1773. In the name of the Society, Ricci accepted the Pope's decision in the spirit of obedience. He died a prisoner in Castle Sant'Angelo on November 24, 1775. Parts of his last letters to the Society, can be found in Note L, page 96.

death and the resurrection of the Lord, to which his pierced heart is ever the witness.³³

Contemplating the wounded Heart of Christ, all who bear the name of Christian are aware of their shameful solidarity in sin with those whose indifference and rejection they share. But, since the wounded heart does not signify the sacralization of sorrow but rather the sanctification of suffering by love, our reaction - our love given in return - expresses itself in different attitudes, according to the vocation and the mission of each.

For some, it will be participation in the death agony of the

³³ Jan Roothaan was elected in 1829 the twenty-first Superior General of the Society of Jesus, which had been restored by Pope Pius VII in 1814. He served as General for twenty-four years. Born in Amsterdam in 1784, at 18 he entered the Jesuit novitiate at Dunaburg in Russia, where, with papal approval, the Jesuit Province continued to exist during the years of the Suppression. Teaching and pastoral work in Latvia after his ordination, the same in Switzerland at Brig after the restoration of the Society and its expulsion from Russia, Rector of the recently established school and community in Turin were his duties prior to being elected General. His able administration placed the solid foundations for the rebirth of a healthy Society in all the sectors of its former strength: spirituality, education, pastoral commitment, foreign missions, academic specialization. Simultaneously, he confronted firmly the unceasing opposition from old enemies and new, in situations as grave as those which had destroyed the Society a half century before. He died at the Gesù in Rome in 1853. His letter on devotion to the Sacred Heart, which Father Kolvenbach paraphrases here (numbers two and three) was written to the Society in June, 1848: I. Reasons for fostering the devotion. II. The way to practice it. III. Lessons the S H teaches us. IV. Final exhortation.

Lord. For others, paschal joy and a look of hope capable of assuming and integrating all that is incomprehensible in the existential agony of men. For still others it will be the ardent faith which can build up the civilization of the Heart of Christ on the ruins accumulated through hatred and violence. It is especially this last attitude which John Paul II has characterized as "the true meaning of the reparation demanded by the Heart of the Saviour."³⁴

In this time of hatred and violence, of injustice and discrimination, the reparation due to the Lord is authentic only if it integrates concern for the poor, promotion of justice, love for the little ones, respect for life. The word reparation, so often rejected today, is bound historically to the early Christian concept of a return of love; this giving love for love, which is the grace proper to the Contemplation for Attaining Love of the Spiritual Exercises, is an answer to the question posed by love, the love of Christ on the cross, whom we have pierced: "What should I do for Christ?" In Ignatian spirituality it is the grace-filled impulse of repentance that opens one up to compassion. This movement will be impossible for us without attaining love, without coming to the love of the Heart of our Saviour.

In reducing the mystery of love exclusively to only one attitude or only one form, we fail to appreciate the global nature of the act of reparation as a true response of love stirred up by love in a world of sin. When the Holy Father asks us "to find the most suitable means of presenting and practising (this devotion) so that contemporary man, with his own particular mentality and sensitivity, may discover there the true answer to his questions and expectations," the Society sees itself invited to reinculturate reparation on the foundations of the Contemplation for Attaining

³⁴ John Paul II, letter to Jesuits, Note D. page 53.

Love. One is doing nothing new in calling Jesuits once again to the munus suavissimum in terms of a sane theology of liberation from sin and from death, introducing the response of love in return for love, reparation and restoration -in the pauline sense - of the image of the love of God in man.

SOLEMN ACCEPTANCE OF THE MUNUS SUAVISSIMUM

"I call to mind the history of the subject I am to contemplate: Here it is..." the 23rd General Congregation which in 1883 solemnly accepted in the name of the entire apostolic body of the Society, with a grateful heart, the munus suavissimum of propagating the devotion of the Sacred Heart, "devotion to the divine heart."³⁵

This was the period of great public consecrations, celebrated in a Christian context, by which the Church tried with all the means at her disposal to revive among all the baptized the fervor and the zeal of the devotion to the Sacred Heart. Beyond a certain verbal inflation and ceremonial pomp, to consecrate oneself is to recognize solemnly and as an apostolic body the mystery of the opened side. Conscious of having been born from the wound of Christ, the Church intoned a chant of praise and recognition. It was in this spirit that the Society also offered itself "to be consecrated in the truth that is the Heart of Jesus." Reparation is followed by consecration, which means all our desires to insert ourselves into the work of salvation, into the redemption of our Lord. The words can change; it makes no difference in fact if one prefers "to surrender oneself" or to "make a gift of oneself." The reality always remains that of the Take and Receive, asking to be placed

³⁵ 23rd G.C. 1883, Decree 46. 1883. See Note B.1, page 43.

with the Son, the prayer par excellence of the Jesuit of today as of yesterday.

Such prayer goes beyond the limits of the Society, and becomes the movement, so widespread in the entire Church, of the Apostleship of Prayer. In 1915 the 26th General Congregation solemnly linked promotion of devotion to the Heart of Jesus to the Apostleship of Prayer.³⁶ Already Saint Margaret Mary in a letter of 1689 to Father Croiset had suggested joining an association of prayer to this devotion. The ideal was realized a century and a half later by Father Gautrelet and especially by Father Ramière.³⁷

³⁶ 26th. G.C. 1915, Decree 21. See Note B.2, page 44.

³⁷ Fathers F.X. Gautrelet and Henri Ramière, S.J., were spiritual father and philosophy student at the Jesuit house of studies in Vals near Le Puy in southern France in the early 1840s, when the Toulouse Province was initiating a mission in Madurai, India. Zeal for the new mission created such distractions from their studies that Father Gautrelet urged the students to offer their studies daily to the Lord as prayer for missionaries around the world. The members of the community took up the idea and preached it throughout the area, and the Apostleship of Prayer was born. Authorized by the Bishop of Le Puy, it was little known outside France until in 1855, when Father Gautrelet invited Father Ramière, who had recently returned to Vals as professor, to take charge. He did so with gusto for thirty years, along with his other regular teaching and writing assignments. When he died in 1884 there were 35,000 centers around the world, and eventually seventy three national MESSENGERS OF THE SACRED HEART, extension of the one he founded in Toulouse in 1861, provided on-going formation in the spirituality of the Apostleship of Prayer. Popes have repeatedly confided the AP to the Society for orientation; the Jesuit General is ex officio Director General of the AP. In 1968, the Statutes were adapted to the norms of Vatican

The work of reparation, the civilization of love, requires those consecrated to allow themselves to act under the movement of the Spirit, open to the spontaneity and gratuity of the human response to the love of the Heart of the Creator and Redeemer. The Society and each of its members are becoming aware of the fact - and it becomes clearer day by day - that they cannot attain an end no matter how noble it is, nor defend a cause no matter how just, nor perform a service no matter how generous, unless it be in response to the love of Christ. They consecrate themselves to the cause of the love of his Heart. It is because of his consecration for us that each of us consumes himself in his loving consecration for the Kingdom. Outside of this perspective of love, we must admit there is no heart.

May he who by divine choice took up the munus suavissimum, Claude La Colombière, inspire again today and for the future this consecration of the Society, which is born of the intimate knowledge of the Heart of Jesus, a knowledge of connaturality, a knowledge by slow impregnation: "Sacred Heart of Jesus, teach me forgetfulness of self, since this is the only way to find entrance into you... Teach me what I ought to do to come to the purity of your love which you have inspired me to desire. Lord, do your will in me. I know that I oppose it, but I sincerely wish not to. It is yours to do, divine Heart of Jesus Christ."³⁸

Whoever in the adventure of his religious experience has experimented the incredible height and depth, length and breadth of the love of Christ the Saviour, can never cease to repeat to himself and say to those he meets along the way that the Heart of Jesus is the true center and final truth of life and death, of love and hatred.

Two. Excerpts from the Statutes are given in Note M, page 101.

³⁸ See Note F.1, page 61, for full text of this prayer.

He says and repeats, in the oriental fashion of prayer, "Heart of Jesus, have mercy of me." He says this on turning toward the pierced and loving heart which loves us in hopeless darkness, toward the heart which is the very Heart of God, and which frees us without exhausting the paschal mystery of God's incomprehensible love for us, love become irrevocable in the Heart of Jesus: There, in this heart we are loved, and there also in this heart, we dare to hope, all are united in love.

May the Virgin Mary, on this 2 July 1988, manifest to our Society in its relation to the Heart of Jesus, the kind attention and maternal truth which she has shown so marvellously through these three centuries.

NOTES

NOTE A

*From a Letter of
Sister Margaret Mary Alacoque
to Mother de Saumaise,
July, 1688 (Letter 89).*

...I must tell you that I had the good fortune of spending all day on the feast of the Visitation before the Blessed Sacrament. My Sovereign deigned to favor His poor servant with several special graces from His loving Heart. He drew me into Himself and made me experience things I cannot express.

He showed me a very high place, spacious and wonderfully beautiful, in the midst of which was set up a throne of flames and within it the lovable Heart of Jesus with Its wound. From this shot forth flames so luminous and glowing that the whole place was lighted up and warmed by them.

The Blessed Virgin was on one side and Saint Francis de Sales and the saintly Father La Colombière on the other. The Daughters of the Visitation were there with their good angels beside them, seeming to hold each as a heart. The Blessed Virgin invited us with these words: "Come, my well-beloved daughters, draw near, for I want to make you the trusted guardians of this precious treasure which the divine Sun of justice formed within the virginal soil of my heart, where It lay hidden nine months. After that It was manifested to men. But they did not recognize Its value and contemned It because they saw It mixed and covered with the clay of their humanity. Onto It the eternal Father had cast all the filth and corruption of our sins. These He caused to be purified away for thirty-three years by the burning flames of Its charity.

But seeing that men, far from enriching themselves and making use of so precious a treasure for the purpose for which It was given them but rather trying to set It at naught and exterminate It, if possible, from the face of the earth, the eternal Father, by an excess of mercy, made use of their malice only to render yet more useful this precious gold. By the blows they gave It in His Passion they have made of It priceless money, stamped with the image of the divinity, so that with It they might pay their debts and carry on the great business of their eternal salvation."

This Queen of goodness continued to speak. She said to them, pointing to this divine Heart: "This is the precious treasure especially revealed to you because of the tender love my Son has for your Institute. He loves it and considers it His dear Benjamin, and for that reason wants you to have a greater share in this inheritance than all others. They must not only enrich themselves with this treasure but do all they can to put this precious money in circulation. They must distribute it lavishly, trying to enrich the whole world with it without fear of depleting it. For the more of it they take the more of it there will be left to take."

Then turning to the good Father La Colombière, this Mother of goodness said: "As for you, faithful servant of My divine Son, you have a great share in this precious Treasure. For if it is given the Daughters of the Visitation to know and distribute it to others, it is reserved to the Fathers of your Society to show and make known its utility and value so that people may profit from It by receiving it with the respect and gratitude due so great a benefit. In proportion as they give Him this pleasure, this divine Heart, source of blessings and graces, will shower them so abundantly on the works of their ministry that they will produce fruits far beyond their labors and expectations. And this, too, for their own personal salvation and perfection"...

NOTE B

GENERAL CONGREGATIONS

1. Twenty-Third G.C., 1883, Decree 46.

As a happy and auspicious close to the labours of the Congregation, a request was put forward asking for the furtherance and promotion amongst us of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. The opinion of the Deputy Fathers having been read out, all the Fathers rose as one to their feet, and unanimously acclaimed the following declarations.

That it should be definitely laid down that the Society of Jesus with the greatest pleasure and deepest gratitude accepts and assumes the most pleasant charge entrusted to her by our Lord Jesus Christ of practising, fostering and propagating devotion to His most Divine Heart.

