

**“Études Picpuciennes” n° 2**

**OUR VOCATION AS ADORERS**

**HISTORICAL AND DOCTRINAL EXPOSITION**

**By**

**Reverend Father Gerald de Becker, SS.CC.**

**1950**

**Maison-Mère de la Congrégation des Sacrés Cœurs  
16, rue du P. Damien, Braine-le-Comte. Belgique.**



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**Translated by**  
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## Introduction

Perpetual adoration has profoundly influenced our origin and orientated the existence of our Institute. This study is aimed at showing the conception and growth of such an influence.

The subject is divided into two parts. In the first section understanding the thought of the Founders is the essential note. The method to be followed is one of consulting their writings and personal letters, also those of their collaborators.

Our Founders did not approach adoration with technical precision; they did not investigate and solve the relation and the dependence of the adoration of Jesus and the adoration of the Blessed Trinity: for all this they had neither the time nor the taste. They let themselves be guided in all things by the Spirit of God. They looked to adoration as a solid basis for their new Institute, to sanctify the souls who would enter and become its members.

The second part treats of the nature of our adoration and determines its value. It is necessarily theological. Adoration, as the external act of religion by which we testify to the supreme excellence and dominion of God and our perfect dependence and submission to Him, is basically outlined. To this basic pattern is then applied the dynamic light of our Christian, religious, and especially Picpucian vocation.

Our greatest motive has been to demonstrate the essence and the beauty of our vocation as adorers, to penetrate beyond mere appearances, to show, with the help of the Gospel and theology, that this vocation fully deserves to be known, loved, and lived. Once our vocation is illuminated and vivified by the substantial truths of our religion, it will enlighten our whole life.



**PART I**

**HISTORICAL EXPOSITION**



## CHAPTER I

### *The Early Life of the Good Father*

To arrive at a proper understanding of the work of the Good Father, it seems in order to touch briefly on his formation and on the earlier days of his apostolate.

HOME LIFE. Young Peter Coudrin was one of a large family and in this family he found many examples of Christian fervor. His father possessed a solid faith, and an active charity. Mr. Coudrin was a farmer and as such had to spend much time sowing and harvesting his crops. Yet he passed several hours before the Blessed Sacrament to make reparation for the irreverences committed in many churches. Each day he recited the Seven Penitential Psalms to obtain the grace of preserving his children from mortal sin. The day's work being done, he often devoted time to further prayer and spiritual reading. The poor in need of bread and firewood were regular callers at the Coudrin home - they knew their requests would be granted and the alms given would remain unknown to others.

Marie Rion equalled her husband in love and devotion. To her, the Founder attributed his devotion to the Blessed Virgin. He spoke of her in one of his sermons: "The examples of piety by my mother touched me more profoundly than those I saw or heard in the places where Divine Providence has since placed me." She had her brother, Father Francis, who prepared Peter, Andrew and the other children for First Holy Communion. He also gave them Latin lessons.

The children were sometimes allowed to help their relatives. Father Coudrin proudly recalled one such occasion with his uncle, Francis Massoneau. As they were working in a field near the church, they heard the bell announcing the consecration of the Mass. Immediately his uncle stopped his plow, knelt and bowed his head in adoration of the Sacred Victim. The Good Father added, "This incident made an indelible impression on my young mind. I have never forgotten it."

It was easy for a priestly vocation to develop in the midst of such a family, a family that trusted in God and directed all its love towards the altar.

IN THE SEMINARY. At the University of Poitiers, and at the seminary, the virtue and piety of the Coudrin boy were admired by all, teachers and students. As a young scholastic, he joined a voluntary group known as the "*Cor Unum*." The members of this organization were devoted to the Sacred Hearts and practiced adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. His letters of this time are simple, showing love, confidence and abandonment: "What a beautiful virtue is confidence in Jesus! God never abandons us. I can't refrain from speaking of the happiness which comes from the love of God."

As a seminarian he saw devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary gain impetus. The works of Saint John Eudes were just published; the revelations of Paray-le-Monial known; and violent attacks against the new cult of love shouted by the enemies of love - all these stirred the soul of Peter Coudrin and fired him with increasing fervor. The priests at the Irish college in Paris edified him by their ardent devotion to the sufferings of Jesus and their spirit of reparation. Their attachment to the Chair of Rome and their love of the Sacred Heart gave him joy.

Once ordained, Father Coudrin gave himself without reserve to the service of souls. He instructed the faithful as do other priests, yet gave them more: he preached to them love for the Holy Eucharist. He often carried the Blessed Sacrament to the sick and while so doing made adoration. The Eucharist inspired the first idea of his future work.

The zeal of the young priest was inexhaustible. Time after time he narrowly escaped the guillotine, but God watched over His apostle. He was destined to found a Congregation consecrated to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and vowed to make reparation for the offenses against Their love. His first work was Eucharistic. He was chaplain to an association of women who were under the protection of the Sacred Heart. There he met a certain Madame Henriette Aymer de la Chevalerie. The soul of this woman thirsted for the Eucharist. He saw her inclination and thirst and he developed it. The tabernacle drew them together and united them for life. Thus the Eucharist led Father Coudrin and his associates to the Heart of Jesus, to that loving Heart which awaits our reparation.

## CHAPTER II

### *Origin and Foundation*

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SOCIETY OF THE SACRED HEART. The Reign of Terror was in progress and Father Coudrin knew it was impossible to remain out in the country. He made his headquarters in the city of Poitiers.

The three sisters of the Garelie family went about their daily chores. Lussas, the youngest of the three used to frequent Mass and the Sacraments. She consulted Father Coudrin as to the best manner of leading a good Christian life. A plan was unfolded whereby she and her friends would devote themselves to the Sacred Heart. She told how her friend Miss Geoffroy consented to shelter a chaplain, if a chaplain could be found.

The plan worked. Father Coudrin recited an act of consecration to the Sacred Heart. The Society was established. The year was 1794, the day June 27, feast of the Sacred Heart. Father Coudrin knew the needs of the faithful and he sent many penitents to the Society on Oleron Street. As confessor and director he exercised much influence. Other priests too, counseled the associates whom he governed with authority. Two principal works were assigned: works of mercy - especially material aid for priests, and reparative adoration.

Miss Geoffroy later took credit for originating the idea of reparative adoration. Father Coudrin welcomed the idea, for it corresponded to his wishes. His contemporaries and biographers wrote much on this. "Have you forgotten," wrote Father **Tauvel,??** that Father Coudrin spent many hours of the night at the foot of the tabernacle on Oleron Street? Do you know that he carried the Sacred Host on his person, for eighteen months, to administer the Sacrament to the dying? God rewards his servants. Do you not feel that the establishing of Father Coudrin and his spiritual family as guardians of the tabernacle is such a reward?"

Sister Gabrielle de la Barre, a member of the Society and close collaborator, said: "Perpetual adoration, in reparation for the crimes of Revolution, was the principal aim Father Coudrin proposed to the Society."

ADORATION IN THE SOCIETY. Father Coudrin preached and practiced adoration. Certain documents show the members of the Society did likewise. "Letters and Memoirs of Sister Gabrielle" give the aim and spirit of the Society: "Its motive is charity, its basis, perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in reparation for the outrages Jesus Christ has received and will receive." The bylaw for the priests reads: "The end and object is to direct an association of pious persons who will make perpetual adoration; educate young boys and girls, visit the sick, and support secular and religious priests in their needs." The "Statutes and Regulations" propose: "to appease the justice of the Lord by offering His adorable Heart a perpetual act of reparation for the perpetual insults He receives. The Society has been principally established to render Jesus the adoration due Him in the Sacrament of the altar."

Other notes and directives have the same theme: "The confraternity has been instituted to adore. The Sisters, each day, must recite the office of the Sacred Heart, say a rosary, and make a half hour of adoration." One of a sheaf of papers, exhumed at the opening of the process for beatification of our Founders, appraises adoration: "In these houses alone (in which adoration is made) penitential expiation will be accomplished, causing God to forget the excesses of the World."

These papers indicate the importance of adoration in the life of the associates. They point to Father Coudrin as the force animating the members in what concerned adoration. Equally noticeable, the Society is shown to have associated the idea of adoration with that of reparation.

THE FIRST STEPS TOWARD A NEW INSTITUTE. The government in the Society was changeable, adapting itself to the opinions of different priests and the circumstances of the moment. The resulting instability gave rise to misunderstandings and difficulties. The united action of Father Coudrin and Mother Henriette pointed towards separation from the Society towards a central unity of strict religious life.

The break finally came in 1797. Mother Henriette, with a few chosen souls, set out to establish a new Institute and God blessed her enterprise. Approval by the Vicar General of Poitiers followed quickly, June 17, 1800. Meanwhile, Father Coudrin sought apt subjects for his new Foundation of priests and brothers. Steps were immediately initiated to obtain approbation of the Sovereign Pontiff. The petition of October 2, 1801 and addressed to the Holy Father described the new Institute: "An order practicing the rule of Saint Benedict with constitutions facilitating perpetual adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament... perpetual reparation of the injuries which have so bitterly wronged and wounded the most Holy and Immaculate Hearts of Jesus and Mary... the members being perpetual adorers who go to the Heart of Jesus by the Heart of Mary." The Founders were happy. The petition was drafted, their life embodied in its ideas. Here they linked inseparably adoration and reparation, and associated the Heart of Mary in the practice of reparative adoration.

The Founder loved the Blessed Mother. He prayed: "Through you, good and tender mother, and by your Sacred Heart we reach the adorable Heart of your dear and Divine Son." He desired to solemnize the Feast of the Immaculate Heart on the first Saturday of the year because: "by her Sacred Heart we adore the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament." Father Coudrin considered the two Hearts of Jesus and Mary as one and the same Heart united in closest charity." He could not conceive of a devotion and adoration of Jesus without Mary. These prayers and expressions demonstrate an idea fundamentally dear to our Founder. The part given to the Blessed Virgin in adoration is great. The nature and extent shall be determined in the second part of this study.

The texts quoted are as a handbook of our vocation. Consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, perpetual adoration of the Heart of Jesus through Mary, duties of love, reparation and sacrifice - these constitute the life, the center, the motive. Just as love explains everything in God and is the key to the entire economy of salvation, so love draws us towards God and towards Jesus. We should consecrate our lives to love, to love nourished by adoration. Everything is unified in this plan. It grasps the central note of Redemption: the love of our Lord. Love caused Him to be born among us. Love desires and seeks our souls. Love should be the be-all and end-all of our lives.

Well aware that men, then as now, followed but little in the way of love, our Founders desired to place at the disposal of Holy Mother the Church an Order in which love is at once the center and the instrument of sanctification and apostolate. They wrote, in the petition for approbation, that the members were: "to inflame the whole world, if it is possible, with Holy Love, in spreading devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary." The hand of Providence guided them. They were inspired with a religious life which would explain and re-live the doctrine and the life of Christ. They were reparative souls with a reparative mission.

## CHAPTER III

### *Adoration among our Sisters*

MOTHER HENRIETTE AND PERPETUAL ADORATION. The Good Mother entered the Society of the Sacred Heart at Poitiers at the age of twenty-seven in the year 1794. She chose the Good Father as the director of her soul. The same charity, the same ideal of perfection and the same apostolic desire burned within them. In March 1795, these two privileged souls joined together to found a Congregation with perpetual adoration as the key pillar to maintain and support the entire edifice.

Perpetual adoration was the spark which inflamed Mother Henriette's soul and determined her vocation. From the time of her entry into the Society of the Sacred Heart, the practice of perpetual adoration attracted her in a special manner. She was often alone in the chapel for several hours; everyone knew she never found the time too long. The oratory of the association became her home. After remaining the whole morning in prayer, she withdrew to a stable to eat a piece of bread which she brought with her, then she returned before the Blessed Sacrament to continue her conversations with God.

HER LOVE FOR PERPETUAL ADORATION. She (the Good Mother) directed a community; she prepared the foundation of a new Congregation; she served at the domestic work of the house; yet, her fervor for adoration never slackened. "When you established adoration in the street of Moulin-a-vent and you gave me an hour," she said to Father Coudrin, "without realizing it you determined my life." She also told him, "I experience an inexpressible desire to be before the Blessed Sacrament, but I do not dare give myself up to it entirely nor remain too long. It seems that it shortens my days."

It was there at the foot of the altar that the Divine Master lit in her soul the devouring fire of love and zeal for the Sacred Hearts; it was there that Jesus forged her soul in that heroic mold and gave her that strength to conquer and to accept the greatest trials with a smile on her lips. It was during these tender colloquies, in these heart-to-heart conversations that she drew the strength to take upon her shoulders each day the relentless burdens of her office and to bring to a good end the task which Divine Providence had confided to her.

