

“Études Picpuciennes” n° 1

**A HISTORICAL ACCOUNT
OF THE
PRELIMINARY CHAPTER
OF THE RULE
OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE SACRED HEARTS**

By

Reverend Father Anthony Hulselmans, SS.CC.

1948

**Maison-Mère de la Congrégation des Sacrés Cœurs
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Translated by

Fathers and Brothers of the Sacred Hearts

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PREFACE

On the night of Christmas, in the year 1800, just before celebrating the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, Father Marie-Joseph Coudrin pronounced the three vows of religion, according to a formula composed by himself, and in which he desired to give a summary of the whole significance of the ceremony: "*I, Brother Marie-Joseph, make the vow of poverty, of chastity, and of obedience, in accordance with the light of the Holy Spirit for the good of the Institute, as zealot of the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, in whose service I will live and die. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.*" (S.B.P. I, 76.)

Then he celebrated the Holy Mysteries, received the perpetual vows of Mother Henriette, and blessed the white mantle which the members of his Congregation were to wear as a sign of their consecration to Mary. It was the official beginning of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts, its real, its true foundation.

Some years earlier, they, the Good Father and the Good Mother, had already begun to lay the foundation of their work. In certain documents, the Good Father speaks even of the year 1793 as the year of the foundation (for example, in his petition to the Holy Father, Pius VII, of October 2, 1801) because it was in 1793 that the Society of the Sacred Heart was founded. Sister Gabrielle de la Barre, the first companion of the Good Mother, refers to this Society of the Sacred Heart as the veil which, for several years, covered and concealed the newly-born Congregation.

In 1797 the veil was rent; Mother Henriette and some of her companions, "the Solitaires," separated from the others, with the definite intention of beginning the true religious life. It was, however, no more than a distant preparation for the future foundation, of which no doubt, the Founders had been thinking for several years already, but which was not realized until the year 1800, when the perpetual vows of the two Founders gave the new Congregation a solid base.

What was the aim of this new Institute? What was the desire of the Founders in beginning this new organization in such different times?

These questions are answered by the Preliminary Chapter of the Rule drawn up in 1816 while negotiations with Rome for the approbation of the Institute were being carried on. This Preliminary Chapter traces for us, in a few words, the fundamental thought of the Founders, and describes the aim of their Institute - an aim which clarifies with its luminous meaning all the articles of their Rule.

This is why it has seemed worthwhile to us to offer a sort of commentary which, by making use of the very words of our Founders themselves, will help to explain the succinct text of the fundamental chapter. We will, first of all, say a few words on the title of the Congregation and that of the Rule, after which the nine articles of the Preliminary Chapter will be explained successively.

The documents which have been referred to and made use of for this study are the following:

1. Those writings of the Good Father and the Good Mother, which were gathered together in the "Processiculus diligentiarum," for the occasion of the informative process of their cause of beatification.

The writings of the Good Father are comprised of four volumes in quarto; those of the Good Mother, three volumes in quarto. They are conserved in the Chancellery of the Sacred

Congregation of Rites. We will cite them as: S.B.P. - that is to say, Scripta of the Bon Pere, and S.B.M. - that is to say, Scripta of the Bonne Mere, with an indication of the volume and the page. (For example, S.B.P. I, 86).

2. The public copy of the informative process of the Good Father, held at Paris, from February 11, 1925 to June 2, 1927. This is comprised of two volumes containing 2088 manuscript pages. It will be cited as: C.P., with an indication of the volume and the page.

3. Some documents of the “position” of our Institute in the secret Archives of the Vatican. This is composed of four enormous volumes, in which are included a certain number of files containing papers. The files are subdivided and enumerated. The citation is made as: A.S.V., with the indication of the volume, of the file and its number. For example, A.S.V. I, 1st 1., no. 1.

4. In addition to this there are several references to “The Life of Reverend Father Marie-Joseph Coudrin” by Father Stanislaus Perron, Second Edition, 1900, Paris, Lecoffre.

5. The citations of the Rule of Saint Benedict are according to the copy of the “Pax” collection. “The Rule of Saint Benedict,” First Edition, Paris, Desclee.

May this commentary, destined solely for the members of the Congregation, augment in us the love of our Institute which, in its origin and in its end, so clearly shows all the signs of an institution which is truly providential.

Rome, September 1945.

Frater Anthony Hulselmans, SS. CC.

INTRODUCTION

The title of the Congregation

1. The foundation made by Father Marie-Joseph Coudrin and Mother Henrietta Aymer de la Chevalerie bears the title of “Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.” It is under this title that the Institute was approved in 1817, as we read in the Bull “Pastor Aeternus” of November 17, 1817, which speaks of “*Congregatio sub invocatione Sanctissimorum Cordium Jesu et Mariae, et Adorationis Sanctissimi Sacramenti.*”

Up until that time the Congregation had borne another name, that of “*Zealots of the Love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Perpetual Adorers of the Divine Heart of Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.*” This title we already find in a note of the Good Father, dated December 20, 1800, wherein he broadly traces the foundation of his Institute: “...*Order of Zealots of the Love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of perpetual adoration of the Heart of Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, under the special protection of the Blessed Virgin, following the Rule of Saint Benedict, explained according to the following constitutions...*” (S.B.P. I, p. CVIII).

It is under the same title that the Good Father proposed his foundation for the approbation of the ecclesiastical authorities; first of all to the capitular vicars of Poitiers, then to the supreme authority of the Sovereign Pontiff.

In his initial request of May, 1801, he does no more than mention the first part of the title: “...*we presume to entreat you to accord us your approbation of the reunion of the type of life of a number of priests and lay-people, forming a society bearing the name of Zealots of the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary...*” (S.B.P., I, p. 28). In the petition to the Holy Father, dated October 2, 1801, he gives the complete title and begins his petition thus:

“*The Zealots of the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, perpetual adorers of the Divine Heart of Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, under the special protection of the Blessed Virgin, to His Holiness, Pius VII, Sovereign Pontiff.*” (S.B.P., I, page 77).

In the course of the same year, 1801, the Good Mother drew up a little outline of the Rule for the Brothers of the Congregation which she called: “*General Rule of the Order of Zealots of the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, perpetual adorers of the Divine Heart of Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.*” (S.B.M., I, p. 97.)

This title was very dear to the Good Father, since it so clearly summed up the fundamental idea of his work. On Christmas night, in the year 1800, he pronounced his vows as “Zealot of the love of the Sacred Hearts.” Furthermore, it was as “Zealots” that his first disciples were consecrated to the service of the Sacred Hearts.

He insisted that this, the primordial title should be conserved, and would have wished to have his foundation approved under this name. However, in the course of the years 1814-1816, when negotiations were opened in Rome for the approbation of the Institute, some difficulties arose. There were some who believed so it seems that this title might be the cause of annoyances for the new Institute as well as for the Holy See.

“It is feared,” said Father Perron, “that the title of Zealots of the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and perpetual adorers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar might irritate both philosophers and Jansenists against the new Institute, as well as against the Holy Apostolic See itself.” (Life, p. 321).

Had this been the sole difficulty, it might have been vanquished. But what was still more serious, their Eminences, the Cardinals charged with examining the first constitutions, pronounced themselves without exception against the title which they found much too complicated. Cardinal John Philip Scott, the presenter (presentere), remarked:

“To tell the truth, the title does not please me. It begins with two newly-fabricated words which are not Latin: *Zelatorum* and *Zelatricum*.¹ Furthermore, the whole title is metaphoric because **Zealots of the love of the Sacred Hearts**, reduced to its proper and natural meaning, would say: persons who love the virtues symbolized in the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, e. g. their humility, their meekness, their purity, their love, etc. That which is added on, and which makes the title still longer: **perpetual adorers of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar** applies neither to the members in particular – which is clear – nor to the Institute as a whole.” (A.S.V., I, 1st 1.)

The other Cardinals, their Eminences, the Cardinals Mattei, Duguani, de Morozzo, and a fifth whose name remains unknown, were equally opposed to it and also made objections. This unanimity was doubtless an evident sign that Rome was not in favor of the proposed title. But the Good Father, informed of the objections which the Holy See made, resolved to attempt a last effort in order to save a title so dear to his heart. It is true that on October 6, 1814, he wrote to Father Hilarion in Rome: “*Try to get an approbation under the title of Adorers if you cannot get one for Zealots...*” (S.B.P., II, p. 136). But that does not mean to say that he lost interest in the first title and was ready to give in to the difficulties with which he was meeting.

Towards the end of 1816, he first of all sent to Rome, on December 6, a memorandum justifying the title of Zealots, and on the 27th of the same month, another on the title Adorers. The first memorandum, especially is of great importance in order to know and understand the thought of the Founder.

2. *“The title of Zealots, it is said here, presents great advantages relative to the end which we desire to attain: that of the sanctification of souls by the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.*

For almost a half-century, a false and odious philosophy, unceasingly occupied with combating religion, has succeeded in totally extinguishing in the hearts of our countrymen, zeal for the glory of God. The wondrous zeal which inflamed the heart of David, king and prophet, for the glory of the house of the Lord, is equally unknown. Everywhere one meets unfaithful or relaxed Christians, forgetting their Christian duty, or fulfilling it in a lukewarm and indifferent manner.

“Even the use of expressions which refer to religion are in some way banished from society. The emphatic words of Humanity and Philanthropy have replaced the beautiful and consoling terms used in speaking of Christian charity. Even though, from time to time, people still speak of respect for the Supreme Being, they no longer understand the significance of the love of God. Under such circumstances, and with the desire of reminding all mankind of the infinite love of Jesus Christ and the confidence which that love should inspire, we could do naught else than take a title which, of itself, should strike people. Moreover, by our very vows of religion we are pledged to this good work. Furthermore, the title should make people understand that they should open their hearts

¹ There is no English translation for the feminine “Zelatricum” therefore both the masculine and feminine is translated by the word zealots.

to the divine flame, and raise towards heaven their eyes, which have been too long fixed on the earth and the things of this world. This is why we have adopted the title of Zealots.

This title of Zealots clearly and plainly expresses the aim which we desire to attain: the sanctification of souls by the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. If one is penetrated by the tenderness of the Heart of Jesus for the salvation of souls, how can he help but be inflamed with a holy zeal which urges him to respond to the love of so good a Master? If a person but thinks of the maternal tenderness of the Heart of Mary for men who have become her children in the person of Saint John, how can he help but feel his heart inflamed with a holy desire to honor the Virgin of virgins? All this is precisely what the name of Zealots includes.

The same thing can be said in considering our Institute in itself and also relative to the members which compose it. What we need is a name which will daily remind our brothers of their duties and their obligations; which will recall to them at each moment that they should sacrifice themselves through holy zeal for the Lord. Their title should ever keep before their minds that they will fail in their most essential duties the moment that they desire to live for themselves alone, without working for the salvation of their brothers. The title should remind them that they ought not to enter into the silence of the cloister except to gain new strength with which to combat the enemies of religion, and finally, that their vocation is wholly one of zeal, and that a zeal which is burning.

The same facts and principles apply to our sisters. If the daughters of Zion, by a natural inclination, were tempted to unburden themselves of the painful duty of education in order to give themselves exclusively to the sweetness of contemplation, their title of Zealots would remind them unceasingly of the obligation of a more widespread charity.

The Congregation of Bishops and Regulars have believed it their duty to consult Reverend Father D'Astros. This pious and wise ecclesiastic has had our Constitutions under his eyes at two different times. We even submitted them for his approbation last September. The Congregation sent them to him during the month of October and he found no complication whatever in the name of Zealots. He was, moreover, in our house and consequently better able to judge whether or not there would be any inconvenience in adopting this title.

Why then, would we be refused the grace of keeping a name under which Father D'Astros himself believed that he should approve our Constitutions and our statutes?

May I also be permitted to make the observation that the title of Zealots is often employed in books of piety. We have a little office of the Sacred Heart of Mary, published a half-century ago in France, in which the Heart of Mary is honored under the title of bountiful Zealot of souls: "Zealot almae cordium."

I will add one more last reflection: the consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary is the foundation of our Institute. We ardently insist on keeping, even in the name of our religious society, a souvenir of that consecration

It is under this title of Zealots that we have, for more than twenty years, borne persecutions and anxieties. The title is, in fact, our consolation, our joy, and I even dare add, our strength and our support. May we be permitted to conserve now, in time of calm and peace, a name which was our mainstay and support in time of tempest and storm."

(S.B.P., II, p. 179; also, Life of the Good Father, p. 335).

In his memorandum of December 27, of the following year, the Good Father resumes the argument, giving new proof in justification of the title of Zealots, after which he speaks on the title of Adorers. (S.B.P., II, p. 183).

But it was too late when the two memorandums reached their destination. On December 20, the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars read approved the Constitutions of the Congregation, an approbation which the Holy Father confirmed on January 10, 1817. The Institute founded by Father Coudrin and Mother Henriette was approved under the title proposed by Cardinal Scotti, presenter: "Congregatio Sacratissimorum Cordium Jesu et Mariam, et Adorationis Sanctissimi Sacramenti."

What a sorrow it must have been for the Good Father to thus see the title disappear which was so very dear to his heart. But that he unreservedly submitted, is proved in a letter of March 25, 1817, to Father Abraham: "*Yesterday, my dear confrere, we received from Rome the approbation of our Congregation...*" and he signed himself "Father Coudrin, Superior General of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary." (S.B.P., II, p. 195).

On the fourteenth of the following April, he addressed a circular to the entire Congregation; announcing the good news of the pontifical approbation. The letter began in the following manner: "*Brother Marie-Joseph, Superior General of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, to his well-beloved brothers and to his very dear sisters. Salutation and benediction in Our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (S.B.P., II, p. 203).

This is so much the more remarkable, in view of the fact that on the twenty-fifth of February of the same year, that is to say, exactly one month before receiving the news that the Institute had been approved under a new title, he began his second circular letter to the Congregation with these words:

"*Brother Marie-Joseph, Superior General of the Zealots of the Love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in-the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, to our very dear brothers, the superiors of the houses of Zealots. Salutation and benediction in our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (S.B.P., II, p. 192).

The title of Zealots still remained in use for some years, in the formula of religious profession, but it disappeared completely in the official correspondence from 1824 on. In order to conform ourselves still more entirely to the title which the Holy See had given us, the Chapter of 1824 had rectified the formula of religious profession, which since that time has remained in use in the Congregation.

3. Even though Rome had not accepted the title of "Zealot-Adorers," the **reality** designated by that title caused no difficulty whatsoever. The new title expressed in other terms that which the former title signified; namely, that the Congregation, founded by Father Coudrin and Mother Henriette, is an institute destined to burn with zeal for the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and that it is dedicated in a special manner to the adoration of the Heart of Jesus in the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

This was something really new in the Church of God. There were already Institutes consecrated in a special manner to Jesus and Mary, and which were filled with zeal for the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Heart of Mary. Moreover, some of these Institutes were consecrated to the Adoration of the Holy Eucharist (e.g., the Eudists, the Benedictines of the Blessed Sacrament, etc.). But there did not yet exist a religious society consecrated so essentially to the devotion to the Sacred Heart that even adoration of the Blessed Sacrament was considered and practiced in the light of that fundamental consecration.

Later on, there were to be several Institutes dedicated to the Heart of Jesus (e.g., Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Issoudin, Priests of the Sacred Heart of St. Quentin, of Betharram, etc.). There were others dedicated to the Immaculate Heart of Mary (e.g., the Congregation of Blessed Peter Claret, the Missionaries of Scheut, etc.). Besides, some institutes were dedicated to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (e.g., Missionaries of the Sacred Hearts of Naples, Society of the Sacred Hearts at Majorca)². But it is greatly to the credit of our venerable Founders to have been the first to base their entire Institute on the devotion to the Sacred Hearts. They united, in that fundamental consecration, the Heart of Jesus and the Heart of Mary. One cannot help but see in this a truly providential disposition. In an epoch when Jensenism had cooled the hearts of the people and the French Revolution had destroyed so many ancient and venerable institutions, behold, there rises up a new institute in a forgotten corner of France itself where error and destruction had reigned. This new institute bore in its coat-of-arms the sign of restoration: Jesus and Mary, basis of all salvation, source of all redemption. It considered Jesus and Mary under the aspect of their hearts, the symbol of their redemptive love.

All had been destroyed all should be repaired and restored in the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

This is why the new Congregation based its existence on a love, which was to exert itself in every phase of its life, in the interior life of its members as well as in the different forms of its apostolate. For this reason it associated itself with the great mystery of the Redemption which had its center in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary and which is continued in the Holy Eucharist. Here we have a further reason why the Founders had perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar in the Congregation as something inseparably united to the devotion to the Sacred Hearts. Furthermore, this is also why the Founders desired that in its exterior structure their work should imitate its sublime model. A man and a woman, united in the greatest intimacy of soul, had planned the foundation and fashioned it into the closest union between the two branches of which their Institute was composed.

The birth of the new foundation was realized in the most complete obscurity; it was retarded in its development by various difficulties, and in comparison with more than one institute of more recent foundation, it has retained and preserved its original simplicity. Still, in the ideal proposed by the Founders there was nothing that was mediocre or commonplace. True, this ideal was striking in its very originality, but at the same time, it responded fully to the needs of modern times. Without exaggeration, one can truly say that the Hand of God was there.

The title which the Congregation has had since 1817 differs verbally from the original title so much desired by the Founders. Yet, it is always what the Good Father desired: a souvenir of our consecration to the Sacred Hearts, which is the foundation of the Institute.

The title of the Rule

4. In the title of the Rule of 1928: "Constitutions, Statutes and Rule", there is, without the least doubt, an error. All the preceding editions, from 1825 to 1909, in the Latin text as well as in the French text, have the word "Rules" in the plural: "Constitutiones, Statute at Regulae," "Constitutions, Statute, et Regles." One finds the same title in the authentic exemplary of trial

² Reverend Father Mamas Mouly, in his booklet: "From Saint Benedict to Father Coudrin," page 44 and on, shows that, shortly after the year 1800, there was a real flowering of institutes of women consecrated to the Sacred Hearts.

copy, approved in 1928, and deposited in the Archives of the Congregation of Religious (P. 61, n. prot. 1948/27).

The term “Rule” is then a mistake, and the title of our Rule should be: “Constitutions, Statutes and Rules of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.”

In the editions of 1825 and 1840 there is added: “and Ceremonial;” which was omitted in 1908, and with good reason, for even though the ceremonial can be united to the book of “Constitutions, Statutes and Rules,” it does not, however, belong to the Rule, properly speaking.

The Rule of 1817 comprised no more than the “Constitutiones et Statute.” Counted among the “Statute” was the chapter on the different persons of which the Congregation is composed.

The Rule of 1825 added the word: “Rules” in accordance with a decision of the General Chapter held in 1824, which came to the following decision. “There will be re-united under the title of Constitutions, Rules and Statutes of the Brothers of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar: 1st, all that which concerns the brothers in the Constitutions and Statutes approved by the Bull of November 17, 1817; 2nd, all the regulations of the Chapter of 1819; 3rd, the rules adopted by the present Chapter.” This decision clearly indicates to us that what was understood by the term “Rules” was the many capitulary regulations which, in 1825, were added to the text of the Constitutions and Statutes. As to the rest, the Rule of 1825 made no distinction between the Constitutions, Rules and Statutes, and divided the 266 articles of which it was composed into a preliminary chapter and sixteen other chapters.

During the General Chapter of 1838, the Rule, considerably augmented and brought up-to-date, was divided into two principal parts, which division has remained as such ever since.

The first part, contained the articles on the government and organization of the Congregation; namely, the members of which it is composed, the Superiors, the General Chapter, the administration of temporal good, etc. This was called “Constitutions.” The second part was called “Statutes and Rules,” and included matter concerning the dispositions on religious life; namely, novitiate, profession, vows, the Rule, permissions, the chapter of faults and corrections, exercises of piety, fasting, etc.

In the French text, the title of two parts was explicitly mentioned: 1st Part, “Constitutions Brothers of the Congregation; 2nd Part, “Rules and Statutes.” The Latin text has no title except for the second part which is called: “Regulae speciales et Statuta.”

As for the revision of the Rule in 1908, the title of the Latin text remained as in 1840; but in the French text it was overlooked. Since the Rule of 1928 had nothing but a French text, which was copied without any critical examination of the text of the Rule of 1909, all mention of the former earlier and older division disappeared.

Yet that division was exact, so much so that we can say that the first part of the Rule contained the “Constitutions”; while the second part gave the “Statutes and Rules.” As has been said, the Constitutions treated of the organization and the government of the Congregation, the Statutes and Rules contained the prescriptions for the interior life of the Institute. There is no clear-cut distinction between “Statutes and Rules.” But it can be said that the “Statutes” are the more ancient regulations which are already found in the Rule of 1817, where they are called

“statuta.” The “Rules” on the other hand, are the numerous capitulary decisions, which after their approbation by Rome were inserted in the Rule.

After this short explanation of the title of the Congregation and the Rule, we may now speak of the aim of the Institute, of which the preliminary Chapter treats in some articles that are very substantial.

PRELIMINARY CHAPTER

On the Aim of the Institute

5. The preliminary chapter of the Rule, which in the Latin text is called “Proemium,” contains the fundamental law of our Institute. In a few clear-cut phrases it traces the aim of our Institute, the chief phases of its activity, the essential traits of its spirituality, the foundation of its constitutions and the substance of its obligations. It is clear that this chapter dates from the time of the origin of the Institute. Aside from a few minimum modifications of no great importance, we find it in its entirety in the Rule of 1825, and, with the exception of the last three articles which were introduced into the Rule in 1825, it was, already included in the Rule of 1817. We will see, in what follows, that even the last three articles, which in 1825 had been compressed into two articles, already figured in the documents prior to 1817, especially in the petition of October 25, 1814, which, reduced and modified, was added as an Introduction to the Constitutions and Statutes of 1817. We can well say then, that the entire chapter goes back to the origins of the Institute.

ARTICLE I

On the Aim of the Institute in General

6. Article I, in a few words, gives us the aim of the Congregation. “The aim of the Institute is to retrace the four ages of Our Lord Jesus Christ: that is, His Infancy, His Hidden Life, His Public Life, and His Crucified Life, and to propagate devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.”

Whoever believed himself to have found in these words a true definition, or even an adequate description of the aim of the Congregation, without the least doubt, would certainly be deceived. Article I contains no more than a short and practical formula which must be studied in the light of tradition, and above all, in conjunction with the life and doctrine of the Founders, in order to grasp its full meaning. The Good Father, in a letter of April 14, 1817, to the High-Chaplain of France, gives the reason for his choice of these terms. “*In order to recall more easily to the members who are to compose this new Institute, the entire extent of their obligations, we have proposed to them as a model the four ages of our Divine Savior.*” (S.B.P., II, p. 1R).

In order to understand the meaning of this article, which is the most fundamental one of the Rule, we must study, in their historic development, the ancient documents wherein the Founders speak to us of the aim of the Institute. We will see that the consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary together with the practice of the propagation of true devotion to these Sacred Hearts, is the foundation and real aim of the Congregation, whereas the imitation of the four ages of the Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ is but the means wherewith to attain the end.

7. The documents on the life of our Founders, where there is question of the aim of their Institute, can be divided into three sections, in accordance with the three periods to which they refer:

- First, the documents relative to the foundation: 1800-1802.
- Next, the documents relative to the solemn approbation: 1814-1817.
- Finally, the documents of the years following the approbation.

I. Period of the Foundation: 1800 - 1802

Even though in some documents the Founders speak to us of the year 1793, or 1794 as the year of foundation, the Congregation was not actually founded until the year 1800. It is also from that year that the first official documents on the aim of the Institute date. Let it not be forgotten that, for the Founders, the Congregation is one single entity, and the end to be attained is the same for the brothers as for the sisters.

In June 1800, the Good Mother wrote as often to the Capitular Vicars of Poitiers as to the Sovereign Pontiff, in order to ask them to give their approbation to the Institute which she had just founded.

To the Capitular Vicars, the Reverend Fathers L. de Mondion and V. Messay, among other things she wrote: *"Our association is titled the Association of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ and is under the special protection of the Blessed Virgin, His Mother. **Its principal aim is perpetual adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ, really present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, and also the practice of all the virtues which can render us agreeable to God.**"* In the same petition she speaks of the *"...feeble efforts which we have made to **immolate ourselves to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ, in order to satisfy as much as we can the Divine Justice, for the excesses committed during these last years and to allay the all-too-just punishments with which it has pleased God to afflict France.**"* (S.B.M., I, p. 26).

To the Holy Father she said more or less the same thing, but expressed herself more clearly on the subject of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Speaking of the first members of the Congregation, she said: *"...they had formed an association under the title of Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus through the mediation of the Sacred Heart of Mary, His Mother. Its principal aim is perpetual adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ really present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, and the practice of all virtues which can render it agreeable to God."* (S.B.M., I, p. 314).