That it should be laid down that the Feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus should be placed among the more solemn feasts in the Society, and that each year it should be celebrated with all possible devotion; also that on that day the act of consecration, prescribed a few years ago by our Very Reverend Father General and by which the Society wholly dedicated herself to the most Sacred Heart of Jesus, be renewed in all our houses.

That it should be resolved that on the 5th of December next year, the centenary of the day when the Prima Primaria Sodality of Our Lady was first established, the Society should, just as she solemnly dedicated and consecrated herself wholly to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, solemnly dedicate and wholly consecrate herself likewise to the most Pure Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whom

the Society has always venerated, venerates still and will ever venerate as a most sweet Mother.

2. Twenty-Sixth G.C., 1915, Decree 21.

The Fathers of the XXVI General Congregation, recalling to mind that solemn declaration of the XXIII Congregation in which they devoutly professed that "the Society of Jesus had with the greatest pleasure and deepest gratitude accepted and assumed the most sweet charge entrusted to her by our Lord Jesus Christ of practising, fostering and propagating devotion to His most Sacred Heart", and taught by experience that the Apostleship of Prayer is most suitable for the furthering of this devotion, they once more, on the very threshold of the second century of the restored Society, ratified the Society's utmost readiness to embrace all that concerns the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and expressed their earnest desire that all Ours, Superiors in particular, should consider as strongly recommended to themselves the fostering and spreading by all means possible of this pious Association of the Sacred Heart.

3. Thirty-First G.C., 1966, Decree 15.

The Second Vatican Council has shed a brilliant new light upon the mystery of the Church, but this mystery is perceptible only to eyes directed in faith to the eternal love of the Incarnate Word. For Christ, who "thought with a human mind, acted by human choice, and loved with a human heart," sacrificed Himself in human love that He might win as His bride the Church which was born from His side as He slept on the cross.

The Church finds a splendid symbol for this love, at once human and divine, in the wounded Heart of Christ, for the blood and water which flowed from it aptly represent the inauguration and growth of the Church and solicit our response of love. Devotion to the Sacred Heart, as proposed by the Church, pays

tribute to "that love which God has shown us through Jesus, and is also the exercise of the love we have for God and for our fellow--men," effecting that interpersonal exchange of love which is the essence of Christian and religious life. This is why devotion to the Sacred Heart is regarded as an excellent and tested form of that dedication "to Christ Jesus, king and center of all hearts, which our age urgently needs, as Vatican II has insisted." This should be the concern of the Society above all, both among its own members and in its apostolic ministry, not only because of our long and venerable tradition but also because of the very recent recommendation of the Roman Pontiff.

For these reasons the General Congregation readily embraces the wishes of the Supreme Pontiff; it recalls the decrees of earlier congregations concerning devotion to the Heart of Christ and urges all members of the Society to "spread ever more widely a love for Sacred Heart of Jesus and to show all men by word and example that the renewal of minds and morals, as well as the increased vitality and effectiveness of all religious institutes in the Church, which are called for by the Second Vatican Council, ought to draw their chief inspiration and vigor from this source. In this way we shall more effectively make the love of Christ, which finds its symbol in the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the center of our own spiritual lives, proclaim with greater effect before all men the unfathomable riches of Christ, and foster the primacy of love in the Christian life.

It is no secret, however, that devotion to the Sacred Heart, at least in some places, is today less appealing to Jesuits and to the faithful in general. The reason for this is perhaps to be found in outmoded devotional practices. Therefore our theologians, men experienced in spirituality and pastoral theology, and promoters of the apostolate of the Sacred Heart of Jesus are urgently asked to search out ways of presenting this devotion that are better suited to various regions and persons. For, while preserving the essential

nature of the devotion, it would seem imperative to set aside unnecessary accretions and adapt it, to contemporary needs, making it more intelligible to the men of our time and more attuned to their sensibilities.

The General Congregation also recommends that Father General encourage these studies. He will then be in a position to assist the whole Society to a better renewal of its religious and apostolic spirit.

4. Thirty-second G.C., 1975, Decree 4.

26. The secularization of man and the world takes different forms in different groups, classes, ages and parts of the world, and in all its forms offers challenges to the preaching of the Gospel to which there is no ready-made answer.

On the one hand, certain false images of God which prop up and give an aura of legitimacy to unjust social structures are no longer acceptable. Neither can we admit those more ambiguous images of God which appear to release man from his inalienable responsibilities. We feel this just as much as our contemporaries do; even more, perhaps, given our commitment to proclaim the God who has revealed himself in Christ. For our own sake, just as much as for the sake of our contemporaries, we must find a new language, a new set of symbols, that will enable us to leave our fallen idols behind us and rediscover the true God: the God who, in Jesus Christ, chose to share our human pilgrimage and make our human destiny irrevocably his own. To live our lives "in memory of Him" requires of us this creative effort of faith.

57. The ministry of the Spiritual Exercises is of particular importance in this regard. A key element in the pedagogy of the Exercises is that its aim is to remove the barriers between God and

man so that the Spirit speaks directly with man. Inherent in this Ignatian practice of spiritual direction is a deep respect for the exercitant as he is and for the culture, background and tradition that have gone into making him what he is. Moreover, the pedagogy of the Exercises is a pedagogy of discernment. It teaches a man to discover for himself where God is calling him, what God wants him to do, as he is, where he is, among his own people.

Decree 11.

43. The 32nd General Congregation confirms and recommends all that is contained in the decrees of the 31st General Congregation concerning devotion to the Sacred Heart and Our Lady, as they pertain to both the spiritual life of Ours and the apostolate. In the promotion of these devotions, account should be taken of the differences which exist in various parts of the world.

5. Thirty-Third G.C., 1983, Decree 1.

14. The Society possesses a spirituality which gives us the way to live day by day as companions of Jesus. That way has been clearly spelled out in the booklets "Readings from the Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Jesuit Religious Life". The 32nd General Congregation is convinced that the reading and practical application of these excerpts will greatly help toward the renewal we seek and give us that "hope which does not deceive" as we face the demands of our times.

JESUIT RELIGIOUS LIFE, PART II.

9. The cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and devotion to Mary retain all their value. We should use these forms of spirituality, while taking account of the differences which exist in various parts of the world.

NOTE C

*Conclusion of Father Arrupe's
address and letter
"ROOTED AND GROUNDED IN LOVE"
February 6, 1981.*

Let me end now greeting you all, as well as every Jesuit who will read these pages, with that wonderful Pauline formula: Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love undying.

Having reached this point, when we see that love is the very core of Christian - and therefore Ignatian - spirituality, I feel somewhat obliged to add a final consideration. What I have said so far may be synthesized as follows:

1. Love (service) for our brothers, for Christ, for the Father, is the single and indivisible object of our charity.
2. Love resolves the dichotomies and tensions that can arise in an imperfectly understood Ignatian spirituality. For instance:

The tension between faith and justice is resolved in charity. Faith has to be informed by charity, "fides informata caritate" and so too must justice, which thus becomes a higher form of justice, it is charity that calls for justice.

The tension between one's own and one's neighbour's perfection. Both should be the perfection of one and the same charity which tends to keep growing, as well intensively in itself, as extensively in the spread to, and perfection of, our fellow men.

The tension between prayer and active apostolic work is resolved in the "contemplative in action", in seeking God in all things (the Contemplation for Attaining Love).

The tension among the three religious vows disappears when their motivation and observance are inspired and impelled by charity (the same can be said of the fourth vow).

The tension between discernment and obedience. Charity should be present both at the origin and in the final goal of discernment: the presence of this "agape" enables us to discern God's will (Rm 12:2), it is an intuition of charity (Ep 3:18-19; Col 2:2). Obedience similarly is an expression of that same divine will. Both superior and subject ought to be animated by charity, with the intuitiveness that is proper to love.

3. Love is the solution to the apostolic problems created by the wickedness (anomia) of today's world.

4. Love is the very depth of the personality and work of Jesus Christ, that which gives unity to it all.

5. Love is also the deepest element of our life and activity, since with Jesus Christ we share one common Spirit (the Person, who is love), who makes us cry out like Christ, Abba, Father!

Love, then, understood in all its depth and breadth (both charity and mercy), is the synthesis of the whole life of Jesus Christ, and should be that of the Jesuit's whole life too. Now, the natural symbol of love is the heart. The Heart of Christ, therefore, is the natural symbol for representing and inspiring our personal and institutional spirituality, leading us to the very source and abyss of the human-divine love of Jesus Christ.

And so, at the close of this address, I would like to tell the Society something that I believe I should not pass over in silence. From my noviceship on, I have always been convinced that in the so-called devotion to the Sacred Heart there is summed up a symbolic expression of the very core of the Ignatian spirit and an extraordinary power - *ultra quam speraverint* - both for personal perfection and for apostolic fruitfulness. This conviction is still mine today.

It may have surprised some that during my generalate I have said relatively little on this topic. There was a reason for it, which we might call pastoral. In recent decades the very phrase "the Sacred Heart" has not failed to provoke emotional and allergic reactions in some, partly perhaps as a reaction to forms of presentation and terminology linked with tastes of a bygone age. So I thought it advisable to let some time go by, in the certainty that that attitude, more emotional than rational, would gradually change.

I cherished, and still do cherish, the conviction that the immense value of so deep a spirituality - which the Popes have termed excellent, which employs so universal and so human a biblical symbol and a word, "heart," that is a genuine source-word (*Urwort*) - would before long come back into usage. For this reason, much to my regret, I have spoken and written relatively little on this subject, although I have often mentioned it in private conversation with individuals and find in this devotion one of the most profound affective sources of my interior life.

As I bring to an end this series of conferences on the Ignatian charism, I could not but give the Society an explanation for this silence of mine, which I trust will be understood. And at the same time, I did not wish to draw the pall of silence over my deep conviction that all of us, as the Society of Jesus, should reflect and discern before Christ crucified what this devotion has meant

for the Society, and what it should mean even today. In today's circumstances, the world offers us challenges and opportunities that can be fully met only with the power of this love of the Heart of Christ.

A LAST MESSAGE TO THE SOCIETY

This is the message that I wanted to communicate to you. There is no question of seeking to force or impose anything in an area where love precisely is involved. But I do wish to say: Give thought to this message, and ponder on what presents itself to your mind. It would be sad if, having so great a treasure in our spirituality, even our institutional spirituality, we were to leave it aside for largely specious reasons.

If you want my advice, I would say to you, after 54 years of living in the Society and almost 16 of being its General, that there is a tremendous power latent in this devotion to the Heart of Christ. Each of us should discover it for himself - if he has not already done so - and then, entering deeply into it, apply it to his personal life in whatever way the Lord may suggest and grant. There is here an extraordinary grace that God offers us.

The Society needs the "dynamism" contained in this symbol and in the reality that it proclaims: the love of the Heart of Christ. Perhaps what we need is an act of ecclesial humility, to accept what the Supreme Pontiffs, the General Congregations and the Generals of the Society have incessantly repeated. And yet, I am convinced that there could be few proofs of the spiritual renewal of the Society so clear as a widespread and vigorous devotion to the Heart of Jesus. Our apostolate would receive new strength and we would see its effects very soon, both in our personal lives and in our apostolic activities.

Let us not fall into the presumptuous temptation of

considering ourselves superior to a devotion that is expressed in a symbol or in a graphic representation of it. Let us not join the wise and prudent of this world from whom the Father keeps hidden his truths and mysteries, while he reveals them to those who are or make themselves little ones. Let us have that simplicity of heart which is the first condition for a profound conversion: "Unless you change and make yourselves like little children..." Those are Christ's words, and we might translate them, "If you want, as individuals and as a Society, to enter into the treasures of the Kingdom and to help build it up with an extraordinary effectiveness, make yourselves like the poor whom you wish to serve. You keep on saying so often that the poor have taught you more than many books; learn from them, then, this very simple lesson: acknowledge my love in my Heart."