Finally, it was before the tabernacle that she was molded to that exceptional sanctity which was the admiration of all those who knew her. She was a "woman unique in her century," were the words of Fr. Antoine Astier, one of the first disciples of the Good Father; it was because her exterior life was no more than the prolongation of her interior life and that everything in her exhaled the love, devotion, goodness, and kindness which she sought before the tabernacle. It is not astonishing then that she knew how to inspire all her daughters with an admirable love for adoration.

OUR SISTERS' LOVE FOR ADORATION. One could write at length on the history of adoration among our sisters. The following are a few examples of their unique devotion.

**Sister Lacroix died at Sées, December 22, 1829**<sup>1</sup>. A few days before her death, the Superior, noticing her weakness, wished to prevent her from making her weekly hour of night adoration. This being a practice to which the good Sister had remained faithful for many years, she

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<sup>1</sup> Note of the transcription: The date of the death of that sister with the surname Lacroix (the name is unknown), according to the SS.CC. Necrology, should be December 22, 1818.

begged not to be deprived of this satisfaction. She said, "I wish to die with my weapons in hand and thus make reparation for the outrages which the Heart of Jesus received." Her Superior gave in to her desire.

"During the Commune of Paris, in 1871, the Sisters imprisoned at St. Lazare turned in the direction of the church, and with the greatest recollection made their adoration in spirit at the foot of the altar. What a scene and how the Good Mother must have smiled at their ingenuous ardor which corresponded perfectly with her own radiant example."

Toward the end of 1808, the bishop withdrew from our Sisters the permission to have the Blessed Sacrament in their oratories. "There were cries of anguish and endless sighing. Nevertheless we rose at night just as we had heretofore done," wrote one of the Sisters, "and turning toward the cathedral, adored the Blessed Sacrament. Our hearts sought Him there in the tabernacle... With what ardor we made supplication to Our Lord, beseeching Him to return and take up His place in our little sanctuary, for without Him we could not live." At the end of ten days, the bishop withdrew the order previously given. This account can be compared to the old legends, so full of beauty and simplicity.

Father Hilarion understood that in the life of our Sisters, adoration had a unique place. Each time that he reports the foundation of a new house of our Sisters, he adds: "and thus adoration began," as if establishing a new house and establishing adoration were identical. The houses of our Sisters are called convents of adoration; to enter our Sisterhood is to enter into adoration.

The love of our Sisters for adoration was great and it reflected the attitude of Mother Henriette and Father Coudrin. The views of the Good Mother on the subject of adoration coincided with those of the Good Father. To the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar, she consecrated herself by the most fervent devotion. "We must," she wrote, "take refuge in the Sacred Heart of Jesus; we must cling to His Divine Heart and fasten ourselves to It in such a manner as to never allow ourselves to be separated from It. May His Heart be our support and our model. Plunge yourself forever into the sorrowful and loving wound of the Divine Heart of Jesus. There you will be sheltered from every storm." Reparation is the distinctive characteristic of adoration: "to immolate ourselves to the Sacred Heart of Jesus to satisfy the Divine justice for the excesses committed during these times..." Her evaluation of adoration was such that "she warned one of the Sisters that the novices must refrain from any work that might weaken or impair their health, for her great desire, first and foremost, was that of making adoration." She was convinced of her great vocation.

In one of her notes written during the year 1800, she says: "Just now... God wants an Order which should be destined to adore His Heart, and repair the outrages which He receives, an Order which will enter into the interior crucifixion of His Heart."

THE SACRIFICIAL SPIRIT OF THE GOOD MOTHER. The notes of the Good Mother give us keen insight into the depths of her soul. Father Coudrin ordered her to put down in writing all she experienced and saw, especially before the Blessed Sacrament. The Good Father made use of these notes; one finds in his letters and circulars, expressions, even entire phrases, quoted directly from them.

She advised her subjects to enter into the interior crucifixion of the Heart of Jesus. This is a strong expression which was dear to the founder and which he used repeatedly in one of his circulars. It is a formula which expresses perfectly what one could call the spirituality of the Good Mother. In the very depths of her soul, there was always the immense desire of giving herself without reserve, to immolate herself. This echoes through all her writings. She said, "It is the interior suffering of Jesus Christ which forms the spirit of the new Institute."

She made a vow to be crucified in everything and wrote, "I have asked Him to send me all the pains and sufferings of certain persons; I have asked to expiate in this world or in the next all that they might have to suffer in purgatory; I have offered my life, my martyrdom even, for their particular salvation and for the salvation of all; I have dared in spite of my unworthiness, to offer myself as a victim for all."

"Her life was nothing but one prolonged sorrow... .. she tried many times by the fervor of her prayers to draw down upon her the justice of God angered by the crimes of men."

She knew that suffering is the great educator which forms profound souls that have real depth, because suffering has been transfigured by Christ's love and because suffering detaches us from the earth. Without suffering we would lose ourselves in earthly food, and we would no longer be able to taste and enjoy the delights of the heavenly food which leaves no bitterness in the soul.

On July 15, 1803, she wrote to Sister Gabrielle de la Barre, "Real happiness lies in suffering accepted with resignation." To Sister Ludovine de la Marsonnere, "Ah! more than ever, let us enter into the painful martyrdom which is the consolation of souls which follow their Spouse... Take courage, be always in that state of immolation since it is God Who wishes you there."

As with Christ, it is necessary that we suffer that we might enter into glory. We will never be glorified with Christ if we do not suffer with Him. "Do all things in the spirit of death to self; it is the means of having real life... may the love of suffering accompany you. Let us all rally around the cross; there nothing can disturb or trouble us."

The cross should weigh down heavily on our life, because our sins erected the cross. We should make reparation and do penance. We should accept our sufferings: the physical suffering of sickness, the moral suffering of our losses, failures, grieves; suffering of abandonment, betrayal, deception the whole litany of sufferings which are like the landmarks of our lives.

The Good Mother had a taste for penance and a thirst for suffering. She realized that "crosses rained down upon her;" she submitted her body which she called "my frail machine" to the greatest penitential acts, so that the Good Father could say at her death that her austerities equaled, if not surpassed, those of the Solitaries of old.

She knew that the cross was her way to heaven: "to go to heaven it is necessary to suffer much; this life is a long agony, but happiness is assured to those who live well under the cross. Never must we give in to sensuality, softness or cowardice." At the same time there was nothing morbid or unhealthy about her love of suffering and penance. We are told "her character by nature was very gay." It was the spirit of reparation and her will to imitate the crucified life of Jesus that drove her toward the cross and suffering. "The dominant attraction of the Good Mother was ..... to imitate as much as possible the crucified life of Jesus Christ; she was avid for suffering, without it everything was wanting to her."

She was strict and severe in self-denial but she never pushed her daughters to imitate her austerities. She said to one of the Superiors, "Don't try to gain heaven by famine, take care of yourself and of the others." She recommended to the local superiors "kindness without weakness." She sent the Sisters who were tired to bed and made several hours of adoration during the night for them. Kindness was also the outstanding characteristic of Father Coudrin. He insisted much on the spirit of mortification and immolation; he equally wished that material things should not be neglected. He said to a superior, "Give your professors wine and feed them well." And during the last night of his life, he thought of his missionary sons, "My poor children in the islands, perhaps they haven't even enough bread." These little incidents show true love, love of self-discipline coupled with an understanding for others.

THE CATHOLICITY OF THE GOOD MOTHER. On learning of her sacrifices one understands why Mother Henriette always desired to link adoration with reparation and expiation. During the captivity of the Sovereign Pontiff, Pope Pius VIII, she ordered that in all the houses of the Sisters the seven Penitential Psalms should be recited at every hour of the day and night to

obtain the cessation of the afflictions of the Church and the deliverance of its Supreme Head. Each sister began her hour of adoration by reciting the penitential Psalms. This pious practice was continued until the month of April 1814.

The Good Father wished that we adore as delegates of the Church; the Good Mother desired that we pray for the Church, for if Christ no longer suffers in His own flesh and in His own Heart, He still suffers in His Mystical Body. The Sacred Scriptures, the Fathers, the doctors of the Church, the mystics, private revelation, and the ordinary teaching of the Church speak to us of this mysterious identification of Christ with the members of His mystical body. If the temporal phase of the Incarnation has been accomplished, if the time of vicissitudes which the infinite love of the Heart of Jesus wished to undergo and experience is past, if the love which compelled Him to become incarnate and which led Him on to death did not permit Him to rest from His fatigues and labors, it is no less true that love is still just as fervent as before; that it has not diminished and that we live on the death of Jesus, inspired by love; that we benefit by His Blood, His tears, His thirst, His sufferings, and pains. In spite of the impassible exaltation of Christ's human nature in the glory of heaven, His redemptive suffering in the midst of His mystical body is not interrupted.

This explains why Jesus in His revelations to the saints still expresses sentiments of sadness, sorrow, and anguish. It is because all the sufferings which one submits to in the name of Christ or that one accepts in union with Him are really His; all the enterprises of prayers, penances, apostolate, all the tears and the blood one sheds for the cause of the Redemption, all the efforts which proclaim the Incarnation and the infinite love to the members of Christ, all these belong to Christ.

The Church continues and prolongs the work of Christ. The great heart of the Church continues from generation to generation the redemptive life of the Sacred Heart of Jesus; the Church burns with the immense movement of love, tormented and sorrowful, and does so in order to win souls to Christ and to His Redemption. Christ no longer suffers in His own person, but He suffers in His Church where He continues to carry His cross and to be crucified, for the Church is according to the expression of Bossuet, "Jesus Christ, diffused and communicated."

Like the Good Father, the Good Mother was profoundly penetrated with this truth; more than anyone else she had the "*sentire cum Ecclesia*," the "*sensus, catholicus*." It was not a mere empty phrase that she made use of when she wrote: "Let us pray for the Church, for the Pope, for France, for Spain." Her interests extended to every place where the forces of the Church were in battle with the forces of evil; she rejoiced in the good that our missionaries were doing and asked only that she might always remember them and pray for them while on adoration.

It follows that in our adoration the great cause of the Church should come before our personal intentions and interests.

## CHAPTER IV

### *Approbation and Development*

In 1814 our Founders began negotiations which finally resulted in the approbation of our Congregation. Nothing was neglected by our Founder to obtain the much-desired pontifical approbation. Father Coudrin constantly reminded Father Hilarion, chaplain to the French Ambassador at the Holy See, to keep the matter in mind. "Make an attempt," he wrote, "to get an approbation for us under the title of Adorers ... the four ages ... the rule of St. Benedict with the Constitutions adapted to our particular function of teaching and missionary work." In October of 1814, he and Mother Henriette addressed to the Holy Father a petition which clearly manifests that the aim of the Congregation is to retrace the four ages of Our Lord's life. Pontifical approbation was given in 1817. Father Coudrin recalled to his children on this occasion that they were destined to adore the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Sweet Heart of Mary.

In his memorandum (December 27, 1816) the Good Founder writes that the designation of adorers explains in a special manner both our consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the love which is rendered Him day and night in the Holy Eucharist to expiate the ingratitude and malice of men.

MARY'S PART. We are destined also to venerate in our adoration the Sweet Heart of Mary. This seems disconcerting and somewhat strange but it is both exact and true. It is rightfully that our Founders insist upon the objective union between the Heart of Jesus and the Heart of His Holy Mother, a union willed by God Himself. The two Hearts in the mysteries of the Incarnation and the Redemption are united in the most intimate and striking manner. The Sacred Heart of Jesus renders Divine Love tangible and visible to us. There is also in the Heart of God something inexpressibly maternal which we cannot comprehend due to the perfect virility of Jesus; that this aspect of such great beauty might be made known to us, the infinite love of God has deigned to associate the Heart of Mary with His work.

God has put something of Himself, something of His divine fecundity and His infinite love, in this most holy creature who desired nothing else but to surrender herself completely into the hands of the Divine Artist. God wished that Mary be associated with His paternity in order that she might give her maternal cooperation to that mysterious regeneration which makes us the adopted children of God. This disposition in no way lessens or detracts from the perfection of Jesus, for it is from Him that Mary has received everything.

By the tender and maternal love of Mary the strength, power, sweetness, and tenderness of God's love is made manifest to use. Her love also reveals to us the secrets of the Heart of Jesus. She has access to the Heart of her Son so that she may at every moment transmit His ardor to apostles, His courage to missionaries, His fortitude to martyrs. Wherever, people are laboring and suffering, Mary is present to console and strengthen.

ADORATION AND THE CRUCIFIED LIFE. If we are to become adorers of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, we must lead a life of immolation otherwise our vocation would be inconceivable. The Good Father never ceased to urge upon his children the necessity of a life of immolation; he says that we, as adorers, are always the victims with the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We should like Magdalene remain at His feet and like John accompany Him to the Cross.