In the formula of the resolutions, approved on May 17, 1800, by the Capitular Vicars of Poitiers, the reparative idea of the new Institute manifests itself clearly:

"I consecrate myself today in a particular manner to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ, and take the resolution to live during a year, in poverty, chastity, and obedience in a spirit of docility, resignation and immolation. In all my actions, I promise to do what seems to me the most perfect, desiring by my fidelity to these resolutions to appease the wrath of God and satisfy His justice; but I have no intention whatever of rendering myself guilty of any sin, even venial, when failing in my resolutions." (S.B.M., I, p. 30).

On Christmas night of the same year, the Good Father made his perpetual vows in accordance with a formula composed by himself, and which we have already cited *"...as Zealot of the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, in whose service I will live and die."*

A few days later, on December 29th, 1800, having received a communication from the Good Mother, he outlined the fundamental idea of the newborn Institute: *"Order of Zealots of the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of perpetual adoration of the Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, under the special protection of the Blessed Virgin, following the Rule of Saint Benedict, explained according to the following constitutions..."* (S.B.P., I, p. XVIII).

On January 1, 1801, exactly a week after his profession, the Good Father addressed a petition to His Reverence, Father de Mondion, in which he asks for the privilege of solemnizing the first Saturday of the year as a feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Without speaking of the end of the Institute, the Good Father gives a most precious proof on the cult of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in his Congregation.

"I come today to solicit a special grace in the name of the Blessed Virgin. As it is by her divine Heart that in our Institute we adore the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, and since Saturday is the first Saturday of the year, a day especially consecrated to her, I come as your son, to solicit the grace of

celebrating this feast with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament as well as benediction in the evening, in honor of that amiable Heart of Mary. This same favor I beg for the first Saturday of each month throughout the year." (S.B.P., I, p. 76) He signed this remarkable document: "Jerome, 1st of the year 1801."

In May 1800 the Good Father addressed himself again to His Reverence, Msgr. de Mondion, this time to ask him for the approbation of the branch of the brothers;

"Knowing your great zeal for the extension of the reign of God and your burning desire to see it established in all hearts, we dare supplicate you to accord your approbation to the union and to the manner of living of several priests and laymen, forming a society under the title of Zealots of the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. The constitutions incorporate a part of the rule of Saint Benedict, together with particular constitutions. The principal and the most rigorous observations are: always to wear woolen clothing, to sleep on a straw mattress, to abstain from meat entirely as long as in good health, to observe habitual silence, and to strictly observe the three vows. Outside of these obligations, each individual in this society has particular duties to fulfill, which duties are regulated by obedience and which form part of the aim which one has proposed. Some members are destined to go into the country to give missions, instruct the people and propagate the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Others are employed in instructing children whom we propose to raise in order that they may become priests or Zealots, according to their vocation or talents, or even good Christians living in the world. Still others, in a word, like a new Moses, are destined to unceasingly raise their arms toward heaven in order to obtain the blessing of the Lord on the work of their brothers and to repair the outrages which the Heart of Jesus has received, daily receives, and will, unfortunately, continue to receive from unfaithful Christians. Such, in substance, is the general plan of the Society of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, a plan which fits in very well with our means." (S.B.P., I, p. 28 and S.B.M., I, p. 104).

In October of that same year the two Founders addressed a common petition to the Sovereign Pontiff, begging for pontifical approbation. The aim of the new foundation is clearly indicated and is altogether dominated by the idea of the consecration to the Sacred Hearts. There exist two preliminary drafts of this petition; the first is a sketch from the hand of the Good Father, the other is the definite final text from the hand of the Good Mother. There are some minimum differences between the two texts and we are here giving the final text, signed by the Good Father, Good Mother, Sister Gabrielle de la Barre, and Brother Hilarion, who at this time was only nineteen years of age.

"The Zealots of the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, perpetual adorers of the Divine Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, under the special protection of the Blessed Virgin, to the Holy Father, Pius VII, Sovereign Pontiff. Humbly prostrate at your feet, we dare supplicate Your Holiness to accord your approbation to the establishment of an order practicing the rule of Saint Benedict, with particular constitutions which facilitate perpetual adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. This Institute bears the title of Zealots of the love of the Divine Hearts of Jesus and Mary, perpetual adorers of the Divine Heart of Jesus in the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar and is under the special protection of the most Holy Virgin Mary. Being grafted on the stem of the glorious Saint Benedict and practicing the austerity of his life, but sweetened by the holy love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, it desires to revive Our Lord's virtues, particularly that of self-abnegation. It desires also to show forth His humility, His meekness, His poverty, His obedience and His charity in order to raise and form young hearts to the likeness of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and to inflame the entire world, if possible, with holy love, by spreading devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary wherever Your Holiness wishes to send us.

This establishment was formed at Poitiers in 1793, and was approved successively by His Excellency the Bishop, and by the Superiors during the vacancy of the Bishopric. In the Society of women, perpetual adoration has never been interrupted, neither by night nor by day. The priests in the society, by devoting themselves to missions and to other painful, laborious work of their ministry, lead the life of "donnés."³ This establishment gets its

³ It is not entirely clear what the Founders mean by the word "donnés." I suppose that the expression signifies that the priests, although devoted to the apostolate in the world, lead a true religious life of silence and penance, as do their brothers and sisters who remain in retreat. "Donnas" would then be synonymous with "consecrated to God."

religious character from the three vows of chastity, poverty and obedience. One Superior governs both groups. However, each member according to the measure of talent which has been confided to him, etc., be it in retreat, silence or penance, or in the solicitude of the apostolic life, renders to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Pure Heart of Mary, the duties of sacrifice, of love, of reparation and total devotion which has been up to this time the basis of the establishment of which we have just given a slight glimpse.

We are willing to add the vow of stability in the order if Your Holiness deigns to confirm the work, which appears to be for the greater glory of God, according to what His Reverence, the Administrator of the diocese of Tours has instructed Your Holiness. This establishment has raised its foundation on the ruins of many others, of which we desire to inherit the virtues, and particularly that of an unlimited devotion to the Holy Apostolic See and for your most holy person. The members at the foot of the altar implore your assistance and your apostolic benediction.

"The humble, most obedient and submissive servants of Your Holiness.

*Brother Marie-Joseph. C., pr. Sup.Gen.
Henriette Aymer, Supr. General
Sr. Gabrielle de la Barre, Mistress of Nov.
Brother Joseph-Hilarion Lucas, professor."*

(S.B.P., I, p. 77 & S.B.M., I, p. 104)

In the course of the year 1801, the Good Mother wrote a whole series of fairly intensive notes in which she treated of several points of the Rule. These are of an extreme importance in the history of the Rule. But she did not speak of the aim of the Institute. This has been spoken of but once, namely, in a communication of February 3, 1802.⁴

*"God had made known to me that He showed Himself corporally to Sister Mary Alacoque, in order that she would make known the devotion to His Sacred Heart. He has accorded this grace to the daughters of the Visitation, because their rule is mild, easy for all, although it demands much interior spirit. He has poured out on them a certain predilection in order that this devotion may spread and be loved. Now that it is actually adopted, He desires **an institute which should be destined to adore His Heart, repair the outrages which It receives, enter into the interior sorrows of His Heart, and retrace the four ages of His Life.** He wishes that the Rule should be somewhat austere in order to imitate His crucified life; but He wishes particularly that we penetrate the interior renouncement of His Heart. It is for this reason that He communicates Himself interiorly only, and not perceptibly. He wishes that our sufferings be of this type..."*
(S.B.M., I, p. 36)

This is the first time that the formula, "the four ages" is mentioned. Nevertheless, there is but a passing mention of this formula, and it is not accompanied by any explanation. Moreover, it is preceded by the already classic formula: "to adore, to repair, to enter into the interior sorrows of the Heart of Jesus."

⁴ In the writings of the Good Mother this note is classed as number 14, between those of February 2, 1801 (no. 13) and February 7, 1801 (no. 16); but it is dated February 3, 1802. It is possible that 1802 is a "lapsus calami." But as there exist other notes of the year 1802, there is not, in my opinion, sufficient reason for doubting the authenticity of this date. That is why we think it best to consider this note as a communication of the year 1802.

Transcription note: In the reorganization of the Good Mother's writings, Fr. André Mark ss.cc. places this billet as: ArchSSCC/S; LEBM.I.33; HL.29 - GB.17, and he explains: This billet, which is number 17 of Sr. Gabriel, was written the 3rd February, 1802. (HL). In her "Mémoires", Sr. Gabriel places this revelation on February 2, 1802 (n°112).

This precious literature on the origin of our Institute ended with the departure of the Good Father for Mende (May 3, 1802). It is only in a note of January 1803 that the Good Mother refers again for an instant to the end and aim of the Institute. She does it wholly in the spirit of the previous documents and writes to the Good Father as follows:

*“It is at this time that God has made me understand that from all eternity He has destined you to do His work. From your most tender infancy, you loved to pray to the Good God, to learn of your religion, and to speak of it. It is between the ages of nine and ten years that your vocation for the ecclesiastical state was definitely decided, and although perhaps you do not recall it, it is at that age that you consecrated yourself to God. It is in these movements of fervor without reflection, which are not always deliberately followed up, that God Himself often takes the upper hand. Of this you are a proof. It is between the ages of fourteen and fifteen years that, most voluntarily and with reflection, you gave yourself to God. From that very moment it was definitely decided, once and for all, that you would be Superior of the Zealots. I saw a multitude of Zealots, first of all spreading out all over France, then throughout the entire universe. It is impossible for me to explain all that God has made known to me concerning the devotion of His Divine Heart. I can only tell you that He had made this devotion known by the Sisters of the Visitation in a time when matters were troublesome for our religion, due to heresies and general disorder. Mankind has not corresponded to this first favor. Our Lord has now chosen you to raise up a **new order which will consecrate itself thus: one part of the Order will make the reign of God known and will spread it, thus re-establishing the reign of God in hearts by means of this devotion to His sufferings, while the other part of the religious order is destined by a life of immolation and sacrifice to adore and to repair, as much as possible, the outrages which He has received.** This order will be established notwithstanding some of the persecutions which we will have to undergo, for such are the designs of God. It is the last grace which He deigns to grant mankind, before the end of the world.”* (S.B.M., I, p. 173).

To these documents, which belong to the period of the foundation, we can add a “note of the Good Father on the aim of the Congregation” written towards 1804 or 1805. In it he speaks of the aim of the Institute and mentions the four ages only, which he attempts to explain. It is certainly a preliminary trial which was later on to undergo considerable change. The four ages are herein explained in a manner entirely different from that which became classic after 1814.

“Our resolutions have for their beginning and their end the four ages of Our Lord Jesus Christ: His Infancy, in raising children for the sake of virtue; His adolescence, in forming them to become good Christians in the world, or in the religious state if they have a good vocation; His crucified life, in forming a society of perpetual adorers of His Divine Heart in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar; His Apostolic Life, in founding a society of missionaries at the disposition of Bishops, in order to preach the Gospel to the poor.

Everything which tends, directly or indirectly, to weaken or destroy this spirit and this aim, in the society as a whole, or among the members who compose it, is not worthy of it and should be banished forever. If, in order to establish and attain this above-mentioned aim, it will be necessary to take any other means than those which the Lord shall furnish, we cannot adopt them. It would take nothing more than the adoption of such means to bring about the collapse of the whole edifice even to its very foundations, since they would not be undertaken for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.” (S.B.P., I, p. 202).

II. The Period of Solemn Approbation: 1814-1817

8. Up until the time when negotiations were begun with the Holy See for the purpose of obtaining the approbation of the new foundation, our Founders do not speak again about the

aim of the Institute. In 1814, Father Hilarion was in Rome as theologian to the French Ambassador to the Holy See. Profiting by his presence there these negotiations were begun. The aim of the Congregation, at the very onset, occupied the center of interest and attention. Judging from appearances, one would be tempted to believe that this was formulated in a manner slightly different from that of the first period. The Good Father wrote to Father Hilarion on August 16, 1814: (S. B.P., II, p. 136) *“Remember that the Lord wants you to be good and that you must neglect nothing for the four ages of Our Lord Jesus Christ...”*

On the following August 29th, he wrote again:

“How can I send you a memorandum on a work which is our consolation but which has not yet been approved by the King? Sketching it briefly, the four ages of Our Lord Jesus Christ should, as you know, form the base of our Institute under the title of Clerics Regular of the Order of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.” (S.B.P., II, p. 136)

On October 6 of the same year he wrote again:

“Flake an attempt to get an approbation under the title of Adorers, if you cannot get one under the title Zealots. You understand very well: our four ages...the Rule of ii Benedict with the Constitution adapted to our particular functions of teaching, missions, etc., etc...” (S.B.P., II, p. 138)

But all that was but an opening wedge; a more extensive and quasi-official report was soon to follow. On October 25, 1814, the two Founders addressed to the Holy Father a petition which was sufficiently developed and which they signed themselves. Moreover, the letter contained a recommendation by Monsignor de Chabot, former Bishop of Mende, who had retired to live in our house at Picpus. As the document is of great importance, we are reproducing it in its entirety:

“Most Holy Father”,⁵

“The Brothers and Sisters of the Congregation of the Most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, which was founded recently in France by Father Mary Joseph Peter Coudrin, most humbly lay before Your Holiness the end and purpose of their institution”.

“This Congregation, which is composed of many members, both priests and the faithful of both sexes, originated in the town of Picpus at the time when France was suffering under the persecution aroused by the National Convention”.

“At that time it received certain favors from your predecessor, Pius VI of happy and glorious memory. Afterwards, it spread to various cities in France, and now is to be found in seven cities; namely, Paris, Poitiers, Mende, Cabors, Laval, Le Mans, and Sees. Certain hope is given for its further propagation since it is already sought by many other towns”.

*“Lately it obtained many indulgences from Your Holiness for a period of thirty years, under the title of the Confraternity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Most Sacred Heart of Mary, as evidenced by the indult of the 4th of September of the present year, 1814”.*⁶

⁵ The original of this petition, written in Latin, is conserved in the Archives of the Vatican. There are two copies which do not differ except for the signature. The first one is signed as the one above. The second bears the signature: "f. Maria-Joseph, Petrus Coudrin.. et H. Aymer de la Chevaleris." Another hand, which seems to be that of the Good Father had added: "Canonica melitensis sine prebendis, Superior generalis totius Congregationis sororum." There is, furthermore, a copy of the second letter made by Father Hilarion. The writings of the Good Father give the French translation only. This is taken from the notes of Father Hilarion, but it is incomplete. In the last part the 2nd, 3rd and 4th sections are missing.

⁶ A first edict was accorded on September 4, 1814, which was soon followed by another dated December 1814, which accorded more extensive indulgences. This is why another hand, which seems to be that of Father Hilarion, has added in Latin in the margin: "as for the indulgences they were accorded for 30 years by the Bull of December 18, 1814." This remark does not concern the indulgences of September 4, but

“This Congregation is consecrated to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and enjoys the patronage of Saint Joseph. It is based on the Rule of Saint Benedict, with special constitutions which are proper to itself. Saints Pacomius, Augustine, Bernard and Dominic are especially venerated”.

*“The end especially intended by the above-mentioned Congregation is to recall to mind the four ages of our Savior: **His Infancy**, by educating, free of charge, poor boys and girls and by forming young students for the Sacred Ministry; **His Hidden Life**, by repairing, through perpetual adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament, the injuries committed against the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Without intermission, day and night, the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar is adored, especially in the houses of the Sisters which are more numerous; **His Apostolic Life**, by the preaching of the Gospel and by the missions entrusted to the priests; finally, **His Crucified Life**, by giving themselves to the mortifications of the flesh and the spirit, insofar as human frailty allows. All, both Brothers and Sisters, make perpetual vows of poverty, chastity and obedience”.*

“The priests of this Congregation instruct boys in the Catholic Faith, the liberal arts, and also in the sacred sciences. Besides, they teach young students ecclesiastical knowledge. They undertake the preaching of the evangelical truths, the hearing of confessions, and the giving of missions with the consent of the Bishops. The priests lead a common and regular life under obedience to the local Superior of each house, whom the Superior General appoints. There are also Brothers not destined for the clerical state, who under the same obedience, give themselves to various works in each and every house”.

“The Sisters of the same Congregation instruct girls, free of charge, in the rudiments of Faith, and in the arts proper to their sex. They lead a regular life under obedience to one of their number, who is the Superior General, and who appoints the other Superiors in each and every house. She, however, makes the vow of obedience to the Superior General of the entire Congregation”.

“The Superior General of the entire Congregation is chosen by the local Superiors of all the houses of the Brothers, by a plurality of votes. The vote of the latest Superior General is equivalent to two votes of the others”.

“The Superior General of the Sisters is chosen by the local Superiors of all the houses of the Sisters, following the manner given above for the election of the Superior General of the Brothers”.

“In these unhappy times, during which Your Holiness has been subjected to persecution, the members did not cease to pour forth prayers to God in order to obtain the liberation of the Head of the Church”.

“In certain houses of the above-mentioned Congregation, every hour, both day and night, for the space of three years, the Seven Penitential Psalms were recited for Your Holiness”;

“The above-mentioned supplicants humbly beg:

- 1. That Your Holiness, with the authority of the Apostolic See, would deign to confirm their Institute.*
- 2. That the indulgences which, by the indult of Your Holiness on the 4th of September, 1814, were granted to the Brothers and Sisters of the aforesaid Congregation for a period of thirty years, be also common to the students of both sexes who are educated or who shall be educated in the houses of the same Congregation, whether such houses are already erected or shall be erected henceforth. That such indulgences be also common to whomsoever of the faithful have been joined. to this Congregation through a special communion of prayer, or shall be joined to it, and who recite daily the prayer 'Salve Regina,' and spend at least one half-hour in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament”.*
- 3. That the priests of the same Congregation enjoy the faculty of reciting the office of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus on the first day of each month, even by transferring duplex feasts which occur on those days, unless they are feasts of Our Lord, or of the Blessed Mother, or feasts of the Saints de praecepto.*
- 4. That, to the same priests, with the permission of the Apostolic See, be granted the power of admitting the faithful into the following confraternities: that of Perpetual Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament, that of*

the privileges demanded in that petition, and accorded on December 18, 1814. Note-- The quotation marks are not closed even in the French, but the quotation would seem to be ended at the placed marked, i.e., after 1814."

Blessed Mary ever Virgin under the title of *Auxiliatrix* that of the Holy Rosary, and finally that of the Holy Scapular of **Mount Carmel**, with the application of the indulgences regarding their use. Also, that the present concession does not impede indulgences which have been, or would be granted to certain of these priests personally.

The above-mentioned petitioners, both the Brothers and Sisters of the Most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, humbly prostrate at the feet of Your Holiness, beseech Your Holiness, that the paternal and Apostolic Blessing would deign to be imparted to them, and also to their parents and relatives, as well as to the boys and girls whom they educate.

Holy Father, the most humble and obedient children of Your Holiness
f.m.j. Coudrin, Superior General of the entire Congregation
H. Aymer Superior General of the Sisters Paris, 25 October, 1814.

“We testify and know, that all the above-related facts are true, that they were already very useful to the Church, and in time to come shall profit it much, especially then. J. B. de Cabot, former Bishop of Mende.”

In this petition, the consecration to the Sacred Hearts is barely mentioned and the devotion to them not at all. The four ages, henceforth definitely fixed, are given as the aim of the Institute. But, it must be said that this was no more than an introduction, that it was soon to be followed by other documents wherein the aim of the Congregation would be more clearly and completely indicated.

9. We have, first of all, three memoranda of Father Hilarion, addressed to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, in which he exposes at length, the origin, the aim, and the means of the Institute. The first is dated December 7, 1814, and gives the history of our origin; the aim of the Congregation is also made mention of.

“In 1794, an epoch during which a bloody persecution brought desolation to the Church and to France, a group of pious women united in the city of Poitiers, to implore in silence and in tears, the mercy of the Lord. They place themselves under the protection of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. At the foot of the tabernacle they would bemoan the misfortunes of the Church and the State, invoke the Divine Heart of Jesus and the Pure Heart of Mary, repair by perpetual adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, the outrages perpetrated against the Divine Majesty, and finally educate children in piety and virtue.”

“The Institute was consecrated to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Saint Joseph was given it for its patron. Saint Pacomius, Saint Augustine Saint Dominic and Saint Bernard were acknowledged as protectors. Saint Pacomius because he was the first among the abbots of Thebaide, and he educated children in his monastery; Saint Augustine, because of his flaming zeal for the glory of the Lord, Saint Dominic, because he devoted himself, - he and his Order, - to combating heresy; finally, Saint Bernard, because of the great conversions he worked in the world and in the cloister and because he served as a precious model for the apostolic and religious life.”

“The Rule of our blessed Father, Saint Benedict, was adopted, but with modifications which correspond to the particular aim of our Institute.”

“In order that the members who compose this new Institute may more easily recall the entire extent of their obligations, they have been given as a model, the four ages of Our Divine Savior, that is: His Infancy, His Hidden Life, His Apostolic Life, and His Crucified Life. I call the Apostolic Life of Our Divine Savior the years which He consecrated to preaching His Gospel, for which purpose He had been sent by His Heavenly Father.”

“Our Sisters, by educating children of their own sex, thereby retrace the Infancy of Jesus Christ. They imitate His Hidden Life by perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and by their spirit of retreat. They approach the Crucified Life of Our Lord, as much as human weakness permits, by the mortification of the interior and exterior senses and by the austere practice of penances. It is still necessary to retrace the Apostolic Life of the

Man-God. Father Coudrin resolved to establish to this effect, a Congregation of men, forming one same Order with the Congregation of our Sisters and consecrating themselves entirely, as do the Sisters to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary. It is a matter of following, in the men's society, that which is already practiced in the houses of the Sisters, adding thereto the missions and all the occupations of the sacred ministry. Such an establishment was of the greatest utility, especially in the unfortunate circumstances in which the Church found itself. After a long period of trial, our Sisters of Poitiers resolved to bind themselves by sacred obligations. So, having obtained the consent of the ecclesiastical superior, they made annual vows.” (A.S.V., 1st 1. number 2)

In the account of the foundation, Father Hilarion gives an excellent synthesis of the aim of the Congregation and the means by which it tries to realize this aim. The basis of the whole thing is the Consecration to the Sacred Hearts by a life of reparative adoration and generous mortification; a life of zeal for the propagation of the reign of God by spreading devotion to the Sacred Hearts, and for the education of youth. In order to sum up with more facility, the different parts of this fundamental concept in one practical formula, it was decided to use the expression “the four ages of the life of Our Lord Jesus Christ.” The second memorandum is of the following December 26th, and treats, as Father Hilarion explicitly observes, of the aim and the end of the Institute. But he speaks relatively little of that aim but rather treats at length of the three classes which are found in the Congregation: missionaries, professors, and choir-brothers. However, what he does say of the aim of the Institute is quite remarkable:

“The primitive and fundamental aim of our Institute is to procure the glory of God and the salvation of souls. We are persuaded that one of the best means to attain that end is to propagate devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. We regard this holy devotion as one of the greatest graces which Our Lord has accorded us in these latter times. To adore the Divine Heart of Jesus, to honor the Pure Heart of Mary, is to pay tribute, a tribute of homage, of gratitude and of love to the infinite charity of the Savior for all mankind, and to the ineffable tenderness of Mary for the adopted brothers of the Man-God, her Divine Son. Such is the true spirit of the devotion to the propagation of which we have consecrated all our efforts.” (Ibid. number 13).

It is extremely remarkable that in this memorandum, which has been explicitly announced as treating of the aim of our Institute, the author does not say a word about the four ages. Instead, he speaks exclusively of the glory of God and the salvation of souls by the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts. The third memorandum followed about a month later, on January 24, 1815, and gave an exposition of the means by which the Congregation intends to realize the aim which it has proposed for itself. It is now that Father Hilarion speaks to us of the four ages:

“The life of Our Divine Savior is the model for all Christians and particularly for religious communities. Filled with this thought, we have conceived the desire of retracing, in all our establishments, the four ages of Jesus Christ; that is, His Infancy, His Hidden Life, His Evangelical Life, and His Crucified Life.”

After this short exposition of what he calls the means, he terminates with a new explanation of the aim and says:

*“After all that I have just explained, it is easy to grasp the aim of our Institute. **This aim** is designated by the very name which we desire to take, that of Zealots of the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, perpetual adorers of the most Blessed Sacrament.” (Ibid. no. 4)*

When we analyze the essence of these memoranda, it is clear that the formula “the four ages” does not indicate the aim, but rather the means by which we wish to realize the end in view. The aim, or end in view, which in general for all religious orders is the glory of God and the salvation of souls, is specified for us by the consecration to the Sacred Hearts, by the zeal for Their love and the propagation of Their devotion.