NOTE D

***Letter of Fr. Kolvenbach
to the whole Society.***

Dear Brothers in Christ,

The Holy Father Pope John Paul II has today graciously visited the chapel of Blessed Claude La Colombière. On the occasion of this visit, he handed me a letter for the whole Society, which I am happy to communicate to you. The letter stresses that "the desire to know the Lord intimately and to speak heart to heart with him is, thanks to the Spiritual Exercises, characteristic of the Ignatian spiritual and apostolic dynamism, totally at the service of the love of the Heart of God."

I have taken this opportunity of the Holy Father's visit to Paray-le-Monial to express directly to him the Society's gratitude for the continuous interest he has been showing, in many ways and many different circumstances, in our spiritual and apostolic renewal.

Let us continue to pray for ourselves and for each other for an even deeper personal love of Christ.

Fraternally yours in Christ,

Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J.
Superior General

Paray-Le-Monial, October 5, 1986

*Letter of the Holy Father to
Father Peter-Hans Kolvenbach,
Superior General to the Society of Jesus.*

As part of my pilgrimage to Paray-le-Monial, I wanted to come and pray in the chapel where the tomb of Blessed Claude La Colombière is venerated. He was the "faithful servant," whom the Lord, in his providential love, gave as spiritual director to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque. This is how he was led to be the first to spread her message. In just a few years of religious life and intense ministry, he revealed himself an exemplary son of the Society of Jesus and to him, as Saint Margaret Mary herself bears witness, Christ entrusted the mission of spreading the cult of his divine Heart.

I know with what generosity the Society of Jesus welcomed this admirable mission and with what zeal it has sought to accomplish it as perfectly as possible in the course of the last three centuries. But on this solemn occasion I want to exhort every member of the Society to promote with even greater zeal this devotion which corresponds more than ever to the expectations of our day.

In the 17th century, on the very threshold of the modern age, the Lord, in his Providence, wanted a powerful movement in favour of the devotion to the Heart of Christ, in the ways indicated in the revelations received by Saint Margaret Mary, to spread from Paray-le-Monial. But the essential elements of this devotion belong permanently to the spirituality of the Church throughout its history. From the very beginning the Church has contemplated the pierced heart of the crucified Christ from which came blood and water, the symbols of the sacraments which constitute the Church; and, in the heart of the Word incarnate, the Fathers of the Christian East and West saw the beginning of the whole work of our salvation, the

fruit of the love of the divine Redeemer, whose pierced heart is a particularly expressive symbol.

The desire to know the Lord intimately and to speak heart to heart with him is, thanks to the Spiritual Exercises, characteristic of the Ignatian spiritual and apostolic dynamism, totally at the service of the love of the Heart of God.

Vatican II, whilst recalling that Christ, the Word incarnate, "loved us with a human heart," assures us that "his message, far from diminishing man, serves his progress by bringing light, life and liberty, whilst, apart from him, nothing can satisfy the human heart" (cf. GAUDIUM ET SPES, nn. 21 and 22). In the Heart of Christ the human heart comes to know the true and only meaning of life and destiny, to understand the value of an authentically Christian life, to protect itself from certain perversions, to unite filial love for God with love for the neighbour. In this way - and this is the true meaning of the reparation demanded by the Heart of the Saviour - on the ruins accumulated through hatred and violence, can be built the civilization of love so greatly desired, the kingdom of the Heart of Christ.

For these reasons I am most anxious that you pursue with perseverance the diffusion of the true cult of the Heart of Christ and that you be ever ready to bring effective help to my brothers in the episcopate in order to promote this cult everywhere, taking care to find the most suitable means of presenting and practising it, so that contemporary man, with his own particular mentality and sensitivity, may discover there the true answer to his questions and expectations.

As last year, on the occasion of the Congress of the Apostleship of Prayer, I entrusted very specially to you this work so intimately linked to devotion to the Sacred heart, today again, during my pilgrimage to Paray-le-Monial, I beseech you to deploy every possible effort to accomplish ever more perfectly the mission

which Christ himself entrusted to you, the spreading of the cult of his divine heart.

The abundant spiritual fruits which come from devotion to the Heart of Jesus are widely recognized. Expressing itself in particular through the practice of the Holy Hour, confession and communion on the first Fridays of the month, it has encouraged generations of Christians to pray more and to participate more frequently in the sacraments of Reconciliation and the Eucharist. Those are ways still appropriate for proposing to the faithful of today.

May the maternal protection of the Virgin Mary help you: it was on the occasion of her feast of the Visitation that this mission was entrusted to you in 1688; and in all your apostolic efforts, may the Apostolic Blessing which I give with all my heart from Paray-leMonial to the whole Society of Jesus be a source of strength and comfort to you!

John Paul II

Paray-Le-Monial, October 5, 1986

NOTE E

Letter of Father Dezza to Major Superiors on the Third Centenary of the death of Blessed Claude La Colombière.

Reverend and dear Father,

This coming February 15 marks the third centenary of the death of Blessed Claude La Colombière. I consider it my duty to invite the whole Society to honor the memory of this exemplary brother Jesuit and zealous apostle of the devotion to the Heart of Jesus.

Blessed Claude La Colombière remains a compelling example of fidelity to the charism of the Jesuit vocation, indeed among the most luminous and the most lovable in our history. Even though he entered the Society "with a horrible aversion,"³⁹ he later wrote from London in 1678 that he had found in religious obedience "all the happiness of his life."⁴⁰ He looked on his vow of fidelity to the Constitutions and Rules of the Society, which he made at the age of thirty-three, as "stepping into a kingdom of freedom and peace."⁴¹ In his lifetime, as is well known, he was not untouched by persecution, enjoying the distinction of being a confessor of the Faith; and he has a firm place in the history of Christian spirituality as the apostle of boundless trust in God. As the Spiritual director of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, he became

³⁹ Letter 70. Cf. *Oeuvres completes*, Grenoble, 1900-1902.

⁴⁰ Letter 105.

⁴¹ *Spiritual retreat of 1674*, II, B, 6 to 13.

convinced that he had received from the Lord the mission of laboring to establish the devotion to the Heart of Jesus and he threw himself into the work with dedicated energy.

In God's Providence the spirituality of the Society is designed to deepen the love of the Lord which finds its expression in the mystery of the Heart of Christ. Right from the days of St. Ignatius, the Society's spirituality had raised up outstanding Jesuit apostles of this devotion. Thus the involvement of Blessed Claude in the promotion of devotion to the Heart of Jesus has left its mark on the history of the Society.

More recently Pope Paul VI, in his address of November 16, 1966, asked the Fathers of the Thirty-First General Congregation: "Will not the devotion which you show to the Sacred Heart be still a most effective instrument in contributing to the spiritual and moral renewal of this world that the Second Vatican Council has urged, and to accomplishing fruitfully the mission entrusted to you to confront atheism?"⁴²

To this question the Congregation responded in Decree 15 with the words: "...the General Congregation readily embraces the wishes of the Supreme Pontiff; it recalls the decrees of earlier Congregations concerning devotion to the Heart of Christ and urges all members of the Society to "spread ever more widely a love for the Sacred Heart of Jesus and to show all men by word and example that the renewal of minds and morals, as well as the increased vitality and effectiveness of all religious institutes in the Church, which are called for by the Second Vatican Council, ought to draw their chief inspiration and vigor from this source." In this way we shall more effectively make the love of Christ, which finds its symbol in the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the center

⁴² AR XIV, 1005.

of our own spiritual lives, proclaim with greater effect before all men the unfathomable riches of Christ, and foster the primacy of love in the Christian life."⁴³ With a sense of contemporary needs the decree goes on to urge that this devotion be presented in a way that "makes it more intelligible to the men of our time and more attuned to their sensibilities."

The Thirty-Second General Congregation also confirmed and recommended this devotion among the Guidelines in Decree 11.⁴⁴ Furthermore, we cannot forget the words of Father General in his recent talk **ROOTED AND GROUNDED IN LOVE**. He paraphrases the words of Jesus in Matthew 18:3, in the following way: "If you want, as individuals and as a Society, to enter into the treasures of the Kingdom and to help build it up with an extraordinary effectiveness, make yourselves like the poor whom you wish to serve. You keep on saying so often that the poor have taught you more than many books; learn from them, then, this very simple lesson: acknowledge my love in my Heart."⁴⁵

A word of encouragement from an even higher authority comes from the present Holy Father in the Encyclical **DIVES IN MISERICORDIA**. Underscoring the urgency and decisive importance for the Church of today to proclaim and live the mercy of God, he describes "this drawing close to Christ in the mystery of His heart" as that which really matters on the ecclesial level for professing and venerating the mercy of God.⁴⁶

⁴³ AR XIV, 897.

⁴⁴ AR XVI, 405; Cf. "Jesuit Religious Life", p.79, n. 9.

⁴⁵ Rooted and grounded in love, AR XVIII, 504.

⁴⁶ **DIVES IN MISERICORDIA**, 13. AAS 72(1980) 1219.

I bring my brief letter to a close with confidence that the memory of Blessed Claude will help to renew in all of us this devotion which is so much the Society's own. Reports are arriving from various Provinces that plans are already under way for programs commemorating this centenary, with frequent mention of a fervent desire to see our Blessed soon inscribed in the list of the Saints. It will be the special concern of the Apostleship of Prayer to advance this cause by promotion of wider knowledge of Blessed Claude and devotion to him. For my part I most willingly invite all to pray to Blessed Claude La Colombière especially on this happy occasion, that through his intercession, the Society may receive from the Heart of Jesus abundant graces in this delicate moment of our history. We ask a particular blessing for the coming meeting of Provincials which is due to begin a few days after this centenary observance.

In union of prayers,

Paolo Dezza, S.J.
Del. Pont.

Rome, January 26, 1982

NOTE F

*From the published retreat notes
of Father La Colombière,
London, January 1677.*

1. OFFERING TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

This offering is made to honor the divine heart, seat of all virtues, source of all blessings, and retreat of all holy souls.

The principal virtues we propose to honor in him are these: First, an ardent love of God his Father, joined to the deepest possible reverence and humility. Second, an infinite patience with evil, deep sorrow and suffering for the sins with which he is burdened - the confidence of a gentle son blended with the confusion of a great sinner. Third, a sensitive compassion for our miseries, with immeasurable love. And although each of these sentiments is present in the highest possible degree, such is the unalterable equanimity of spirit produced by absolute conformity to the will of God that nothing that might happen, however contrary to his zeal or humility or love or any other of these dispositions could upset him.

These same sentiments still move this heart, especially the burning love for mankind. Always open to lavish every grace and blessing, he is eager to share his treasures with us, to give himself to us, disposed to receive us and serve as an asylum, a dwelling, a paradise on earth.

In return for all this he finds in the hearts of men only hardness and forgetfulness, only contempt and ingratitude. He

loves and he is not loved. His love isn't even acknowledged since we don't care to receive the gifts which bear witness to it, nor to listen to the tender and comforting declarations he would like to make to our heart.

To make reparation for so many outrages and such cruel ingratitude, most adorable and lovable Heart of Jesus, and to avoid falling into these same attitudes, as far as in my power I offer you my heart with all the movements of which it is capable. I give myself entirely to you. From this hour I desire, I think sincerely, to forget myself and all that concerns me and so remove the obstacles which would prevent my entering into the divine heart which you have opened to me. It is there I wish to live and die with your faithful servants, entirely penetrated and inflamed by your love.