Father Hilarion tells us that the Good Father always regarded himself as a victim, and that he felt within himself the very need of immolation. Before going up to the altar, as well as in the chapter of faults, he often recited a prayer to the Heart of Jesus, convinced that one could not find

happiness elsewhere than in the cross. He passed all his life through the crucible of suffering and tribulation; they were his joy. "Whether it be that we are persecuted or whether we are left in peace, let us be children of the Cross."

Our Venerable Founder recognized the Divine solution to the problem of suffering. Suffering is not a sterile punishment of sin, but a compensation for sin. Jesus overcame sin by His suffering which He accepted out of pure Love; God gives Himself to all those who suffer in like manner, because they imitate and complete the suffering of Jesus. Today, many people unable to solve the problem of suffering remain frustrated; they consequently miss the happiness and joy which suffering should bring, because they have not understood that suffering is unanimous with love and reparation, and that it has a saving sense for all humanity.

Father Coudrin fully understood that our personal suffering, once it is united to the suffering of Jesus, constitutes for us a powerful means of sanctification, the instrument of our purification, the basis of our apostolate. He was not one to refuse the invitation of love-suffering. He appreciated all its value and he knew that by it, divine love gave, if one may so speak; it's all in full measure.

PLACE OF ADORATION. The Good Father considered the practice of adoration a sacred and rigorous duty, for he was deeply penetrated with the value of that vocation. He united himself unceasingly to all those zealous souls who were absorbed in their office of adoration. "My heart is always with the perfect adorer who never loses sight of his obligations of meekness, humility, wisdom, obedience, and poverty." He wishes his children "as much peace of heart as they need to be good adorers." It can be seen from these texts that the Good Father considered adoration not only as an essential duty, but also as a source of sanctity, an instrument of sanctification. It is true that sanctity does not consist in the extravagant, the extraordinary, the baroque, or in fascinating prodigies nor is it necessary that we change our station in life. It is a matter of duty for us to concentrate all our attention and zeal on our adoration, to consider, as a personal responsibility, the expression of our reparation and love. In this way, we will avoid the danger of seeing adoration become something rigid and mechanical or to look upon it as a routine task. Through the acceptance and execution of this duty we will attain true and solid sanctity.

SANCTITY, FRATERNAL CHARITY AND ADORATION. Sanctity does not consist in exaggeration, but only in the willing adaptation of ourselves to all duties and demands made upon us. According to the intention of our Venerable Founder, adoration figures among our essential duties; our life should be impregnated with a special love for adoration, a love not only affective and verbal but also effective and productive of good actions. We must show effective love for our neighbor, for we cannot love God without likewise loving those whom God calls to be His children.

Sincere charity means that we love, not in word, but indeed and in truth. It is an inclination of the heart, the gift of self; it has a special warmth for the weak, the poor, the lowly, the abandoned. It is devoted and considerate; for charity sees nothing as worthless or contemptible, because in all she sees the image of Christ.

Thus, Father Coudrin and the Good Mother united fraternal charity with the practice of adoration. It is because they both understood perfectly that adoration should be a source of effective sanctity. "Not the life that is spent in gestures and which exalts itself in marvelous ideas, but that life which diffuses itself in love is the one that counts for eternity."

ADVICE AND COUNSELS. Our venerable Founder often gave instructions on adoration and the zeal with which it should be accomplished. In Father Coudrin's notes entitled "Advice and Counsels concerning Adoration" the remote dispositions for adoration are set down. First we will transcribe them and then we will comment on them.

"The adorer is delegated by the Church to adore, praise, thank, make reparation. In vesting yourself with the red mantle, bear in mind that it symbolizes the ardor with which you should present yourself before God as Jesus Christ appeared before His Father, covered with a mantle of derision and all the crimes of the world with which He was laden.

"The adorer should Adore, with Jesus Christ. He should first of all make reparation for himself and for the sins which are committed in the entire universe. He should ask for the conversion of sinners, the propagation of the faith, pray for the militant Church and for the Church suffering, but above all make an entire donation of oneself to the Heart of Jesus. This devotion, which had its birth on Calvary, has issued from the very Heart of Jesus which, after His death on the cross, was pierced with a lance. This loving Heart remains ever open so that it may be at every instant of our life a place of refuge and of pardon for our faults, of consolation in our pains, of encouragement in our weaknesses, an asylum of peace in our troubles and fears, and, finally, our hope at the hour of death.

"Do not fear, then, in these solitary conversations to discuss with Him your miseries, your fears, your annoyances, those who are dear to you, your projects and your hopes, even as holy Job poured forth his heart: "Alas! What joy and heavenly consolation when God was in secret in my house, when the All-Powerful One was with me."

"The remote dispositions for making adoration well are:

- (1) Speak little to men and much to God. Withdraw one's spirit from all created things, too much of which deprive it's of the presence of the Creator.
- (2) Remove from one's heart all affections which take the place of God in our heart and which hold and bind us to sensible objects and prevent us from raising our spirit to invisible things and allowing our soul to take its flight towards God.

"In order to obtain these graces one must have recourse to Mary, our good Mother, and to our Guardian Angel. Once one has found Mary, and through Mary, Jesus, and through Jesus, God the Father, one has found all, that is to say ALL WITHOUT EXCEPTION. This does not mean that he, who through true devotion has found Mary, should be exempt from crosses and suffering. It may be that he is assailed by them more than others, because Mary being the Mother of Sorrows gives to her children a portion of her good Cross and obtains for them the grace to patiently carry it after the example of her Son."

When preparing ourselves for adoration, we must observe vocal or material silence; we must also possess a spirit of recollection which consists in continual contact with God. The soul is recollected when it enters into itself to find God there. It is an illusion to think that one can lead both the spiritual life and a worldly life at one and the same time; we should choose either God or the world. The Good Father extolled the practice of recollection: "May the presence of God be in us the food and nourishment of our daily life."

Another disposition which the Good Father indicates as preparation for adoration is the spirit of interior detachment. To detach oneself from all created things; to renounce all that is not God, is to increase in us the capacity for the divine, is to depend wholly and solely upon God Who will not delay in heaping His blessings and His goods upon us. God is so magnificent in His consideration for us that in return for all that we renounce and leave for His sake He gives us Himself with an ineffable liberality and bounty. To reach the point where we find God perfectly, to seek in God only the direction of our actions, to will what He wills even unto the most difficult and severe demands of His love, it is necessary that we be possessed of great self-discipline, for we must offer all and give all. The more we are faithful in delivering ourselves to God without any preoccupation whatsoever with temporal things and human affections, the more we will find all in Him.

The Good Father understood all that perfectly when he said: "God is the Master of all and everything; to Him I abandon myself and all my interests." And the Good Mother said that "the

most absolute abandonment was the shortest way to reach perfection." Her prayer of predilection was: "My God, here I am!" She also said, "Abandon yourself entirely to Him, for in Him only you will find the peace and strength to suffer. Abandon yourself to God Who will never abandon you."

The red mantle of adoration aptly unifies all these sentiments and symbolizes the fervor with which we should present ourselves at the foot of the altar; it symbolizes the ardent love and the spirit of immolation which should animate us; it symbolizes the sins of all humanity which Jesus wished to expiate; it symbolizes the scarlet mantle which the executioners thrust upon Jesus as a sign of derision.

Finally, our venerable Founder speaks to us of what we may call the general orientation of our adoration. The Heart of Mary is the way which leads to the Heart of Jesus - *ad Jesum per Mariam*. We should adore with Jesus and, united to Him in the most intimate union, render to God the Father the homage of adoration and reparation worthy of Him.

The preparation for adoration which the Good Father demanded from his children may have seemed exacting, but as adoration is the culminating point of our intimate union with Jesus, he could do no less.

## CONCLUSION to PART I

To get a clear and concise historical prospectus of adoration as carried on in the Congregation from the beginning, it is well to make a brief summary of our findings.

Our Founders, it must be admitted, left us few documents on Adoration. This is true when we merely consider these documents from the numerical viewpoint. However, there is along with these texts a body of doctrine and practice which is bequeathed by the Founders to our Institute. There is also the spirit, the inspiration and example of their lives, the concrete expression of which is found in their work and in the testimony of their first disciples and collaborators. History demonstrates that no matter how great one is, no one ever fully completes an undertaking; one makes the first draft or outline and it is for those who follow to continue and carry on the work to completion. Great undertakings are made of material that is objective and fundamental. Our venerable Founders could do no more than indicate the chapter headings, the main themes. It is for us to multiply these themes and build upon them.

The reading of texts consulted herein should convince us of the primordial place which belongs to adoration. It is a central point in our Congregation, which had its origin in the lives of our Founders. It is the first of our duties, the principal of all the charges confided to us; it is somewhat of an identification card, the first expression of reparative love. It is the first and foremost of our works as well as the most beautiful. Our most ancient documents treat of adoration as the end and aim of our Congregation. Perhaps no one has better underlined the meaning of adoration than Father Mateo, SS. CC. who refers to it as the "capital exercise which best reflects the dominant idea of our founders and which was the spark which brought our Institute into being. "

Adoration is the manifestation for excellence of our reparative love. It demands that we penetrate the intimate sentiments of the heart of Jesus. It is the reproduction of the hidden life of Jesus, in that the Congregation lives hidden close to Jesus really present in the mystery of the Holy Eucharist as Jesus during His hidden life lived close to His Father. We should adore with Mary who leads us to the end of adoration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and the Heavenly Father.

It would be a fatal error to consider adoration as a pure ritual, almost magic. It does not suffice to present oneself at the foot of the altar, to put on the red mantle and there consecrate a certain time to prayer. Such a mentality destroys the very meaning of our adoration which should reflect itself in our moral life. Adoration is not something which one places at the side of one's life. Instead, it should impregnate each of our acts. Placing it outside our daily moral life would be like putting the yeast next to the dough instead of mixing it in the dough. Ritual practices have an undeniable importance, but they do not suffice to even make a Christian and much less a religious.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus before all else constitutes the object and the center of our adoration. There is no amazement, then, when one knows that the spirituality of our Founders had as its base the Sacred Heart of Jesus. "The Heart of Jesus," Father Coudrin wrote, "loves and pardons all. You will never know too much of Him. Once you possess this Divine Heart and hold fast to it, your imperfections will disappear." We need a guide, a model, a protector. In Jesus alone these are to be found.

The same sentiments were expressed by Mother Henriette. She said, "May the Divine Heart be our support and our model... make an effort to calm your weariness and attach yourself still more strongly to this Divine Heart of Jesus which is and which will be our strength and our support... always be a good child of the Sacred Heart, and all the rest will be added to you."

Adoration is pre-eminently the exercise and the manifestation of our devotion to the Sacred Heart. But this adoration is intimately united with the devotion to the Blessed Sacrament which it necessarily presupposes. It is in the Holy Eucharist that we find re-united the object, the motive, and the end of our devotion to the Sacred Heart; it is in the Eucharist that our Lord shows us and gives

us His Living Heart; it is in the Eucharist that He has suffered the most from our coldness and our crimes; it is in the Eucharist that He makes heard His most plaintive accents and His most pressing appeals; it is in the Eucharist that He wishes to receive the reparative homage of our adoration, our praise, and our love.

Since perpetual adoration is one of our principal duties and one of the principal exercises of our Congregation, it is clear that our Superiors have the right and also the duty to see that all the religious, without exception, should be rigorously faithful to that holy practice and that it should be seldom interrupted. The interruption of adoration, even when due to the most perfect motive, profoundly grieved the Good Father and he asked pardon of God, in the name of the Congregation, as if a great infidelity had been committed.

Our Congregation has for its general end to glorify God and to sanctify its religious by the observation of the vows and the Rule; it has for its special end the propagation of the cult or devotion to the Sacred Hearts. These two ends or aims meet and are united in the same ultimate end, charity. It is charity because the formal glory of God (the general aim) consists in that God should be known and loved by all mankind. Moreover, the theological virtue of charity, which we desire should reign by the cult of the Sacred Hearts, coincides with perfection. The degree of sanctity which one attains is constituted by the degree of divine love which accompanies it. Perpetual adoration, like the accomplishment of all our duties, should be understood as a function or duty of the virtue of charity.

It is charity, then, that should be the soul of the life of a religious of the Sacred Hearts. Also it is charity which should guide us in our adoration, as our love should be by essence, reparative, and our adoration also be essentially reparative. The general intention, our charity, suffices; the Holy Spirit breathes how and where He wills, and each one has his own temperament, his own inclinations. What is of importance here, as everywhere, is to respect the hierarchy of values, to exaggerate nothing, not to make an absolute end of what is no more than the means, no matter how excellent and efficacious it may be.