The Constitutions which the Good Father signed on March 28, 1816, were presented by Father Hilarion, first in French, on April 19th, and then in Latin, on May 24th. In these the aim of the Institute was indicated as follows:

“The aim of our Institute is to imitate the ages of our Lord Jesus Christ; namely, His Infancy, His hidden life, His evangelical life and His crucified life, and also, to propagate devotion to the Most Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary.”

This was the formula of the petition of October 25, 1814, to which the words: “and also to propagate devotion to the Most Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary” were added. The ‘practical’ formula, as Father Hilarion called it in his first memorandum, had been adopted because the Rule is a code for the practical life.

But the meaning of the formula was determined by the origin of the Institute and the basis of its vocation.

It is what the Good Father indicated, especially in the explanation which he added to his memorandum of December 6th. This has already been cited in extension on pages nine and ten of this study. There he does not speak of the four ages, but only of the consecration to the Sacred Hearts and the zeal for the propagation of the devotion to Their Hearts.

“The title of Zealots presents a great advantage relative to the aim which we desire to attain: that of the sanctification of souls by the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary” and... “the consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary is the basis of our Institute.”

It is true that this memorandum arrived too late, inasmuch as the approbation of the Institute by the Holy See was given sooner than expected; but it had the advantage of giving the Founder a new occasion to state precisely his notion of the aim of the Institute.

On March 24, 1817, in the afternoon, the Good Father was informed of the good news of the approbation. On April 14, he announced it in circular letter to all the Congregation “*tamquam gaudium magnum*” He used the occasion to recall to all his children the aim of the Congregation:

“Overwhelmed with so many favors which we have received from the God of all mercy, let us be on our guard, our well-beloved Brothers and our very dear Sisters, lest we forget the grandeur of our vocation. We are destined to adore the Heart of Jesus and to repair the outrages which He receives every day. We ought to enter into the interior sorrows of this Sacred Heart. One of our principal duties is to retrace the four ages of the life of the Man-God: His Infancy, His Hidden Life, His Apostolic Life, and His Crucified Life. Let us not lose sight of the fact that Our Lord wishes us, in a particular way, to enter into the interior crucifixion of His Heart. We should then, like Magdalene, take our place at His feet, and like Saint John accompany Him to Calvary and to the Cross. Remember also, our well-beloved brothers and our very dear Sisters, that after the adorable Heart of Jesus, we should particularly honor the Sweet Heart of Mary...” (S.B.P., II, p. 201).

One clearly sees that this citation is borrowed in great part from the Good Mother's communication of February 3, 1802 (cited on page 22 of this study). But the same day the Good Father wrote a letter which is of great interest for the study with which we are occupied. It was addressed to Monsignor de Talleyrand-Perigord, High Chaplain of France and communicated to him the news of the approbation of the Institute. The Good Father gave a rapid preview of the origin and aim of his foundation. He wrote:

To My Lord, the Chief Chaplain of France, April 14, 1817.

My Lord,

During the time when even France was the prey of the most cruel misfortunes, in 1794, while the weapons of the assassins took toll of numerous victims of all classes of society, some pious women of the town of Poitiers, prostrate at the foot of the altar in a secret oratory, devoted themselves, by adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, to repairing the numberless outrages committed. Little by little their number increased. Consecrated to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, they established, with the consent of the ecclesiastical superiors, perpetual adoration during the day and during the night. They submitted themselves to regular practices and the house soon contained a community which recognized as its superior, Madame Henriette Aymer de la Chevalerie, Canonise of Malta, and

*a relative of their Lordships, the Bishops of Chalons-sur-Saone and of Saint Claude. From the beginning of this newborn institution, I developed the idea of forming a **Congregation destined to spread the faith, propagate the devotion to, the Divine Heart of Jesus and the Sacred Heart of Mary, repair by perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar the outrages committed against the Divine Majesty, and finally, to educate children in piety and prepare young students of the sanctuary for the sacred ministry.***

To recall more easily to the minds of the members who were to compose this new Institute the extent of their obligations, we have proposed to them as a model the four ages of Our Divine Savior: His Infancy, His Evangelical Life, and His Crucified Life. At this time I was joined by some young people. They adopted my views and promised to cooperate with me, using all the means at their disposal...

...We count more than twenty-two years of existence, maintaining ourselves in the midst of every sort of danger which surrounded us. However, we lacked approbation and legal authorization.

...The Holy Father confirmed our Institute and our Constitutions on January 10 of this present year.”
(S.B.P., II, p. 199).

This letter is a summary of the first memorandum of Father Hilarion, which the Good Father sometimes cited literally. It is a proof that the memorandum conveyed exactly the authentic thought of the Founder and constituted a new argument for our thesis in regard to the different formulas which indicate the end of our Institute. The consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary with, first of all, the practice of the true devotion to these Hearts by adoration and reparation, and, after that, the propagation of that devotion by preaching and by teaching, is the fundamental thought of the Institute. The four ages of Our Divine Savior indicate in a practical and easy formula the obligation which that primordial aim imposes on the members of the Institute.

We can, then, conclude that an attentive consideration of the documents of this second period will lead us to the same conclusion as do those of the first; namely, the basis and the characteristic note of the Congregation is the devotion to the Sacred Hearts. Its whole life is summed up in the new rule motto which is its own: “*Sacris Cordibus Jesu et Mariae honor et gloria.*” The imitation of the four ages of the life of Jesus merely indicates the manner in which this fundamental idea may be realized as the basis of its entire existence.

III. After the approbation

11. The documents of the third period add nothing new, but confirm what has already been said. We have first of all, a little "note on the Congregation entrusted to the Nuncio of Paris, Monsignor de Nisibe, around the fifteenth day of May, 1821, by Father Hilarion in the name of the Good Father.⁷

⁷ On the first of December, 1820, the Good Father had written to the Holy Father on the subject of difficulties with Reverend Father Lemercier, pastor of Saint Marguerite's Parish. The letter was transmitted to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, who decided to seek further information from the Nuncio of Paris. On March 28, 1821, the letter of the Sacred Congregation to the Nuncio was transmitted to the Cardinal Secretary of State. It is probably as a result of this letter that the Nuncio asked for information on the Institute, which information the Good Father gave by Father Hilarion. The reply of the Nuncio to the Sacred Congregation is dated June 17, 1821. (V.S., I, 1st 1. n. 17)

“Its aim is: to repair by perpetual adoration the outrages perpetrated against the Sacred Heart of Jesus by the malice of men, consequently, perpetual adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar, both day and night, has been established in twelve houses of the Congregation...” (S.B.P., II, p. 339).

After this brief survey concerning the end of the Congregation, the decree spoke of education, the missions and the curriculum in the seminaries. Nothing is said about the four ages, or about the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The central idea of the aim, as proposed in the decree, is that of reparation through adoration, which is, without any doubt, the dominant idea in the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

In a small notice on the Congregation, dated November 19, 1822, and written in the Good Father's hand, we again come across the same thought, though expressed in different words:

“The Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar was formed by Msgr. Coudrin at the very height of the Revolution. Its principal aim was to appease the wrath of God, to satisfy the vow of Louis XVI, and to keep the remembrance of the religious state from dying out in France”.

“Encouraged by Pius VI, successively approved by the Ordinaries and definitely recognized by the Holy See, it united a society of ecclesiastics who make perpetual adoration. It maintains seminaries and colleges, gives free classes, raises the children of the poor and prepares them for the sacerdotal state. It also gives missions. The schools of the Society of Sisters gratuitously educate young people and give classes for the poor”.

“God has so blessed this Congregation that it now has twenty establishments in France.” (S.B.P., III, 51)

The devotion to the Sacred Hearts is not spoken of, neither are the four ages, but as in the preceding note, **the idea of reparation** occupies the center of interest in the exposition of the aim of the Institute.

In 1824 and 1825 the Good Father directed several petitions to the Holy See in which in passing, there was question of the aim of the Institute. There is first of all a petition of September 29, 1824, asking for a Proper for the Congregation:

“In all our houses,” said the Good Father, *“we make an effort, as much as possible, to make reparation by perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, both during the day and during the night, for the injuries perpetrated against the Divine Majesty by the malice of men. We have therefore made our choice of several offices which could help us to attain this end.”* (S.B.P., III, 163)

Once more, it is the idea of reparation which is the central thought of the Good Father but he does not elaborate upon it.

On the 20th of October 1824, the Good Father addressed a memorandum to the Holy See with the purpose of asking for the approbation of the Ceremonial of the Congregation. Among other things, he says:

“In all Congregations, there has always been, for the reception of novices, and for the profession of vows, some prayers and ceremonies proper to each.

Guided by the same motives, we solicit from the Holy Apostolic See the approbation of our Ceremonial. Special prayers have been chosen which could excite devotion towards the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Most Sweet Heart of Mary. We have adopted for our use some of the blessings and prayers received from more ancient

*Congregations which appear to us to indicate the aim of our Institute. Only those prayers have been added, **which in a special manner express our perpetual consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.** We have proposed as our principal aim to inflame the piety of the Brothers and Sisters of our Congregation.*

*We have wished that our novices, even in the ceremony of their reception, be aware of the zeal which should direct their souls, of the charity which should inflame their hearts, the fervor which should animate their prayers, and the obedience which should accompany all their actions. We have equally wished that our professed members, in pronouncing their vows, understand that they' should be, during their whole life, fervent in psalmody, **constant in adoration and in reparation for the injuries inflicted upon the Divine Majesty, and compassionate towards the sorrows of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Sweet Heart of Mary.***

By these means, our Brothers will renew the spirit of their vocation each time they clothe themselves with their religious habit, recalling to mind the prayers which have been employed in the blessing of these holy articles.” (S.B.P., III, p. 165.)

The consecration to the Sacred Hearts in a spirit of love, compassion and reparation is most fundamental in the special vocation of the Congregation as it is described in this petition. It is of so much more significance, inasmuch as it is here concerned with the Ceremonial in use for the taking of the habit and the profession of vows. These ceremonies belong to the soul of a religious institute and they express, better than any other document, the characteristic spirit of its vocation.

It suffices to cast a glance on the prayers which the Good Father proposed for these two ceremonies, which since then have remained unchanged, in order to convince oneself that he succeeded marvelously in “expressing in a special manner that we were forever consecrated to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.”

Already, in the ceremony of the taking of the habit, this consecration is mentioned. First, in the prayer for the blessing of the white cassock or soutane:

“We beseech Thee, O Lord Jesus Christ, who, in the immense abundance of Your bounty, deigned to put on the cloak of our mortality, to bless and sanctify this vestment, a sign of an innocent and immaculate life, so that these Thy servants who have been clothed with this garment may merit to be vested with You, and also that they may strive to honor and reverence Your Most Sacred Heart and the Most Holy Heart of Your Virgin Mother Mary...”

Then in the prayers recited after the investiture:

“Hear, O Lord, our supplication and deign to bless these Thy servants, to whom, in Your Holy Name, we have given the habit of this holy Institute, and grant that, with Your grace, they may remain devoted to the Most Sacred Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ Your Son and to the Most Holy Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and also that they may merit eternal life...”

In the ceremonial of the profession of vows this is even much clearer. The prayer for the blessing of the cord is expressed thus:

“Bless, O Lord, Almighty God, these cinctures, which girdle Thy servants, our Brothers, so that they may adhere unceasingly to You and to the Most Sacred Heart of Our Lord Jesus Christ and to the Most Holy Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary; and that they may realize their adherence forever to Your service...”

And the prayer for the blessing of the Scapular:

“Look, we beseech Thee, most merciful God, on the Most Sacred Heart of Your Son, in Whom You are well pleased and on the Most Holy Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary which pleased You to be free from all stain and to be adorned with all virtues; bless and sanctify these scapulars, so that Your servants, always bearing them on their breasts, may merit to become conformed to the Most Sweet Hearts of Jesus and Mary and in You to be consumed into one.”

After the profession of vows and the singing of the “*Te Deum*,” the celebrant chants:

*“Almighty and eternal God, Who commanded that we keep promises made to You and that we fulfill our vows, deign to bless and sanctify **Your servants here present, consecrated to the Most Sacred Heart of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the Most Holy Heart of Mary** insofar as they continue in the Rule...”*

This consecration is then most fundamental in the liturgy of our religious ceremonies. Also it is rather surprising that neither the consecration nor the devotion to the Sacred Hearts is mentioned in the petition of July 15, 1825. This was addressed to the Holy See, with the purpose of obtaining a foreign mission. Speaking of the aim of the Congregation, he mentions only the four ages:

“Our Congregation...has for its end to call to mind the four ages of Our Lord Jesus Christ. His infancy is recalled by educating boys; His hidden life by repairing, through perpetual adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament, the injuries offered to the Divine Majesty. His crucified life is recalled through works of mortification, and His Evangelical life through the holy works of the missions.” (S.B.P., III, 200)

Looking at the documents of the third period, it is evident that none speak of the aim of the Congregation except in view of certain favors which are being petitioned, or to inform the ecclesiastical authorities on the subject of certain difficulties. Thus it is, we find no clear-cut statement or account. But it is certain that the practice and the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts takes place everywhere and the formula “to retrace the four ages” is used only once.

12. If, after having gone through all the documents which treat of the end of the Institute, we wish to sum up all that they contain, we should say that the special end and aim of our Institute is: **the consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and the practice and propagation of true devotion to these Sacred Hearts:**

The **practice:** By perpetual adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar and by the practice of mortification in a spirit of love and reparation, of compassion and immolation.

The **propagation:** By the exercise of an ardent apostolate in the education of youth and the sacerdotal ministry.

All the faithful should tend towards the glory of God by the imitation of Christ. Religious have as their primary aim, the sanctification of their souls and of the souls of others. Both these aims the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts contemplates in the light of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts and seeks to realize them in the spirit which is proper to that devotion.

It is for this reason that it calls itself the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts. This is why its children bear on their bosoms the insignia of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary. For this reason also they promise in the profession of their vows to live and die in the service of the Sacred Hearts. Their whole existence is illuminated by their motto: “*Sacris Cordibus Jesu et Marie honor et gloria.*”

There we have, wholly and entirely, the aim of the Institute. The aim gives it its reason for being, and illuminates with its splendor all the elements of the vocation which the Founders wished to give it.

In what manner does the Congregation tend towards the realization of its consecration to the Sacred Hearts? The Rule answers with the brief formula of our venerable Founders: **"by retracing the four ages of the life of Our Lord Jesus Christ."**

The Rule speaks of the **four ages**: the Infancy of Jesus, His Hidden Life, His Evangelical Life, and His Crucified Life, because all the essential traits of the great mystery of Christ are contained in these four periods of His life. Moreover, all the characteristic parts of our vocation correspond to it marvelously.

In fact, the members of the Congregation, in their consecration to the Sacred Hearts, should **first of all live** on the contemplation of the Love of Jesus and Mary, symbolized by Their Sacred Hearts.

Through the Heart of Mary and in union with Her, they should enter into the Heart of Jesus, in order to take into account: *"quae sit latitudo, et longitudo, et sublimitas, et profundum; scire etiam supereminentem scientiae caritatem Christi."* (Eph. e, 18-19.) They should penetrate into the mystery of the unknown and uncared-for love of the Redeemer, which is the center of the whole mystery of Christ, in order to identify themselves with the Sacred Hearts and lose themselves with Them in God. This is what the Founders desired: *"dulcissimis Cordibus Jesu et Mariae conformes fieri, et in teipso (misericordissime Deus) in unum consummari."*

These, then, are the reasons why the Congregation has as its first duty, to keep watch at the foot of the Tabernacle. The members should there "adore the Divine Heart of Jesus," and also "have part in the sorrows of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Most Sweet Heart of Mary." Likewise they should there "repair the outrages committed against the Divine Majesty." In doing that the Congregation imitates the Hidden Life of the Savior, and retraces in its own life this period of the life of Jesus.

At the foot of the tabernacle the Congregation "enters into the interior sorrow of this Heart," which in the mystery of its love is so unknown and despised. There it understands that it can only fulfill its mission of reparative love in union with the Sacred Hearts, by participation in the crucified life of Our Savior.

Its task of adoration and reparation, of contemplation and of sacrifice is marked with the sign of the Redemption, and cannot be better rendered than by the brief and significant formula of the Founders: to retrace the life of the Savior, imitate the Man-God in the mysteries of His Hidden and Crucified Life.

There we have the first part of our vocation: the contemplative foundation borrowed from the Benedictine ideal which the Founders wished as the basis of their work.

But this is not all. Love should burn with zeal, therefore the children of Father Coudrin and Mother Henriette should penetrate so deeply into the mystery of the love of the Sacred Hearts that the flame of Christ, the ardent fire of the soul of the Savior will inflame their hearts. They should be "Zealots of Love."

The burning desire to communicate to others the plenitude of their own conviction will move them to announce the glad tidings of the great mystery of love to all those who have need of it: to children, who were always the Savior's privileged ones; to sinners, whom Jesus came to call to penance; and to young students of the sanctuary who, one day, should continue among souls the mission of the Redeemer.

They should work at the education of youth and at the preaching of the Gospel. Again the Founders return to their formula, convinced that there is no other more significant word which expresses the depth of their thought: imitate the life of Jesus; retrace the mysteries of the

Savior in the exercise of their apostolate. And they say: retrace the life of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the mysteries of His infancy and His evangelical life.

The rest of the text of the Rule: “and to propagate the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary” adds nothing to the first part. It serves only to better inculcate the spirit proper to the Congregation in its imitation of the life of Jesus.

13. As has already been said, the words of the first article of the Rule do not contain a theoretic definition of the aim of the Congregation. Neither do they give an adequate division of the means by which it wishes to attain the aim. It is no more than a practical formula attempting to say, in a clear and simple manner, how the Congregation intends to realize its consecration to the Sacred Heart. This formula was not a point of departure in the thought of the Founders, but rather a conclusion in which they wished to synthesize the ideal which had ripened in their spirit. This ideal was complete and definite before the formula “the four ages” existed. Thus, the meaning of the formula should be determined in accordance with the ideal to which it lends all its significance.

One often hears the following question asked: Why are the words of the first article of the Rule, the very article which is certainly the most fundamental, why are they not more explicit and why do they not indicate more precisely the end and aim of our Institute?

We must reply that the words are clear enough, provided one takes them in the sense which the Founders have given them. They must be looked at in the light of their doctrine. Also the practice of an intense life which preceded by twenty years the codification of the text of the Rule must be kept in mind.

It must be kept in mind that the Rule is not a treatise on asceticism, but a code which briefly indicates the way which leads to perfection.

Then one will understand that in their Rule the Founders could not make use of the lengthy descriptions, indicating the aim of the Congregation, which they used in their petitions. Instead, they had to choose a brief formula which would recall in a few words “to the members who were to compose the new Institute, the entire extent of their obligations.”

To this effect they chose the formula: “the four ages, and the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts.” In the various documents this formula was neither the first nor the most important, and in the different supplications it appears rarely enough. But it had the advantage of being brief and practical, offering as it did, an excellent framework for synthesizing all the parts of the somewhat complex aim of the new foundation.

It is the Good Father himself who forewarned us that this formula was not his fundamental thought. Rather it was intended as a means of helping our memory retain more easily the different obligations of our vocation.

It suffices then to take the article in accordance with the intentions of our Founders, as clearly manifested in a multitude of their writings, and explain it in the fundamental dogmatic light of our Institute. Then we can comprehend, without a shadow of doubt, the end for which the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts was founded and what exactly it wishes to attain.

In the fundamental consecration to the Sacred Hearts, by which it dedicates itself to the practice and propagation of the devotion to Them, the Congregation tries to retrace the life of the Divine Savior in its four principal periods. His life was wholly one of love, and it consumed itself in union with Mary, in the great work of the Redemption which the Heavenly Father had confided to Him.

One often brings up another difficulty against the formula which is used in Article I to indicate the end of the Institute. Since, according to the intentions of the Founders, it is the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary which are the object of its devotion and the model of its imitation, why does the Rule speak only of retracing the life of Jesus, without mentioning Mary?

It seems to me that the answer to that difficulty is again found in the fact of the brevity of the text of the Rule. The Rule explicitly mentions the life of Jesus, our Founders being convinced that thus Mary and her role in the work of the Redemption are sufficiently indicated.

The **Life of Jesus**, in His infancy and His hidden life, as well as in His public and crucified life, shows us the Savior always intimately united to Mary, His Holy Mother. As regards His infancy and His hidden life, this fact is very clear. Jesus passed these two periods of His life in the shadow of Mary. Everywhere one finds Him in the company of His Holy Mother: in her virginal womb, on her knees, under the roof of her humble house. He is the object of her caresses and maternal care. It is always Jesus with Mary and Mary with Jesus.

The intimate union between Jesus and Mary is found also in the periods of His evangelical life and crucified life. Though less manifest during His evangelical life, the union between their two Hearts was no less intimate. Such harmony reveals itself again in all its splendor during His crucified life, wherein Jesus consummated the work of the Redemption in the sufferings of His Passion and by His death on the Cross. Here Mary assisted Him as co-redemptrix of the human race.

Furthermore, let us not forget that the four ages enclose a common idea, namely, the work of Redemption. In this Mary is always united to Jesus.

We will return to this point. For the moment it suffices to have indicated that the words of the first article do not say: “to imitate our Lord Jesus Christ,” but: “to retrace the four ages of the life of our Lord Jesus Christ.” This suffices to show us the **ideal of the Sacred Hearts**: Jesus and Mary, everywhere and at all times united in the mystery of Their love which is so clearly symbolized in Their Sacred Hearts.

At the close of this lengthy consideration on the general end and aim of our Institute, we have a right to establish that the wording of the first article of the Rule is sufficiently clear to those who study it in the light of the intentions of the Founders. To those persons therefore, who ask what the aim of the Congregation is, we reply with the words used in the quinquennial report to the Holy See:

“The aim of the Institute is to practice and propagate true devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary by retracing the four ages of the mortal life of Our Lord.”

ARTICLE II

How the Congregation Understands Retracing the Infancy or Childhood of Jesus

“In order to retrace the Childhood of Jesus Christ, the Brothers open free schools for poor children. In addition to this, they establish colleges in which they make it a point and a duty to admit gratuitously a certain number of children, to the extent that the resources of each house permit.

“The Brothers, as their particular care, prepare young students for the sacred ministry.

“The Sisters also open free schools for poor children of their sex. Moreover, they conduct boarding schools, and they make it a duty to gratuitously bring up a certain number of young persons born of unfortunate families, to the extent that the resources of each house permit.”

14. This article of the Rule is literally reproduced as it was drawn up at the General Chapter of 1838 and approved by the Holy See in 1839 and 1840. It is true that in 1908 the three parts which compose the article were arranged in a fashion other than that of 1838, but the wording was not changed.

In the rule of 1825, which took the article from the Rule of 1817, without changing anything, the text was shorter but in substance it said the same thing as the actual article.

“In order to imitate the Infancy of Christ, we provide for and educate, free of charge, in our houses, poor children of both sexes. We also have schools for boys and girls from poor families, who cannot be brought up in our houses. Resident students of both sexes, for a tuition agreed upon, are also admitted into our houses. Students are prepared for the ecclesiastical life under the special care of the brothers of our Congregation.”

This article speaks equally of the Sisters because according to the intentions of the Founders, the Congregation is one, and the two branches of the Institute - “Brothers and Sisters” - form but one, single family of the Sacred Hearts.

This is why the Rule of 1817 was the same for the two branches and spoke sometimes of the Brothers, sometimes of the Sisters, and even for the two groups together. This was changed in 1824; two Rules were drawn up but the Preliminary Chapter was common to both, followed by the Rule of the Brothers as Part One, and by the Rule of the Sisters as Part Two.

In fact, in this Preliminary Chapter no change whatsoever has been made, and though it may be of little importance, the mention of the Sisters remained and was maintained as such, as a perpetual memorial of the intimate union which united the two branches of the Institute.

At the time of the revision of the Rule in 1908, a Consultor proposed to take out of the Rule of the Brothers all mention of the Sisters. But the Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Religious, Dom Laurent Janssens, O.S.B., remarked with justice that this point of the Rule would never meet with any reasonable difficulty from the Holy See. Therefore, sufficient reason for changing it was lacking. It remained, then, as it had been since the beginning of the Institute.

15. The Congregation wishes to retrace in its life the mystery of the Infancy of the Savior by its participation in the work of the education of youth.

At first sight, this may appear strange. One would expect here, as for the imitation of three other ages, that the Rule would indicate a means by which the members of the Institute could retrace in their spiritual life the mystery of the Childhood of Jesus and the virtues which characterize it.