I offer this heart all the merit, all the satisfaction of all the Masses, all the prayers and mortifications, all the religious practices and acts of zeal, humility, obedience and other virtues I shall practice till the last moment of my life. Not only to honor the Heart of Jesus and its dispositions, but that he might accept this complete gift of myself and dispose of it as he pleases, in favor of whomsoever he pleases. Having already offered the holy souls whatever in my actions is capable of satisfying divine justice, I desire that this be done according to the good pleasure of the Heart of Jesus.

This does not free me of the obligations for the Masses and prayer intentions which obedience determines, or from offering Mass for the poor or my brethren or friends who request it. But I would want to do so knowing that it is not mine to offer, that whatever I might practice of obedience or charity or other virtues are all of the Heart of Jesus, source of the force to exercise them. Without reserve, all belongs to him.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, teach me perfect forgetfulness of

self, since this is the only way to find entrance into you. As all I shall do belongs to you, grant that nothing I do be unworthy of you. Teach me what I must do to come to the purity of your love, in fulfillment of the desire you yourself have inspired in me. I have a great will to please you but an even greater inability to do so without the special light and help which I can only hope for from you.

Lord, do your will in me. I am well aware that I oppose it, even though I wish not to. It is yours to do, Divine Heart of Jesus Christ. To you alone the glory of my sanctification, if indeed I do become holy - this is as clear as day to me. But it would be a great glory for you, and this is the only reason I wish to perfect myself. Amen.

2. REFLECTIONS CONCERNING SISTER MARGARET MARY

God revealed this to the person who is, I have reason to believe from the graces he has given her, according to his heart. She explained it to me, and I obliged her to put it down in writing. I wish to write it down myself in my retreat journal, since it appears the good God wishes to make use of my feeble efforts in carrying out his designs.

"Being in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, one day during the octave (Corpus Christ) I received great graces from God's love. I was moved by the desire to make some return and give love for love. He told me, "You could not make me a greater return than to do what I have so often asked of you." Showing me his divine heart, he said, "behold the heart which has loved men so much, spared nothing, even to exhausting and consuming itself to prove its love. As thanks, I receive from most people only the ingratitude of indifference and irreverence, sacrilege and the

coldness shown me in this sacrament of love. What I feel the most is that hearts that are consecrated to me treat me so. That is why I ask you that the first Friday after the octave of Corpus Christ be a special feast to honor my heart, as a public act of reparation to make amends in its honor for the injuries it has received during the time it is exposed on the altars. I promise my heart will expand and pour abundantly the graces of its divine love on all who will render it this honor."

"But dear Lord, to whom are you speaking? To a weak creature and poor sinner whose very worthlessness would be the greatest obstacle to accomplishing what you want. You have so many generous persons to carry out your plans."

"Well, poor thing, haven't you noticed that I use the weak to confound the strong? That ordinarily it's the little ones and the poor in spirit that I use to reflect the splendor of my power, so that they attribute nothing to themselves?"

"Then give me the means to achieve what you desire."

"Go to my servant (Father La Colombière) and tell him in my name to do everything possible to establish this devotion and give my heart this pleasure, and not be discouraged by the difficulties he will encounter, which will certainly not be lacking. He must know that whoever totally distrusts himself and places his confidence only in me is all powerful."⁴⁷

⁴⁷ These two selections are from the Works of La Colombière, Part VI, 188 ff., and 125 ff. They can be found in Georges Guitton's life of La Colombière, "Perfect Friend", translated by William Young, on pages 158-159 and 164-165.

NOTE G

Some Prayer Experiences of Early Jesuits

1. ST. PETER CANISIUS (Pieter De Hondt)

Born in Nijmegen, the Netherlands, in 1521, Canisius studied in Cologne and entered the Jesuits at 22 after making the Exercises with Blessed Peter Faber in 1543. Ordained in 1546, he professed his final vows to St. Ignatius in Rome in 1549. A brilliant scholar, he was among the Jesuits sent as advisors to the Council of Trent.

Named Provincial of Upper Germany in 1556, he was also Papal legate to the German Bishops for the implementation of the Council's decisions. He turned out an endless flow of books, for the most part written to meet immediate practical needs. He was constantly on the move around Germany, Austria, Bohemia, Switzerland, and Italy, preaching, founding colleges, counselling bishops and encouraging Jesuits. During his busy life he served under five Jesuit Generals. He spent the last seventeen years of his life in Fribourg, Switzerland, where he had installed himself at the insistence of the populace to assist them in withstanding the pressures of the Calvinists of Geneva and Basel. He died there in 1597. He was canonized and declared a Doctor of the Church in 1925.

The Second Reading from the Office for the Feast of St. Peter Canisius recounts in his own words his mystical experience on September 4, 1548, in the Basilica of St. Peter's where he had gone to receive the apostolic blessing before setting out for Germany:

"Eternal High Priest, in your great goodness it pleased you

that I should seek from your Apostles confirmation and success for the apostolic blessing I had received. For pilgrims come to pray to them in the Vatican, and there by your power they work miracles. I experienced there a great consolation and the sense of the presence of your grace which was being offered to me through their intercession. They gave me their blessing, too, confirmed my mission to Germany and seemed to be promising me their good will as apostle of Germany. You know, Lord, how urgently and how often that day you entrusted Germany to me, telling me ever after to have her good at heart, and to wish to live and die on her behalf.

"Finally, my Saviour, I seemed to be gazing at the heart of your Sacred Body with my own eyes. It was as if you opened it to me and told me to drink from it as from a spring, inviting me to draw the waters of salvation from these springs of yours. I was filled with longing that the waters of faith, hope and charity should flow from your heart into me. I thirsted for poverty, chastity and obedience; I begged you to wash me all over and dress me in fine clothing. Then I dared to touch your beloved heart and bury my thirst in it; and you promised me a robe woven in three parts to cover my naked soul and help me greatly in my undertaking. Those three parts were peace, love and perseverance. Secure in the protection of this garment, I was confident that I would lack nothing, and that everything would turn out for your glory."

2. ST. FRANCIS BORGIA

Francis was born in the Borgia Palace in Valencia, Spain, in 1510, and at seventeen entered the court of Charles V at Valladolid. In 1529, he married Eleanor de Castro, lady-in-waiting to the Empress. During the next ten years they managed the domestic affairs of the royal palace. In 1539 Charles made him Viceroy of Catalonia and then, four years later after his father's

death, Duke of Gandia. When his wife died in 1546, Francis made the Exercises at Peter Faber's suggestion and decided to become a Jesuit. Ignatius counselled him to keep the matter quiet, begin studying theology, and make adequate provision for his eight children.

Two years later Francis took vows as a Jesuit privately. After another two years, in 1551, with Charles V's approval, he abdicated his position and was ordained to the priesthood. He spent the first year of his priesthood in pastoral work in northern Spain, then took on a series of diplomatic assignments given him by Ignatius. In 1553 Ignatius appointed him commissary general for Spain and then Portugal, the East and West Indies. He held this post for eight years, building colleges, founding novitiates, settling disputes and making friends for the Society.

In 1561 he went to Rome to be Vicar General of the Society, and in 1565, on the death of James Lainez, Francis was elected the third General of the Jesuits. During the seven years of his generalate, over thirty new colleges were founded and Jesuit activities were expanded around the world, with new missions established in Florida, Peru, Mexico and Crete. He died in Rome in 1572. He was beatified in 1624 and canonized in 1671.

His writings are copious and reflect his deep spirituality and concern for the interior life of Jesuits. By some standards too severe for common use in formation, his daily meditations are unique for his day in that they follow closely the liturgical calendar and stress the simple lessons of the Gospel, adhering faithfully to the Ignatian method of contemplation used in the Exercises.

In his Spiritual Diary, which he kept until 1568, he records in brief, often disjointed but always spontaneous expressions the kernel of his inner experience. Some examples:

"At Mass I'll ask the Father for strength to rid my soul of evil, the Son for light against the darkness, the Spirit for fire to burn... in him I have Father, Pastor, and medicine. (838)

"O Lord, I killed you for lack of love, and you kill with love in order to give life. (797)

"Lord, let this chalice of government pass from me... Either take me or take this charge from me. Or give me the grace to carry it out according to your pleasure. (781, 806)

"Each hour, offer the heart of Christ and what I feel in it, to sense the more his passion, his love, and the realization of his will. (792)

"At Mass I asked that on raising the host I might share his feelings when they lifted him up on the cross. (732)

"To ask to die for Christ. To wish only to die, and rejoice in all that is cross and painful to the heart which has been so rebellious against its God. (774)

"In order to suffer more, Christ didn't immediately open his side... He opened it after death to reveal the love of his heart... and to show us that, spiritually, love isn't forthcoming till the death of the "old man" in us who lives according to the flesh. (844)

"Wisdom, justice, goodness and what he does with his heart, and what he has one do to merit living in his heart." (787)

(The numbers given after each citation correspond to page numbers in Volume V, Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu).

3. BLESSED PETER FABER

Peter Faber was born in the Alpine village of Villaret in 1506 and tended his father's sheep till his Carthusian uncle, who recognized his piety and his talent, sponsored his education at La Roche and later Paris. He was nineteen when he arrived in Paris.

In Paris, he roomed with Francis Xavier and tutored Ignatius Loyola. He was the first of Ignatius' fellow students to be attracted to the idea of establishing a mission in the Holy Land. He was also the first of the, little group which eventually formed around this idea to be ordained a priest; he was ordained in 1534, after making the Exercises. That same year, on the feast of the Assumption, Peter celebrated the Mass in the chapel of the Martyrs on Montmartre at which he, Ignatius and their five companions vowed poverty, chastity and mission to the Holy Land - or whatever the Pope would prefer, should this mission prove unfeasible.

The mission to the Holy Land did, in fact, prove impossible, and the group placed itself at the Pope's service in 1537. Impressed with their talents and intelligence, Paul III put them to work in Rome, appointing Faber professor of Scripture at Sapienza University.

After two years in Rome and another in Parma initiating a spiritual renewal of the populace, Faber spent the rest of his short life "in the saddle" serving the spiritual needs of the Europe of his day: central and northern Italy, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain and Portugal. Called back from Portugal by the Pope in 1546 to accompany Lainez and Salmeron to the Council of Trent, he arrived in Rome sick and exhausted and died two weeks later, only forty years of age. He was beatified in 1872.

During the last four years of his life Faber kept a spiritual Memoriale of the graces received each day. The prayer to which

Father Kolvenbach refers in his conference was recorded in September, 1542 (Nos. 126-127 of the Memoriale, 120-124 MHSI):

"I wish to note the devotion I have found before the Crucifix in Mainz... when I consider how Christ disregards my ingratitude and sinfulness and bathes me in the blood from his wound, giving me so many graces...

"Considering the blood of the Immaculate Lamb, Christ Jesus, I sensed the great strength of the docility Christ teaches us by word and work. Surely there is no more efficacious way to confront cruelty and anger and all that offends charity than to be humble in allowing those who offend to have their way. The only way to disarm the other and soften his heart is to show him goodness and meekness of spirit.

"How hard and cruel I've been, slow to hear and believe Jesus Christ my Lord, who has so often shed his tears and blood for me in vain. Miserable and cruel soul, that pays no attention to these tears which Christ, leaving the Father and coming into this world, to feel its miseries and evils, has shed for you. Even though you see them, you remain unmoved, waiting for him to shed his blood.

"Eight days after his birth he sheds his blood and his tears when they circumcise him. This doesn't move you - it's only the physical pain of a child's body, and you're waiting for your God to give you signs of his internal sentiments. Look, then, at his tears. He sheds them for you. They are poured out over you. So why aren't you moved? Will you say you're waiting for still greater gestures from your God so that you become more sensitive and come to change yourself? How truly miserable and pitifully hard you are!