## **PART II**

### **DOCTRINAL EXPOSITION**



# CHAPTER I

## *Adoration*

THE MEANING OF ADORATION. Adoration is a manifestation of the cult which man owes to God. Cult is a mark of submission based on acknowledgement and recognition of the superiority of someone. It has a twofold element: an objective element of the superiority which is honored; a subjective element which is the recognition of that superiority. Strictly speaking, the cult of adoration is due to no one but God; it is manifested by an act showing that the one being honored is recognized as the Supreme Being.

The Bible often mentions adoration. The Hebrews, just as the other peoples of the Orient, recognized the supremacy of God by acts of cult. Their act of adoration was often expressed by sacrificial oblations which signified man's total dependence on God. For the Jews, the bloody sacrifices signified in the most striking manner the entire dependence of man on God. To them, blood signified the principle of life (Deuteronomy, XII, 23) and expiation (Leviticus, XVII, 11). Thus special sanctity was attached to sacrificial blood by the Israelites, and its effusion on the altar became the principal act of the Mosaic priesthood. The blood identified with the life of the victim typified their principle of life and their total dependence on God.

The symbolism of blood does not reside alone in the desire of union and family kinship contracted with God, but also, and above all, in the manifestation of the divine superiority. This spirit is uniquely interpreted in the Book of Psalms.

Man's first duty is to recognize and acknowledge that he has received all from God. God has given man his choicest gifts; man in return should make the gift of himself. Adoration, impetration, expiation and thanksgiving are the acts (or means) whereby man pays his debt of homage to God. Each particular person must unite and offer himself to God by these acts. Herein one finds the fulfillment of his being.

Were we in the state of pure nature; our union with God even in its consummation after this life would remain veiled and imperfect. We would not see God face to face. He would be known only through His creatures. There is no common denominator between God and us. We are on far different planes. God must come to man's aid and help him cross the abyss from finite to Infinite. God must lift man up to His level. For this end, He communicates to man something of His own nature and life, so that man can know God as God knows Himself and love God as God loves Himself. Man thus participates intimately in the divine life. The Christian religion is not only the tendency of man towards God, but also above all the descendance of God towards man.

By grace our union with God is so personal, so permanent, and so certain that our soul becomes a heavenly dwelling and our life as the beginning of eternal beatitude. If we should glorify Him for the numberless natural goods which we have received from Him, we should glorify Him still more for the supernatural gifts which surpass all the needs of our nature and belong to the Divine plan of salvation.

It is true that for our happiness God has heaped His gifts upon us; it is also true that the happiness of creatures cannot be the final cause or last end of the divine plan. God wills to glorify Himself in our happiness - our happiness is included in the glory of God. God created us and made us his adopted children for Himself and for His glory. Because God's creative action is infinite, He cannot limit or render finite His actions, consequently God can will nothing less than His own good. It is the law of order, for only this object is truly worthy of Him. He allows other beings to serve His glory, and these beings reflect, dimly and only in part, His eternal love for Himself.

To recapitulate God, because He is God, must work all things for His own end and His own glory. Yet, He is no egoist, for He has a most strict and inalterable right to our adoration and our

love. The love with which God loves Himself, pours out on His creatures with the utmost liberality and bounty. He has no need of our adoration which neither augments His interior glory nor His own intimate happiness. God's glory resides in Him and depends on nothing except Himself. Regardless of what we do, no matter what wrong we do, or evil we commit by our free will, God's interior glory remains untouched. He seeks in us only a part of His external glory and this because He willed it. From the moment His Omnipotence, moved by love, produced outside Himself contingent beings, a bond was formed between the Creator and the creature, a bond of sovereignty on the part of the Creator, a bond of dependence on the part of the creature.

**OUR DUTY TO ADORE AND RETURN GOD'S LOVE.** Throughout his works, St. Thomas treats of the duty of adoration. We will briefly recall some of his ideas. The brief formulas of the Angelic Doctor do not at once yield all their richness; really to grasp this richness one must have frequent recourse to his doctrine.

Adoration just like religion, according to the Angelic Doctor, takes on the general aspect of justice, a justice which is deficient, but deficient only because we are incapable of paying all our debt. It is a duty of justice which is based on the rights of God, rights which He imposes absolutely. It is more a matter of us adjusting ourselves. This, however, does not prevent the duty of justice from going hand in hand with love, for God is Creator precisely because He is God, because He is a Father.

The analysis of the idea of "creation" adds precision to the exigency of entire and total dependence. Creation is here understood in its metaphysical meaning. We are creatures not only because the world of which we are a part had a beginning in time, but also because continually and at every moment we are creatures. Our whole being has come from God, all that we are and all that we have; our very structure makes inevitable a dependence upon God; our souls, our bodies, and our actions require the divine assistance.

The act of submission of an intelligent being should be a free act which adds to the obligation of dependence, the merit of a spontaneous gift. Conscious of what he is in the sight of God, a free being's reaction should be that of the total gift of self to God, thus acknowledging the necessary relation between the cause and its effect', between the workman and his work. When man refuses adoration and the total gift of himself, he no longer lives up to his first reason for existence nor to the final end of his existence which is to adore and to render glory to God. In that case, the harp, the strings of which should sing the glory of God, is broken.

When man refuses to give adoration, he fails to recognize that which explains God's interest in miserable creatures; love alone explains His role of Creator and Sanctifier. God needs nothing to add to His infinite perfections, but He wants the prayers of His creatures to join with the splendid voice of the Word, which, in the bosom of the Trinity, sings His glory. He conceived the plan to let others benefit from His life and His riches.

To adore and to love, these are the essence of the Christian religion. Adoration is our fundamental duty and the most profound reason for our existence. Adoration is the foundation of all our relations towards God.

To sum up, we are creatures and we are in His power. Because our debt towards God is an infinite one, we can only acquit ourselves of that debt by the sovereign homage of adoration. As we are perpetually conserved by Him and are depended upon Him, we should continually elevate our minds and adore Him.

Theoretical knowledge alone is not enough that would be reducing adoration to a mere Platonic attitude or a sort of diletantism. Adoration must have a vital inner core. It must be one with the substance of religious duty.

**JESUS, THE PERFECT ADORER.** The history of religions clearly proves that the duty of adoration is implanted in the nature of man. From the beginning of time, man has addressed himself to Divinity, acknowledged the sovereignty and the power of a Superior Being and implored Its aid. And Jesus came and gave us the perfect example of our duty of adoration.

It is the first work He came to accomplish on earth, the principal occupation of His human nature during His human existence and in the Eucharist. Jesus came upon earth to save us, but above all to glorify His Father. He constantly adored with His sacred Humanity. He desired to be baptized with a baptism of blood in order to return to God the glory which guilty humanity refused to render Him. An interior fire filled His soul, a thirst for love and justice, an interior fire which even the sacrifice of the Cross could not appease; thus, He instituted the Eucharist to renew this sacrifice and prolong it in space and time. The activity of His public life was dominated by this great aim: to give to God the most perfect homage He could receive; to inflame souls who would unite themselves to Him, and who would be adorers in spirit and in truth. His mission was to adore and to form adorers.

The Word Incarnate was on earth the perfect adorer of God the Father. He penetrated and rested in the vision of the Holy Trinity. Night and day an incessant adoration ascended from His soul to God. He continues His life of adoration in the Eucharist. The Church continues His praise to the Almighty God: "We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we adore Thee." Knowing that she is incapable of praising as is becoming to the infinite grandeur of God, from the moment of the Consecration the Church offers Christ Himself to the Holy Trinity. Under the signs of the immolation of Calvary, she offers Jesus to God the Father: it is Jesus Who adores in His Name. Uniting Himself with His Church, Jesus continued here on earth His life of adorer. In heaven, also, Jesus is the perfect adorer of His Father. There He is before His Father, no longer in the humble manner of His mortal life, but in the triumph of His redemption. He is the eternal adorer of His Father; He is the Mediator Whose prayer obtains the application of His acquired merits; He is the supplicant Who praises and renders thanks in the name of all the elect.

**INFLUENCE ON OUR ADORATION.** Our adoration should imitate the adoration of Jesus. His holy humanity was so intimately, so closely incorporated with the Word that it no longer possessed any personality of its own. With due proportion, the same should apply to us: since there is nothing in us which does not come from God, there should not be anything in us which does not tend to God's glory. The external glory of God consists precisely in that reasonable creatures know, recognize and love the divine perfections. To adore is not simply a gesture but a disposition of the soul by which one delivers oneself entirely and completely to God. Since Jesus has come to give us a unique example of the life of adoration, to adore is to adore with Jesus, partake of His sentiments ("*hoc enim sentite in vobis, quod et in Christo Iesu.*" Philip II, 5), espouse His interests, and with Him glorify the Father.

To adore with Jesus is to love. "Adoration has been defined as the ecstasy of love. It is love overwhelmed by the beauty, the power, the immense grandeur of the object which is loved; it is silence which is both profound and full, the silence of which David spoke when he cried out: "Silence is Thy praise."

Whenever we renounce our duty of adoration, we renounce that which for us is the truth and the way, we transgress the first rule and the real reason for our existence, we no longer imitate Jesus.

**THE ELEMENTS OF ADORATION.** The elements of adoration are in accord with the four immediate ends of sacrifice. We will study these elements in union with Jesus.

a) Adoration as an act specifically reserved for God needs no explanation. Let us unite our adoration to the adoration of Jesus, Whose sole desire and motive revolved about the glory of

Let us unite our adoration to that of Jesus. David said: "I have found a heart with which to pray to my God" and I have found the Heart of my King, my Brother, and my loving friend, Jesus.

b) The love of the Sacred Heart leads to acts of gratitude and thanksgiving. We must penetrate into the soul of Jesus in order to appreciate all the gifts of God, in order to realize and appreciate all the riches which come to us from the treasures of grace bestowed on us by the Incarnate word.

Let us thank God for all the privileges which He has wished to accord to His most holy Mother. Let us unite our praises to those of the most pure Virgin, the unique, the Well-Beloved who did not cease to rejoice in God in her canticle of joy: "*Magnificat anima mea Dominum.*"

Let us develop in us the spirit and cult of gratitude towards our superiors and our teachers, but above all toward God, toward Jesus Who is the manifestation of Divine Bounty of which His Heart is the ardent furnace. Let us draw near Jesus, thank Him for all His benefits, all the marvels and splendors of the material and spiritual world.

c) Our adoration should be reparative, it should expiate sin. Sin is the refusal of submission to order; it is a proclamation of independence; it is the seeking of one's own personal glory; it is the refusal to glorify God. Sin has ruined the work of love; sin has thwarted and has opposed the plans of God, if one may speak according to our human viewpoint. "But where the offense has abounded, grace has abounded yet more." (Rom. V, 20) God puts into operation a new plan which is no other than the plan of the Incarnation and the Redemption: Jesus, the second Person of the Trinity, becomes man and gives His life - sin is expiated; an infinite glory is rendered to God.

The expiation of sin occupied a place of first importance in the soul of Jesus. The Scriptures give witness to this: "He will save His people from their sins," (Luke I, 77). God sent His son "in expiation of our sins" (I John II, 2)." Christ, the Son of God, came from the destruction of sin in the world." (Hebrews IX, 26)

When Saint Thomas plainly shows the importance of expiation in the soul of Jesus, he insists on the doctrine of the Scriptures and of Tradition. This importance given to reparation explains itself by the historic reality of sinful humanity. Jesus regarded sin from the viewpoint of man's revolt against God, and in order to repair that offense He offered God His own life of infinite value.

It is true that the expiatory redemption of Jesus is terminated since it is outside of the field of merit and is in the termination of glory. However, Jesus preserves in His soul the sentiments of expiation for which He labored, suffered, shed tears, offered His life. The effects of this merit remain to be applied to mankind, but they will not be applied without our own cooperation.

We all have the duty to repair the order destroyed by sin, to immolate in us that which is opposed to the triumph of divine love. Reparation is expected of us because of our baptism. In baptism we die to sin in order to be able to live for God and to reproduce in us the death of Jesus.

Our reparation finds its value in our union with the reparation of Jesus, in our participation in His Passion which should be completed and fulfilled in us.

Because the modern world has lost the sense of sin and of reparation, we should cling to and relish our vocation of reparation. There is a burning need for it. It seems that at no other moment in the history of humanity has sin, in its virulency, run riot as at the present time. There are the sins of humanity, pride, luxury, violence; there are personal sins and actual sins; sins of materialism, paganism, frivolity. Even in our Christian countries, how many are there who remain really faithful to Jesus, who do not tarnish the purity of their baptism? And if we have not enough courage to really be sincere, of what worth are we ourselves before God? Alas, how well we now understand the complaints made by the Sacred Heart of Jesus to Saint Margaret Mary.