The Founders have always insisted on humility and simplicity. This amiable simplicity should be the characteristic virtue of the children of the Sacred Hearts, the first one of the virtues which they should practice in their imitation of the Savior. And they have been careful to explain their preference for that virtue by referring to the mystery of the Childhood of Jesus Christ.

The Good Father thus explains himself in his Circular of April 14, 1817:

“The first virtue which we recommend to you, in order to imitate Our Lord, is that of simplicity, because it is the first virtue which this Divine Savior Himself practiced. Without simplicity one never reaches perfection.

“The first reason which proves the love which Our Lord had for simplicity is that, though He had at birth the reason of a perfect man, yet He wished to conserve the simplicity of a child. It is through love for us and also in order to make us feel that we can and should imitate Him in everything, that He wished to conserve the appearance and the weakness of infancy. He had, in all truth, the simplicity of childhood, and He joined to it a sweet gaiety, a tender naïveté, and a perpetual tendency towards good, which rendered Him the most beautiful, as well as the most lovable of the children of men.

“The second reason is that the shepherds were the first ones called, and that in consideration of their great simplicity. The Heart of the Holy Child blossomed out when they came to adore Him. On the other hand, the Magi were received with a tender gravity...” After having given three other reasons, he concludes: *“Finally, without great simplicity, there are no sweet communications with God.”* And he continued: *“Humility is the faithful companion of simplicity; these two virtues form an intimate relationship. There is never any-real humility without simplicity, and humility is especially recommended to us by our Blessed Father, Saint Benedict.”* (S.B.P., I, p. 201.).

This whole treatise on simplicity was taken by the Good Father from one of the notes which the Good Mother wrote him during the last months of 1801. (S.B.M. I, p. 54.) We can say then, that from the very origin of the Institute, simplicity and humility were recommended to us in a special manner. Without the least difficulty, the Founders could well have written in the Rule:

“In order to retrace the Childhood of Jesus Christ the members of the Congregation will force themselves to retrace in their life the simplicity and the humility of the Savior.” This they did not do, but said: *“We raise gratuitously poor children of both sexes. We open free schools for all poor children who cannot be brought up in our houses. We will receive boarders ...etc. , that is to say, we work at the education of youth, at the formation of Jesus Christ in the souls of children.”*

It was certainly an original observation, but profound and logical at the same time, because in the formula "retrace the four ages" the Founders wished to give a synthesis of the total aim of their Congregation, a summary of all it does in order to realize its consecration to the service of the Sacred Hearts.

The education of youth, in the light of the mystery of the Love of the Sacred Hearts, was had from the origin of the Institute, a place of honor, a place of primary necessity in the activity of the Congregation.

Founded at the time when all the religious institutions in France were destroyed, the Congregation had the firm intention of renewing fallen society in the spirit of the great mystery of Love so clearly symbolized in the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. It could not content itself solely with the sanctification of its members, with a contemplative life of prayer and penance, of

adoration and reparation, but was to actively participate in the raising up of degenerated humanity.

Its members should burn with zeal for the salvation of others. To this effect, the Founders had united around them their children, a family of Zealots of the Love of the Sacred Hearts. The Congregation which with its whole being was dedicated to the love of the Sacred Hearts, should have its part in the Christian Apostolate. And from that, it was clear that it should consecrate itself to the education of youth, not only because education has always been an essential part of the Apostolate of the Church and also had in the Benedictine tradition a place of first importance but also because it was one of the prime necessities of the time.

In all truth, one could apply to this epoch the words of the Prophet: "*Parvuli petierunt panem et non erat qui frangeret eis,*" the Children were asking for the bread of Christian education, and there was no one to give it to them.

If one wished to achieve something, it was necessary to begin with the child and address oneself most particularly to those who were in greatest need: the children of the poor who had no one to instruct them in religion, and the future Levites of the sanctuary whose formation had been neglected for years.

This, then, was established in the very origin of the new foundation. We find mention of it already in the first petitions of May and October 1801 (cfr. number 7). The author of the "Life of the Good Father" affirms that the foundation of the branch of the Brothers began by teaching: "*the newborn work began by religious instruction of which the Church was at that time entirely deprived.*" (Perron, Life, p. 153.)

The Founders, who saw all the contemplative and active life of their foundation in the light of its consecration to the Sacred Hearts, would not consider the education of youth except in the light of the Childhood of Jesus. When in 1801 they called their participation in this form of apostolate "to bring up and form young hearts to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary," they gave it to be understood that for them, education was nothing else than the formation of Christ in the child, a representation of the life of the Master in the soul of the young. The education of the children was for them a reproduction of the mystery of the Infancy of Jesus wherein the Son of God, born of the Virgin Mary, was raised by her in all that treats of the formation of man. This is why their sons, in all that they do, guided by the ideal represented in the Sacred Hearts, should equally realize the work of the education of youth and in union with the prototype of all education, they should try to form young souls for the Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

All this was born spontaneously from the fundamental idea of their work. It already existed even before "retracing the Life of Christ" was spoken of and while the formula "the four ages" was yet indefinite and awaited explanation. But when the Founders reached the point of synthesizing the riches of their ideal in the short formula which was to serve them as their motto, it was most natural that they call the work of education, born of the needs of the moment and vivified by the spirit of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts, a reproduction of the mystery of the Childhood of Christ.

They found it superfluous to add to it that their children should force themselves to imitate Jesus in the virtues of His Infancy; namely, simplicity, humility, and modesty. All that was contained in the duty of retracing the Childhood of the Savior by the education of youth. If the members of their Institute should apply themselves to "being all to all, in order to gain all to Christ," it was very clear that they should be "children" in order to gain children to Jesus Christ. The short formula of Article II indicates explicitly the means by which the Congregation retraces

the Infancy and Childhood of the Savior and leaves it to be understood implicitly what each member should do in order to fulfill as well as possible, this duty of the Institute.

16. Without exaggerating, we can verify that the Congregation has made every effort, from the very beginning of its existence, to fulfill this important part of its program.

Hardly had the Good Father grouped together his first disciples when he began the work of instruction. Brother Isidore taught catechism and Brother Hilarion gave lessons in Theology to several young people destined for the ecclesiastical state. (cfr. Perron, *Life*, page 170). The Sisters, on their part, took care to combine education of the youth of their sex with perpetual adoration. Of all the foundations, it can be said what Sister Gabrielle de la Barre, in her notes on the Congregation, said of the foundation of Mende: "Right away perpetual adoration began." When this first aim of the Congregation was fulfilled, the Sisters occupied themselves with the second aim, the free instruction of the poor. (Copie, Braine, page 19.) Thus, there sprang up the schools of Poitiers, of Mende (1802); Cahors (1803); Laval (1804); Le Mans, Sarlat, etc. (Perron, *Life of the Good Father*, p. 245).

Since the very beginning the Congregation has always had its part in the work of the education and instruction of youth. The Sisters have their schools and their boarding schools; the Fathers have several flourishing colleges, especially in Spain, in Chile, Peru, and Brazil. They even have the direction of the seminary of Poitiers and of the Catholic University of Lima, which was founded by one of the Fathers of the Congregation.

Wherever they work, it is with the fixed intention of hastening the coming of the reign of the Love of the Sacred Hearts and of Honoring Jesus and Mary in the mystery of the Infancy of the Savior. Living with love, they have but one, sole desire: to communicate the flame of that love to all those who are confided to their care.

ARTICLE III

To Retrace the Hidden Life of Jesus

“All the members of the Congregation will force themselves to retrace the Hidden Life of Jesus Christ by repairing, through perpetual adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, the injuries inflicted on the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary by the enormous crimes of sinners.”

17. The text of Article III is exactly that of the Rule of 1825. The Rule of 1817 had, in place of “the injuries committed against the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary” another expression: “the injuries done to the Divine Majesty.” *“Innitimur Christi absconditam imitari vitam, reparando adoration perpetua Sanctissimi Sacramenti injurias Majestati divine ad hominibus indesinenter illatas.”*

This formula we also find in some other writings of the Good Father (for example, his letter of April 14, 1817, number 10, and his memoranda of October 20, 1824, number 11), but it did not as adequately signify the special character of our adoration as did the phrase found in the oldest documents.

In the petition of the month of May 1801, the Good Father speaks of “to repair the outrages which the Heart of Jesus has received, does receive, and will unfortunately still receive from bad Christians” (number 7). In their petition of October 25, 1814, the Founders speak of retracing the Hidden Life “by making reparation, through perpetual adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament, for the outrages done to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary” (number 8). The Bull “Pastor Aeternus” of November 17, 1817 says: “injuries inflicted on the Most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary by the highest crime of man's sin...” It was then altogether in conformity with tradition that the Rule of 1825 changed the words of the Rule of 1817 in order that they express our total consecration to the Sacred Hearts and substitute in accordance with the Bull of 1817 the words: “injuries inflicted on the Most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary by the highest crime of man's sins.”

Since that time, the text of the Rule has not been changed.

As has been said, the Congregation, consecrated to the service of the Sacred Hearts, is not exclusively contemplative nor exclusively active. It has a mixed life, wishing to combine a life of prayer with apostolic work in a harmonious union.

This end characterizes the mode of its contemplative life. It watches, day and night, at the foot of the Tabernacle where Jesus, really present, continued His mystic immolation. The purpose of this vigil is to contemplate the great mystery of His Love, to adore His Divine Heart, and make reparation for the outrages which are perpetrated against His Adorable Heart and the Immaculate Heart of His Blessed Mother.

This “adoration” is truly the center of our Institute, the first of our duties, the principal charge which has been confided to us. The Cardinal presenter who, in 1816, corrected the text of our first constitutions wrote: “Perpetual Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament is one of the principal watchwords of our Congregation.” Adoration is in effect, like our identification tag.

Accordingly, it is altogether natural that we find it from the very beginnings of our Institute and we can even say that the Congregation is the fruit of the Adoration of our venerable Founders.

The vision of the Motte d'Usseau, which the Good Father always considered as the origin of his work, was given him during the long hours of adoration which he passed before his God whom by his faith he believed present in the very small particles which remained in the corporal after the celebration of Holy Mass. And the plan conceived in that life of solitude and adoration received its first realization in the uninterrupted adoration of the Good Mother in the chapel of the Association of the Sacred Hearts.

When she separated herself from the Association order to begin with the "Solitaries" the true religious life, it was above all in order to consecrate herself to perpetual adoration.. As she wrote in June 1800 to the Capitulary Vicars of Poitiers:

"We united ourselves, more than six years ago, under the invocation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the special protection of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, in order to make perpetual adoration of this Divine Heart in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, and we have continued it since that time. Our Principal aim is perpetual adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus." (Life, Perron, page 161; S.B.M. I.26.)

She wrote the same thing to the Holy Father. Speaking of the society which she had formed with her first companions she says: *"Its principal aim is the perpetual adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, really present in the Holy Sacrament of the Altar."* (Ibid. p. 31.)

This is what she repeated for the whole Institute on February 3, 1802 when she made known to the Good Father that the Lord wished for an Order *"which would be destined to adore His Heart, make reparation for the outrages which It receives, enter into the interior sorrows of that Heart, and retrace the Four Ages of Its Life."* (Ibid. p. 36) She names adoration before all as the principal part. And this applies to all the Congregation, not only to the Sisters, but also to the Brothers. The Good Father also, writing to the whole Institute in his Circular of April 14, 1817, believed he could not better indicate the aim of the Congregation than by using the words of the Good Mother: *"We are destined to adore the Heart of Jesus, make reparation for the outrages which It receives every day. We should enter into the interior sorrows of this Sacred Heart."*

Some months earlier he had manifested very clearly his opinion thereon in the memorandum of December 27, 1816 on the title of "Adorers." "I do not think," he says, *"that the title of **perpetual adorers** and **adoratrices** of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar will offer the least difficulty; it explains in a special manner both our consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the homages which are rendered Him, day and night, in the August Sacrament of the Eucharist for the purpose of expiating the ingratitude and the malice of men."* (S.B.P. II, p. 183, Perron, Life, p. 338.)

Certainly, it is above all the Sisters who consecrate themselves to this heavenly task, but the Founder wished that the Brothers should equally force themselves to observe the practice that we can join perpetual adoration of the Sacred Heart to our apostolic work. Therefore, it is with good reason that Father Vital Jourdain in his note on the Congregation, affirms: *"The pious Founder wished, before all else, that his children, consecrated to the Sacred Hearts, render Them homage, day and night, in the August Sacrament of the Eucharist, in order to expiate the ingratitude and the malice of men."* (*The Congregation of the Fathers of the Sacred Hearts, First Edition, Letouzey*, page 169.)

In the first years of the foundation, it was very clear that to found a house was to say in short: *"open an Adoration."* For this reason, the houses of the Institute were given the name "Adoration."

The Founders called their Congregation "Order of Zealots... perpetual adorers" and would have well wished that this title should remain. Such, however, was not the case. The title of "Zealots" disappeared, but that of "Adorers" has remained in the official title which the Holy See has given to the Congregation. Can we not here see a disposition of Providence, which has willed to teach to all the generations of children of the Sacred Hearts, the end for which the Institute has been specially founded and what its principal work is?

19. It was not without reason that the Founders gave to Adoration the place of honor among the different employments of their Institute and that they united their children around Jesus in the Eucharist. The first reason for so doing is because Jesus is really present in the Eucharist and love, the first duty of consecration to the Sacred Hearts, demands that we keep Him company as much as is possible to do so. Secondly, because by Adoration we contemplate His Infinite Love in all its admirable manifestations; we adore Him, praise Him, glorify and thank Him. By Adoration we enter into His interior sorrow, that is to say, we participate in it and sympathize with Him for the cruel sufferings which torment His Adorable Heart, and for which He still wishes to be consoled.

The duties of love and intimacy, of compassion and reparation, the essential parts of the true devotion to the Sacred Hearts, spontaneously lead the children of the Sacred Hearts to the foot of the Altar. There they continue the vocation of Saint Margaret Mary, and before her, that of Saint Mary Magdalene. As the Good Father said in his Circular of April 14, 1817: *"We should then, like Magdalene, remain at His Feet, and like Saint John, accompany Him even to the Cross."*

But there is another reason which explains the very intimate relation between our consecration to the Sacred Hearts and the Holy Eucharist.

Our Founders wished that the Congregation realize its consecration to the Sacred Hearts by the efficacious participation in the Work of the Redemption. This Work had its source in the Love of Jesus and Mary so strikingly symbolized by Their Hearts.

This Work of the Redemption was consummated on Calvary. There, in the Love of Jesus, sacrificing Himself for all and assisted by Mary, humanity was redeemed and saved.

Moreover, the Founders wished that their children should always be the children of the Cross, as we will see in the explanation of Article V. But this Redemption is continued in, and applied by the Holy Eucharist. Nothing was then, more natural than the eagerness of the Founders to conduct their children to the foot of the Altar, where Jesus, under the signs of His Real Presence, continued the immolation of Calvary. They wanted to make them participate generously in the immolation of the Divine Lamb and to permit them to assimilate this spirit of victim and sacrifice which should animate all their life and which alone can render efficacious their participation in the Work of the Redemption.

"The duties of sacrifice, of love, of reparation, and of total devotion which," as the Founders say in their Petition of October 2, 1801, *"have been up to this moment the basis of the establishment,"* make of it an Institute essentially Eucharistic, consecrated before all else, to the Adoration of the Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

20. In what has been said we find indicated the spirit which is characteristic of our Adoration.

The Congregation of the Sacred Hearts watches before the Tabernacle, in order to make reparation "by perpetual adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar for the injuries done to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary by the enormous crimes of sinners."

The spirit of reparation which characterized the work of the Redemption has a leading part also in the devotion to the Sacred Heart such as Saint Margaret Mary made it known and such as the Church officially approved.

“In fact”, says Pope Pius XI in his Encyclical *'Misericordissimus,'* “the spirit of expiation or reparation has always had a place of first importance in the cult of Sacred Heart of Jesus; nothing is more in conformity with the origin, the nature, spirit, and the practices of this devotion.” (cfr. die V infa Oct. Sac. Cordisesu, lectio 5).

This spirit is also proper to our Institute and characterizes the perpetual adoration to which it is dedicated. The Good Father clearly showed this in a letter of February 1, 1802 to Father Antonin: “Adoration is a continual act of honorable amendment.” (S.B.P. III, page 7.)

The Children of the Sacred Hearts come to the feet of Jesus in order to weep over the sins of the world. The cry of sorrow, by which the exercise of adoration begins: "*Parve, Domine, parve populo tuo, ne in aeternum irascaris nobis,*" dictates the spirit which should animate this exercise.

Other institutes consecrated to perpetual adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament propose to prolong, during the entire year, the splendor of the Feast of Corpus Christi. Our Congregation wishes to enter into the interior sorrow which the Heart of Jesus formerly suffered, especially at Gethsemane and on Calvary, and to respond the desire which He manifested one day to Saint Margaret Mary: “*You at least, give Me this consolation of supplying as much as you can for their ingratitude.*” And gain: “*You will rise in order to prostrate yourself during an hour with Me, your face against the ground, as much to appease the Divine Wrath as to sweeten in some manner the bitterness which I felt when I was abandoned by the Apostles.*” (Cfr. "The Religious of the Sacred Hearts" Third Edition, 1938, page 52.)

Such is one of the first characteristic notes of our Adoration. There is another which is no less striking. It is that by perpetual adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, we wish to make reparation for the outrages committed not only against the Heart of Jesus but also against the Immaculate Heart of Mary.⁸

This fact demonstrates the very intimate union which characterizes our devotion to the Sacred Hearts. We will speak of it at length in the explanation of Article VI.

Here it suffices to recall what we have already said. The Rule of 1825 changed the words: of the Article according to the formula employed in the Petition of October 25, 1814, and according to the words of the Bull "Pastor Aeternus." The Rule of 1817 speaks of making reparation for the outrages done to the **Divine Majesty** the Rule of 1825 says: "the injuries done to the **Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.**"

This last expression is more in conformity with the foundation of our vocation, namely, consecration to the Sacred Hearts. It proposes as a direct and immediate object of our veneration, the Hearts of Jesus and Mary which are inseparably united both in Their Love for us as in the injuries which are done to Them.

It is certain that our “Adoration,” in the strict sense of the word, cannot be offered except to Jesus; He alone is our God. It is clear also that the other acts of the exercise of Adoration, namely, thanksgiving, reparation, and supplication go first to the Heart of Jesus which alone is really present in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar. But if we enter into the spirit of reparation, to the interior sorrow of the Heart of Jesus, we necessarily find there the Heart of Mary.

She has such an important part in the work of reparation, her Heart is so intimately united to the Heart of Jesus,, she is so inseparably joined to her Divine Son in the injuries which sinners heap upon the Redeemer, that our homage cannot separate her from Jesus.

⁸ In the Appendix, No 1 "Reparation to the Sacred Hearts" is explained at length.

Praise and thanksgiving, consolation and satisfaction should be offered to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary. This is the direct end of our veneration.

Moreover, it is expedient to bear in mind that, ultimately, all the honors rendered to the Sacred Hearts have for their object, the Adorable Majesty of the Most Holy Trinity.

When we penetrate into the intimate sentiments of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, the love with which They burn, the zeal with which They are consumed, the interior sorrow which They experienced during Their mortal life, we find, everywhere and in everything, the Divine Majesty of the Adorable Trinity.

If then, in the exercise of Adoration, we address ourselves to the Heart of Jesus in order to make reparation for the outrages done to Him; if in the homages which we render Him, we unite the Heart of Mary to that of her Divine Son, we should never forget to go further and take part with Them In the supreme end of the whole Work of Redemption: *“that in all things, God be honored through Jesus Christ Our Lord.”*

In this sense there is no essential difference between the formula of 1817 and the text of the Rule of 1825, which, since that time, has remained without any change.

21. Our Founders called this life of Adoration a reproduction of the Hidden Life of Jesus Christ.

There is in fact, a great affinity between this period of the Life of Our Savior and the life of Adoration led by the Congregation.

Jesus, hidden from the eyes of the world, lived with all His Soul with His Heavenly Father and already accomplished in union with Mary, the great mission which His Father confided to Him, namely, to make worthy reparation to the unrecognized and unacknowledged Majesty of the untreated Love of God. In like manner, the Congregation Lives, hidden in a peaceful retreat, near Jesus really present in the mystery of the Holy Eucharist.

In order to better imitate this "Hidden Life" the members of the Congregation make Adoration before the closed Tabernacle which, better than Solemn Exposition, recalls the Life of Jesus at Nazareth.

There, it endeavors to penetrate more and more into the unfathomable depths of the great mystery of Love which the world has not accepted and which it rejects and combats. Its purpose is to make reparation, in union with the Hearts of Jesus and Mary* for the enormous crimes of humanity.

There, its love for the Sacred Hearts becomes a real identification with Them, a communion with their Work. It is more than a simple imitation; it is a veritable reproduction of the Life of Christ; it is Jesus Himself Who lives in a mystical manner in His children, and Who, as at Nazareth, continued in union with Mary, His work of reparation to the glory of the Most High God.

ARTICLE IV

To Retrace the Evangelical Life of Our Savior

“The Brothers retrace the Evangelical Life of the Savior by the preaching of the Gospel and by Missions.”

22. Adoration is a duty for the two branches of the Institute. The Rule says: *“All the members of the Congregation make an effort to retrace the Hidden Life of Jesus Christ by perpetual adoration...”* In practice, it is the Sisters, above all, who take this obligation upon themselves; the care of retracing the Hidden Life of the Savior belongs principally to the Sisters. But the obligation to reproduce His Evangelical Life concerns the Brothers.

That does not mean to say that the Sisters should not burn with zeal for the coming of the Reign of Love. Our Founders wished that they be "Zealots of Love." Their title of Zealots should lead them unceasingly to the obligations of a more widespread charity, as the Good Father said in his memorandum of December 6, 1816. (Cfr. p. 11.)

The Sisters have a very important part in the apostolic mission of our Institute. By their prayers and their sacrifices they should make fruitful and sustain the apostolate of their Brothers. It is thus that the Good Father saw his Work in the vision of the Motte d'Usseau: "a group of evangelical workers, destined to spread everywhere the light of Faith... clothed in white, and followed by a cortege of virgins having clothing of the same color, whose principal aim would be to pray for the apostles." (Perron, Life, p. 58.)

But this part is not so much a reproduction of the Evangelical Life of Jesus; it is rather retracing the life of Mary during the Public Life of the Savior.

The Sisters should be for the Brothers what Mary was for Jesus during that period of His Life. In that manner the union existing between Jesus and Mary in the Work of the Redemption which during the Evangelical Life of the Savior was less visible but none the less real, will be retraced in a living manner in the life of the Congregation. This is why the Rule says: *“The Brothers retrace the Evangelical Life of Our Savior.”*

23. They do it *“by the preaching of the Gospel and by Missions.”* The French text of this Article which is like that of the Rule of 1825, is a little obscure. The word “Missions” may signify both the “holy parochial Missions” and the “Missions among the infidels.” The Latin text is clearer. Already in 1817 the Rule said:

“The Brothers recall the Evangelical Life of Christ by the preaching of the Faith and by the giving of holy missions.” This text was slightly modified in 1838: *“The Brothers represent the Evangelical Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ by preaching the Christian Faith and by the exercise of the missions.”*

Of these two editions of the Latin text, it results that "the Missions" of the Rule of 1928 signify "the holy Missions" as the Dutch translation says *“het geven van Volkemissies.”*

The work of the Missions among the infidels which the Rule in Chapter 10 of part II calls: "missiones ad gentes exteras," or simply "missions exterae" (p. ex, Art. 431 - 432) is comprised in the first part "by the preaching of the Gospel."

24. The first form of apostolate confided to the Congregation was the work of holy Missions.

On October 22, 1820 the Good Father arrived at Troyes in order to take charge of the important functions of the Vicar-General of the Diocese. Without delay he made his children come there in order to begin the indispensable work of giving missions to the people.

In a Circular Letter of November 25th of the same year, he announced to the Congregation with joy that finally the moment had come wherein he could begin the realization of a work so long cherished.

"Let us admire Divine Providence, beloved Brothers and very dear Sisters! It has led us to fulfill all the obligations of our Institute. The day which we have desired with so much ardor has arrived. This God of Goodness, Who, as the Scriptures say, disposes of all things with strength and sweetness in order to attain the end which He proposes, mixes great consolations with our trials. He, at last, opens to us a new career. The Eternal Mercy calls us to the imitation of the Evangelical Life of Our Divine Savior Jesus Christ. We are going to begin in the Diocese of Troyes the important work of giving Missions, a work specially recommended to us by the Sovereign Pontiff." (S, B, P. II, p. 315; Perron, Life, 406.)

25. This first form of reproducing the Evangelical Life of Jesus was soon followed by another, more important and more vast: that of the evangelization of infidels.