"See, then, how the Lord shed his tears because of the ingratitude and future destruction of Jerusalem. See the tears he shed on the cross as he gave up his spirit. If this isn't enough, and you insist on the Lord shedding blood rather than tears, look at the blood he sweats, and see how the two are mixed. Look at his extremities and see how the blood flows, thanks to the bonds, the blows, the scourging, the crowning. This is for you. As if there were only you.

"If all this still doesn't move you, then get inside the veins and consider how on the cross not one single drop of the pure blood of the immolated lamb remains. If this isn't enough, take the precious blood and water which comes from the side of the Lord and with Longinus heal your soul. But don't wait for any greater signs of divine goodness from his suffering humanity, because after all this, Christ is risen from the dead and will not suffer any more!"

4. ST. ALPHONSUS RODRIGUEZ

Alphonsus Rodriguez was born in 1533 and lived the first thirty-eight years of his life in Segovia, Spain, just over the mountains northwest of Madrid. He inherited his father's prosperous drapery business at fourteen. His marriage to Maria Suarez lasted only six or seven years. She and two of their three children died within a few months of each other. His business collapsed, and when his remaining son also died, his only solace and security was his faith.

Alphonsus describes himself as having been "neglectful of God" prior to these tragedies. They turned him towards the Lord as

sometimes only tragedies can. He slowly learned to suffer with love and managed to pull himself away from despair and into a life of prayer and gentle service to others.

When he decided to ask for admission to the Society, his first thought was to become a priest. Because of his age (38) and poor health, his application was refused. For the same reasons his application to the Jesuit Brotherhood would also have been refused had not the Provincial's intuition prevailed. He entered the novitiate in Valencia in 1571. That same year he was sent to the Jesuit college in Palma on the island of Majorca to complete his noviceship, and there he stayed till his death forty-six years later in 1617.

For the first few years in Palma his duties were varied. But in 1579 he was made doorkeeper, the job he kept for fifteen years. When, at 61, he was down-graded to "second" doorkeeper, he took care of the odd jobs around the college for another twenty-three years.

Without attracting attention, mystical experiences had become the common way in his prayer life. Besides recording these in a clear and precise spiritual autobiography, he wrote thirteen other books on God, prayer, and the practice of virtue. The spiritual insights from his prayer to which Father Kolvenbach refers in his conference are recounted in the first chapter of his Autobiography, on pages 27-33 of the William Yeomans translation, Geoffrey Chapman 1964 edition. They are as follows:

"It also happened to this person that one day, as he was serving Mass, and was very distracted in it, Our Lord appeared to him standing above the altar at the Gospel side, dressed in an ample garment just as he was when he walked among men in the world. His face was handsomely proportioned, rather swarthy in color, almost tawny like the color of hazel. In his face could be

seen a great divineness. The modesty of his eyes and the serenity of his face were wonderful and divine. It seems he wanted to teach this person to learn this modesty from him. That was why he revealed in the modesty of his eyes his own great interior riches which were seen in him as in a mirror.

"Such is the virtue and power of this presence and vision of Christ which this person saw, that every time he recalls it, he feels a strong attachment to modesty and devotion, and the whole man is changed, just as someone coming from devout prayer emerges a changed man, both in his exterior as well as in his interior dispositions. For it seems that the Lord casts as it were a flash of fire into his heart which wounds his soul and moulds and changes it into something better, both interiorly and exteriorly. Even though it is more than twelve years since this happened it is still fresh to him and produces the same effect. It seems that he will never be able to forget it, though with such things he always lives in fear and suspicion, because of the danger there can be in them...

"Among other ways of praying into which God led him - for of himself he neither knew nor realized the way along which God wanted to bring him - there was this one. After he had exercised himself in the events of the mystery, thinking about it in order to get the real sense of it, he was so fired in the love of Christ, that reasoning stopped, and he remained enjoying what God communicated to him at that moment.

"It was like this. Saturated with the Lord as he contemplated what he suffered for him, wounded with love, the Lord put him within himself, into his heart, where he communicated to him great things about his passion and about the many great sufferings he endured for him. But who could tell or explain what he communicated to him of virtues and spiritual things, granting him to feel his sufferings in himself, in soul and body, as if he really suffered the physical pains. He fired him

completely with his love to the point where the soul is in great union with Christ, and transformed by the greatness of the love of each for the other which passes between them...

"Further, just as in prayer this person was taken up by Christ into himself and there received such great communications from him, so in what follows Christ imparted himself to him in a wonderful way. What happened was that while looking at his Lord nailed to the cross, wounded with love by the great force of love, like the magnet which draws iron to itself, this person's soul drew the Lord to himself, placing him within his entrails and heart. In that personal presence, Christ gave him knowledge of what he is and of what he possesses, namely love, sufferings, and virtues, and granted him to feel in himself his great sufferings. And when he was in the soul such was their communion that the soul came to be transformed into him and, as it were, deified. He felt the visit and presence of this Lord in himself perceptibly in a wonderful way. This transformation and perceptible presence of Christ used to last for days without interruption, especially when he received the most holy sacrament of the altar.

"Both these humble transformations of the soul in God will be understood by the comparison with fire. For God behaves towards the soul like fire with iron. If the fire is great it communicates itself to such an extent that the iron is made a fire, and so the iron is fire by communication, not by nature. In the same way, when God puts the soul within his heart, which is all fire of love, eventually he so inflames it in his love and with the great love he communicates to it, that it becomes divinized by this communication of Christ and his grace, united to him and transformed in him.

"This is true both when the Lord puts the soul within himself and when the soul, from the greatness of its love for the Lord, puts him within its entrails and heart. The soul derives great

profit from this. The presence of Christ in the soul becomes so great, that even walking in the street, it went along so absorbed in Christ crucified, that it did not see people except as shadows. He experienced this perfect union and presence of God after he had been on Majorca for about eight or ten years."

NOTE H

THE FIRST JESUIT PROMOTERS

François Froment, S.J. (1649-1702) was stationed in Paray from 1688 to 1695 as prefect of the Jesuit school and confessor in the church. Sister Alacoque interested him in the devotion to the Sacred Heart, and he wrote "The genuine devotion to the Sacred Heart", which was published only in 1699, nine years after Margaret Mary's death.

Jean Croiset, S.J. (1656-1738) began corresponding with St. Margaret Mary while he was still a scholastic in Lyons. She encouraged him in his zeal, and when a Lyons publisher asked him to expand a booklet on the devotion which was becoming very popular, he assumed the work with enthusiasm. His book, "The devotion to The Sacred Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ", published in 1689, was successful enough to warrant an expanded edition which was published in 1691 with a biography of the life of Sister Alacoque a year after her death.

Prefect of the Jesuit college in Lyons, Croiset used every opportunity to promote the devotion and his book. He urged his Jesuit colleagues in Paray to start the association Sister Alacoque had suggested. This was done, and the confraternity expanded rapidly. However, with a change in Provincials in 1694, complaints about Croiset's excessive zeal and questions about the practices being introduced also multiplied rapidly, and the Jesuit General Thyrsus Gonzalez, decided it would be prudent to transfer Croiset from Lyons. Undismayed, Croiset continued his apostolate successively in Arles, Avignon and Marseille.

His book suffered a like fate several years later in 1704 when similar complaints managed to have it placed on the Index. Liturgical difficulties motivated this restriction, and although it wasn't officially removed from the Index till a hundred and eighty-three years later in 1887, scores of translations continued to circulate around the Catholic world, with the offending items removed. Croiset, although he continued an ardent preacher and promoter of the devotion and a prolific writer on other subjects, published nothing else on the Sacred Heart.

Joseph-François de Galliffet, S.J. (1663-1749) was a Jesuit philosophy student in Lyons while Colombière was spiritual father there shortly before he died. Like many of the scholastics, Galliffet became a fervent apostle of the Sacred Heart, under the influence of Claude's friendship and zeal. Correspondence with Sister Alacoque fanned the flames.

An unusual incident confirmed this vocation: at death's door from ministering to the sick while making his second novitiate in Lyons shortly after his ordination, he recovered completely. When informed that a friend had prayed he be granted health and a long life to serve the kingdom of the Heart of Christ, Galliffet accepted this as a clear sign of God's will designing the rest of his life. He lived it accordingly.

He, too, eventually published a book, "The cult of the most Sacred Heart of God and our Lord Jesus Christ", in 1726 while stationed in Rome as French Assistant to the Jesuit General Michelangelo Tamburini. A serious, scholarly work produced to support the growing interest in establishing a feast of the Sacred Heart, he was himself made Postulator of this cause. In spite of his eloquent case, the cause was shelved, probably to avoid prejudicing, one way or the other, the cause for the beatification of Margaret Mary Alacoque.

After returning to France in 1742 he became Rector in Lyons. Till his death seven years later he also busied himself translating his book from Latin to French, writing a companion volume on devotion to Our Lady, and founding and assisting scores of centers of the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart.

Bernard Francisco de Hoyos, S.J. (1711-1735) caught the sparks from Galliffet's book while a scholastic in Valladolid and spent the last three years of his life indefatigably planting the seeds of the devotion all over Spain by writing about it to King, classmates, bishops and others till his death from typhoid following the thirty-day tertianship retreat in 1735. He was only twenty-four.

His own mystical prayer experiences from novitiate on were confirmed by the theology on the Heart of Christ he discovered in the writings of his Jesuit confreres. Besides his letter writing, his apostolate included founding numerous centers of the Confraternity of the Sacred Heart, through which he was able to print and distribute hundreds of thousands of leaflets and prayer cards. He took the devotion to the simple people, where it has flourished ever since.

Domenico Maria Calvi, S.J. (1714-1788), Rector of the retreat house at San Andrea in Rome, picked up the cause Galliffet had championed and succeeded where he had failed. Unceasing efforts through personal appeals, leaflets, retreats, and popular missions kept alive the informal discussions concerning the cult and possible liturgical feast of the Sacred Heart following the Congregation of Rites' 1729 decision to defer any action on the matter, pending further study. In 1765 the Congregation finally approved a Mass and office of the Sacred Heart for use in Poland and Rome.

NOTE I

*From Pope John Paul II's message to
the young people of France (June 1980)*

RAISE YOUR EYES TOWARDS JESUS CHRIST

5. You are worth what your heart is worth. The whole history of mankind is the history of the need of loving and being loved. This end of the century - especially in regions of accelerated social change - makes the development of healthy emotions more difficult. That is probably why many young and not so young people seek the atmosphere of little groups, in order to escape from anonymity and sometimes from distress, in order to find again their deep vocation for interpersonal relations. If we are to believe a certain type of advertising, our age is even enamoured of what could be called a doping of the heart.

It is important in this sphere, as in the preceding ones, to see things clearly. Whatever use humans make of it, the heart - symbol of friendship and love - has also its norms, its ethics. To make room for the heart in the harmonious construction of your personality has nothing to do with mawkishness or even sentimentality. The heart is the opening of the whole being to the existence of others, the capacity of divining them, of understanding them. Such a sensitiveness, true and deep, makes one vulnerable. That is why some people are tempted to get rid of it by hardening one's heart.

To love is, therefore, essentially to give oneself to others. Far from being an instinctive inclination, love is a conscious decision of the will to go towards others. To be able to love truly,

it is necessary to detach oneself from many things and above all from oneself, to give gratuitously, to love to the end. This dispossession of oneself - a long and demanding task - is exhausting and exalting. It is the source of balance. It is the secret of happiness.

Young people of France, raise your eyes more often towards Jesus Christ! He is the Man who loved most, and most consciously, most voluntarily and most gratuitously! Meditate on Christ's testament: "There is no greater proof of love than to give one's life for those one loves. I Contemplate the Man-God, the man with the pierced heart! Do not be afraid! Jesus did not come to condemn love but to free love from its ambiguities and its counterfeits. It was he who changed the heart of Zacchaeus, of the Samaritan woman, and who still operates similar conversions today, all over the world. It seems to me that tonight, Christ is whispering to each one of you: "Give me your heart... I will purify it, I will strengthen it, I will turn it towards all those who need it: towards your own family, your school or university community, your social environment, towards the unloved, towards foreigners living on the soil of France, towards the inhabitants of the third world who do not have enough to live on and to develop, towards the most humble of men. Love demands sharing!"