Thus, it is vital that we possess the reparative spirit, and make reparation for all those who disown or ignore His love. But if the work of Jesus is complete and perfect, of what use is our cooperation? Everything is perfect and complete, but God willed that each one of us cooperate in the concrete realization of the Redemption. Man's will is free. Though of itself it is sterile as regards supernatural acts, it is most efficacious in union with Jesus.

Some do not know the meaning of reparation; they are slaves of sin and do nothing to free themselves from this slavery. How will the Redemption be applied to them, whence will come the blow which will awaken them and arouse them to action? Undoubtedly, from God's grace, but also from the action of the living members of the Mystical Body of Jesus. The merits of Jesus are an infinite treasure, but they do not act as a total substitute for our personal action. If it pleases God to show Him Divine Mercy, He does not thereby disregard His Justice. To avail ourselves of His sacrifice, our personal cooperation is necessary; it depends on us to render subjective this holy redemptive sacrifice which is objective, that is to say, objectively, God has placed the means at our disposal.

For each one of us He has a special prayer of Love, He remains the Good Shepherd Who calls each one of His sheep by its own name. The time of merit and of expiation has passed for Jesus, there remains nothing more than to apply to ourselves the effects of the Redemption. His prayer here plays a most important role: it obtains for us the graces of salvation which He merited for us during His mortal life; it frees us from Satan who seeks to devour us.

Though difficulties and failures assail us, and our prayers are apparently not answered, the conviction that our prayers are united to Jesus should inspire absolute confidence in us. It is impossible that God should reject our prayer when we rely on the credit of His Son. We are poor; we must wait and expect all from Jesus Who is our All, our Head, our Supreme Pontiff.

Our prayer must be the expression of our life of union with Jesus. In proportion as this is verified, our influence on the world of souls will be very real and very great. Jesus loved to hear the prayers of Saint Gertrude and said to her: "In your soul, I re-unite, like a treasure, all the riches of my grace, so that everyone may find in you whatever he seeks. You will be like unto a bride who knows the secrets of her spouse and who, after having lived a long time with him, knows how to guess all his desires and his will." To do so we must live in Jesus. The moment that we unite our prayer to the prayer of Jesus, our egotism and our cowardice no longer impede the efficacy of our supplication, because God no longer looks at anything but the supplication of His Son Who treats with Him as equal to equal. Humility and confidence should be the first qualities of our prayer: "May the Creator, before my misery, recall that it is for our misery that He came down among us and that He now finds that which was lost! May He Who sanctifies at the sight of my misery remember that He is the Gift, the Gift without measure, the eternal Gift, the Gift which completely fills the void."

The value of prayer is not solely the result of our association with God's divine government, or because it is inspired by the theological virtues. True, charity inspires in us good desires which should be acted upon; with hope we confidently expect the help of God, and faith discloses to us the objects and motives of prayer. The value of prayer lies in the fact that it is the eloquent expression of our adoration. There is no real prayer unless the will is religiously submissive to God

and His beneficent influence. To pray is not only to humble oneself but also to honor Him Whom one is addressing, and recognize His superiority. When one prays, one wishes by his very subordination, not only to dispose oneself for, but furnish a motive for being heard.

Prayer must be connected to our moral conduct. Prayer cannot replace or act as a substitute for the practice of virtue. It is not those who say, "Lord, Lord, who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but those who do the will of My Father Who is in heaven." Jesus Himself condemns the prayers offered by one who is not in peace with his brother. "He who prays is vigilant; he is a soldier who has his arms in hand. The enemy may come, he is ready; he is like unto the wise virgin who has oil in her lamp and who, when the bridegroom knocks, can open to him and follow him."

In practice, let us consider the time given to prayer as the most precious part of our day. Prayer is the food of the soul; we must give ourselves to prayer. People pray so little in the world. There are so many beautiful and grand intentions which should arouse our interest: the Church, the missionaries, our Congregation, our country, our parents, our friends, the triumph of all that is true, beautiful, grand, and noble.

Above all, let us develop the spirit of prayer, the life of union with Jesus.

## CHAPTER II

### *Adoration of the Blessed Trinity*

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED TRINITY. The mystery of the Blessed Trinity is the first mystery of our religion. The mystery which characterizes Christianity is not belief in one Creator, for in that case a Jew or an Islamite would also be as Christian as we; neither is it the belief in the Incarnation which is often found radically falsified in a multitude of religions.

The distinction between the Christian and the pagan was, from the beginning, founded on an initiation into the divine life and adopted sonship by baptism. In its essence, the life of a Christian is a life of communion with the Divine Persons: with the Father Who adopts us as His children, with the Son Who is formed in us and Who renders us in some manner conformable to Himself, with the Holy Spirit Who seals our union with the Father and the Son.

In the New Testament, especially in the writings of St. John and St. Paul, the revelation of the doctrine concerning grace coincides almost entirely with the revelation of the mystery of the Blessed Trinity.

The mystery of the Trinity is one of those truths of which almost all the elements are formally found, in a manner explicit or implicit, in the Scriptures: the Trinity of the Persons, their substantial unity, the original relations between the persons, and their reciprocal immanence.

It is of significance that the revelation of the mystery of the Holy Trinity was first made through sensible contact, that is to say, by the coming of the Divine Person. When one saw and heard the Son, one also knew the Father and the Holy Spirit.

It is a baffling mystery which seems to defy the laws of our intelligence. God is one, and yet in Him are found three distinct personal terms. There is in God one nature but Three Persons; there is in Him no other diversity than that of origin, which is nothing but an opposition of relation, as the Council of Florence tells us. The Father is the source of all life, principle without principle, the beginning without beginning, He is Father because He engenders a Son; the Father and the Son are inseparable from the Spirit of love Which proceeds from the Father and the Son. The intimate life of God is like unto an ocean of love. From all eternity the Father loved Himself and pronounced a Word in Which He expressed Himself entirely, a Word which is His Thought, His Splendor, the perfect image of all His perfections. The Word responds to His Father with a similar and eternal love. The result is an ineffable embrace which unites Them in the Holy Spirit who is a person also, who proceeds from the superabundance of the love of the Father and of the Son.

Thus, in God all is love. This love is so great and so strong that it over-flows from the bosom of God to touch the created world. Yes, God has gone so far as to communicate His love to creatures: "the nature of God is goodness," says Saint Thomas, and love is precisely the perfection, the final flowering of goodness.

Through grace, the soul of the just becomes the sanctuary of the Blessed Trinity: "If anyone loves me, my Father will love him and We will come to him and make Our abode with him," (John XIV, 23); "We are the temples of the living God." (II Cor. VI, 16); by grace, the entire Blessed Trinity is the guest of the soul.

It is true that the mystery of the Blessed Trinity places difficulties before the human intelligence. The aim of this mystery is not to humiliate our intelligence to upset the construction of our reason or to forbid us access to the divine, but it is substantial. His doctrine shows us the activity of the Divine Persons in the Mystical Body: the Father there engenders His Son; the Father and the Son send forth the Holy Spirit.

This mystery then is not reserved exclusively for theologians. It is a vivifying truth by which many souls have lived intensely. In the name of the Blessed Trinity, their lives were a continual ascension. Neither did the faithful await the institutions of the liturgical feast by Pope John XXII in 1334, in order to live this mystery and to fully realize it in all its spiritual value.

The Holy Trinity is not only a dogma; it is a living and vivifying reality which cannot remain inactive in the souls of the just. Through grace, the Christian enters into contact with each of the Three Persons, each of whom imprint in his soul His own personal characteristics: The Christian becomes a child of the Eternal Father, the brother of the Son Who is the Word and the temple of the Sanctifying Spirit. The personal link of each Christian with the Holy Trinity is at the same time a principle of unity with all the faithful. God does not nourish us with arid formulas, but with His own Life and His own plenitude.

As a consequence of baptism, we have within us the presence of the Three Divine Persons. They admit us into Their ineffable community on condition that we abandon ourselves to Their action and that we cooperate with Their regenerating grace. The Father loves us in order to engender in us life eternal; the Son, by His Incarnation, reveals to us the love of the Father and saves us from the slavery of sin; the Holy Spirit completes the work of the Father and the Son in guiding us to the summits of sanctity. Since the Holy Trinity will one day constitute the object of the beatific vision, it is only fit and proper that from this present life It should occupy a choice place in our spirituality, especially in our vocation of adorers.

As the source of every good, the Blessed Trinity directs us with strength and suavity towards perfection. We should reflect on It more often and discover in this mystery the powerful and apt motives to really live our vocation of adorers. The intimate life of the Blessed Trinity is a life of reciprocal donation, and we can no better imitate the Three Divine Persons than in practicing the life of donation. To give, to love, to work and make every effort to promote the glory of God, these are just so many duties which flow from our fundamental duty of adoration.

Thus, the Blessed Trinity is the greatest example of donation or the giving of self. The Divine Persons "give Themselves in Their totality, They ignore all self-occupation and self-centered activity, They constitute a total donation, not egoism; They realize the total ecstasy of each one towards the others."

Here we have the divine exemplary, the concrete and practical significance of this mystery; it is an appeal for a total donation, for a tribute of homage without reserve. Inasmuch as the Christian bears the imprint of the Blessed Trinity, he owes it to himself to imitate this mystery. The Trinitarian charity excites us to give ourselves to God and His interests, to exclude from ourselves the spirit of domination and independence.

In practice, we adore and honor in the Father His quality of Principle or First Beginning in unreservedly offering Him our entire being, our plans, our actions, in leaving Him the initiative in all things. We adore and honor the Son when we uphold truth and wisdom in all that we do. We adore and honor the Holy Spirit when we seek in all things that which is the most perfect, the most holy, when we fight with strength and zeal in order to gain souls for God.

Accustomed as we are to the systematic exposition and the regrettable aridity of our manuals, it is difficult for us to fully realize the enthusiasm with which the first Christians became familiar with this mystery. We have only to re-read the Fathers of the Church to learn that they conceived of the Christian life as a created extension of the life of the Trinity, as a participation in the reciprocal donation of the Divine Person.

Once more, it is Jesus Himself Who here teaches us to adore, to give ourselves up as He Himself did, "Behold, I come, o Father, to do Thy will. Into Thy hands I commend my spirit." He beseeches His Father to admit us into the ineffable society of the Holy Trinity: "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us." He sweeps us along with Him into the stream of eternal love: "That they may be one and that the world may know that

Thou have loved them as Thou hast also loved Me." (John, XVII, 23). Jesus came to make known to us the Father. He is ever seeking the glory of His Father. Never does He seek His own glory, but the glory of Him by Whom He was sent. The entire life of the Word Incarnate is the echo of this cry from the heart: "Abba, Pater."

He can say in all truth, "In all things I do the will of My Father," and when the hour of departure is at hand, He has the right to say that He has fully realized the mission which He has received from His Father. The "*ecce venio*" of the Incarnation and the "*consummatus est*" of the cross are like the two poles of His mortal life: to give, to love, to sacrifice.

And here we have the wise and marvelous teaching of Jesus! By His grace He introduces us into an ever increasing intimacy with Him. Whosoever unites Himself to Jesus, also unites himself to the Holy Trinity and is admitted into the intimacy of the divine life. How far we are from that almost servile adoration of the Jews who did not dare to lift their eyes toward heaven or pronounce the name of God.

We, on the other hand, bear in us the Holy Trinity; the Three Divine Persons substantially reside in us; it is easy for us to converse with the Three Adorable Persons, to listen to Their voice and allow ourselves to be formed. May our life be a continual adoration of this ineffable mystery, a canticle, pure, great, and abundant, whose keynote is "*Tribus honor unus*," "O Trinity, Whom I adore."

## CHAPTER III

### *Adoration of Jesus*

ADORATION OF JESUS. The mystery of Jesus is the mystery of the Man-God. There is in Jesus a double aspect, the divine and the human. There is in Him the adorable and the adoring. He acts with authority and still He prays to the Father; He manifests an absolute sovereignty, and still He says that He does not act of Himself.

Jesus was a man of His time, of His country, of His, race. He paid the tax, He celebrated the traditional feasts of His people, He was dressed as one of His fellow-citizens. He experienced our weaknesses and our corporal infirmities: fatigue, thirst, hunger, fear, anguish, sadness. He was moved to tears, He was moved to indignation.

Jesus was man like the rest of mankind. However, He aroused the admiration of His contemporaries by two outstanding qualities which were absolutely His own and which the crowd of spectators were quick to acknowledge. He taught with authority. He believed Himself and declared Himself to be in possession of a superior and divine authority. Furthermore, His teaching was accompanied by a multitude of miracles, of which many were worked and presented precisely in order to confirm His divine power.