The Congregation was hardly founded and counted but few members when the Good Father already spoke in prophetic terms of this future work. We have as proof of this the testimony of Monsignor de Beauregard, Bishop of Orleans.

This pious Prelate had known the Good Father at Poitiers and had become very intimate with him. For a time he even became a member of the new foundation and pronounced his vows under the name of Brother Polycarp. He always remained very friendly toward our Founder and wrote him several letters. After the death of the Good Father, he communicated some very interesting facts relative to the subject which occupies us at present. On October 16, 1837, he wrote to Father Hippolyte Launay:

"I was truly most attached to your Institute and I well know the good that it will procure for the Church of God... I know equally that your Brothers... have received the mission to announce the Gospel in the Islands of the Pacific Ocean... These events are so much more touching for me inasmuch as good Father Coudrin made them known to me. One day, opening his heart to me and raising his eyes to Heaven he said: see them in their apostolic journeys, yes, in distant countries, winning souls for Jesus Christ. These words were said to me in 1802 or 1803 when he began to put into execution the great plans of his beautiful soul."

A month after in a letter of November 14, 1837, to Father Hilarion, His Excellency spoke of the same thing.

"One of the things which struck me the most is the disclosure which he, Father Coudrin, made to me in 1801. He confided to me his plans for the future: 'my brothers, my children will go to save souls. I see them leaving for the missions, advancing into those countries, the Islands where they will make Our Lord Jesus Christ loved.' Without a doubt at that time one could only hope for such a thing. He had none around him except for Mr. David, myself, and Mr. de Villemort who since has left you. For my part, I had no idea then of joining his Institute. Shortly afterwards I did so but have likewise renounced the life..."

The originals of these two interesting letters are conserved in the archives of the Motherhouse; they are cited in the Process of the Founder (C.P.I. p. 275 and p. 957) and make us realize how the Good Father thought of the far away missions from the very origin of his work.

But for the actual realization of these projects, he had to wait until his work was further advanced and until a considerable number of members were at hand to guarantee the maintenance of a mission.

On 1824, the General Chapter manifested the desire that the Congregation begin to consecrate its efforts to the preaching of the Gospel in infidel countries. This desire was for the Good Father a sign that the providential moment for beginning the work had arrived.

Without delay he drew up a memorandum for the Holy See which he signed on July 15, 1825 and in which he asked that his Congregation be charged with a Mission in the countries depending upon the Propagation of the Faith. He profited by his voyage to Rome in order to insist personally upon this request. (Cfr. S.B.P.p. 200.)

The Holy See accepted his request with great pleasure and assigned us the mission of the Sandwich Islands. In his Circular letter of February 11, 1826 which serves as the Introduction to the Rule of 1825, the Good Father says:

“Neither are you ignorant of the fact that the Propaganda has asked priests of our Congregation to carry the light of Faith to the inhabitants of the Sandwich Islands situated in the Oceanic Sea. On December 3rd of last year, His Eminence, Cardinal Della Somaglia, Pro-Prefect of the Propaganda, sent us a decree of the Holy See, establishing one of the priests of our Congregation as Prefect Apostolic of the Sandwich Islands, and two others as apostolic missionaries, with extensive powers. On January 15th of the present year, the Head of the Church sent to the Prefect Apostolic an authentic copy of the Bull of the Jubilee, considering him as already invested with the powers of the Holy See.

“Thus the Eternal Mercy has offered us a means whereby we may imitate more perfectly the Evangelical Life of Our Divine Savior by beginning the important work of foreign missions. This is one of the principal aims of our Institute and it has been especially recommended to us by the successor of Saint Peter.” (S.B.P. III, p. 249)

Necessary preparations delayed somewhat the departure of the first missionaries but on September 8, 1826 the Good Father announced in a Circular Letter that the moment of departure had arrived.

“For some time now we have been longing, beloved Brothers and very dear Sisters, for the happy moment when we could begin the important work of foreign missions. A year ago, the successor of Saint Peter asked us for priests to go to the Sandwich Islands in order, as Cardinal Somaglia tells us in his letter, that new laborers would be destined to gather in this new harvest: ‘novis novae messis eperarilis benigne concessis.’ Three of our priests were invested more than eight months ago, with powers from the Holy See but divers circumstances have retarded their departure. Each day new difficulties arose. At last the God of Mercies had deigned to smooth the way. Six of our brothers, Father Alexis as Prefect Apostolic, Father Abraham and Father Patrick as apostolic missionaries, choir-brother Theodore, and lay-brothers Melchior and Eustace are going to embark very soon in order to preach the Gospel in these Isles where the Catholic Faith has never been announced.

“Gladly we announce the news, beloved Brothers and very dear Sisters, and it is a great consolation for us to designate those who are to be the first to enter into this holy and painful career. The only thing that embarrasses us is making a choice. A great number of Brothers asked, with great insistence and as a signal favor, for permission to consecrate themselves to a work so painful in the eyes of nature but so meritorious in the eyes of Faith.” (S.B.P. III, p. 275.)

Some years later, the Founder addressed a new petition to the Holy See and offered to evangelize new regions. On February 11, 1830 he asked to be charged with the evangelization of the Society Islands, the dangerous Archipelago of the Marquesas, etc. (S.B.P. IV, p. 125.)

On February 26th a new request was made on the subject of the Archipelago of oriental Oceania. (S.B.P. IV, p. 141.) By a brief of May 20, 1833 these requests were granted.

In December 1833, a first group of four missionaries under the direction of Father Chrysostom Liausu, left for the new mission. These were followed, in October 1834, by another

group of seven missionaries, having at their head, Monsignor Etienne Rouchouze, Vicar Apostolic. (Cfr. Perron, Life, p. 585-588)

This last form of apostolate has remained one of the principal phases of the apostolic activity of the Congregation.

Missions among the people in the countries of Europe are rarely asked of us, but a considerable number of our Fathers and Brothers work in mission countries in the strict meaning of the word. The Good Father foresaw this when on March 30, 1833, he wrote to Mr. Pelagud, Director of the work of the Propagation of the Faith in Lyons: *"our vocation is especially to preach the faith to the infidel."* (S.B.P. IV, P. 273.)

This is why the General Chapter of 1883 decided that the work of the Missions should occupy a place of primacy among the works confided to the Institute.

"The General Chapter, adhering fully to the observations presented by Our Very Reverend Father, is of the opinion that there is reason to support and uphold principally the work of the Missions, as much in Catholic countries as in infidel lands, even were it necessary for that reason to diminish and even suppress our establishments of learning." (Article I, of the Acts of the General Chapter of 1883: 3rd Session, September 2, 1833.) However, this should not be taken in the sense that the active apostolate takes the first place in the aim which the Congregation proposes to itself. That would be in opposition to what we have already said and what Very Reverend Father Marcellin Bousquet repeated in his Circular of January 2, 1887:

"The Congregation of the Sacred Hearts is not only a religious congregation like so many others; it is not only a congregation for the work of the apostolate and teaching; it is, above all else, a congregation, which from its very origin, has been dedicated to Adoration and reparation." (A. C. VII, 17.)

But the worlds of the Good Father should be understood in this sense that the work of the missions takes the first place in the activity by which the Congregation retraces the Evangelical Life of Jesus Christ.

The Congregation is not exclusively, nor even principally, a missionary Congregation; but it consecrates the principal part of its activity to the preaching of the Gospel among the infidels and to the propagation of the Work of the Enthronement.

26. The Gospel is the same for all. In the same way, the apostolate as exercised by the Congregation is no other than the great apostolate of the Church in which so many orders and religious congregations work.

However, our preaching of the Gospel should have its own distinctive feature, determined by the fundamental trait of our vocation; consecration to the service of the Sacred Hearts.

Living on the love of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, our lips should speak out of the abundance of the heart. In all that we say we should have but one aim: to make known the great mystery of Love which has such great power of attracting hearts, enlightening the mind, animating the will, and converting souls.

By the maternal care of the Heart of Mary we should be transformed into Jesus to such a degree that it is He Who lives in us. Through her, our life should become a reproduction of His Life; our activity, a continuation of His Evangelical activity; our words, an echo of His most intimate sentiments. To all those who come in contact with us, we should be "other Christ" and

in all that we undertake, we should have no other aim than that of “inflaming the whole, world, if it were possible, with Holy Love.”

According to the character of our spirituality, which is wholly impregnated with the mystery of Love, all those to whom we give life in Jesus Christ should distinguish themselves by a great devotion to the Sacred Hearts, and by Them and in Them, to the God of all Love. Then, Article IV of our Constitution will not be a dead letter, but a vivifying spirit and the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts, with its sons who work and its daughters who pray, will be a living continuation of the Evangelical Period of the Life of Jesus and Mary.

ARTICLE V

To Retrace the Crucified Life of Jesus

“Finally, all the members of the Congregation should reproduce, as much as it is in their power to do so, the Crucified Life of Our Divine Savior, by practicing with zeal and prudence, the works of Christian mortification, especially by restraining the senses.”

27. The text of this Article, with slight modification, is the same as on the Rules of 1817 and 1825. This one says: *“Finally we ought, insofar as we can, to imitate the Crucified Life of Our Divine Savior, by taking upon ourselves with zeal and prudence, the works of Christian mortification, especially by restraining our senses.”* We can see that the meaning is still the same and that we find ourselves face to face with an Article coming from our Founders themselves.

It speaks of our participation in the mystery of the Cross of Christ. This mystery holds the very first place in the Life of the Savior. The other mysteries of His Life have a greater or lesser importance according to their relation to the Work of the Redemption, while His Crucified Life was a consummation of that Work. On Calvary, the new Adam assisted by the new Eve offered, by a bloody immolation, His Life to the Heavenly Father. Thus humanity was redeemed and the glory of God repaired.

The Crucified Life is the crowning point in the whole mortal existence of the Savior, the center of all the Redemption.

And as Christian life in its fundamental signification is but a continuation of the Life of Christ, each Christian is marked with the mystery of the Cross. To all those who wish to follow Him the Master says: *“If anyone wishes to follow Me, let him renounce himself, take up his cross and follow Me. For he who wishes to save his life, must lose it; and he who loses his life for My sake, will find it.”* (Matt. XVI, 24.)

This is the general law for all. But those who are called to take a special part in the great Work of the Redemption should participate more intensely in the Crucified Life of the Savior. They should continue upon this earth the mission of Jesus and Mary repairing with Them the glory of God outraged by so many crimes, and helping to save fallen humanity.

Thus, we have here an essential part of the aim which the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts proposes to itself. Consecrated to Their service and living under the light of the symbol of the Love of Jesus and Mary in the immolation of Their Crucified Life, it is called to continue and to apply to our modern times the Work of the Redemption of Christ. The participation in the mystery of the Crucified Life has a central place in the mission which is confided to it, and immolation in a spirit of love and reparation is the most characteristic mark of its vocation.

28. This is what the Founders taught from the very origin of their Institute. They were not content to lead a life heroic in its crucifixion; they also wished that their children should be marked with the sign of the Cross and have at heart the love of suffering. This should hold them in a state of continual immolation.

“My poor children,” wrote the Good Father in a letter to Father Isidore on November 14, 1803, *“will always be children of the Cross. Thus they will more perfectly be children of the Heart of the Good*

Master.” (S.B.P. I, p. 128.) On August 4, 1804, he wrote to Sister Gabrielle de la Barre: “*whether they persecute us, or whether they leave us in peace, let us be children of the Cross and may our entire hearts burn with the desire of immolation which it exacts or permits, and all, yes all, will go according to His Will. I feel and wish even unto death that His is always adorable.*” (S.B.P. I, p. 179.)

And at the end of his life, after forty years had given more depth to his views, he wrote on July 17, 1835, to his niece, Sister Eudoxie Coudrin: “*Let us remember that we are dedicated to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and that to this precious profession there is unquestionably attached a sweet and holy grief and bitterness inseparable from our vocation.*” (S. B.P. IV, p. 389.)

It is for this reason that the Founders had wished that the Rule of the Congregation should be somewhat austere. Moreover, the Good Mother spoke of an illumination from Our Lord in this regard:

“He wishes that the Rule should be somewhat austere in order to imitate His Crucified Life.”

For that reason also the Foundation at its beginning had many holy austerities which frightened less generous souls. In the earlier days the members slept on boards, observed perpetual abstinence, maintained continual silence; in a word, they lived according to the Rule of the Trappists.

This is what Our Lord had requested. “*It is during this epoch,*” writes Sister Gabrielle de la Barre in her ‘Memoirs of the Good Mother,’ “*that God made known to her that while waiting until time and experience had submitted the Congregation to a rule, we must adopt that which is practiced by the Trappists.*”

The notes which the Good Mother wrote around this time to the Good Father are very significant on this subject.

But the Founders themselves were the first to take account of the fact that these austerities did not go hand in hand with the fatigues of the apostolate and of instruction and teaching. Therefore, they discontinued a part of the primitive mortifications. The spirit however, remained the same, and since the exterior penances had to be diminished, they insisted that their children apply themselves with greater generosity to interior crucifixion in order to maintain in themselves the spirit of continual immolation.

29. This spirit has been and always will be the fundamental trait and characteristic of the spirit of our vocation.

Very Reverend Father Euthyme Rouchouze, third Superior General, who governed the Congregation in a period wherein it took part in a special manner in the crucifixion of Our Lord, illustrated this in a remarkable way in his Circulars. Our manual, “The Religious of the Sacred Hearts,” gives several citations. It suffices for us to cite these words which have become classic. They are taken from the Circular of October 28, 1863:

“We insist strongly in seeing that this spirit of victim reigns among the children of the Sacred Hearts, especially since we regard it as proper to the Institute and as its very life and soul. We will not live the life of the Congregation, that is, a life that is strong and full of youthful vitality, except insofar as we have this spirit of sacrifice and maintain ourselves in that state of victim even in the smallest details of our life. We will prosper and develop if this spirit of immolation has deeply penetrated us and has, as it were, become incarnate in us. If, on the contrary, this spirit diminishes little by little, we will vegetate, so to speak, flaying among us those well-meaning people, who, at the bottom have good will and no desire to do wrong. But we will not live a life that is strong and vigorous; and it is even to be feared that we will continue to go on becoming weaker and weaker.”

“This spirit of sacrifice in union with the Sacred Hearts, is like the sap which should nourish the tree of the Congregation. If it is strong and abundant enough to circulate everywhere, from the roots to the very tips of all the branches, this tree will bear abundant and varied fruits. This then, our well-beloved Brothers, is the idea which

first of all presided at the birth. of our Institute, the idea of sacrifice and immolation in order to repair by expiation, the outrages without number which the enormous crimes of sinners unceasingly inflict upon the Divine Majesty. This idea is not only ours, but above all, that of our Venerable Founder. The Good Father reproduced it so often in his letters, being for him the idea which had given birth to the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts.” (A .C. V., 124.)

To these sublime sentiments we have only to add those contained in his Circular of 1869, summarizing all his doctrine:

“It has been pointed out to us already many times, and it will not cease to be repeated: to be children of the Sacred Hearts and to be a victim, is one and the same thing.” (A.C.V. , 186.)

At the General Chapter of 1874, one of the members of the Chapter asked if the spirit of the Congregation, exposed by Very Reverend Father Euthyme, had remained in conformity with the primitive spirit of the Institute. In his opinion, prior to the government of Very Reverend Father Euthyme, the characteristic note of the Congregation had been that of simplicity. Thus, he said that it was somewhat surprising that Very Reverend Father Euthyme, in a Circular to the whole Congregation, made an attempt to prove that the spirit of the Institute was that of mortification. (A.C. VII, 146.)

Very Reverend Father Bousquet, in a brilliant discourse, came to the defense of his predecessor. He proved that *"the spirit of sacrifice is, in effect, the particular stamp, the characteristic aspect which should distinguish us from other communities... Today, as always, the spirit of sacrifice and immolation is, and remains, the essential principal and reason for our existence. It is the soul of the religious body to which, we belong."*

No one will doubt, that regarding their relations with God, simplicity should be the characteristic note of the children of the Sacred Hearts. But if one asks what is the essential trait of the spirit of the Congregation and of the vocation which is confided to it in the consecration to the Sacred Hearts, we must reply without the least hesitation that it is the spirit of immolation and sacrifice.

It may be that the ardor and energy of the classic formulas of Very Reverend Father Euthyme are new; his doctrine however, is traditional: it is the authentic thought of our Venerable Founders.

30. This is the result of all that we have already said.

If the Good Father loved to repeat that his children should be children of the Cross, that our hearts should burn with the desire of the immolation which God exacts or permits, it is then clear that he saw an essential relationship between the vocation of the child of the Sacred Hearts and the mystery of the Cross. This mystery was one of supreme sacrifice and total immolation. This conclusion is found directly and indirectly in diverse testimonials, and finds its confirmation in the idea of reparation which, without any doubt whatsoever, was fundamental in the thought of the Founders.

Take, for example, the petition of October 2, 1801, in which our Founders expose, in a clear manner, the fundamental aim of their work. They declare that, in the new foundation, *"each one, according to the measure of talent which has been confided him, - be it in retreat, in silence and penance, be it in the solicitude of the apostolic life, - should render to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary the duties of*

sacrifice, of love, of reparation, and total devotion which have been, up until this time, the foundation of the Institute.” They name the duty of sacrifice as the first of the duties which are at the base of the Institute.

We have, following that, the note of the Good Mother of January, 1803, wherein she assures the Good Father that God has chosen him *“to establish a new order, which would consecrate itself thus; one part to making known, extending, and establishing the reign of God in all hearts by means of devotion to His sufferings; the other part being destined to adore God, and repair as much as possible, by a life of immolation and of sacrifice, the outrages which he has received.”*

The mission, so essential to our Institute, of repairing the outrages committed against the Divine Majesty is fulfilled *“by a life of immolation and sacrifice.”* We find the same idea in the letter which Father Hilarion wrote on July 8, 1803, to Father Isidore in order to give him an account of a ceremony which had re-united around the Founder the Brothers and Sisters of Mende. When all had renewed their vows, the Good Father made an act of consecration in which *“he offered himself in a spirit of victim for all of us and he said Holy Mass for the particular intention of obtaining from Heaven this spirit of renouncement and sacrifice which God demands of us.”*

These words clearly show us the spirit which animated the Founder and his first disciples, and that the Good Father desired for his children, above all, the spirit of renouncement and of sacrifice.

This is also attested to by another witness, Brother Theodule Escolan, who knew the Good Father at Picpus and who affirmed that it is the spirit of sacrifice which, according to the words of the Good Father, forms the true children of the Sacred Heart.

Reverend Father Cyril Merien, in giving information on Father Coudrin at the informative process said: *“I have also heard it said by Brother Theodule Escolan that the Good Father was very fond of speaking to his children on the end of our Institute. His example gave immense weight to his words because he first of all practiced what he taught...”* According to Brother Theodule, *“the Good Father was for them an active and living lesson of the spirit of sacrifice which, according to the Founder, was what characterized the real children of the Sacred Hearts.”* (C.P. Tome I, p. 688.)

We can also add here the words of Brother Theodore Martin who, in his capacity of infirmaries at Picpus, had been very close to the Good Father. In his “Memoirs,” he describes the origin of the Institute. This is what he says concerning Christmas night, 1800:

“Who can tell of the joys, the blessings, called down upon us during this blessed night. It recalls to us the memories and souvenirs of the Good Father during the first days of the Society wherein he and the Good Mother were like the first two victims of the Sacred Hearts, advancing toward the altar in order to swear their fidelity! At that time, as even today, a storm menaced the Church and France, and a deluge of evils inundated the earth. The ark of the Sacred Hearts, floating on the rough waves, silently followed its course, sheltering in its interior, a few elite souls offered as hostages of reparation, and ready for every sacrifice...”

Here we have the fundamental idea of the Good Father and the Good Mother; already in their first offering, they considered themselves as “victims of the Sacred Heart and offering of reparation.”

We have then, every right to conclude that according to the mind of our Founders, the spirit of victim and sacrifice was fundamental in their Institute. Very Reverend Father Euthyme did no more than bring out and emphasize their authentic doctrine.

31. In explaining Article I, we have demonstrated that **the idea of reparation** is referred to very frequently in the documents which speak of the end of the Institute. We have likewise seen that this idea initiates the devotion to the Sacred Heart which dominates the entire spirit of our vocation. No one can deny then, that the spirit of reparation is the most essential trait of the work of the Founders, the characteristic note of the vocation which they have confided to their children. And what is reparation if not immolation and sacrifice? Our reparation, in fact, cannot and should not be anything but a participation in the great Reparation of Jesus and Mary. Jesus and Mary could not fulfill their reparative mission except by Their immolation, the sacrifice of Themselves, Their continual state of victim.

It is very clear then, that we cannot make reparation except by the immolation and sacrifice of ourselves.

The Rule tells us, it is true, that the Congregation wishes to take part in reparation “*by perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.*” But this reparation by adoration and prayer would be incomplete if it were not accompanied by the bloody immolation of a crucified life, just as the unbloody sacrifice of the Mass receives its signification and its value from the bloody immolation of Calvary. Adoration at the foot of the Altar, by which the Congregation enters into the interior sorrow of the Heart of Jesus, naturally leads us to participate in the sufferings and sorrows which the Savior endured, and incites us to a great generosity in the sacrifice of ourselves.

This is why the Good Father said: “*Let us not lose sight of the fact that Our Lord wishes that we enter particularly into the interior crucifixion of His Heart. We should then, like Magdalene, remain at His feet, and like Saint John, accompany Him even to the Cross.*” (Number 10.) And the Good Mother added: “*The children of the Sacred Heart should be immolated victims.*” (Maxim, number 23.)

32. All this doctrine has been summed up by the Founders in Article V of the Constitutions of their Institute.

“*Finally, all the members of the Congregation should reproduce, as much as it is in their power to do so; the crucified life of Our Divine Savior, practicing with zeal and prudence works of Christian mortification, especially by restraining their senses.*”

Here no distinction is made between Brothers and Sisters. Article V is wholly concerned with a duty which the two branches of the Institute should equally fulfill. And the Rule adds with an insistence which is most significant: “*as much as it is in their power,*” that is to say, as much as human strength, guided by the rules of prudence and vivified by the ardor of generous zeal, permit. The possibilities of that phrase, “*as much as it is in their power,*” should be measured according to the model and the example of the Sacred Hearts: of Jesus, Who loved us and immolated Himself for us; of Mary, who even in the most cruel sacrifice which was ever asked of her maternal Heart, pronounced her “Fiat” with joy.

In the light of this sublime model, vast horizons open up before us. This ideal comprehends the whole field of Christian mortification, both interior and exterior; or, as our Founders say in their petitions of October 25, 1814: “*mortification of the flesh and the spirit, as much as human weakness permits.*”

In the exercise of this mortification, it is prudence which should guide Superiors and directors of conscience, whose obligation it is according to Article 371 of the Rule to watch over the practice of corporal mortification. But it is an ardent zeal that should animate all the children

of the Sacred Hearts who as the Good Father says, “*should burn with the desire of immolation.*” This zeal derives its ardor from the flame of the hearts of Jesus and Mary and nourishes itself with the desire of being like unto Them. It must be forever growing in the increasing conviction that immolation is not possible without a great generosity in the practice of mortification.

While our adoration retraces the Hidden Life of the Savior, our life of immolation and sacrifice continues His Crucified Life, is mission of “the Lamb of God.” As the whole life of Jesus, according to the words of the Imitation, was “*crux et martyrium,*” so also our whole life in its different aspects should be a continuation of the mystery of the Cross.

There, we cannot repeat often enough, is found the center of our obligations; and we cannot better synthesize this explanation of Article V of the Preliminary Chapter than by the maxim of the Good Mother: “*The children of the Sacred Hearts should be immolated victims.*”

ARTICLE VI

On the Devotion to the Sacred Hearts

“Moreover, their aim is to make, every possible effort to spread true devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as approved by the Holy Apostolic See.”

33. The text of the Rule of 1928 is, except for a very small change, just like that of 1825. The Rule of 1817 says the, same thing but in a little different manner. *“Demum proponimus conari, quantum in nobis est, ad propagandam veram devotionem ad dulcissimum Cor Beatæ Mariæ Virginis.”*

This formula was somewhat different from that which the Founders had proposed in the Constitution of 1816. The text of the article was brief and precise: *“Especially we must consecrate all, our efforts to spreading true devotion toward the Most Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary”*.

It was the formula in use since the beginning of the foundation. In May 1801, the Good Father wrote to Mgr. de Mondion in order to ask for the approbation of his Institute. Speaking of the aim of his Congregation, he declared among other things: *“to instruct the people and propagate the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.”* (number 7). In the petition of October 2, 1801, the two Founders speak in the same sense, saying that the new foundation proposes to itself to *“inflare the entire world, if it is possible, with Holy Love, by spreading the devotion to the Divine Hearts of Jesus and Mary.”* (number 7).