Young people of France, it is more than ever the time to work hand-in-hand at the civilization of love, according to the expression dear to my great predecessor Paul VI. What a gigantic workyard! What a stirring task!

On the plane of the heart, of love, I have something else to confide to you. I believe with my whole strength that many of you are capable of risking the complete gift, to Christ and to their brothers, of all their powers of loving. You understand perfectly that I mean the vocation to the priesthood and to religious life. Your towns and villages in France are waiting for ministers with

hearts burning to proclaim the Gospel, celebrate the Eucharist, reconcile sinners with God and with their brothers. They are also waiting for women radically consecrated to the service of Christian communities and their human and spiritual needs. Your answer to this call lies along the direct line of Christ's last question to Peter: "Do you love me?".

NOTE J

From the Encyclical HAURIETIS AQUAS of Pope Pius XII, May, 1956

15. There is no doubt that Scripture never makes express mention of special veneration paid to the physical heart of the Incarnate Word as the symbol of His most ardent love.

If we must openly admit this, it cannot surprise us nor in any way lead us to doubt the divine love for us which is the principal reason for this devotion. This love is proclaimed and inculcated both in the Old and New Testaments in such vivid images as to greatly stir our souls...

19. Only from the Gospels do we get clear and full knowledge of the new covenant between God and man. The covenant which Moses made between the people of Israel and God was merely the symbol and token which the prophet Jeremias foretold. The real new covenant, We say, is that which was established and accomplished by the Incarnate Word and divine-grace reconciling us with God...

We pause in this consideration so that, enlightened by that light which shines from the Gospel and sheds light on this mystery, We too may conceive and express the desire recorded by the Apostle of the Gentiles: "To have Christ dwelling through faith in your hearts: so that, being rooted and grounded in love, you may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is its breadth and length and height and depth, and to know Christ's love which surpasses knowledge, in order that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God." (Ep 3:17-19).

20. The mystery of the divine Redemption is first and foremost a mystery of love, that is, of the true love of Christ for His Heavenly Father, to whom the sacrifice offered on the Cross in loving obedience renders most abundant and infinite satisfactions for the sins of mankind. "By suffering out of love and obedience, Christ gave more to God than was required to compensate for the offense of the whole human race." (SUMMA THEOLOGICA III, q.48, a.2.)

21. This is a mystery of the merciful love of the Trinity and the Divine Redeemer for all mankind. Since men could in no way expiate their sins, Christ through the incalculable riches of His merits which he acquired for us by shedding His precious Blood, was able to restore and perfect the bond of friendship between God and men which had been severed first in paradise by the pitiful fall of Adam, and later by the countless sins of the chosen people.

22. The Divine Redeemer, our Mediator because He made perfect satisfaction to divine justice for all the debts and obligations of the human race out of His most ardent love for us, effected the marvelous reconciliation between divine justice and divine mercy which constitutes the impenetrable mystery of our salvation...

23. ...To be sure the love with which God loved our first parents and the Hebrew people was of a spiritual nature. The expressions of love, so human, intimate and paternal which we read in the Psalms, in the writings of the prophets and in the Canticle of Canticles, are indications and manifestations of the truest but entirely spiritual love with which God loved the human race. On the contrary, the love spoken of in the Gospel, the letters of the apostles and the pages of the Apocalypse - all of which describe the love of the Heart of Jesus Christ - express not only divine love but also human sentiments of love.

24. This point is quite clear to all who are Catholics. For

the Word of God assumed not a fictitious and empty body, as some heretics already maintained in the first century of the Christian era and who were condemned by St. John the Apostle in most severe terms: "For many deceivers have gone forth into the world, who do not confess Jesus as the Christ coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the Antichrist." (2Jn 7). But the Word actually united to His divine person an individual, integral and perfect human nature which was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the most pure womb of the Virgin Mary. Nothing, therefore, was lacking in the human nature which the Word of God joined to Himself. Indeed He assumed a human nature in no way diminished or changed in its spiritual and bodily capacities, that is, a nature endowed with intelligence and free will and the rest of the internal and external faculties of perception, sense appetites and all natural impulses...

25. There can be no doubt that Jesus Christ took a human body with all the affections which are proper to it, among which love holds the first place. There can likewise be no doubt that He had a physical heart like ours, since without this organ human life, even as regards affections, is impossible. Wherefore, the Heart of Jesus Christ, hypostatically united to the Divine Person of the Word, beyond doubt throbbed with love and the rest of the impulses of the affections which, however, were in perfect accord and harmony with His human will filled with divine love and with the infinite love itself which the Son shares with the Father and the Holy Ghost. There never was anything contrary or conflicting in these three kinds of love (cf. St. Thomas SUMMA THEOLOGICA 3, q.15, a.4; q.18, a.6).

26. We say that the Word of God took upon Himself a "real" and perfect human nature and formed and fashioned for Himself a heart of flesh, which like ours could suffer and be pierced. Unless this teaching be considered not only in the light

which is shed by the hypostatic and substantial union but also in that of the redemption of mankind - its complement, as it were - this doctrine can be a stumbling block and foolishness to some, as Christ nailed to the Cross actually was to the Jews and gentiles.

The authoritative teaching of the Catholic faith, since it is in complete agreement with Scriptures, assures us that the only begotten Son of God assumed a human nature capable of suffering and dying precisely because he wished, by offering the bloody sacrifice on the Cross, to accomplish the task of man's redemption.

NOTE K

From the works of Hugo and Karl Rahner.

I. HUGO RAHNER ON THE BIBLICAL BASIS OF THE DEVOTION

**From "Heart of the Saviour", a symposium,
Edited by Josef Stierli, S.J.**

There is good reason for seeking to trace the historical devotion to the Sacred Heart back to its origins in the Bible. It is not as though we were falling into an anachronism common to many pious books, of trying to produce copious scriptural references for all the keypoints of a devotion which has unquestionably acquired much of its present character in modern times. That approach does no service either to history or to asceticism. Indeed, it has already done much harm. Still it is undoubtedly possible, within the limits of sound exegesis, to show how the kernel of the devotion is really contained in the Revelation of Holy Scripture, especially of the New Testament.

This would silence immediately at least one reproach, cast with increasing emphasis in our own day in the name of a pruned and purified biblical theology: that the pious veneration of the Heart of our Lord should be rejected as a scandalous excrescence, a perversion of Catholic pietism into a sort of romantic passion for Jesus; that it lacks the true modesty of the Gospel, and exchanges the Christian familiarity with God for the loud sensuousness of palpable symbols.

Karl Barth has gone so far as to place the Catholic devotion to the Sacred Heart on the same level as modern Protestantism's biographies of Jesus, which have shed all belief in the true

Incarnation of the Word. He would see in both forms "an attempt to find an approach to Jesus which ignores his Divinity, and an approach to Revelation which, through its use of human judgements and human experiences, will be within the powers and understanding of all men." Hence his crushing verdict: "The modern Protestant faith in Jesus as a religious hero, and the Catholic devotion to the Heart of Jesus, are to be rejected as the deification of creatures."⁴⁸

This, by the way, is not new. It is ancient and dusty. The, Jansenists said it before Barth, and the Church gave its answer to the Pseudo-Synod of Pistoia. But when we listen with charity, we can pick out the element of truth in these strictures. Many features of devotion to the Sacred Heart which were attractive to the late medievals and still more to the age of baroque may be meaningless to a Christian who has been penetrated by the awful solemnity of the language of the Bible and the theology of grace. That is why we think it so important to try to root the devotion in the Bible.

Our task must be to show which key-ideas in the biblical Revelation suggested the first forms of the devotion; how the classical beauty of this original structure was later overgrown, but never quite destroyed, by various short-lived growths of piety, which today have lost their attraction; and finally, how in our day that form of the devotion which alone enjoys the recognition of the praying and teaching Church is rediscovering the simplicity of its early days. Through this intimate history of men's deep love for Christ, we can find our way back to the word of God, as it is cherished and expounded in the living Church; and there we shall discover the fundamental ideas which are perennially valid and therefore ever burgeoning afresh in the Church.

⁴⁸ K. Barth, "Die Kirchliche Dogmatik", I, 2, Page 150s.

The present frame-work will scarcely allow of more than a cursory attempt to sketch the fundamental traits of the biblical basis for the devotion. Let us start with what is most essential. In the language of Revelation, the hallowed word "heart" and its almost synonymous equivalents have the same primal meaning as in all human language. The strictly theological section of this book will discuss this meaning in detail. But the connotation of "heart" in the Old Testament has been well summarized in a recent work: "Heart" is the principle and organ of the personal life of man, the centre in which the being and the activity of man as a spiritual personality are concentrated, and consequently the source and centre of his religious and ethical life. "Heart" is the focal point of spirit and courage, of interior insight, of man's planning and volition, of the ethical decisions of the whole, undivided man.

The same is true for the language of the New Testament. "Heart" stands for a man's most secret thoughts (Mt 24:48; Rm 10:6); it is opposed to his outward seeming (1Th 2:17; 2Co 5:12), and still more sharply to mere lip-service (Mt 15:18; Mk 7:6). "Heart" is therefore the key word for expressing the newness and redemptive message of the New Testament. It is in the heart, in the depths of the righteous man who is penetrated by the love of God, that the encounter of Revelation and faith, of grace and response to grace, takes place. The grace of Christ is a circumcision of the heart (Ac 7:51; Rm 2:29). Justification is in faith "from the heart" (Rm 10:10; Heb 10:22). The Spirit is poured out in our hearts (Ga 4:6). Love from the heart constitutes perfection (Mt 22:37; 1Tm 1:5). The Christian is called simply "the hidden self of the heart" (1P 3:4). "So the New Testament too shows the heart primarily as the central point in man which God addresses, in which the religious life is rooted, and which determines man's ethical disposition"⁴⁹

⁴⁹ K. Kittel, "Theologisches Woerterbuch zum Neuen Testament" III, col. 613, 615.

Victor Warnach has traced the connections between this key word of the Bible and a devotion to the Sacred Heart built on a scriptural basis. "The pneuma is that profound element in man, at once godlike and intensely personal, which is repeatedly called "heart" (kardia) in Holy Scripture because it constitutes the real directive centre of the person, from which spring all thoughts and feelings, all cares and decisions (Mk 7:21f.; Rm 8:27; 10:10; 1Co 14:25; 1Th 2:4; 2Th 3:5). The same meaning attaches to the equivalent term leb (or later lebab), which is frequently used in the Old Testament; and in the liturgy and spirituality of the Church down the centuries, "heart" has generally retained this spiritual sense. It is from this source that the veneration of the Sacred Heart, which centres round the idea of charity (agape), draws its deepest significance. We should mention too the special meaning of the "Coeur qui trouve Dieu" for Pascal, who gave a modern but quite justifiable twist to the New Testament concept.⁵⁰

Warnach's suggestion brings us into the centre of our question. We must look to the language of the Bible for a deeper understanding of the devotion to the Sacred Heart. The sense in which the phrase "Heart of our Lord" has been understood from the earliest times in the prayers of the Church and of her devout children, is precisely that of Holy Scripture. Occasionally in the course of history the genuine biblical understanding of the original force of this phrase was lost, or Christians strayed into one of two dangers, that of sensuousness, seeing only the tangible physical heart, or that of a bloodless rationalism, seeing merely the symbol. Whenever that happened, it was time (as it is time today) to seek a remedy in the Bible, to study the hypostatic mystery of the Sacred Heart itself, and there to relearn the almost hypostatic union that exists between the divine and human elements of the devotion, whenever it is formed in the spirit of the Church.