Jesus declared Himself the author of divine grace in the new alliance which He established in His blood and which constituted the spiritual goods reserved for the Messianic era. He said that He would be with His own until the consummation of time, which a prerogative of the Almighty One. He would assist the faithful, especially by sending them the Holy Spirit.

As to His Incarnation, His mission of Love, Jesus expressed Himself as having been sent by the Father, as mentioned in the Scriptures. This consciousness of His divine filiation supposes that He is also conscious of a pre-existence close to God. One must meditate on the sacerdotal prayer of Jesus (John XVII, 2) to understand the profound unity of Jesus with His Father, unity of which Jesus is fully conscious, unity which has for its source the love which is God and which sent the Son of God into the world: "God has so loved the world that He has given His only begotten Son, so that those who believe in Him shall not be lost but have life everlasting.", (John III, 16).

Jesus makes of faith in His divinity the principal and first attitude of our soul, the source of salvation; moreover, this faith brings with it faith in all the other revealed truths. It is the root of justification as well as the basis or foundation of sanctification.

Many times St. Paul mentions the homage which is due to Christ. In the Epistle to the Philippians, St. Paul writes: "So that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow in heaven, on earth and under the earth and that every tongue will confess to the glory of God the Father that Jesus Christ is the Lord." (Phil. II, 10-11).

Jesus is depicted in the Acts as the Messiah announced by the Prophets. He is superior to David and placed at the right hand of the Father according to the divine plan. He sends His Spirit, pardons sins and in Him alone is our hope. Faith in the adorable divinity of Jesus has transformed the life of His faithful into a sort of adventure which is not only magnificent but often heroic. To adore Jesus is to give Him all.

In our day, even though materialism seems to have complete control, the adoration of Jesus is more intense than ever before. He is adored among the most primitive people as well as by the cultured people of the world. One could never find a single personality who could sustain a like fidelity and a like generosity in the adhesion of his disciples. It is because the adoration of Jesus is a total attitude, a donation without reserve. Jesus is not an assignment to be learned like a school book, but a living doctrine, a concrete model of life and action.

One could never know how to adore Jesus without making efforts to become better, without rising to a higher plane morally. To adore Jesus is to participate in His life of love by the intensity of our interior life, by the ardor of our apostolic zeal and by the depth of our charity. To adore Jesus is to participate in the great and immense love of God, in that love so simple, so filial, so confident, as taught by Jesus Himself. It is to begin here on earth the life of glory. To His true adorers, that is to say to the poor, the meek, the afflicted, the hungry, the merciful, the pure, the peacemaker, the persecuted, Jesus has solemnly promised the possession of the kingdom, the vision of God.

More than ever, Jesus is adored and loved. One lives in Him, one dies for Him. His life, His heart, His voice provoked in His adorers generous imitation even unto heroism. There are saints whose lives appear sweet and without struggles, one would say that they walk, already wholly pure, towards light and love; there are others whose lives seem a torment and a continual combat, but all are borne along by an ardent and confident love in Jesus Who is their hope and their strength; "*Christus spes nostra.*"

AN ANTINOMY. AN EFFORT AT A SOLUTION. It is clear that we are in the presence of a certain antinomy: it is the adoration of the Holy Trinity and the adoration of Jesus. We know that Jesus continually seeks the glory of His Father, that He is the Way which leads to His Father, that it is by Him and with Him that we go to the Father. He adores the Father and with Him we also should adore the Father.

It is no less certain that Jesus Himself is adorable, that we have the obligation of offering Him our homage of worship and adoration. One notices this antinomy, a type of apparent contradiction, even in the life and daily practice of the Church. Her liturgy is addressed to the Father by Christ Jesus ("*Per Dominum Nostrum Jesus Christum*") while this same liturgy also addresses itself, its prayers, directly to Jesus and adores Him in the course of a long series of feasts.

As every Christian, we have the strict duty of adoring the Blessed Trinity. If the Blessed Trinity is a primordial truth of our religion, then religion is inconceivable without the adoration of the Holy Trinity. Whosoever calls himself Christian should adore the Blessed Trinity. Protestantism itself, at least a great number of its adherents, as long as it has avoided making itself liberal and mingling in liberalism, has respected the Holy Trinity as the essence of Christianity, as the fundamental truth. In fact, this dogma has for its object God in His complete life; it makes us attain God Himself in His intimacy. The Blessed Trinity is our first Principle, our sovereign Master, our Last End, Who has a right to our adoration and to all our homages. This is the reason why every Christian desires to sanctify himself constantly by the adoration and the invocation of the Blessed Trinity. "The sign of the Cross and the Gloria Patri are the spontaneous and expressive witnesses of Catholic piety."

We owe everything to God the Father Who, through pure mercy, took the initiative in the work of creation and regeneration. He is our Father, not carnally as in pagan mythology, not by a sort of fiction which recalls somewhat the judicial fiction as was the case of the Jews, but in the full force of the term, in other words, in reality. We owe all to the Three Divine Persons Who have introduced us into the circuit of divine love, without any consideration of the merits of which we were utterly incapable. We have the strict and rigorous duty to adore the Holy Trinity, and that not only during the exercise of our adoration, but also when the liturgy of the Church, the prayers of our Congregation and the inspiration of the Holy Spirit invite us to do so.

If we should adore the Holy Trinity, it does not follow, however, that adoration should always be explicit. We hope to be able to prove that our adoration inasmuch as it is the official exercise of our Congregation should not have the Holy Trinity for its principal object ordinarily, that the explicit reference to the Father and to the Holy Spirit is not indispensable. We hold that in adoring Jesus one implicitly adores the Father and the Holy Spirit. The transition between these objects, between the adoration of Jesus and the adoration of the Holy Trinity, is often most

unconscious and done with perfect ease and spontaneity. It is an ordinary fact that in the Incarnate Word the Holy Trinity reveals itself to us in a greater or lesser measure; "in Jesus," the Good Father said, "one finds God the Father, one finds all." One can perfectly adore the Sacred Heart of Jesus without neglecting the adoration of the Holy Trinity, as it is currently practiced in the life of so many of the faithful.

We may make a distinction and speak of a general antinomy as differing from a special antinomy. The general antinomy refers to the adoration of Jesus and adoration of the Blessed Trinity; whereas the special antinomy because it applies especially to our adoration as an official exercise of our Congregation refers to our adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar and adoration of the Blessed Trinity.

We will first take up the subject of general antinomy and its principles. The same principles will then be applied in the solution of the problem of the special antinomy.

GENERAL ANTINOMY. How can we justify our claim that the adoration of Jesus, the Word Incarnate, does not contradict the adoration of the Blessed Trinity in such a manner that this first adoration should not explicitly refer to the Blessed Trinity.

The first reason is fundamental and in the end we must always return to it, i.e. the hypostatic union which unites in the Divine Person of the Word the two natures; the divine nature and the human nature. The divine nature of Jesus is the same nature, of the same grandeur, of the same dignity and without the slightest subordination whatsoever, as the nature of the Father and the Holy Spirit. Properly speaking, there is no hierarchy between the Divine Persons.

The divine nature is a sole supreme and concrete reality which is of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. God is not God before being the Trinity.

It would be an error to think that God is One before being Triune, "for God is Triune from the moment He is God" (V. Brenton); from all eternity He is Father, Son, Spirit, in the absolute simplicity and simultaneousness of His Being. Because of the penury of our human language which takes on the measure of the experimental being, and because of the infirmity of our thought, we express the priority of the unity of the divine nature to the Trinity of the Persons. However, we do not establish any priority, or any posteriority, or any real inferiority, which would be incompatible with the simplicity of the Divine Persons.

The distinction of Persons is a distinction of origin, because there is opposition of subsistent relations by which the persons are related to one another. Now the relations do not change the being which they ordain; they leave it in its primitive state. In God, each Person supposes the others at the same time that it distinguishes between them (subsisting relation). As in God nothing is accidental, the relation should identify itself with the divine substance, it should be real from all eternity; if not, it is neither becoming or worthy of God. But aside from these relations which constitute the Persons in their essential propriety, all that is in God is One, is given and communicated from one Person to another. The Divine Persons are all Three perfectly and equally God, but each one possesses Its manner of being God: The Father communicates His perfection to the Son by way of generation; the Son possesses the infinite perfection as engendered by the Father; the Holy Spirit possesses it as proceeding from the Father and the Son by way of spiration. The paternity, the filiation, the processions add nothing to the divinity; they do no more than express the divinity under a relation which is real, they are all Three, identically God. It follows therefore that when one adores the Son, one implicitly adores the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Without doubt, the humanity of Jesus is adored in Itself, but It is adored because of Its union with the Word in the unity of the Person; it terminates, but does not determine the cult of latria. For the same reason, we adore in Jesus all that which is hypostatically united to the Word as the body, its members, the soul and its faculties. That which is adored in Jesus is the all-subsisting, the divine instrument; and the motive of adoration is always the divinity to which the humanity is

hypostatically united. The divinity is adored in itself and for itself; the humanity with its parts is adored in itself, but because of its union with the Word. In Jesus one and the same person subsists in the divine nature and in the human nature united in the person of the Word in the strongest, most intimate and most indissoluble manner.

The second reason to justify the claim that the adoration of Jesus does not contradict the adoration of the Trinity is the economy of Christian sanctity. The center and foundation of this economy is Jesus Christ. It is, then, perfectly legitimate to take for the central object of our adoration the Author of our salvation, He from Whom we have received everything. Without doubt, even after the coming of Christ, the great principle of the Old Testament still prevailed: God is the source all good; all sanctity comes to us from God. But henceforth there exists an intermediary, Christ Jesus, "Who has become for us God-given wisdom and justice, and sanctification, and redemption."

Jesus has sanctified us by the voluntary sacrifice of His death, and every Christian participates in that sanctification by means of faith and baptism which cause Christ to live in us. We are holy in the same measure as our life is lived in the presence of and under the inspiration of Jesus. If He lives in us, it is normal that we should be dedicated to Him with all that we are and all that we have. Saint Paul inculcates in his disciples the doctrine that if it is true that the Christian stands out from other men by the very fact of that mysterious and beneficent presence, it behooves him not only to avoid sin (which is negative) but more yet to show forth everywhere Christ Jesus. All his activity, all his conduct, should bear witness to his belonging to Jesus. The Lord Jesus Who lives in us and in Whom we live is not only the pre-existing Son of God, but the Son of God Who became Incarnate, Who suffered, Who died and rose again from death.

The Christian does not unite himself immediately to God nor does he live directly in God; he should do so by and through Christ the Man-God, and thus participate in the life and death of Christ.

The principle of our supernatural life, because it is supernatural, is necessarily Christ according to His divine nature the Christ Who is God, but this Christ-God has also lived our human life. He has had a human history and it is that life which every Christian should reproduce. In fact, our life as a Christian consists in dying to the carnal man, the first Adam, to live the life of the second Adam, Christ, so that we may unite ourselves to His death and His resurrection. No grace, no good comes to us except through Jesus Christ, "as all die in Adam, thus all will live in Christ: (I Cor, XV, 22). To believe in Jesus is precisely to believe in the working of our salvation by Jesus "Who alone is the Savior!" (Rom. III, 23-26). Saint Peter tells us that outside Him there is no salvation (Act. IV,12) and Jesus Himself warns us that without Him we can do nothing. (John, XV, 5).

Inasmuch as there is nothing so important here below as being saved, faith in Jesus our Savior should necessarily bring with it the total gift of fidelity which confides itself in the person of Jesus "just as one confides oneself to a doctor or to a guide. Faith does not only imply the intellectual act by which one affirms with certitude the existence of God (Christ) Who justifies, but a total gift of ourselves to God.

"We have seen and have borne witness that the Father has sent His Son as Savior of the world: he who confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God." (John, IV, 14-15). Jesus is the head of the saints; He incorporates in Himself, in the course of time, those Whom the Father has given as a heritage and whom He has acquired by His death.

The third reason to justify our opinion is that Jesus is our Savior. He has thereby acquired a new title to our homage and adoration. The Man-God does not reign over the world by right of birth only, but also by right of acquisition, that is to say, because of all the meritorious works accomplished in His human nature for our salvation. Our beatitude later on will consist not only in seeing God, but it will also be the joy of having been saved by Jesus, a brother of our human race.