This formula clearly indicated the devotion which the Congregation of the Good Father and the Good Mother proposed to practice and propagate, uniting the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary in the closest union.

But in the examination of the Constitution at Rome, the Cardinal presenter, J. Philip Scotti, caused some difficulties by wishing that, in the formula as well as in the practice, the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus should be distinct from that which is due to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. *“If it were said that one should consecrate all his efforts to propagating devotion toward the adorable Person of Our Savior Jesus Christ I would have no objection; but to say that the members of the Congregation should consecrate all their efforts to propagating the devotion to the Most Holy Hearts of Jesus and Mary, without explaining in what this devotion consists, and putting in some manner on the same level the devotion towards Jesus, our God and Savior, and that which one should have towards His Most Holy mother, in that I see some difficulty.”*

The new text did not differ essentially from that which the Founders had proposed, but it insisted on two points.

First - One should clearly distinguish between the devotion which is due to the Divine Heart of Jesus, which is always a cult of latria, and that which we render to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, which is always infinitely inferior to the cult of latria.

Evidentially, the Founders knew that, and had clearly manifested it in the practice of the devotion in their Institute. If sometimes, they had spoken of the *“Divine Hearts of Jesus and Mary,”* it was after a formula in use at that time, wherein such expressions as *“Divine Mother of God,”* or *“Divine Mary”* were used. But in these manifestations of their devotion, they had not only reserved adoration for Jesus alone, but also gave a place of special honor to the Heart of the Divine Master, who alone is our God and who alone is the only end of our whole existence.

But inasmuch as they wished to indicate above all the very intimate union between the Heart of Jesus and the Heart of Mary in the work of Redemption, they spoke in short of the “devotion to the Sacred Hearts.” In the new formula, this union was sufficiently expressed in the single work “devotion” towards the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Most Sweet Heart of Mary. The opportune reference to the essential distinction between every cult rendered to the Divine Heart of Jesus and the cult of the Heart of Mary completed the formula.

Second - The new formula added an explicit mention of the approbation of the devotion by the Holy Apostolic See. That also was contained implicitly in the formula of the Founders. Since they wished to propagate nothing less than the true devotion, they gave it to be understood that it concerned the authentic devotion approved by the Holy See.

But Cardinal Scotti found that in a time wherein devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus was still often attacked and certainly was not known and practiced yet, it would be far better to make explicit mention of this approbation. That is why he added “*et prout est ab Apostolica Sede probate,*” which gave to the text of the Rule a rather bizarre literary form, but at the same time indicated a truth of the greatest importance, namely: that the devotion characteristic of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts is none other than the authentic devotion of the Church.

34. It is certainly remarkable that in 1816 one spoke of a devotion to the Most Sweet Heart of Mary “*as it is approved by the Holy Apostolic See.*” For, from the point of view of “Approbation by the Holy See” the devotion to the Heart of Mary was still in its very beginning.

The devotion to the Sacred Heart had received its solemn approbation in 1765. It had its own feast, with a Mass as well as its own Office, being both in its spirit and in its practice well defined. The revelations made to Saint Margaret Mary and the long discussions which preceded the approbation contributed more than a little to determining the nature and the spirit of the devotion to the Heart of Jesus. Everything was not as yet so well defined as it is today but it was clear that true devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, such as the Holy See approved, was the devotion which Jesus Himself had taught to Saint Margaret Mary.

The devotion to the Heart of Mary had certainly not reached this point of development. We had to wait until the year 1944 before the Church approved a liturgical feast in honor of the Immaculate Heart of Mary for the Universal Church. As to the nature of this devotion very little has been defined.

It is then clear that at the beginning of 1800 devotion to the Heart of Mary, as far as approbation by the Church and the Holy See were concerned, was still in an embryonic state. There did exist a Mass and an Office “*pro aliquibus locis.*” There were some confraternities under the name of the Holy earth of Mary. But that was about all. But the remark of the Cardinal presenter, explaining the words “true devotion,” was a directive for the future. For the devotion to the Sacred Hearts had to be developed according to the doctrine of the Holy See. It was at the same time a confirmation of the thought of the Founders. For them, devotion to the Most Sweet Heart of Mary as practiced in the Congregation was modeled on the devotion to the Sacred Heart in such a way that it sufficed to know the spirit and the practices of the devotion to the Divine Heart of Jesus, approved by the Church, in order to be guided in the devotion to the Maternal Heart of Mary.

What is the characteristic spirit of our devotion to the Immaculate heart of Mary? It is the spirit of the official devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus; the spirit of love and compassion, of reparation and sacrifice. We have a proof of this in the prayer to the Immaculate Heart of Mary composed by the Good Father towards the end of the year 1800 a few days before his

profession, and recited by him daily before the celebration of Holy Mass. It is an act of consecration wherein the spirit of compassion and reparation is uppermost.

In contradistinction to Saint John Eudes, who contemplates and venerates the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Admirable Heart of Mary, our Congregation considers and honors the Heart of Mary in the Heart of Jesus, that is to say, in the intimate union of the work of the Redemption which had its source and its center in the Heart of Our Savior Jesus Christ and with which Mary cooperated.

For that reason it suffices for us that the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus should be explicitly and officially approved and that its spirit should be fixed. Our devotion to the Most Sweet Heart of Mary is modeled on it and from it takes all its essential traits.

35. In the explanation of Article IV we have already demonstrated that **the ideal of the Sacred Hearts** was present to the spirit of our Founders as the basis of their work from its very origin. They wished to form a **Society of Zealots of the Love of the Sacred Hearts**. This name, used by the Good Father in the formula of his profession, on Christmas night 1800, is likewise found in a note written by him on December 29th of the same year. It is likewise found in a note of the Good Mother, of January 11, 1801, in which she says that the foundation had been approved by the Hearts of Jesus and Mary: *“Approved by the Divine Heart of Jesus and by the Divine Heart of Mary, what more could one want?”* (S.B.P. I, page 108, note number 9.)

Several days before, the Good Father had asked Mgr. de Mondion for permission to celebrate the feast of the Amiable Heart of Mary on the First Saturday of the year. He gave as the motive: *“because it is through Her Divine Heart⁹ that we adore the Sacred Heart of Jesus.”*

These words demonstrate the intimate union which, from the origin of the work, united the Immaculate Heart of Mary to the cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. On February 11th, the Good Mother wrote to the Sisters of the Society of the Sacred Heart that *“they who had decided to place themselves with us under **the banner of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary** share our satisfaction.”* (S.B.M. I, 40.)

In May of the same year, the Good Father addressed himself again to Mgr. de Mondion asking for the approbation of the Institute which he had founded *“under **the name of Zealots of the Love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary**, whose members are destined...to instruct the people and propagate the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.”*

In the petition of October 2, “the Sacred Hearts” is made use of five times. This petition was sent to Cardinal Caprara, legate of the Pope in France, who, as the Good Father thought, had transmitted it to His to His Holiness. This is why he wrote to him on January 25, 1802.

“My Lord: We have just been informed by His Lordship, the Bishop of Saint Claude that your Eminence has deigned to pass on to His Holiness the petition which we addressed to him, under date of October 2nd, with the desire of obtaining the approbation of an establishment in honor of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary which Divine Providence has pleased to form in the unfortunate circumstances through which we have passed.” (S.B.P. I, p. 78.)

These documents of the first years of the foundation show us the goal which the Founders had before them: the devotion to the Sacred Hearts as the foundation and the end of their Institute.

This fundamental thought of the Founders was immediately transmitted to their disciples. We have a proof of it in the letters which Brother Bernard de Villemort, one of the first disciples of the Good Father, wrote him from Paris at the end of the year 1800 or at the beginning of

⁹ “Divine” Heart, according to the formula unfortunately in use at that time.

1801. He concluded his first letter of December 14, 1800, thus: *“Farewell. Live forever the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.”* And the third letter, which is of January 6, 1801: *“I conclude with the desire that the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary become for us the universe, the unique object of our desires. Live forever... Ave Maria.”*

He began the sixth letter, which is of January 12, 1801, with the initials *“V. C. J. S. and M.”* and terminated it with a greeting for all those who can be *“united to us by the bonds of the S. C. of J. and M.”* This form of initials appears again in the seventh letter of January 26th, the eighth of February 2nd, and the ninth of February 11, 1801.

These diverse manifestations, in simple correspondence, of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts clearly show us that, even towards the end of 1800, this devotion had already taken deep root in those who made up our Institute.

36. This testimony is confirmed by the **ancient paintings and pictures** of the Sacred Hearts which were in use from the beginning of the Congregation. “The Life of the Good Father” by Reverend Father Perron gives two of them, one on page 129 and the other on page 154. The author believes that these representations were already in use in 1793 or 1794. However, the letter of Brother Bernard de Villemort, cited above, leads us to believe that the first painting had been acquired by him in Paris in 1801. (See “From Saint Benedict to Father Coudrin” by Father Names May, p. 40.)

This does not mean that the members could not have had images of pictures of the Sacred Hearts before 1800. It is even more than likely that they did, inasmuch as these images were then very widespread. We have no certain proof of it, although it is certain that from the official beginning of the Institute in 1800, pictures of the Sacred Hearts were being used.

The Good Father speaks of this in his note of December 28th to the Good Mother. He asks: *“Why the picture of the heart of Mary before that of the Heart of Jesus?”* (S.B.P. I, p. 106, number 8.) He was alluding to the fact that in the first representations used in the Institute, the Heart of Mary was placed at the right of the Heart of Jesus and in front of it. This he found somewhat strange.

37. It is true that in some documents of this first period the intimate union between the devotion to the Heart of Jesus and that of the Heart of Mary in the Congregation is not so manifest. Such expressions as “consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus under the protection of Mary” or “through the mediation of the Heart of Mary” are spoken of. Thus, wrote the Good Mother to the Vicar of Poitiers: *“Our Association is called the Association of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Christ and is under the special protection of the Blessed Virgin, His Mother.”* To the Sovereign Pontiff she wrote: *“they have formed an association under the title of Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus through the mediation of the Divine Heart of Mary, His Mother.”*

The lack of precision in these formulas can probably be explained by the fact that the Congregation began as the Association of the Sacred Heart, from which it separated in 1797. The custom of speaking of “the consecration to the Sacred Heart under the protection of Mary” lasted for some time, even in the little group which had separated in order to consecrate itself more especially to the service of the Sacred Hearts.

This was but for a short time, so that it can be said that in the official documents wherein the foundation of the Institute is spoken of, the formula “the Sacred Hearts” dates from the origin of the Institute. It can also be said that the fundamental devotion of the Congregation united from the beginning the Immaculate Heart of Mary to the Divine Heart of Jesus.

38. This union was not just a fortunate affinity, but an essential relation between the characteristic devotion of the Institute and its fundamental aim. Born in the midst of the French Revolution which had destroyed that which the past centuries of Christian life had patiently constructed, the Congregation had been founded for a work of reconstruction and restoration. Its mission was clearly indicated: reparation to the Majesty of God restoration of fallen humanity. It should make every effort to bring to realization in these modern times the great work of Jesus Christ: “*instaurare omnia in Christo.*”

In His first plan, God had confided the sanctification of the human race to two spouses, who were united most intimately in a bond of purest and most tender love. He had created humanity as a confederacy of love and confided to these first spouses the mission of filling the earth with a family of children of God.

By the sin of Adam this first plan was destroyed; the Mystery of love became the great mystery of iniquity. But God revised His plan and sent His Only Begotten Son to save fallen humanity, to restore all that the sin of our first parents had annihilated. With jealous care, He wished to retrace all the traits of His first project and to “recapitulate” everything in Christ Jesus. This is why He ordained a new Mystery of Love; He decreed that with the new Adam, a new Eve should cooperate and that the sources of regeneration and salvation would flow forth in a league of love. Mary, who in the mystery of the Incarnation was to be the Mother of God, in the mystery of the Redemption, was destined to be the “*Sponsa Verbi.*” It does not fall within the limits or the intentions of this little commentary to explain at length how Mary cooperated in a union of love with Jesus for the salvation of the human race. It suffices to indicate that the work of the Redemption was a Mystery of Love, not only in the sense that the Incarnation of the Word of God was due to the Infinite Love of God and that Jesus immolated Himself for us through love for us. But besides this, there is another great Mystery of Love underlying our restoration. Jesus and Mary, the new Adam and the new Eve united in a bond of spiritual love, are the Parents of all the elect.¹⁰

Since our Founders wished that their work be a participation and a continuation of the work of the Redemption of Jesus Christ, it was natural and logical that they place their foundation under the banner of the Sacred Hearts; that is to say, of Jesus and Mary, considered in the symbol of Their Love and Their inseparable union in that Love. The union of the Sacred Hearts in all our works is a characteristic trait of our Institute.

39. One might ask if the Founders themselves were conscious of the profundity and depth of their views in the founding of their Institute. It is certain that the two essential elements: the idea of reparation and restoration in union with the Savior's work of Redemption, and the devotion to the Sacred Hearts considered in the intimate and inseparable union of Their Redemptive Love, were present to their spirit from the very origin of the work. We find traces of

¹⁰ We permit ourselves to refer here to the work which Reverend Father Ansgar Deussen, SS.CC., is at present elaborating: “*Mysterium Caritatis*” a work which we have read with great satisfaction, and for which we cannot help but desire a speedy publication. (It was edited as n. 3 of the “*Études Picpucennes*”)

it in their first writings. Did they also see the profound affinity between these two elements? One cannot establish the proof of it with certitude, inasmuch as the Founders were preoccupied but very little with theoretical declarations or scientific expositions; rather, their intentions are manifested in practical teaching and instruction.

The Spirit of God Who guided them proposed the ideal to them, not as a philosophic definition but as a work of God destined to fulfill the necessities of the disastrous epoch in which they lived. From the beginning they knew which direction to take, being guided very probably by a vague intuition rather than by a very clear view. They began and then allowed themselves to be guided by the Holy Spirit. Under His guidance their concept of the Institute took on precision and the formula became clearer.

And so, after more than a century, as we survey their writings and study the plan which they proposed, we are struck with the amplitude and the profundity of this ideal, and we see how very coherently the fundamental devotion of the Institute coincides with the aim which they gave to their work.

40. From all that we have said in order to explain this Article, it is evident that it is but a repetition of the preceding Articles. In the first five Articles we have continually repeated that the fundamental aim of the Congregation is to practice and propagate true devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

If one takes “the four ages” in the light of the origin of our Institute and the reproduction of the life of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the sense which our Founders gave it, it is manifest that all the life of the Institute is based on the devotion to the Sacred Hearts.

The word “moreover” with which Article VI begins, has then the meaning of “summing up” and we can translate the Article thus: “*Summing up what we have said they have for their aim to make all the efforts within their power to propagate true devotion towards the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Most Sweet Heart of Mary as that devotion is approved by the Holy Apostolic See.*”

Recapitulating the whole end of the Institute as it does, the Rule mentions only the propagation and not the practice of the devotion. This may be explained by the fact that the Founders wished to give in the Rule a series of practical norms. It is evident that if the members of the Congregation make all the efforts within their power to propagate the true devotion these efforts should have their roots in an intense practice of that same devotion. A devotion is not an article of propaganda which can be spread by mere verbal recommendation; it is a form of life which communicates itself like an ardent flame of conviction and enthusiasm, and which should be intensely lived before there can be any question of communicating it to others.

We may then conclude that the end and aim of the Institute described in detail in the preceding Articles is in this Article synthesized anew in the light of the fundamental idea of our entire vocation: devotion to the Sacred Hearts.

41. It is a great honor for our modest religious family that, in spite of the very restricted number of its members, it has had such a large part in the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts. The Work of the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in Christian families, which has contributed in a considerable manner to the spread of the devotion to the Heart of Jesus and to the coming of His Reign of Love, was founded by a member of our Institute, preached by him throughout the entire world and is especially maintained by the devotedness of our Brothers and Sisters. For that reason the Work has been confided to us by the Holy See as a special work of the Institute. We have but to maintain and propagate it still more in order to fully respond to the

end of our vocation: “to propagate with all our power, the true devotion towards the Sacred Heart of Jesus.”

Besides the Work of the Enthronement there is also the Work of the League “Maria Regina” which strives to propagate devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the knowledge of Her Royalty. This work was not founded by us, but its founder ceded it to us. He was convinced that no one was better authorized than we to take charge of a work which was in direct harmony with a devotion that, for more than a century, had already nourished the spiritual life of our Congregation, under the direction of the Fathers of our German Province; it has developed considerably in Germany and in Holland. It gave great satisfaction to the promoters of this providential work to see Pope Pius XII consecrate, on October 31 1942, the Church and the entire world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. He could give no better approval to the work of “Maria Regina.”

For the present these two great works are parallel inasmuch as they have several mutual affinities. Soon, let us hope the moment will come when they will be united, when the Sacred Hearts will be inseparably joined in the consecration of societies, of families, and of individuals. This consecration, for more than a century, has formed the happiness and glory of our Institute and in it the world will find its salvation.

ARTICLE VII

Particular Patrons and Heavenly Protectors

“The Congregation has Saint Joseph, spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary, for its special patron, and Saint Augustine, Saint Dominic, Saint Bernard, Saint Pacomius, and Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque for its special protectors.”

42. With the exception of the name of Saint Margaret Mary, and apart from some modifications which are purely verbal, this Article is the same as that of the Rule of 1825.

In the margin of the Project of the Rule of 1908, there had been added after the name of Saint Augustine, the name of Saint Benedict among the particular protectors of the Congregation. But the addition was not received in the definitive text, and rightly so. Saint Benedict is more than a protector, he is the Father of our Institute and of its legislation, as our Founders liked to call him.

In the Rule of 1817 this Article as well as the two following were missing, but it was found in the petition of October 25, 1814 which we have reproduced in full already. (Cfr. number 8.)

This petition, considerably shortened, was placed at the need of the Constitution of 1817 and served as an Introduction. In it one read: *“Congregatio Sacratissimis Cordibus Jesu et Mariae, patrocinio gaudet S. Josephi... Sanctos Pacomium, Augustinum, Bernardum et Dominicum praecipue veneratur.”*

The Good Father, in his Circular of April 14, 1817 commented on these short words in the following manner: *“To the cult of Mary, you should, my well beloved Brothers and very dear Sisters, join a tender devotion to Saint Joseph, Patron of our Institute, Foster-Father of Jesus and guardian of the virginity of Mary. He was inflamed with love for Jesus and was very close to the Son and to the Mother. You will not fail then to implore him every day.*

...You know, well beloved Brothers and very dear Sisters, that we should consider as our protectors, Saint Pacomius, Saint Augustine, Saint Dominic, and Saint Bernard.

We honor Saint Pacomius because we should, after the example of his disciples, lead a life of penance, imitate his silence and prayer and also receive children who, even though leading a different life, will have the same spirit. We should, like Saint Dominic, preach the Faith to the people. This saint is one of the beloved children of the Blessed Virgin whose privileges he defended against the heretics of his time. Saint Augustine teaches us that we should receive sinners, be ready to help them, and that, with the right approach, we will convert many of them. But it is principally Saint Bernard whom we should imitate in his love for solitude and in the ardor of his zeal. We should expect to be, like him, persecuted and criticized. Let us suffer with resignation in order to better unite ourselves to the suffering Heart of Jesus.” (S.B.P. II, p. 201.)

43. These words of the Good Father had taken from some notes which the Good Mother had written him in 1801. On October 10, 1801 she wrote: *“This morning I saw with Our Lord, Saint Bernard, whom I noticed first, then Saint Dominic, and Saint Augustine whom I had trouble identifying, also Saint Pacomius who was named to me. I took him for Saint Jerome, thinking that he ought to pray for you. You alone, ought to do all that the institutions which they founded, did”.*

“Saint Pacomius implies that you will have a great number of disciples, that they will lead a penitential life; Saint Augustine, that you should easily believe in the conversion of sinners, receive them when they come to you and assist them; furthermore, that you will convert many of them with much facility. Saint Dominic represents

science and means that you should preach and teach the young. But it is Saint Bernard whom you should imitate; he includes everything: his love for children, his solitude, his recourse to the Pope, to kings, to the great. Like him, even though your affairs depend upon God, you will be criticized and persecuted.” (S.B.M. I, p. 65.)

“I saw the four Saints again,” she reported two days later, on October 12, 1801. “Our Institution alone should fulfill the aim of their institutions. You should, like Saint Pacomius, have many children who, although leading a life different from yours, will have the same spirit. I saw your gifts of which you never speak. We should lead a life of penance, silence, and prayer.”

“Saint Augustine symbolized preaching and the facility of receiving and converting sinners who have made errors in faith. Saint Dominic is among our Saints because he is a privileged child of the Blessed Virgin whose defense he undertook in a most victorious manner. Certain privileges of Our Lady were attacked but I know not which. In the instruction of youth and in preaching, he represents knowledge. Saint Bernard is the one who has the most in common with you. Like him, you will have dealings with the Pope, the King, and with Bishops. Like him, you will have the satisfaction of bringing up children.” (S.B.M. I, p. 65.)

The same month she had another illumination which she communicated to the Good Father in the following terms: *“A thick cloud appeared before me, which opened and permitted me to see on one side Saint Magdalene at the feet of Our Lord, Whose presence I felt but Who was concealed in the cloud; on the other side Saint John. Nearby stood Saint Joseph, and in the middle the Blessed Virgin was presenting you to Our Lord. She was between Saint Joachim and Saint Anne. Behind them were our four Saints who presented to Our Lord rolls of paper which contained their institutions. They seemed to intercede for us and say: ‘They are fulfilling all this.’”* (S.B.M. I, p. 62.)

At the end of 1802, while the Founders were together at Mende, she again made allusion to our Protectors. She saw a group of several Saints, all religious: *“our four Saints were in the middle.”* (S.B. M. I, p. 167.)

From all these notes it results that the words of the Good Father in his Circular of April 14, 1817 were no more than a definite summary of all that the Good Mother had communicated to him on the subject of the four Protectors.

It is not at all necessary to ask oneself if the illuminations of the Good Mother came from God, because it is of great significance that the Good Father, who knew her better than anyone, had so much confidence in her that he copied her communications almost verbatim. What concerns us is that the Good Mother saw them thus, and that the Good Father thus communicated the matter to his children. We have clear evidence what the Founders wished and that for a religious congregation, is of the highest importance.

44. They then, first of all placed their Congregation under the special patronage of Saint Joseph. This was the logical consequence of their fundamental thought, to place their foundation under the banner of the Sacred Hearts. As we have seen the Congregation should reproduce, as much in its interior life as in its exterior activity, the Mystery of Love and the Life of the Savior, where we find the Heart of Mary, Virgin and Mother, is inseparably united to the Heart of Her Son. This being so, is it not natural that Saint Joseph should be the special patron of a Congregation which retraces the image of Jesus and of Mary? In the ineffable designs of Divine Providence, Saint Joseph was elected to be the guardian of the life of Jesus and of His Mother. Could anyone else be the guardian of the institute which bears the imprint of the life of the Savior and His Blessed Mother?

Saint Joseph has always been the Patron of our Institute. The Congregation honored him from the very beginning in a special manner. The feast of his Patronage was introduced during the life of the Founder and celebrated with great solemnity in all our houses long before it was

entered into the Liturgy of the Universal Church. In all the ceremonies, the taking of the habit, the profession, the renewal of vows, recourse is had to his intercession; each day he is invoked.

And we can say that, on his side, Saint Joseph has shown himself to be the veritable Protector of the Congregation, above all in the difficult period of storm and stress and division. When after the storm, a period of calm began, the well-known sanctuary erected at Louvain in veneration of the foster-father of Jesus was confided to the care of our Congregation. Under the direction of the Fathers of the Belgian Province it has become a much-frequented center for veneration of this great Saint. From this center issued forth four very flourishing provinces of our Institute.

It was also at Louvain that Father Damien de Veuster entered our Congregation. He, by his heroic life among the lepers of Molokai has called forth much honor for his religious family.

45. Furthermore, our Founders gave to their foundation four particular protectors, who not only should protect it but teach something to its children.

From Saint Pacomius we learn that we should lead a life of penance, of silence and of prayer; He should at the same time be our model in the education of the children confided to our care.

From Saint Augustine we learn how to be charitable towards sinners how to receive them with facility and how to help them in their conversion. He is especially the patron of those of our Congregation who are priests.

From Saint Bernard we learn to love solitude and to be zealous for the apostolate. The Good Mother also mentions his love for children.

Saint Dominic is a model of zeal in preaching the Faith, and of love for knowledge and the instruction of youth. He teaches us how to defend with ardor the prerogatives of the Blessed Virgin of whom he was a beloved child.