⁵⁰ V. Warnach, *Agape*, Page 231.

You might say then that the less understanding Christians showed for the true nature of the Sacred Heart devotion, the dimmer also was their understanding for the divinely inspired language of Holy Scripture. The sensualism and intellectualism of our time have tended to cloud our vision of those truths and concepts which denote something undivided, compact of body and soul. They can be kept within the range of men's knowledge and perception only by the language of the Bible and by this perennially fresh devotion, as it lives and develops within the tradition of the Church. Every failure to understand the eternal word "heart" is a real tragedy of the spirit. And on the other hand, wherever men learn the secrets of the Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ with a knowledge which is authentic (in other words, founded on Scripture) and interior, there something decisive has taken place in the realm of the spirit: God has been understood in the way in which he offered himself for understanding -from heart to heart, from the Heart of God to the heart of man.

**II. KARL RAHNER'S
"Servants of the Lord", Ch. 7, The Man with
the pierced heart, pages 115-119.**

Remember all that you already know: that "heart" is a basic concept in the Bible, that the word is a primitive word meaning the native centre of man where he stands before God as one bodily whole, that the heart does not mean an abstract idea - is not a metaphor artificially derived from a physiological organ - but originally means that centre of man where his eternity dwells and occurs; that man needs such archetypal, evocative primitive words if he is not to wither away in a rationalist desert, reduced to knowing nothing more of the mystery of his existence than what he says about it in explicit concepts; nothing at all, therefore, because then words themselves have lost their self-transcendent reference to a more original experience in which man himself and God and his

Spirit are encountered - precisely in the heart. That it is in the nature of devotion to the Sacred Heart (if this is still really envisaged) to mention the Lord's heart, but that its nature does not require that prayer and cultic invocation be directly addressed to the Lord's heart itself; that it quite suffices, and is preferable where feeling would be indiscreetly exuberant, to invoke the Lord himself "in his heart", to seek him and love him "with one's eyes on his heart."

Presupposing both limitations of our thesis and what has just been said, we may then state that tomorrow's priest will find his own nature if he contemplates the heart of the Lord. Here is the heart that has admitted the world's darkness and sin into itself, the heart that hid in the Father's hands even its abandonment by God, the heart that craved no power but the power of forgiving love, the heart that was pierced and so became the fountainhead of all Spirit. Here is the heart of the word, the centre in which God and the world, eternity and time, life and death, God's word and man's response, become one without separation and without confusion, where the substantial oneness called the hypostatic union is translated into existential event and only thus achieves its ultimate meaning and true fulfilment.

Here we have, united and reconciled at their source, all the realities of the Father's incarnate Word and therefore all the immense variety of experience which we go through with him. When we say "Sacred Heart of Jesus" we evoke that primally unifying centre, at once incomprehensible and perfectly matter-of-fact, which displays itself at work in the history of Jesus of Nazareth, which alone gives meaning to this history and its every event, the meaning of God, his incomprehensibility, his love, the meaning of life that finds itself through death. This heart is not "sweet", it is terrible! Terrible in its dark death-throes; terrible in the incomprehensible mystery of the love whereby God exposes himself to his creatures, their guilt and futility; terrible in the

absolute claim it lays to us, sweeping us away into its destiny; terrible in the confidence with which it reaches out to our appalling unreliability. And if this heart is "sweet", then it is sweet with the holy ripeness of love that conquers in death, which only he can understand who has undergone the terrible fate of that love along with it. Tomorrow's priest must meet this pierced heart if he is to become the man with the pierced heart.

Do not imagine that this devotion to the Sacred Heart is old-fashioned, dated, a piety of yesterday. What is old-fashioned? What is modern? The really modern Christian is not the man who makes a point of non-conformity to a certain past and conforms to a today that only shallow minds take for the future; he is the man who keeps the old and anticipates the real future. Much in the Church which seems old really anticipates the future before anyone has yet caught sight of it. A person who had the courage to practise a real ecclesial piety in the age of naive individualism was anticipating the age just dawning now; a person who made real exercises of election at Ignatius's feet was anticipating a genuine theological existentialism of solitary decision that may not be fully with us until tomorrow. No, the rare, resolute people who find the things of tomorrow in those of yesterday are the ones to tell us what today really is.

So it may be with devotion to the Sacred Heart as well. At bottom it has little to do with the baroque period. It is no luxury for religious introverts, for those cultivating a beautiful soul, no luxury grown alien to our stingy age that is in such jeopardy on every hand. Here we adore the heart that plunged, oblivious of self, into the deadly solitude of our guilt and the frightful incomprehensibility of God, abandoning itself to the dull routine of every day, the irksome tasks of daily service. The baroque stalk only produced the seed that today falls dying to the ground and tomorrow will bear fruit: the fruit of the power of the solitary heart to take decisions, the fruit of faith amid unbelief, the fruit of

experience of God amid a world which cries in its frivolity or its distress "God is dead", the fruit of love for each other that is different from the reconciliation by craft or violence of all our separate egotisms, the fruit of the folly of the cross and of courage to die amid a world which thinks it has overcome death because it hides the dying in hospitals and thinks it is creating life by prolonging the last agony. The heart of man is always the unknown country only discovered by the future, the first beginning at which we have not yet arrived. And therefore understanding the heart of Jesus in faith, hope, and love is the one long adventure ever new, that only ends when one has arrived at one's own heart and discovered that after all that frightful pit is filled with God. This is true of the individual and it is true of our general situation at the present day.

Abstract considerations such as these, drawn from the philosophy and theology of history, will never move anyone to accept this devotion to the Sacred Heart, much less beget the grace and charism of that devotion. They can do only one thing, point out the question that each must answer for himself: whether the meaning of these words does not speak out to him from the inmost centre of existence, these words that are only understood if grace itself in its might gives the core of man what they announce. But anyone who has the courage to experience grace and know desolation of heart, to be faithful, to follow conscience for no reward, to love the man farthest away as his neighbour, discovers his wretched heart, begins to understand what is meant by the heart.

And if such a one turns in faith and prayer, hope and love, to his Lord the Son of man for the image in which he is himself created, to which he is called, he will suddenly perceive in blessed alarm how out of the experience of his own heart he is calling upon the Lord in his own heart. He will perceive that the grace of devotion to the Sacred Heart is offered to him. He will accept it, he

will do his best to let it grow, discreetly, without any display of inflated pious talk, without disregarding the creaturely pluralism that is inevitable even in religious life and must irradiate in many forms so that the one thing necessary may be done. He will perceive that restraint, in the manner of present-day piety, only provides the promised zone of solitude and silence where there occurs the sober intoxication of the Spirit, the searing blessed pain of love for God, and the uncanniness of dying with the God-forsaken Crucified. He will look on him whom they pierced and feel the wounds which that pierced Man has driven into his inmost being. Then perhaps he will keep starting up out of the sleepy round of the ecclesiastical functionary, fear of betraying his true mission and grace will pierce his heart, he will flee from himself to him who alone is our hope and future, he will pray: Lord, by your heart make me through your omnipotent grace the man with the pierced heart who alone can be your priest.

**III. KARL RAHNER'S
"God of my Lord Jesus Christ"
from "Encounters with silence", pages 15-17.**

With this one word You tell me everything: Infinity. But it is precisely this word that renders futile all attempts at neatly planning out my life. You are thus the eternal threat in my life, frightening me out of all sense of security.

No, Lord, You must speak to me in a word that does not mean everything at once, a word that does not embrace the whole of reality in one unfathomable unity. You must say a word to me that means just one thing, one thing which is not everything. You must make Your infinite word finite, if I am to be spared this feeling of terror at Your Infinity.

You must adapt Your word to my smallness, so that it can

enter into the tiny dwelling of my finiteness - the only dwelling in which I can live - without destroying it. Then I shall be able to understand; such a word I can take in without that agonizing bewilderment of mind and that cold fear clutching my heart. If You should speak such a "abbreviated" word, which would not say everything but only something simple which I could grasp, then I could breathe freely again.

You must make Your own some human word, for that's the only kind I can comprehend. Don't tell me everything that You are; don't tell me of Your Infinity - just say that You love me, just tell me of Your Goodness to me. But don't say this in Your divine language, in which Your Love also means Your inexorable Justice and Your crushing Power - say it rather in my language, so I won't have to be afraid that the word love hides some significance other than Your Goodness and gentle Mercy.

O Infinite God, You have actually willed to speak such a word to me! You have restrained the ocean of Your Infinity from flooding in over the poor little wall which protects my tiny life's-acre from Your Vastness. Not the waters of Your great sea, but only the dew of Your Gentleness is to spread itself over my poor little plot of earth. You have come to me in a human word. For You, the Infinite, are the God of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

He has spoken to us in human language. No more can the word love mean anything that I must fear. For when He says that He loves us, and that in Him You love us, this word comes from a human heart. And to a human heart this word has only one meaning, only one blessed and blissful meaning. If this human heart loves us, the heart of Your Son, the heart which - may You be praised forever! - is finite like my own poor heart, then my heart is at peace. For it loves me, and I know that such a love is only love and nothing else.

Jesus has really told me that He loves me, and His word has come from the depths of His human heart. And His heart is Your heart, O God of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, if this human heart of Your Son is unspeakably richer and greater than my heart, it is so only in that love and that goodness which can never be anything else but love and goodness. It can never conceal within itself the awe-fulness of Your Infinity, which is always all else as well.

Grant, O Infinite God, that I may ever cling fast to Jesus Christ, my Lord. Let His heart reveal to me how You are disposed toward me. I shall look upon His heart when I desire to know Who You are. The eye of my mind is blinded whenever it looks only at Your Infinity, in which You are totally present in each and every aspect at once. Then I am surrounded by the darkness of Your unboundedness, which is harsher than all my earthly nights. But instead I shall gaze upon His human heart, O God of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and then I shall be sure that You love me.

But I have still one more request. Make my heart like that of Your Son. Make it as great and rich in love as His, so that my brothers or at least one of them, sometime in my life can enter through this door and there learn that You love him. God of Our Lord Jesus Christ, let me find You in His heart.

NOTE L

*From the letters
of Father General Lorenzo Ricci
to the Society of Jesus.*

1. LETTER OF JUNE 3, 1767

All of Ours during their daily visits to the Blessed Sacrament should continue the designated prayers with great confidence, redoubling them on the approaching feast of the Sacred Heart. On that day, in addition to whatever else the piety of each suggests in love and homage to the Divine Heart, the priests will offer Mass for the Society, and those who are not priests will recite the rosary for the same intention. They will ask the Holy Mother of God, our mother also, to obtain for us easy access to the heart of her divine son. In him alone, and through him, the Society will find a refuge and certain help; in no other place can it rest more securely. Also, on that day they will receive Communion in acknowledgement of the gift the Divine Heart has made to us of himself, gift which contains all the treasures of his immense love for us. In this way also we will make reparation for the injuries we ourselves and others have not ceased to inflict on Christ our Lord in his sacrament of love...

2. LETTER OF JUNE 19, 1769

1. Both my solicitude and your prayers have been rewarded: our exiled and homeless brothers have been of constant spirit and unshakable fortitude in the face of so many difficulties. Tossed about on both land and sea, they have inspired the admiration of all by the patient and cheerful way they have born

their misfortune, much as the Apostles did. They are a living demonstration of the ideas and principles to which they have pledged their lives and by which their lives are governed. A demonstration also of God's special presence strengthening them in virtue.

Even so, it has not been God's good pleasure to bring us out of our tribulations, either because we're not all together free of blame for our misfortunes, or because, pleased with our virtue, he has deferred our consolation to a more opportune moment.