If it is true that the Incarnation and the Redemption can add nothing to the grandeur and the glory of the divine nature, it is equally true that the Incarnation and Redemption add much to the grandeur of the man in Jesus; Jesus has become the living Head of restored humanity. He presents a magnificent superabundant reparation to God; He overcomes forever the obstacle which sin interposed between God and man. Jesus, because of love for us, made Himself the victim of sin. In virtue of His divine propitiation, He has opened to men the display of all the divine riches, He has mystically integrated a body Which has its life in Him and comes to full flower in Him

The Fathers of the Church, interpreting St. Paul (Coloss. I, 19-20), say that Jesus recapitulates in Himself, not only humanity, but the entire universe. All things are resumed or contained in Christ, and that in an ontological sense. The Man-God resumes in some manner the whole of creation, that is to say, the bodily world and the spiritual world of the mind and soul. Furthermore, He is the Head of redeemed humanity, and the economy of the redemption finds in Him its accomplishment.

A faith that is enlightened shows us Jesus not only exercising His function of adorer before the face of the Father, but also displaying His primacy as Redeemer.

There is a danger to be avoided and it is not altogether imaginary which could falsify our spirituality. By force of meditating continually on the redemptive role of Jesus, we could perhaps reach the point where we would no longer consider in Him anything but His function of Mediator between God and man. But the function of mediator, far from exhausting all the reality of Jesus, important and great as it is, is but one aspect. Let us beware of placing Jesus face to face with the Blessed Trinity as if He were not Himself one of the Three Divine Persons. Jesus is equal to His Father in His divinity, and the Incarnation in bestowing on Him our miserable human nature does not deprive Him of any of His divine prerogatives. "He remains the Son of God in Principle and in flesh with the same title as the Father and one with the Spirit Who is God with Them."

From the beginning of His preaching of the gospel, Jesus tends to direct His disciples toward the summit of perfection: "Be ye perfect as your Heavenly Father is perfect." (Matt. V, 18) At the Last Supper, when for the last time before His death He pours forth His tenderness upon those who are His own and gives them the last will and testament of His Heart, He proposes to them an ideal which is divine, but at the same time concrete and within their means. This ideal is Himself. "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." Jesus is not only an intermediary (the Way) but also the End (the Truth, the Life). The terms "truth" and "life" are absolute; they suggest that Jesus is not only the way that leads to God, but the termination or end, that is, God Himself. With a simplicity which prolongs the simplicity of the Gospel, the Imitation of Thomas a Kempis (III, 56) thus comments upon this text: "Follow Me: I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Without the way there is no going; without the truth there is no knowing; without the life there is no living. I am the Way which thou must follow; the Truth which thou must believe; the Life for which thou must hope."

It follows, then, that Jesus is the only way and the only end. Continuing His discourse, Jesus said: "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh to the Father, but by Me. If you had known Me, you would without doubt have known My Father also; and from henceforth you shall know Him, and you have seen Him." Philip saith to Him: "Lord, show us the Father and it is enough for us." Jesus saith to him: "Have I been so long a time with you and have you not known Me? Philip, he that seeth Me seeth- the Father also. How sayest thou, show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me?" (John XIV, 6-10)

This thought of Jesus is clear and without equivocation. Jesus is the model of sanctity; we are to penetrate and reproduce Him. Confidence in the Father equally implies confidence in Jesus: "You believe in God, believe also in Me." (John, XIV, 1). No one could confide himself in one without confiding himself in the other: "These two confidences do not range themselves one above the other as if they were addressed to persons of different ranks of dignity. They are equivalent to one another."

Jesus tells us that the object of eternal life is the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ: "Now this is eternal life: That they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou has sent." (John, XVII, 3). There is then but one beatitude, the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ. "We are not to distinguish here two unequal objects attained successively, as for example, having to pass by Jesus Christ in order to get to the place where the Father is."

The ideal of the Christian life, such as the Gospel teaches us, is to live in union with Jesus Who is the splendor of the Father. At the same time, He is our Mediator with His Heavenly Father.

Saint John of the Cross, commenting on the Epistle to the Hebrews I, 1, (Wherein Paul says, "God Who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all in those days hath spoken to us by His Son") says, "God has become, as it were, dumb and has no more to say because what He had formerly said by the prophets, He has said in full by His Son. He, then, who would now question God or who would ask for a vision or a revelation would not only commit a stupidity, but would perform injury unto God, because he would thereby cease to fix his eyes on Jesus Christ, preferring some novelty."

"He who has seen Me, has seen the Father." In virtue of the mutual immanence of the Father and the Son, we perceive in the Son the mystery of the Holy Trinity in such a way that the knowledge of the Son is not an inferior stage through which one must work in order to directly know the Father. "In Christ Jesus," "In the Lord" - these are the oft-repeated formulas used by Saint Paul - we find all in Christ Jesus, we need not seek further for the treasures of divine life. Jesus Himself explicitly teaches us: "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abide in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I Am the vine; you the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing." (John XV, 4-5)

SPECIAL ANTINOMY. How can we justify the belief that the adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus - and more particularly in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar - does not contradict the adoration of the Blessed Trinity in such a way that this first adoration should not explicitly refer itself to the Blessed Trinity?

The glory of God finds its crowning, its ultimate perfection, and consummation in Christ the Redeemer. Love which is merciful is the most obvious and manifest sign of love. Saint Thomas writes: "The highest of the virtues, in itself and in God, is mercy. In fact, it is the attribute of mercy to give to others, and what is more, to provide for the needs of others. This especially is a function of superiors. Thus it appears that to be merciful is a characteristic of God, and it is in the practice, and dispensing of mercy that the divine Omnipotence most clearly manifests itself."

If this principle of Saint Thomas is true, and it is from the standpoint of doctrine incontestable, it is clear that when we adore the Sacred Heart of Jesus we glorify that which is the highest and greatest in God: His merciful love of which the Sacred Heart of Jesus is the most touching manifestation.

The mystery of Jesus is a mystery of mercy; it is His mystery as Savior as He has said of Himself: "The Son of God is come to seek and save that which was lost" (Luke XIX, 10). He seeks the lost sheep, He calls them "each by his own name" and He takes them upon His shoulders.

We know of the divine counsels only what it has pleased Jesus to reveal to us. All that He tells us of God converges on this central theme: God is love and mercy. The Evangelists and Saint Paul propose for our imitation the historic Christ. "But God Who is rich in mercy, for His exceeding charity wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together in the heavenly places, through Christ Jesus. That He might show in the ages to come the abundant riches of His grace in His bounty towards us in Christ Jesus." (Ephesians, II, 4-7)

God is love and mercy, and the Sacred Heart of Jesus is the most touching manifestation of it. It is then normal that in our adoration we exalt this merciful love.

Our adoration is naught else than an exercise of the cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (the concept of cult is much broader than the concept of adoration). For as much as we were able to verify the matter, the history of this cult (as also the history of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus) in our Congregation does not accent the Trinitarian sense or meaning. What is the nature of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus such as it is proposed by Holy Mother Church? In his admirable encyclical "Misericordissimus Redemptor," His Holiness Pius XI calls the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus "the sum of our religion and the norm of a more perfect life." (*totius religionis summa atque adeo perfectionis vitae norma continetur*). The word "religion" here signifies not the moral virtue which is understood under that name, but the ensemble of relations which exist between God and man. These relations which are incontestably dominated by the gifts of God to man, gifts which find their culmination in the person of Jesus, in His love for men. This shows us that if the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is fairly recent, its foundations are as ancient as Christianity itself. The love of Jesus is from all time adorable, and His Heart is from all time capable of signifying this love.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is the norm of perfection. The exemplary and efficient cause of our perfection is Jesus. All grace comes to us by Him (I Cor., XV, 22); without Him we can do nothing (John XV, 5). Charity is the bond of perfection. Knowledge of the love of Jesus is alone capable of giving us the fullness of God: "To know also the charity of Christ, which surpasseth all knowledge, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God." (Eph. III, 19).

The organic heart, that portion of the virginal flesh of the Son of God, is the material object of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Our religion is a religion of spirit and of truth. However, "to imagine that sensible objects are not necessary in order that we rise to God by knowledge and love, is to forget that we are men." Thus even in our relations with God we bear within us the conditions of our human nature, that is to say, body and soul. However, when we adore the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the organic heart is concerned only as a point of departure, a secondary element, as a sign and a symbol. The Heart of flesh is not adored in Itself, but because of Its union with the Word Incarnate. To adore the Sacred Heart of Jesus is to adore also the excellence of that Divine Person Who is the Son of God and the Son of Mary. We start from the organic heart and the created love of Jesus in order to rise even to uncreated love of Jesus which set his created love in motion. In Jesus, the human is the sacrament of the divine "*per Christum hominem ad Christum Deum*." (St. Augustine).

The cult and the adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus are doubtless rounded on the human element, and it is perfectly legitimate to adore the human conduct of Jesus toward His Father, as also His Hidden life which our adoration proposes to imitate. In Jesus, the Divine Person (*principium quod*) is the final principle of all the acts performed by the two natures (*principia quo*). It follows that every human act of Jesus expresses His divine excellence, expresses the person of Jesus Which possesses the divine nature in a manner which is proper to Him. To adore the Sacred Heart of Jesus is then to adore His infinite dignity, the excellence of His divine nature which is of the Holy Spirit.

When we adore the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, we adore, with His Heart, the love which, besides so many other benefits, He has wished to give us in this sacrament. The special reason or motive for our adoration (its formal object) is constituted here by the Real Presence of the adorable Heart of Jesus in the Eucharist, a presence which evokes love giving itself to us in order to remain with us. Jesus here gives us His Heart in order to have ours "*quoniam ipse prior dilexit nos*". (I John, IV, 19). We must respond to this love; our love must be a reciprocal love, a love of friendship and personal affection which makes an effort to respond to the tenderness of the love of Jesus.

Our adoration is reparative. It is altogether natural that it aspires before all else to repair the outrages which the love of Jesus submits to on the part of sinners. The love of Jesus is a love unknown and outraged; it is logical therefore that our adoration should be one of reparation of justice and of expiation. By our adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament of

the Altar, we exalt in an eminent manner His love and His tenderness, of which His Heart is the eloquent symbol.

According to the desire expressed by our venerable Founder, the Most Pure Heart of Mary should play an important part in our adoration. This has been clearly and unequivocally indicated; the Mother spontaneously leads us to her Son, Who is her glory, her pride, and our happiness.

For all these motives, the primordial orientation of our adoration should appear clear: it tends, in the first place, to exalt and make reparation to the unacknowledged and unrecognized love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It is this meaning which the writings of our venerable Founders accentuate; they are fond of indicating - and that with a pronounced preference - the Sacred Heart of Jesus as the habitual object of our reparative adoration. This fits in harmoniously with their spirituality, which gravitates around this adorable Heart, and with the aim which they have assigned to their Congregation: the consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary by the practice and the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts. Permit us to remark that the text of the Pontifical Bull of Approbation "Pastor Aeternus" (1817) and our Rule (article I, 3) speak in the same sense.

Let us not forget that the Blessed Trinity is revealed to us by and in Jesus, that is to say, the concrete person of Jesus. He reveals the Blessed Trinity to us, but at the same time He gives It to us also by His grace, which is simultaneously a created extension of the divine life and an incorporation in Jesus.

Nevertheless, nothing must be exaggerated. Once the primordial meaning of our adoration and our devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus has been well determined, we must of necessity affirm that this meaning is not exclusive.

The writing of our Founders is clearly contrary to this exclusive meaning (see the "Advice" of the Good Father, the formula "make reparation for the outrages made to the Divine Majesty"); theology is also opposed to it. In fact, whoever penetrates into the Heart of Jesus should necessarily find love which presumes the whole mystery of the Blessed Trinity, the love which identifies itself with the Divine Persons. As has been said before, Jesus remains the Way which leads us to God, which introduces us into the mystery of an intimate life with God.

By the exercise of our adoration, we wish to exalt, consider, and comprehend something of the love which is infinite. However, this is impossible without immediately encountering the radiant splendor of the divine love which is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. This divine love is the foundation of the love which we consider and find in the Heart of Jesus - of which our adoration is an eminent exercise; it is "the sum of our religion and the norm of perfection." (Pius XI). It should contain the objective elements which orientate us also toward the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, the mystery which, with the mystery of Incarnation, dominates our religion. Without these mysteries we would not have the Sacred Heart of Jesus. To love and imitate Jesus is to be swept along by Him and with Him in His love for the glory of the Father.

Adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus does not exclude adoration of the Blessed Trinity; they unite harmoniously for always "in Jesus .... the most unforeseen and unexpected contrasts end in dissolving themselves in a perfect harmony."

## CHAPTER IV

### *The Heart of Mary and our Adoration*

MARY'S RELATION TO JESUS, THE BLESSED TRINITY AND HUMANITY. This is a brief exposition of the theological reasons which justify Mary's place in our spirituality and in our adoration.

Jesus wished to associate His Mother with all His mysteries, beginning with the mystery of the Incarnation- "natus ex muliere" - which touches the essence of a mystery. It is of her that Jesus asks His body. If Jesus is the Son of God, He is also the Son of Mary, for it is she who formed and nourished with her own substance the body of Jesus.