Looking at our patrons we see again that the spiritual life of our Congregation is truly the "*vita mixta*": the harmonious union of the contemplative and apostolic life. On one side there is love of solitude, of silence, of prayer, and the penitential life such as the children of Saint Pacomius and Saint Bernard practiced; on the other, zeal for preaching, for the ministry of the confessional, for teaching and the education of youth such as was practiced by Saint Augustine and Saint Dominic.

If we make an effort to put into practice the lessons of our celestial Patrons then there will be realized the words which the Good Mother heard in one of her heavenly communications: "*they will fulfill all that*"; that is to say, all that their Constitutions contain.

After the canonization of Saint Margaret Mary, the Superior General, in the name of the entire Institute, asked the Holy See to have her as the fifth of our special patrons. This was accorded by Rescript of the Sacred Congregation of Rites on July 14, 1920. (Num. Prot. C. 58-920.) The reason for this request is clearly manifest.

Because of the very particular relation she had with the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus her feast was introduced into the Liturgy of the feasts proper to the Institute long before her canonization. Thus, it was very natural that the Superior General should ask the Holy See to permit us to honor her as particular patron of the Congregation. She teaches us to maintain a close union in our relations with Jesus, and to be zealous for the propagation of the devotion to His Divine Heart. We can be confident that she will interest herself in a special manner in an

Institute which has striven from its very origin to continue the mission which the Sacred Heart has confided to her.

In her note of October 1801, of which the exact date is unknown, the Good Mother named among our protectors Saint Joachim and Saint Anne:

“We will have for protectors Saint Joachim and Saint Anne. You should preach the devotion to these Saints whose intercession is not very often invoked, but by whom one will obtain many graces. We should especially celebrate their feasts.” (S.B.M. I, p. 62.)

The Good Father repeated these words, almost literally, in his Circular of April 14, 1817:

“Also look upon Saint Joachim and Saint Anne as your protectors; let the Fathers of our Congregation preach the devotion to these two Saints, whose invocation is rarely made use of but by whom one can obtain many graces. We hope that someday we can have in our houses a special feast for them.” (S.B.P. II, p. 201.)

The feasts of these two Saints are celebrated in the Universal Church as doubles of the second class; but in the Congregation there has never been a special devotion to them, not even during the lifetime of the Founders. Neither in the Rule of 1817 (Stat. number 17) nor in that of 1825 (Chapter X, Article 3) are their names found in the list of days whereon Communion is prescribed; they were added only in 1838. Nor does one find their feasts in the list of days whereon the members of the Institute can gain a plenary indulgence, as is the case for our four Protectors. We gain no more than an indulgence of seven years, as on the feast of Saint Caprasius and some other Saints. We can then say that they have never been considered as particular patrons in the same way as our four protectors.

ARTICLE VIII

Foundation of the Rule and Substance of our Religious Life

“The Rule of the Congregation is based on the Rule of Saint Benedict. The Brothers lead a common life of regular observance under obedience to the Superior General of the entire Congregation and to particular Superiors as will be mentioned later. They make simple vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, first for three years, and then for life.”

47. This article gives in a few words the foundation of the Rule of our Institute and the essential obligation of our religious life. It was lacking in the Constitution of 1817, but was found considerably developed in the petition of October 25, 1814.

“The Brothers as well as the Sisters make perpetual vows of Chastity, Poverty, and Obedience. The priests of this Congregation... lead a common and regular life under obedience to the Superior General of the entire Congregation, and to the particular Superior of each house who is designated by the Superior General. There are also other Brothers who are not destined to embrace the ecclesiastical state, and who are under the same obligations of obedience. They will occupy themselves with the different kinds of work in each house. The Sisters of the same Congregation...lead a regular life under obedience to the Superior General and whom he appoints as particular Superiors in each house.” (Cfr. number 8.) In the same petition we read: *“This Congregation...adopts the Rule of Saint Benedict but with Constitutions proper to the Institute.”*

The text of this petition, somewhat shortened, was added as an Introduction to the Rule of 1817. In 1824, the text was slightly modified and was added to the Articles of the preliminary chapter of the Rule as follows:

“We have adopted the Rule of Saint Benedict as the foundation of our Rule, and we live a common and regular life under obedience to the Superior General of the entire Congregation and to the Superior General of the Sisters”, his expression was inexact. It was not true that the Brothers lived under obedience to the Superior General of the Sisters. The reviser of the text of 1824 still more accentuated this inexactitude: *“We live in common, in regular practices under obedience to the Superior General of the entire Congregation, and to the Superior General of the Sisters, etc.”*

This is why the Rule of 1840 did well to make two articles of it. While perhaps the unity of the Congregation may not be expressed with as much force, the new text is closer to the original of the Founders as presented in the petition of October 25, 1814. The text of 1840 also added the words *“perpetual vows, but simple.”* This was found in the Introduction of 1817, but had been omitted by the reviser of 1824. It was not even added in 1838; Rome added it in 1839.

The Rule of 1909 marked a new improvement in the text by making mention of the temporary vows exacted by the Holy See. The text revised in 1908 by the General Chapter did not yet speak of them; but Rome demanded the introduction of temporary vows before giving its approbation. Consequently the text was modified to this extent. In 1928 the text underwent no further modification, permitting us to conclude that the actual text of Article VIII is substantially the same as that of the Petition of October 25, 1814.

48. The article established, first of all, that the foundation of our Rule is the Rule of Saint Benedict.

We are in the habit of calling the combination of Constitutions, Statutes, and Rules of our Institute, simply “our Rule.” In the strict sense, this title applies only to the four ancient Rules of old, which had been approved in a special manner and which served as a basis for the more modern Institutions. These Rules are those of Saint Basil, Saint Augustine, Saint Benedict, and Saint Francis. (Cfr. Bastian: *Canonical Directory*, 3rd edition, number 43, page 28; and Schaefer: *De Religiosis*, 1st edition, number 52, page 51.) For Orders and Congregations of more recent origin one should speak of their book of Constitutions; but in many institutes it is customary to speak of the “Rule.”

It is then in this larger meaning that Article VIII, as well as many of the following articles, speak of the Rule of our Congregation.

Thus, it is that the more recent foundations, even if they are only tertiary foundations, base their constitutions on one of the four ancient Rules and unite themselves, indirectly, to one of the great religious orders. Many have taken the Rule of Saint Augustine, others that of Saint Francis.

For us, our Founders chose the Rule of Saint Benedict; this was decided without the least shadow of doubt from the very beginning. In June 1800, Mother Henriette, tracing the origin of the new Institute, wrote to the Vicars of Poitiers: “*Our practices are drawn from the Rule of Saint Benedict.*” (S.B.M. I, 26.) The Good Father was no less explicit.

In the petition to Mgr. de Mondion in May 1801, he asked for the approbation of a group of several priests and laymen “*forming a society under the name of Zealots of the Love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, practicing a part of the Rule of Saint Benedict, with particular Constitutions.*” (S.B.P. I, p. 28.)

In their common petition to the Pope on October 2, 1801, the Founders repeated the same thing with still more insistence:

“*Humbly prostrate at your feet, we humbly beg Your Holiness to accord your approbation to the establishment of an Order **practicing the Rule of Saint Benedict**, with particular Constitutions which facilitate perpetual adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar...(Our Institute is) grafted on the stem of the glorious Saint Benedict, practices the austerity of his life, and is sweetened by the holy love of the Divine Hearts of Jesus and Mary...*” (S.B.P. I, 77 and S.B.M. I, 104.)

During the negotiations at Rome from 1814 to 1816, for the purpose of obtaining pontifical approbation of the Foundation, this point, from the very outset, held first place in the plan of discussions.

In the petition of October 6, 1814 already cited several times we read: “*It recognizes Saint Joseph as patron and adopts the Rule of Saint Benedict, but with Constitutions proper to the Institute.*”

This point, so clearly formulated by the Founders became for a time, the object of a discussion among the Commission of Cardinals charged with examining the Constitutions. Cardinal Maury thought that it was not fitting that a Congregation originating in France should be founded upon the Rule of an Italian Saint. (Cfr Perron, “Life” p. 323.)

This difficulty, somewhat original, made no impression on the other Cardinals. One of the Cardinals however, found that Saint Benedict was too little spoken of in the Constitutions, moreover, his name was missing on the list of days on which Holy Communion was prescribed. This remark, which was very true, did not however, stop the Cardinals, and without any more difficulties they permitted the Founders to take the Rule of Saint Benedict as the foundation of the Constitutions of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts.

The Good Father considered Saint Benedict as the Father of our Institute and spoke of him as “our Holy and Blessed Father.”

On December 1, 1814, he wrote to Father Hippolyte Launay: *“Our Father, Saint Benedict, does not wish that we undertake new enterprises without being assured of subjects.”* (S.B.P. II, 145.) In his Circular of April 14, 1817 he wrote: *“Neither will you forget to beg the intercession of our Blessed Father, Saint Benedict, patriarch of the Cenobites of the West.”*

In his Circular of February 11, 1826 he insisted still more: *“You know, my well-beloved Brothers and our very dear Sisters, that the Rule of Saint Benedict is the foundation of our Rule. We advise you to read and meditate often before God on the Rule of this great patriarch of the Cenobites of the West. Above all, we recommend you to read chapters 4, 5, 6, 19, 20, 33, 34, 54, 68, 71, 72 of the Rule of Saint Benedict.”* (S.B.P. III, p. 249.)

In 1831 the Good Father had these Chapters printed for the use of his children. *“Extract from the Rule of Saint Benedict, for the use of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.”* (Cahors, from the press of Francis-Maurice Richard, 1831.)

Following the example of the Good Father, our Fathers of olden days loved to call Saint Benedict “our father.” A striking example of this is found in the Commentary on the Rule which Father Ladislaus Radigue composed.

Also, the General Chapter of 1863 decided to add to a new edition of the Rule decreed at the same time the Chapters of the Rule of Saint Benedict which the Founder indicated and had printed in 1831. This decision was put into execution in 1875. But in the new edition of 1909 these chapters were omitted through pure forgetfulness, so it is said.

The General Chapter of 1923 expressed the desire that they should again be added to the Rule, but unfortunately this Rule, approved on February 14, 1928 came off the press without the chapters of the Rule of Saint Benedict. The German translation alone carried out the desire expressed by the Chapter of 1928 and printed in their Constitution the Circular of February 11, 1826, together with the Chapters of the Rule of Saint Benedict which are indicated above.

Even this much is too little. It is very much to be desired that each religious have at his disposal a copy of that Rule, especially since according to the desire of the Holy See, the Rule of Saint Benedict should guide us where our Constitutions are silent. This is what the Holy Congregation of Bishops and Regulars wrote to Very Reverend Father Euthyme Rouchouze in a letter of November 28, 1866: *“...that in those things which are lacking in the Constitutions the members observe the Rule of Saint Benedict which they profess.”* Very Reverend Father Euthyme Rouchouze communicated this letter of the Holy See to the Congregation by a Circular of April 12, 1867.

49. That the Founders desire that the Rule of Saint Benedict be the foundation of the Rule of their Institute is altogether natural; first of all, because of the affinity between the spirit of the Rule of this great Saint and the spirit which they wished to leave as a legacy to their Institute.

It was not their intention to make the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts a Benedictine Congregation as are, for example, the Cistercians and Camaldolites. If such had been the case we should be monastic religious having the obligation of Choir. This would not be in accord with the plans of the Founders.

It is true that in the first rules and regulations fixed by the Good Mother for the Brothers in 1801, canonical office was prescribed as can be verified in numbers 56, 57, and 58 of her writings. (S.B.M. I, p. 90 and 91.) In 1802, she even gave a detailed regulation in which the hours of Divine Office were indicated. We herewith reproduce this regulation in its entirety as a souvenir of the way of living of our first Brothers¹¹

¹¹ S.B.M. I, p. 110

6:00 A.M.	Rising
6:30 A.M.	Prime, followed by Holy Mass
7:00 A.M. to 9:00 A.M.	Work
9:00 A.M.	Terce, Sext, High Mass
11:30 A.M.	Dinner, followed by None
1:00 P.M. to 2:00 P.M.	Recreation
2:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.	Work
4:00 P.M.	Vesper
5:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M.	Work
7:00 P.M.	Salve, followed by Matins and Lauds
8:00 P.M.	Supper - conversation until 9:30
9:30 P.M. to 10:00 P.M.	Chapel
10:00 P.M.	Retire for the Night

The Good Mother does not here speak of other exercises: the half-hour of adoration, the hour of meditation, a half-hour of spiritual reading and examination of conscience, which she had explicitly prescribed in the previous regulations. The reason being that they were considered as personal obligations which one fulfilled during the free time or during the time for “work.” The contemplative character of our Institute here appears very clearly and distinctly.

It is not possible to definitely state how long this regulation was followed. But it is certain that the Founders soon became aware of the impossibility of uniting the obligation of choir with our obligations of preaching, teaching, and especially of perpetual adoration. Regarding adoration, the Good Father, in his letter of December 29, 1814 said to Father Hilarion: “*Adoration during the night and the day should supply for everything.*” (S.B.P. I, p. 147.)

This is why we did not become a Benedictine Congregation in the strict meaning of the term; but the Founders definitely wished that all the essential traits of the Benedictine spirit should become a part of the spiritual physiognomy of the Institute.

Perpetual adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament was to replace the canonical office but it was to be observed with the same delicate care with which the Opus Dei is surrounded in the Benedictine Abbeys. The Superior General was to take the place of the Abbot; he was to that effect to be endowed with a great central power which would make of him, as of the Abbot in the Benedictine families, a veritable “pater familias.”

The Brothers were to lead a common life and were to be animated with a real family spirit towards their Superior and their confreres.

It is for this reason that Article VIII (after) having stated said that the foundation of our Rule is the Rule of Saint Benedict, immediately adds: “*The Brothers live, in common with regular practices, under the obedience of the Superior General of the entire Congregation.*”

Another reason for which the Founders chose the Rule of Saint Benedict is because of its **Christocentric** spirit.

The great Patriarch taught his monks to have a great love for Our Lord Jesus Christ. He said of them: “who regard nothing more precious to them than Christ” (Chap. V, p. 31) and recommended that: “they place nothing before the love of Christ” (Chap. IV, p. 26) and again: “that they place nothing whatsoever before Christ.” (IXX, 160.)

Thus, inasmuch as our Founders also wished that love for Jesus Christ and His Blessed Mother should be the foundation of their Institute, Saint Benedict was also dear to them, and his Rule indicated all that they needed to observe in their Constitutions.

Furthermore, they wished that the counsels given by Saint Benedict to his Religious should serve the same purpose for their children. It is in this sense that the Good Father wrote in his Circular of February 11, 1826:

“It is there that you will learn to esteem and to practice that holy virtue of obedience, which should be such, that the voice of the Superior who commands and the action of the disciple who executes his orders should be instantaneous and unanimous as it were. There you will find that humility which finds its contentment in all that is most vile and most abject, giving us to believe with all our heart that we are the least of all creatures, and inducing us to expose to our Superior our most secret thoughts and failings. From these counsels of Saint Benedict we will derive that fervor in prayer which inspires us with a profound recollection in the presence of God and His holy Angels; that poverty of spirit which permits us to have nothing of our own since we have not even the right to dispose of our own will, and which maintains peace and union because it banishes vain desires and murmuring. There, you will get that submission of mind and heart which rests on confidence in God and makes the Religious depend entirely on the Divine assistance and obey by a sentiment of charity, thus finding nothing impossible in obedience. These counsels teach the Religious that he never examines him who commands, but that God is approached by the path of submission; they teach him that interior silence which as the prophet says ‘place a guard around the lips so as not to sin by one’s tongue’. Finally, there he will learn that ardent zeal which separates us from vice and conducts us to God and to eternal life.”

“It is necessary,” says Saint Benedict whose expressions we are fond of borrowing, *“that the Religious exercise this zeal through the most ardent charity, that is to say, that they show one another marks of honor and respect, patiently bearing the infirmities of their neighbor; that no one seek what he believes to be to his advantage or most useful to him, but rather what is most advantageous for his brother. It is necessary that the Religious render to one another duties of mutual charity through motives of pure love of God; that they fear the Lord; that they love their Superior with an affection that is both humble and sincere, and that they **prefer nothing to Jesus Christ.**”*

Finally, we can add that the origin of the veneration which our Founders had for the Rule of Saint Benedict was derived from the influence of the Trappists on the first attempts at religious life by our Founders. Sister Gabrielle de la Barre mentions these attempts in her “Memoirs” of the Good Mother. She says: *“It was at this epoch (around 1797) that God made known to her that until time and experience had submitted the Congregation to a Rule, it was best to adopt that which was practiced by the Trappists.”* In fact, the Founders borrowed several points of the first regulations from the Rule of the Trappists. Father Hilarion mentions this in his *Life of Very Reverend Father Marie Joseph Coudrin*:

“They took a number of their dispositions from the Rule of the Trappists of Val-Sainte, such as silence, etc.” (C.P. I, p. 326.)

These Trappists followed the Rule of Saint Benedict together with their own Constitutions. It was natural then that our Founders, who guided by a light from on high, had begun on the basis of the Rule of Saint Benedict, should prefer to continue on a foundation so solid.

We may then conclude that the Founders, by choosing the essential traits of the Benedictine life, also wished to give us the admirable spirit of the Rule of Saint Benedict. And if

we desire to grasp the entire meaning of our Rule and the different Articles which compose it, we must contemplate them and explain them in the light of the Rule of the great Patriarch, and to this effect follow the counsel which the Good Father gave us: *“we recommend that you read and meditate often before God on the Rule of this great Patriarch of the Cenobites of the West.”*

50. After having treated the foundation of our Rule, Article VIII adds that we make the three vows of religion: of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, and that the three vows, although simple, are, after a trial of three years of temporary vows, taken perpetually. In Chapter II of the second part of the Rule, the meaning of these words is explained at length. Here we content ourselves with remarking that our vows are perpetual.

Before 1909 the Congregation knew nothing of temporary vows. At the first profession ceremony of the first disciples of the Good Father on February 2, 1801, Brother Hilarion made temporary vows which were soon changed into perpetual vows -during the following month. This is explained in part by the difficulties of the time and in part by the somewhat vacillating character of Brother Hilarion, but the event remains exceptional.

Following that time, the Brothers always made their perpetual profession after eighteen months of novitiate; and here and there some defections were to be deplored.

In the Rule of 1840 this disposition was maintained, and even in 1908 it was not changed. But before giving its approbation to the revised and corrected Rule, the Holy See demanded some modifications of importance. Among them was the introduction of a period of three years of temporary vows.

This is why the words: *“They make perpetual vows, but simple”* were changed into these other words: *“They make simple vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, at first for three years, then forever.”* These temporary vows are a period of trial, but they do not determine or change the spirit of our Profession. The spirit is that of an irrevocable engagement by the profession of perpetual vows. Only these vows correspond fully to the formula of our profession by which we consecrate ourselves to the Sacred Hearts in order to live and die in their service.

ARTICLE IX

Brothers and Sisters - One Single Congregation

“The Sisters also make simple vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, and lead a common life of regular observance under obedience to the Superior General of the entire Congregation, the Superior General of the Sisters and the Superior of each particular house.”

51. In the Rule of 1825, as we have said, Articles VII and IX formed but one Article. The Rule of 1840 made two Articles out of this and also went back to the text of the petition of October 25, 1814, in which the Brothers and Sisters are spoken of separately. (Cfr. number 8.) It was more exact, since in this way there was avoided the formula: *“we live under obedience to the Superior General of the Sisters.”*

As for the Brothers, the Rules likewise established that: *“the Sisters also make perpetual vows, but simple, etc.”* This remained such as it was until 1908; but when in 1909 there was added to Article VIII the mention of temporary vows, in Article IX the word “perpetual” was simply omitted without any further explanation. It was done probably because it was not yet known what would be established for the Sisters.

But in that fashion the Article was incomplete and remained so in 1928. However, in the interval the Rule of the Sisters had been completed and it said: *“The Brothers and Sisters make simple vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience, at first temporary for three years, then perpetual.”* The text of 1928 should then be completed in this sense: *“at first temporary for three years, then perpetual.”* For the Sisters, as for us, the entire and irrevocable consecration by perpetual vows is truly essential.

As has been said in the explanation of Article II, the fact that in the preliminary chapter of the Rule there is question of our Sisters, manifests the very close union which unites the Brothers and the Sisters of the Sacred Hearts. According to the intentions of the Founders this unity of the Congregation is really essential since it is in the union of the two branches only that the end and aim of the Institute will be fully realized. Only the perfect union between the Brothers and the Sisters can symbolize the perfect union of the Sacred Hearts and continue the ideal of the very close union of the two founders.

In the history of the Church it has happened more than once that the foundation of a religious order of men corresponded with the foundation of an order of women, and that often by the collaboration of two Saints.

Saint Scholastic cooperated with her brother, Saint Benedict, in such a way that we have the Benedictine Fathers and the Benedictine Sisters, and the Sisters remained in very close dependence on, and in union with Saint Benedict. We also find Saint Francis of Assisi and Saint Clare working side by side, as well as Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac.

But basically, it was always two orders which they founded, and in spite of a very pronounced resemblance in the end to be attained, it cannot be said that in order to realize the aim of the Benedictines, Franciscans, or Lazarists, the Benedictine Sisters, the Poor Clares, or the Daughters of Charity were indispensable. While with us the two branches form a Congregation which possesses one sole total aim, which neither one nor the other branch could attain alone.

This is why the Good Father and the Good Mother are both Founders of the entire Congregation, of the Brothers as well as of the Sisters. Together they signed the petitions to the Pope in 1801 as well as in 1814 and in the beginning drew up one Rule for the two branches. Both of them effaced themselves and attributed to one another the principal part in the foundation of the Order. Sister Gabrielle de la Barre, in her "Memoirs" of the Good Mother, writes on the origin of the work: *"She had a very clear insight of the fact that it was not Miss Geoffroy but Mr. Coudrin who was to be the Founder of the new Religious Order, and far from believing that she herself was called upon to cooperate therein, she believed herself so unworthy that, when something went wrong, she attributed it to her sin and wished to withdraw."*

On his side the Good Father wrote to Sister Gabrielle on October 20, 1803: *"It is true that P... P... (Petite Paix or "Little Peacemaker") carries the light, and I do naught else but hold the candlestick."*¹² (S.B.P. I, p. 124.)

When towards the end of 1828 there were some difficulties between the Good Mother and Father Raphael Bonamie, the new Prior of the Motherhouse, regarding the custom whereby the correspondence of the Fathers passed through the hands of the Good Mother and was controlled by her, the Good Father wrote to Father Raphael in a very resolute tone, and said on the subject of the Foundress:

"Be assured, my dear Raphael, that she is the soul of the two families... For my part, I know how things have been from the very beginning, and I tell you that, before God, she is the support and the life of the rest of us. She is more Founder than Foundress, and I know that she has never ceased to be a victim for the whole family." (Letter of January 27, 1829, S.B.P. IV, p. 79.)

The same day he wrote to the Good Mother in order to communicate to her the contents of his letter to Father Raphael which he summed up thus:

"Put it in your mind that if God wished the Society, and I do not doubt it any more than I doubt of my existence, the Good Mother is typical of what God wants, and she is not to be regarded as an ordinary superior. She is the root of the tree; if we pull the tree up by the roots, its life is finished." In the same letter he designated the separation of the "two branches" as "a scandalous rupture." (S.B.P. IV, p. 81.)

Several months later, while he was in Rome, on April 8, 1829, he wrote the following to his niece, Sister Eudoxie Coudrin:

"Conserve her days, which are so precious for the family. For it is she who upholds everything and her heart is the bark which carries in the midst of the tempest all which belongs to the Congregation. The longer I live, the more I am convinced of this truth." (S.B.P. IV, p. 88.)

The Good Father forgot the large part which he had in the foundation in order to manifest the part no less great of the Good Mother. This cooperation in the foundation continued without ever experiencing the least shadow. The Good Father, both in the drawing up of the Constitution and in the governing of the Congregation, never did anything without first consulting the Good Mother. More than that, he left to her a good part of the administration. The Good Mother on her part remained always in the most entire dependence on the Good Father and referred to him for all decisions to be made, however little in importance.

This union of hearts between the Founder and Foundress, this unity of aim and of life between the two branches of their Institute should serve to symbolize the union of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary in the Work of the Redemption. As Jesus and Mary cooperated in the Work of Salvation and the Redemption of the human race, thus the Brothers and the Sisters of the large family of the Sacred Hearts should cooperate in the continuation of that work in the most strict and most cordial union. This resemblance with that Ideal should go so far that, according to the prescriptions of the Good Mother, one should never undertake to make a

¹² "Petite Paix" was a nickname for the Good Mother.

foundation for the Brothers without making a foundation for the Sisters, and the latter should even precede that of the Brothers in order to prepare for them a shelter, just as Mary had prepared a terrestrial dwelling for Jesus.