2. We shouldn't be too concerned about why God hasn't seen fit to hear our prayers. Rather we should suffer the delay with equanimity, and with hopeful patience await the moment of his compassion. We will have this patience if we consider that whatever happens adversely does so by the just will and determination of God, a loving Father who directs everything that happens to our good and his glory. We will have this hope if we recall that a loving Father does not reject or abandon the children who hope in him. Confiding in this hope, we continue to plead with our Lord. If we remain constant in our fasts and supplications, in good time he will hear our prayers.

It has become all the more necessary to maintain this fervor, seeing that new and greater dangers are added to the permanent calamities of the past. It is now not just one or another part of the Society that suffers, but the whole Society is being attacked with violence. Our prayer, "like incense in the presence of the Lord," rises from hearts at once both anguished by sorrow and enflamed with love; our prayers acknowledge the serious dangers we face and at the same time express our love for the mother we find in such a grave situation.

3. The prayers and acts of piety directed to the Virgin and the Heart of Christ which have been recommended to you on

different occasions should continue till the Lord takes pity. They should be offered with a good heart and sure faith that the requested grace will be obtained. The danger we are in motivates this effort, and the assurance of faith is increased if we recall, as we invoke the Virgin, that she is the Mother of God and our mother. Mother of God, she goes to her son with confidence. Our mother, too, she cannot but be greatly moved by our calamities.

When we direct ourselves to Christ in our visits to the Blessed Sacrament or on the occasion of the (recently established) feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, remember his words, "Come to me all you weary and oppressed, and I will refresh you" (Mt 11:28). With these words and indicating his open heart, he lovingly attracts those who are work-weary and exhausted from their responsibilities to come to him for shelter and aid from their failures. We place before him both his promises and the calamities which oppress us. Being so rich in mercy and kindness, he will certainly be moved by our needs.

If, however, he appears deaf to our prayers as though asleep, this is because he wants us to exercise our faith still more and, far from losing heart, shout all the louder with the confidence of the Psalmist, "Wake up, Lord! Why are you sleeping? Get up and help us!" Or, using the words of the Apostles when they were perishing at sea because of the sudden tempest, "Lord, save us! We perish!" (Mt 8:25). Hearing these cries Jesus, who had been asleep in the boat, reproved the wind and the sea; the tempest abated and there was a great calm. We must be careful: that fear not so weaken or overcome our faith that we merit the reproof given the Apostles, "Why were you afraid, men of little faith?" Nothing destroys the force of prayer like the lack of faith...

3. LETTER OF FEBRUARY 22, 1773

Ricci's last letter, six months before the Suppression.

I see with confusion that the Lord has not seen fit to extend his hand and lift us up. Certainly he has given us many proofs of his mercy, and we have experienced his presence and almost miraculous care in a thousand ways. Even so, he has allowed the calamities which have engulfed us to take their course. I adore his ever just judgements. We can attribute the cause of these calamities to our own failings, to mine in particular, and say to the Lord in sincere confession, "Yes, we have sinned... all the disasters you have brought down on us, all that you have done to us, you have been fully justified in doing" (Dn 3:29-31)

And yet, will our God, whose nature is goodness, fail to show us his mercy? Will he forget his piety? No, we've already experienced often enough that, even when irritated, he never forgets his mercy. We've come to realize that these acts of mercy are more abundant than his justice and his other attributes. That's why I pray, and you pray with me, that seeing us so frail and weak, he be inclined to mercy and compassion; that if his justice insists on seeing our sins, we beg that it see them in his son Jesus who took these sins upon himself and made satisfaction for them with such exuberance! That he give us the gift of a contrite and humble heart which he will never despise nor send away.

Our sins need not keep us from confidence that God will glorify his holy Name in the exercise of his mercy. And even less

should we allow these calamitous times to undermine our confidence. On the contrary, these calamities should strengthen our confidence, if we understand them properly. We are completely alone, and every human support fails us. Obviously God has reserved it to himself to take care of us and wishes that we place our hope of help in no one else. In this he treats us with great and tender love, showing us how little we should place our trust in men or our hope in others. Our gratitude is due to him alone.

Whom should we fear, if God himself is our shield and our protection? Being abandoned by men should be turned to our profit: It is God himself who testifies that he is the father of orphans and protector of the abandoned. With humility and confidence we vehemently and sincerely implore his help and mercy, lifting our arms and eyes to heaven where dwells the Lord who glories in being called the opportune helper of those in tribulation...

For the rest, our prayers should be made in the name of Jesus Christ, that they might be efficacious in bringing us close to the heart of our divine Father, in accord with what Jesus affirmed, "Whatever you ask the Father in my name will be given you" (Jn 16:23)... What do we ask when we raise our hearts to God for the conservation of the Society and our perseverance in it? We ask the Lord to help us persevere in the vocation by which we were called to this holy and praiseworthy Institute, so very fruitful and exceedingly apt to promote the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

NOTE M

From the Statutes of the Apostleship of Prayer

PREAMBLE

The Second Vatican Council laid strong stress on the fact that all the faithful are called to the apostolate. In order to fulfill this function, they are invited to take up external works and are urged to foster in themselves a vital union with Christ, and to nourish it in a special way through the liturgy and meditation on the Word of God. By performing their work according to the will of God, they can grow in that union. To this end the Council also gives special recommendation to associations which foster closer unity between their members' everyday lives and their faith, and also exhorts the laity to try with constancy to acquire the particular spiritual characteristics of their movement or association. Just as former statutes were repeatedly adapted to the needs of their own times, it was thought opportune to draw up new ones which would contain the teaching and spirit of Vatican II, and so adapt the Apostleship of Prayer to contemporary needs.

I. WHAT THE APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER IS

Through baptism all the faithful share in the function of Christ as priest, king, and prophet, and are appointed by God to apostolic activities in accord with their particular vocation. Within this universal apostolic vocation, the Apostleship of Prayer is a union of the faithful who, by their daily oblation unite themselves with the Eucharistic Sacrifice, in which the work of our redemption is continuously accomplished and, by this vital, bond with Christ,

upon which the fruitfulness of the apostolate depends, cooperate in the salvation of the world.

Christ spread his kingdom by teaching and performing works of mercy. At the same time, even from the very beginning he offered his life to the Father for mankind, prayed for them, consummated the offering of himself through the paschal mystery, and so redeemed the world. In the same way every external apostolate ought to be joined with prayer and sacrifice, so that it may contribute to the building up of the Body of Christ in the power of the sacrifice of the cross.

But this union with Christ the High Priest necessarily requires an intimate bond with him through personal love. Therefore the Apostleship of Prayer has given singular importance to the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Through it the faithful may reach more deeply into the mystery of the love of Christ and so also share more profoundly in the paschal mystery of the Lord. Through it they are better able to respond to that love with which our Savior sacrificed himself for the life of the world and from his transfigured Heart gave life to the Church (Jn 19:34).

II. THE APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER PROGRAM FOR THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

For the exercise of their apostolic vocation, the Apostleship of Prayer offers the faithful a program of apostolic spirituality whose center is the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

1. The Sacrifice of the Mass and the daily offering.

Since the Eucharistic Sacrifice is the source and apex of the whole preaching of the Gospel, and the whole power of the

Church's activity flows from it, the spirituality of the faithful should also be shaped by it. The Eucharistic Sacrifice should penetrate and form their lives and lead them to a conscious and vital participation in this mystery.

The Apostleship of Prayer insists, therefore, upon the daily offering, or oblation, by means of which a member offers himself through Christ to God - that is to say, offers all his prayers, actions, works, sufferings and joys - for the needs of the Church and indeed for the salvation of the whole world. This offering is described by the Council as follows:

"Besides intimately associating them (the laity) with his life and his mission, Christ also gives them a share in his priestly function of offering spiritual worship for the glory of God and the salvation of men. For this reason the laity, dedicated to Christ and anointed by the Holy Spirit, are marvelously called and equipped to produce in themselves ever more abundant fruits of the Spirit. For all their works, prayers, and apostolic endeavors, their ordinary married and family life, their daily labor, their mental and physical relaxation, if carried out in all of these become spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (cf. 1P 2:5). During the celebration of the Eucharist, these sacrifices are most lovingly offered to the Father along with the Lord's body. Thus, as worshipers whose every deed is holy, the laity consecrate the world itself to God" (LG 34).

This spiritual oblation, which pertains to the exercise of the common priesthood of the faithful, is at the same time also the exercise of their prophetic function, since it requires them to bear witness by their life, charity, labor, and apostolic activity. By living this daily oblation, the faithful bear witness to Christ before men and give testimony to the truth. This testimony of one's life, flowing from faith, hope, and charity, is the beginning of and the condition for every apostolate, and nothing can be found to put in

its place.

Since, however, the Lord instituted the Eucharistic Sacrifice as a banquet, members, following the guidance of Vatican II, are not only to share in the Eucharistic Sacrifice frequently, and every day if possible, but should in it also receive the Body of the Lord, which is the sacrament of holiness, the sign of unity, and the bond of charity.

2. The devotion to, or the Spirituality of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Christ not only gave up his life for us out of love (1Jn 3:16), but also takes us up into the mysteries of his life and makes us a people set apart and a royal priesthood (1P 2:9). We ought, therefore, to return him love for love. Since the Church teaches us that Christ's love is most particularly expressed through his heart and invites us to pay devotion to that love, symbolized in the Heart of Christ as the source of salvation and of mercy, the Apostleship of Prayer strongly urges its members to make themselves familiar with the practice and spirituality of devotion to the Heart of Jesus. They will respond to the Lord's love by consecrating themselves to him and practicing and fostering the forms of this devotion approved by the Church. They should imitate the example of Christ's love for his brethren and return love for him who loved us with a human heart, with that charity which is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

3. Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary

Members of the Apostleship of Prayer are devoted with filial love to the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of the Church, who is so intimately associated with the work of the redemption. They follow her example who devoted herself completely as

handmaid of the Lord to the person and work of her Son. They should, therefore, make their offering of themselves to God through her who is our mediatrix with her Son. They should recite the rosary, or at least one decade, daily, and earnestly commend the cares of the Church to her motherly heart. They should generously cultivate devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and, particularly in the liturgy, always remember that a close union between the faithful and Christ is in no way hindered by the influence of his mother, but is rather nourished by it.

4. Thinking with the Church.

For the Church to carry out its task of uniting all men with Christ and among themselves, and to complete its work of building up his Body by the Eucharistic Sacrifice, all members must stir up in themselves and in others the desire to think with the universal Church and to share its concerns. For this purpose members make a daily offering for those intentions which the Supreme Pontiff proposes for the Apostleship of Prayer each month, or in urgent cases commends to the prayers of the faithful.

They will also readily include in their offering those intentions for which the bishops of their region request prayers.

5. Careful Attention to Prayer.

Members are today aware that the human race is experiencing a new historical age, and is being shaken by profound and rapid changes and by deep disquiet. Therefore there is the greatest need of fervent and ceaseless prayer, that the world liberated by the crucified and resurrected Christ may, once the power of the Evil One has been broken, be transformed in accord

with God's plans and reach its perfection.

Therefore members obey the Lord's command "to pray continually and never lose heart" (Lk 18:1), and take seriously all things connected with cultivating the practice of prayer. Following the example of the Church, which continually takes up the bread of life from the table both of the Word of God and of the Body of Christ, members highly esteem the reading of Sacred Scripture and meditate on it. They cultivate sound mental prayer and various other forms of prayer, which they are free to choose for themselves. They should make days of recollection and retreats, which are excellent schools of prayer and of union with God in action, and they should foster these things in others.

(Parts III, IV and V of the statutes deal with formation and pastoral activities, structure, and sections of the Apostleship of Prayer, respectively.)