This is what she wrote to the Good Father in an explanation of the picture of the Sacred Hearts. The Good Father asked her in a note of December 28, 1800: “*Why the picture of the Heart of Mary before that of the Heart of Jesus?*” (S.B.P. I, p. 106.) The Good Mother did not reply immediately but later sent a separate note which, in the collection of her writings is found among the correspondence of the end of the year 1801. Speaking of the Blessed Virgin she says:

“At the instant when Our Lord was conceived in her womb, He gave her His Heart, which He placed in the manner illustrated on your medallion. That of the Blessed Virgin is in front because she existed before the Humanity of Our Lord was formed. This is why in our Order, the House of the Sisters should be established before that of the Fathers. This is why also there will never be an establishment of one without the other.” (S.B.M. I, p. 82.)

53. As we have seen, the unity of the aim of the Institute which the Founders loved to model on the union of the Sacred Hearts corresponded, in the original idea of the Founders, to a great unity in the organization and even in the material interests of the Congregation.

According to the prescriptions of the first Rule, not only did the Superior General govern the whole Congregation of Brothers and Sisters, but each house of the Sisters had, side by side with the Mother Superior, a Father Superior, to whom the Mother Superior was strictly dependent.

In the first foundations care was taken that in the same city both branches of the Congregation were represented; and while the Fathers had the spiritual direction and the Lay Brothers helped with the material work, the Sisters had charge of the kitchen, laundry, wardrobe, etc., of the whole family of the Sacred Hearts.

The Good Mother in particular, was the mother of the two groups and fulfilled the function of the Bursar for the whole Institute; she purchased and sent into the different houses all that was necessary: food, clothing, etc.

This state of affairs, truly patriarchal, which corresponded so well to the intentions of the Founders, could not remain such as it was in the beginning. Prudence rendered it necessary that a more strict separation be made in material affairs; the spirit of ecclesiastical legislation desired that the too great dependence of the houses of the Sisters in regard to the authority of a Father Superior should not be maintained. Moreover, experience had shown that too strict a union in the exterior organization and in the interests of the material order could lead to difficulties. That is why the primitive state was changed on these points; but the union of hearts and minds has remained, and should remain, if the Congregation wishes to work with success toward the end which the Founders proposed.

The dependence of the Sisters in regard to the Superior General of the whole Congregation is always sufficient.

The Superior General of the Sisters makes a vow of obedience between the hands of the Superior General eight days after her nomination and she should habitually live in the house of the Sisters of the same city wherein the Superior General resides. (Const. 1924, Chap. Art. 1.) Every year she is obliged to address to the Superior General a written report of her administration, covering both temporal and spiritual matters. (Ibid., Art. 2) She can neither found nor suppress any house of Sisters without the consent of the Superior General of the Congregation. (Ibid. 4.) The latter should, every five years, make either in person or by one of the

Fathers of the Congregation, a visitation¹ of all the houses of the Sisters. (Ibid., Art. 4.) Still more, the regulations of the General Chapter of the Sisters should be submitted for approbation to the Superior General of the entire Congregation and his Council. (Ibid., Art. 2.)

This unity of Superiors in the person of the Superior General remains an exterior sign of the interior union which ever binds us together. This unity had to submit to the trial of serious difficulties. There were storms which darkened for a moment the light on the point of our unity. But the love for the same Ideal, the veneration for the same Founders, who for forty years had maintained such a close union of mind and heart, in efforts and in work, all helped to vanquish these difficulties. And, strange to say, it was at the moment when the division seemed the most accentuated that the proofs on the necessity of an indissoluble union were the most formal.

Yes! We will always form a single family of Brothers and Sisters and if we wish to preserve the essential traits of the work of the Founders, we should watch with jealous care that this unity never disappears.

We should remain as the Good Father contemplated us in his retreat in the Motte d'Usseau: a group of evangelical workers and virgins vowed to prayer, who do not only bear the same name and wear the same habit, but who form one heart and one soul in the realization to the same Ideal: "SACRIS CORDIBUS JESU ET MARIAE HONOR ET GLORIA."

APPENDIX NUMBER I

Reparation to the Sacred Heart

Article III of the preliminary chapter of the Rule says that all the members of the Congregation will retrace the hidden life of Jesus Christ by making-reparation, through perpetual adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, for the injuries inflicted on the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary by the enormous crimes of sinners.

In presenting that Article, we said that the formula: “perpetrated against the Sacred Hearts” replaced that other formula: “perpetrated against the Divine Majesty,” which is found in the Rule of 1817 and in some other documents.

But one may ask if the words “*repair, by adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, the injuries perpetrated against the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary*” should be taken in this sense that the exercise which we call adoration should be addressed explicitly to the Sacred Hearts. Or can we say that we repair the injuries done to the Sacred Hearts by the very fact of adoration itself of the Most Blessed Sacrament, even if the exercise and the explicit attention of the adoration is addressed only to the Heart of Jesus, who alone is really present in the Most Blessed Sacrament?

May it be well noted that we speak of the exercise of adoration. It is evident that adoration, in the strict sense of the word, cannot be addressed except to the Heart of Jesus. But the other parts of the exercise: praise, thanksgiving, reparation, and petition, can be addressed to the Heart of Mary.

1. I believe that the study of the documents shows us that the Founders never supposed, not even for an instant, that the exercise of adoration should be explicitly addressed to the two Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

Speaking, for example, of the consecration which is the foundation of the whole Institute, and of the different homages which one should render to Jesus and Mary, they use distinct formulas when referring to the Heart of Jesus and to the Heart of Mary. This distinction is seen in the petition of October 20, 1824 cited in number II, and in the ceremonial of the taking of the habit and the profession.

But when they speak to us of the exercise of adoration it is always the Heart of Jesus alone which is named. This becomes evident by consulting the petition of May 1801, the note of February 3, 1802, the note of January 1803, and the note of the Good Father on the aim of the Congregation in 1804-1805. (All these documents are cited in number 7.)

It becomes clear that they suppose that the exercise of adoration is not addressed except to the Person of Jesus. The reason for this is very simple:

First- Because He alone is really present in the Holy Eucharist, and the homage which the loving soul renders Him in the Blessed Sacrament is unique and exclusive because it is adoration in the strict sense of the word.

If the direct and immediate end of loving contemplation is the “Heart of Jesus,” that is to say, a part of His Holy Humanity, the intention of the adorer addresses itself above all to the Person of the Word in all the splendor of His divinity and His uncreated love, in such a way that all the homage which is rendered Him will always be and should always be that of latria.

Our consecration and our love, our thanksgiving and our compassion, our reparation and our petitions to the Heart of Jesus should be characterized by faith in His Divinity, and should always be addressed, exclusively to Him. The fact that Jesus is God, and as true God has the right to a cult which is reserved for Him alone, is the first reason for which our Founders, in speaking of adoration, never named any other object but the Heart of Jesus. They manifestly supposed that we would address ourselves to Him alone; that He alone is the immediate object and direct end of that exercise.

But there is still another reason: The souls who come to Jesus in the Holy Eucharist, in order to enter, as the Founders say, into the interior sorrow of His Heart, have need of this exclusivism.

The soul comes to Him like a spouse going to her Spouse, with all the ardor of a burning love and the desire to respond perfectly to His rights and His desires. He is the Spouse of souls who are consecrated to Him; and more than that, His is a Divine Spouse whose claim to love is other than that which a mother, a brother, or a friend may have. He wishes the closest union of heart that anyone can demand or expect and which no other person has obtained. He desires the center of the whole life of the soul, the most animating strength of all that is alive in us, and the tender imperious exigencies of His Divine rights.

When the soul fully realizes the truth -- and who more than we, destined to penetrate the inmost center of the Heart of Jesus, should have the duty to realize it -- when the soul, touched by the desire of the Celestial Spouse, unites herself to Him in His Eucharistic Presence, she spontaneously feels within herself the desire of forgetting all and of addressing herself to Him alone in this solitude of love of which Saint John of the Cross speaks, in order to contemplate His love, the created love of His human nature, but still more, the uncreated love of His divine nature. The soul likewise wishes to speak of Jesus alone in order to adore Him in the excellence of His love and to give herself to Him, to render Him the homage of her gratitude, of her tears and her ardent supplications in an infinite measure which alone corresponds to the rights of a Spouse Who is God. The exercise of adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament, or as our Founders said, of the Heart of Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar, is necessarily an exercise reserved in all its details for Him alone. If it were to address itself to the Sacred Hearts, united "*in ratione objecti*," it would lose both its profundity and its charm.

The motive which animates this whole exercise is the spirit of reparation. We praise, we glorify, and we thank the Heart of Jesus in order to supply for that which is missing in so many rebellious and ungrateful souls; we weep before Him in order to repair the offenses and the injuries which He receives from others; we ask pardon of Him and ask for His grace and His mercy: All that with the definite intention of offering Him an honorable amend. The Divine Heart of Jesus is the immediate end of our reparative adoration.

2. But in addition to the formula which is the most natural and which at the same time is the oldest: "*repair the outrages which the Heart of Jesus has received, does receive and will still receive*," we find two others: "*repair the outrages against the Divine Majesty*," and "*repair the injuries inflicted upon the Sacred Hearts*." The last form, "injuries inflicted upon the Sacred Hearts" might, at first sight, seem strange; but it is exact and contains a profound truth.

The Founders presupposed the objective union which exists between the Heart of Jesus and the Heart of His Holy Mother. This is so inasmuch as God inseparably united them in the

great work of the restoration which was at the same time reparation to the Divine Majesty and Redemption of the human race. Jesus and Mary are very intimately united, first of all in the mystery of the Incarnation, then in that of the Redemption.

That does not mean that Mary is equal to Jesus, that she is on the same level and is united to Him as a coordinate cause. No Mary is but a creature; all that she had she received from the absolute plenitude of her Son and she is essentially subordinate to Him. But in that subordination she is intrinsically united to Him in such a way that His glory is reflected on her and in her. Besides, all the outrages which are done to Him, the Word Incarnate, also touch her in her dignity as the Mother of God, Their work is common to them both, and every injury done to the Redeemer has its repercussion in the Heart of the co-Redemptrix.

This union is so real and so close that it is not even necessary to think explicitly of Mary in order to give consolation and reparation to her maternal heart. When we think of Jesus, when we love Him, when, in our adorations, in our whole life, we give Him the place to which He has a right as Son of God and Redeemer of the human race, we then console, "*ipso facto*," the heart of Mary, and we repair the injuries which have been done to her. Because of this real and objective union our Founders could speak of reparation to the Sacred Hearts by adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at the same time supposing that the adoration should be addressed directly to Jesus alone.

However, it is to be desired, inasmuch as it was certainly the intention of our Founders, that the intention of reparation to the heart of Mary should be explicitly manifested, and that, for example, at the beginning of the exercise of adoration, we address ourselves to her in order to express our desire of giving satisfaction to her heart as well as to that of her Son.

From all that has been said it is evident that, contrary to Saint John Eudes who honored the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the admirable heart of Mary, we honor the heart of Mary in that of Jesus.

This does not mean to say that we give Him a lesser place than that given Him by the great Apostle of the liturgical cult of the Sacred Hearts; but we believe that we unite ourselves more intimately to the sentiments of her maternal heart and imitate her more perfectly by placing the Heart of Jesus on the higher plane. Jesus was all to her; His honor is what she desires; the outrages which were inflicted upon Him are real injuries done to her maternal heart. It is true then that we unite ourselves to her and enter into the most intimate sentiments of her heart when we give all to the Divine Heart of Jesus.

3. There is then, no essential difference between the first formula: "*repair the outrages against the Heart of Jesus*" and that other more recent one: "*repair the injuries inflicted upon the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.*" The second says explicitly what was implicitly contained in the first.

Still less is there a difference between the first formula and that which one often encounters: "*repair the outrages against the **Divine Majesty.***" We find that formula for example in the memoranda which Father Hilarion presented on December 7, 1814 to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars; in the first Constitutions of 1816-1817; in his Petition of September 29, 1824, in that of October 20, 1824, and that of July 15, 1825 (see numbers 9 and 11.) We see that the Good Father still made use of that formula after the revision of the new edition of the Rule in 1824 which adopted the definite formula: "*to repair the injuries done to the Sacred Hearts.*"

This formula: "*reparation to the Divine Majesty,*" was in perfect accord with the primitive formula: "*reparation to the Heart of Jesus.*" First of all because Jesus is God, and His Heart, due to

the hypostatic union, is “of infinite majesty.” To repair the outrages which are done to Him is then, by that very fact, to repair the injuries done to the Divine Majesty.

Furthermore, the reparation which we give Him is after all no more than a participation in the Reparation which He Himself has given to the unrecognized Majesty of God, His Father, in the name of all humanity and for all the injuries of the ages. The encyclical *Miserentissimus Redemptor* insists upon this meaning and our Founders understood it in this fashion inasmuch as they wished that we enter into the interior sorrow of the Heart of Jesus.

What is it then, that we find in the innermost center of the Heart of Jesus, and we can say as much for the Immaculate Heart of Mary, if not the sorrow caused by the outrages done to the Divine Majesty? To enter into the interior of the Heart of Jesus is to be borne at the same time toward the Infinite Majesty of the Adorable Trinity.

Let us never forget that in honoring Jesus in His holy humanity, God in the mystery of His Divinity, should remain the final end of the interior life. Sin is before all else an injury against the Divine Majesty, and the Sacred Hearts, with all that They have, have oriented Themselves towards God in such a way that the injuries done to Them finally attain even the Divine Majesty. Then we will be convinced that the primordial aim of our reparation is no other than the aim of the Great Reparation of the Sacred Hearts, of which the final end has always been and will always be the adorable Majesty of God.

It has sometimes been thought that the intention of the Founders should be considered in this way: that the Congregation should be for the Sacred Hearts what they Themselves were for the Divine Majesty. Nothing is less true and the fact that the Good Father makes much use of the formula: “reparation for the injuries against the Divine Majesty” more than he uses the other: “reparation for the injuries done to the Sacred Hearts,” clearly shows that he had a much more exact and more profound idea of reparation. For him reparation is nothing else than another aspect of the great end of all Redemption; Reparation to the Divine Majesty.

We reach the same conclusion in considering that the reparation which we should give by adoration of the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar is called by our Founders; “*to retrace the hidden life of Jesus Christ.*” The life of adoration with the specific aim of reparation is, in their eyes, an exact reproduction of the hidden life of Jesus.

The hidden life of Jesus was a life of adoration of the Divine Majesty and the reparation of that period, as of His whole life, was addressed to God. To retrace His hidden life by a life of adoration which is reparative, is then, ultimately a participation in His reparation of the injuries done to God.

We find in the revelations of the Heart of Jesus to Saint Margaret Mary another indication in the same sense. It is perhaps not possible to indicate exactly what influence the revelations of Paray-le-Monial exercised on the spirit of our Founders. But it is certain that the Good Mother speaks of them more than once and that she even conceived of the foundation of our Institute as a second stage in a divine plan of which Paray-le-Monial was the first.

In her note of February 3, 1802 she presented the matter thus: “*the revelations of Paray serve to make known the devotion to the Sacred Heart, and the Order of the Visitation had received the grace to spread this devotion and make it loved.*” Then she adds: “*now that it is adopted, He wishes an order which should be*

destined to adore His Heart, repair the outrages which it receives, which will enter into the interior sorrows of that Heart, and which will retrace the four ages of His life."

In the letter of January 7, 1803 she speaks of the revelations at Paray and of the work of the Visitandines as a first effort of the Sacred Heart to save the world. Since men have not corresponded to that first favor the foundation of the Congregation was a new effort. *"It is the last grace which He offers men before the end of the world."* (See number 7.)

There is then in the fundamental idea of the Founders a continuity between Paray and Picpus, and the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament instituted by them in the Congregation has no other aim than that demanded by Jesus Himself for the Holy Hour. The intention indicated by Jesus to His confidante can be summed up in these words: to console His Heart, and to prostrate oneself with Him, the face against the ground in order to appease the Divine Wrath.

Have we not in the two formulas: reparation to the Sacred Heart, and reparation to the Divine Majesty, two aspects which respond to the double end which Jesus Himself gave to adoration? And thus, we reach the same conclusion, that is, that the reparation specified by our adoration has for its end, according to the intentions of our Founders, the ineffable Majesty of God, the First Principle and Last End of all.

As a resume of all the preceding, we could say that in the different formulas which the Founders made use of in order to indicate the spirit which should animate adoration, the most ancient, *"to repair the outrages done to the Sacred Heart of Jesus,"* renders more perfectly the direct and immediate object of their intention: to address oneself to the Heart of Jesus really present in the Blessed Sacrament, and to repair by adoration the injuries which are done to Him. The second: *"to repair the injuries done to the Sacred Hearts"* completes the first by the opportune reference to the close union which exists between Jesus, our Savior, and Mary, our co-Redemptrix." The third: *"to repair the injuries against the Divine Majesty"* gives the final end of the entire devotion to the Sacred Hearts; the end towards which adoration should always be most conscientiously directed.

APPENDIX NUMBER II

Advice of the Good Father on Adoration

Among the documents deposited in the informative process of the cause of the Good Father, there is found some advice or counsels which he gave on adoration.

“The Religious of the Sacred Hearts” alludes to them in Chapter 38 of the Second Part, and continually makes use of them without giving the text. It is not without utility however, to have the literal text of these counsels which, without pretending to be a complete treatise on adoration, nevertheless contains some very useful observations on the spirit and the method of that important exercise. The text is preceded by these words: a person asked the Good Father for advice on adoration; in a few words he gave the following:

“The Religious of the Sacred Hearts” informs us that this person was “one of the first religious of the Institute.” (Third Edition, page 343.) It is said that it was Sister Justine Charret¹³ who for many years was Superior of several convents of our Sisters.

“The adorer is deputed, delegated by the Church to adore, thank, repair. Putting on the mantle is a symbol of the ardor with which you should present yourself before God. You should be like Jesus Christ before His Father, covered with a mantle of derision and all the crimes of the world with which He charged Himself.

The adorer should adore with Jesus Christ and by Jesus Christ. She should repair first of all for herself and for all the sins which are committed in the whole world. She should ask for the conversion of sinners, the propagation of the faith, pray for the Church Suffering. But above all, there should be the entire donation of herself to the Heart of Jesus.

This donation, born of Calvary, has come forth from the very Heart of Jesus pierced on the Cross after His death. It forever remained open in order to beat every instant of our life a place of refuge and of pardon for our faults, of consolation in our pains, of encouragement in our weakness, an asylum of peace in our troubles and fears, and our hope at the hour of death.

The Heart of Mary was pierced, and it is through it that we go to the Heart of Jesus which was not pierced but opened because there is the place of repose, the source of living waters where the soul takes its delight, quenches its thirst, fortifies itself, and is inundated with graces. Mary¹⁴ offers to God the sentiments of adoration of the Heart of Jesus in order to supply for our own insufficiency, for it is His Heart which, in the August Sacrament, renders to His Father by His state of Victim, the honors worthy of Him. Let us be, in His presence, penetrated with a respect like unto that of the Angels who surround Him. He is the most tender of friends with souls who seek to please Him. His goodness knows how to proportion Itself to the least of His creatures as well as to the greatest. Fear not then, in these solitary conversations, to tell Him of your miseries, of your fears, of your annoyances, of all those who are dear to you, of your projects and your hopes; tell Him all with confidence and with an open heart. See, my child, how the holy man Job poured out his heart in his great trials; he cried out: Alas! What joy and celestial consolation when God was in secret in my house; when the All-Powerful One was with me.

¹³ The spelling of her family name is not always the same. In many of the letters which she addressed to the Holy See and which are conserved in the Sacred Archives of the Vatican, she sometimes signed herself: "Sr. Justine Charray." Generally it is "Charret" but at least one should not read "Charres."

¹⁴ Note of this Edition: The English version has “Mary”; however the French original only says “she”, most probably in reference to the sister who does the adoration. Cfr. the study done by Fr. Jean Kerrien (1976, notes at General House) retaken by Fr. Juan Vicente González in his work “Fr. Coudrin, Mother Henriette and the primitive community”, Rome, 1978.

The remote preparation for making adoration well consists of speaking little to men and much to God, withdrawing one's spirit from all creatures whose presence deprives us of that of the Creator. Remove from one's heart all the affections which take the place of God and attach us to sensible objects which prevent us from raising our minds to invisible things and keep our souls from taking flight towards God. In order to obtain these graces it is necessary to have recourse to Mary, our Good Mother, and to our Guardian Angel.

When one has once found Mary, and through Mary, Jesus, and through Jesus, God the Father, one has found all: which means all without exception! This does not mean that he who has found Mary through true devotion will be exempt from the cross and from sufferings. He will be more assailed by them than another because Mary, being the Mother of Sorrows, gives to her children a part of her good cross and obtains for them the grace to carry it patiently. She makes them understand that in order to be a friend of God one must, after the example of His Son, drink of the bitter chalice,

Moreover, my child, it is God who teaches us to pray. It would be useless for you to say a poor beggar: 'When you ask for an alms, make use of such and such an expression.' The poor beggar presents himself at the door of the rich man, knocks, and says only: 'I am naked,... I am hungry,... I am thirsty!' He forgets your lesson, yet he gets what he asked for. In withdrawing, he blesses God and promises to love Him because He fed him and satisfied his thirst. In the same way should we pray."

It is to be remarked that the words: "When one has once found Mary, etc.," as far as "...drink of the bitter chalice," have been borrowed almost literally from Saint Grignon de Monfort.¹⁵ One will also notice the very evident orientation of this advice towards God the Father, which is a confirmation of what we said in the preceding appendix.

¹⁵ "The Secret of Mary," see Edition Type 1926, Saint- Dinrentsur-Sevre, p. 15.

APPENDIX NUMBER III

Prayer to the Sacred Heart of Mary

In several of his writings Father Hilarion has conserved for us a prayer to the Sacred Heart of Mary composed by the Good Father. Father Stanislaus Perron gave an extract from it in his "Life of Very Reverend Father Marie Joseph Coudrin." (Second Edition, p. 165166.) But the complete text can have a certain documentary interest concerning the spirit of our origin. In fact, the spirit which dominates in this prayer is the spirit of reparation. And as that prayer was composed towards the end of 1800, it shows that the spirit of reparation was fundamental ever since the beginning of the Institute. It is then a confirmation of what we said in the explanation of Article V, numbers 29 and 30.

Father Hilarion writes:

"A few days before his vows, towards the end of 1800, he composed a prayer in honor of the Queen of Saints and of her Sacred Heart. This prayer he was in the habit of reciting, ever since, at the foot of the altar before beginning the Holy Sacrifice. I believe I should insert it here:

"O Mary, O Sacred Heart of Mary, the most generous, the most compassionate of all hearts after that of Jesus, behold us here at your feet, humiliated after the example of one of your most dear and tender children (Saint Bernard) in order to make you an honorable amend. Pardon, O Mary, a thousand times pardon for the excess of fury and rages committed by France during these recent times. Pardon for all the horrors committed against you in all places for so many centuries. O Mary, so many altars and temples dedicated in your honor have been destroyed and wrecked, your pictures and images, even the most miraculous, torn, mutilated, desecrated, in hatred of your virginal maternity! Innumerable virgins, in the secret of the cloisters and of solitude, of whom you were the Queen, have been pursued and thrown out. These same virgins, sacrificed, form your terrestrial court. Like you, O Mary, have they not also been the reproach and the opprobrium of your most execrable enemies? So many holy associations in your honor have been crushed and ruined by the impure and burning breath of the instruments of Satan.

O Mary, O afflicted heart of Mary, after so many crimes committed against you, after so many abominations, after the almost entire desertion of so many Catholics, a very small number of souls have remained faithful to you. Are there many, O Mary, Mother of Sorrows, who, their heart pierced with the same sword that pierced your Heart on Calvary, feel themselves suffering as you have suffered during these past ten years? Are there any who, close to you, forget their own interests, feel only your outraged glory?

We come to you today then, humiliated, in order to make an honorable amend for this ingratitude on our part, and for that of the whole universe. No more particular views, no more personal needs. Your glory has been oppressed; we wish to repair it. We conjure the Angels and the Saints to unite themselves to us. We will, by the desires of our hearts, do violence to the just so as to form but one desire; that of being consecrated to you. Annihilated before you, we consecrate to you those who, in spite of themselves, your children, are your cruelest enemies.

Revenge yourself, O Mary, revenge yourself in a manner worthy of your grandeur by showing us the wound of your bleeding heart, by receiving us all with the sword in your hand in order to immolate us with you to the glory of your Divine Son. It is through you, Good and Tender Mary, it is by your Sacred Heart that we will surely arrive at the Adorable Heart of your Divine Son, Jesus. Place us in His Heart, so that we may there find a refuge and a shelter during life and repose during eternity. Amen."