Mary is the mother of a Divine Person Who has both a Divine and a human nature. Mary's maternity is the source of all her privileges, privileges which prepare or accompany that maternity, for which God upset all the laws established by Himself. It is on the physiological maternity that the spiritual maternity is grafted, a maternity of grace and glory. It is on this consideration that so many Fathers and theologians base their works on the grandeur of Mary.

Beginning with the maternity, one could trace an impressive parallelism between the mysteries of Jesus and the mysteries of Mary. Beginning with this privilege, one sees the reasons for which the Catholic loves to honor Mary - her initial innocence, her mediation of all graces, her assumption, her co-redemptive maternity.

Mary was created to be the Mother of God, and her vocation as Mother of God is antecedent to her condition as a daughter of Eve; this is why it was fitting that she should be all-pure ("*Potuit, deuit, ergo fecit*" according to the expression attributed to Duns Scotus).

She had been predestined from all eternity to become not only the Mother of God, but a worthy Mother of God. Since there exists an ineffaceable and ineffable affection between the Son and the mother - above all when this Son and this mother call themselves Jesus and Mary - one understands without difficulty that the worthy maternity of Mary is constituted by a richness of grace which permits that woman, blessed among all, to fully respond to her ontological grandeur. Without the gift of Grace enriching, heightening, and elevating the maternity of Mary, it has been well said that that maternity would be a mutilated and wounded reality.

Because the Word, pre-existent from all eternity, chose the one in Whom He would realize His Incarnation for the redemptive finality, He asked her consent to the work of the Incarnation and Redemption. Tradition is very firm on this point. From that, it is evident that because of this new-found and unique maternity, the union between Jesus and Mary far surpassed the notion and the reality of an ordinary maternity and established a very special relationship, orientated toward the redemptive end.

One understands, then, that Saint Thomas could write: "The Blessed Virgin, from the fact of her divine maternity, possessed a certain infinite dignity, as a result of the infinite good Which is God. Nothing superior to her can be created, the same as nothing can exist which is superior to God." And Cajetan said that by her divine maternity Mary is at the limits of the divinity.

When one tries to understand the condescendence of divine love which chose a young girl, a human creature to be the mother of the Creator, one is overcome with stupefaction. This dignity is so great that no human word can ever express it, no human intelligence comprehend it. In reality, Mary herself could not entirely comprehend it; for in order to fully comprehend the dignity of the Mother of God, it is necessary to comprehend in all its amplitude the dignity of God, her Son.

By her dignity of the Mother of God, Mary is introduced into the family of the Blessed Trinity. She has become the associate of the Father, for the same Person Who is the Son of God is also the Son of Mary; the Father engenders the Son from all eternity as God; Mary gives birth to Him in time as Man. In regard to the Word Incarnate, Mary is His real mother: she formed His substance; "she prolonged herself in Him"; she nourished Him with her milk; she presided over His human education; for all that, Jesus manifested towards her all the duties of filial piety: love, obedience, assistance. By her divine maternity Mary became the Spouse of the Holy Spirit, inasmuch as it is by the operation of the Holy Spirit that she conceived the Word - "*incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto*" - a work in which the entire Trinity co-operates; it is attributed by appropriation to the Holy Spirit, because it is above all a work of love and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the love of the Father and the Son. By her divine maternity, Mary procured from the Blessed Trinity an extrinsic glory of a unique grandeur.

One understands, then, that Mary is full of grace, full of divine life, that she opened herself to grace with a purity, a generosity, an ardor of which no creature has ever been capable. She gave herself irrevocably, fully to the work of God. She united herself in all things to Jesus.

This is why Mary occupies a place which is unique and transcendent in Christianity. She is inseparable from Jesus. If Jesus already unites His faithful to all His mysteries in such a way that they are inseparable from Him, He does it for His Mother in a much more particular and intense manner. He gave her, in regard to His mystical Body, a special grace of spiritual maternity which is nothing less than a complement and a normal prolongation of her divine maternity.

Jesus is the new Adam; Mary "the new Eve"; as expressed by Tradition, she is the "*adiutorium simile sibi*" of the new Adam (St. Albert the Great), the mother of all those who live in Jesus. An ineffable and indissoluble union exists between Jesus and Mary, and to wish to separate Jesus from His Mother would be, following an axiom of Tradition, to divide Christ.

Because Mary was constantly united to all the mysteries of Jesus here below, she still unites herself to Jesus in His celestial role of advocate in regard to the Father. In heaven she continues to surround us with her maternal care. In all truth, we can say with St. Germain of Constantinople, "No one is saved, if it is not by you, O All Holy, Virgin Mary. No one receives gifts, if it is not through thee, O Most Innocent One. No one receives the alms of grace, if it is not through thee, O Most August Queen of Heaven."

It is especially in our day that the place of Mary in the economy of the Redemption is more deeply studied. Many theologians are no longer content to say that Mary is the distributor of graces; outstanding theologians, such as Lebon, Bettremieux, Roschini, Dillenschneider, Carol and ever increasing numbers of others do not hesitate to proclaim the direct concourse, the immediate and soteriologic collaboration of Mary in our redemption. Without doubt, say these theologians, Jesus remains the unique Mediator, but Jesus merited all graces for all men from a source of merit and of strict justice; Mary merited, with a merit of congruity, depending on Jesus and depending on His merits. This merit is under the jurisdiction of the order of friendship, rather than the order of justice. One even thinks it possible to affirm that at this moment the doctrine has passed the domain of speculative theology to that of an official doctrine. Pius X, Benedict XV, Pius XI, Pius XII, have affirmed in unequivocal terms Mary's role of collaboration in the Redemption.

Theologians prove this doctrine from the "fiat" of the Blessed Virgin, her title of "new Eve," her participation in the intimate disposition of the Redeemer and in all the mysteries. By her "fiat" she consented to give the victim of the expiation and the sacrifice which would save us; she united herself to all the sorrows and sufferings of the agony and the Passion; with Jesus she offered to the Father the affliction and anguish of her Son and her own sorrows for the redemption of humanity. She even went so far as to offer to God the life of her Son and herself with Him: "She abdicated her maternal rights to her Son," as Benedict XV and Pius XII expressed it. They further base their contention on the general manner of acting of God Who does not save mankind except with the concourse of human cooperators. The redeeming blood of Jesus, in Itself efficacious, is

actually so only in the measure in which one works, prays, and suffers. Saint Paul already spoke of completing in his own body that which was lacking in the sufferings of Christ, for the body of Christ; so many souls behind the walls of the cloister pray and immolate themselves for others. It is to this title, but on a plane infinitely higher that God has willed to associate His Mother with the redemptive work of His Son. As the first Eve played her role in our losses, so Mary, the new Eve, has played a role in our salvation; there where sin abounded, its need must be that grace super abounds.

THE ROLE OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY IN OUR VOCATION OF ADORERS. If all, the doctrine concerning Jesus resumes itself in His Sacred Heart, all the doctrine of Mary also resumes itself in her most pure Heart. The foregoing consideration will have proved, we hope, that the whole mystery of Mary is a mystery of love. Her divine maternity was the point of departure of an activity of love without any limitations. Her desires, her views, her interests coincided from the very beginning with the desires, the views, the interests of Jesus. Jesus is the love which gives Himself to God and to men; Mary imitates this love: she gives herself to Jesus and she gives herself to mankind. The union between these two Hearts is so close that Saint John Eudes - and before him Saint Brigid and Saint Francis de Sales - loved to speak of the one and only Heart of Jesus and Mary. The Good Father sometimes spoke in the same sense (for example, "the one and same Heart in the closest charity," "we are vowed to the Heart of Jesus and Mary"). If Jesus is love, we can say that, in a special sense, Mary is love also, and this is why we especially honor the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The immediate object of the interior and exterior cult of the devotion of the Heart of Mary is her physical heart, considered in its reality as symbol of the most perfect love of Mary toward God and toward mankind. The divine maternity, it is true, does not necessarily belong to the immediate object of the devotion to the Pure Heart of Mary, but it determines the specific character of it. Because of that sublime dignity by which Mary was introduced into the hypostatic order, every cult which is rendered her and so then that of her Heart also becomes a cult of hyperdulia radically distinct from the cult of simple dulia. The final term of the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary is the entire person of Mary, inasmuch as the honor of the cult is always rendered to the whole subsistent being ("*honor exhibetur toti rei subsistenti*," St. Thomas). Mary's supernatural excellence is in some way infinite, because of her close relation with the person of Jesus.

Thus the immediate connection which exists between the cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and that of the Most Pure Heart of Mary, and consequently between the adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. This directs us and helps us to realize the spirit and the exercises of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. Who better than Mary can teach us the meaning of adoration? She is very close to the Blessed Trinity and to Jesus. What joy for her to lower herself before Him Who has regarded the humility of His handmaid and Who wished to submit Himself to her. Her joy and her gratitude burst forth in her hymn of thanksgiving, the "Magnificat." We will learn from Mary the meaning of reparation. She had nothing to repair for herself, yet she was to be, according to the expression of Pius X, "the great Reparatrice" ("Miserentissimus Redemptor"). She made common cause with her Son in order to destroy sin; she offered herself and offered her Son in order to restore fallen humanity. Finally, she taught us the spirit of prayer. She prayed for herself, in order to fully correspond with her vocation and with the grace of God; she prayed for mankind which was to be redeemed, she prayed for her Son so that the Father might bless His work of Redemption. She is the All Powerful Supplicant.

The Most Pure Heart of Mary furnishes us with an easily accessible model for our adoration; is there anything which inspires more confidence than the heart of a mother, than the heart of the Mother of God? Her heart is patterned after the love of her Son. Her love gives us the most beautiful and most precious thing she possesses: her Son. There is no doubt that the example and

the sentiments of the Most Pure Heart of Mary will inspire us and strengthen the efficacy of our adoration. Since it is a general rule of spirituality that it is meek and just to study Jesus through Mary, this rule certainly has great value for our adoration. Who better than the Virgin of the "fiat" and of the "Magnificat" can help us find the accents we need in order to exalt the love of her Son: "All that relates to love is particularly mysterious and often inexpressible," writes Saint Thomas; that is particularly true when it concerns the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus such as it manifests itself in the Sacrament of Love: prolongation and multiplication of the presence of Jesus in this valley of exile, perpetual renewal of the redemptive sacrifice, mysterious abyss where lives the source of all graces and the sap which should insinuate itself into all our being in order to transform it. It will place before our eyes the example of the greatest love which instituted for us this sacrament of love.

Let us adore Jesus in union with Mary; let us thank her for having given us Jesus, "*per quam meruimus Auctorem vitae suscipere.*"

The fact that we adore the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar by the Heart of His Mother clearly indicates the object of our reparative adoration. The Heart of Mary here reveals to us the divine condescension which urged Her Son to give us this love unrecognized and ignored, by the ingratitude, indifference, profanations and sacrileges of man. Her maternal Heart conjures us to exalt the unknown love of her Son and to respond to it.

Since there is such a union between the Son and the Mother, the outrages perpetrated against the Heart of Jesus are also outrages against the Heart of Mary; it follows then that we must repair the unrecognized love of the Heart of Mary; "we will make reparation as inflicted upon her own Heart, for the same outrages inflicted on the Heart of Jesus in the Sacrament of His love by the enormous crimes of sinners." We must always associate the Heart of Jesus with the Heart of Mary in our adoration. If Jesus is our Mediator and Savior because of the human nature with which He wished to clothe Himself, how can we adore and Love Him without Mary from Whom He has received this human nature? "When one abandons the Mother, one no longer understands the Son." (Dom Marmion)

The Most Holy Heart of Mary will also teach us to adore the Blessed Trinity, and to make reparation for the outrages perpetrated against the Divine Majesty. Who better than Mary, who by her divine maternity was introduced into the family of the Blessed Trinity, can understand the intensity of the Trinitarian life, the benefits which flow from it for us, and the wickedness of the outrages perpetrated against the Divine Majesty?

In giving a prominent place in the exercise of our perpetual adoration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, our venerable Founders have understood the vital good which exists between the Heart of Jesus and the Heart of Mary.

Is the Heart of Mary only the means or a way by which we come to the Heart of Jesus, or can it, in certain circumstances, be the object (the secondary and the subordinate, it is understood, since the devotion to the Heart of Mary cannot in itself be an absolute end) to whom we can consecrate our homages, prayers and confidences during a notable part of our adoration without its being necessary that we explicitly refer ourselves to the Sacred Heart of Jesus? The answer, it seems to us, should be in the affirmative because in honoring the Mother, one at the same time honors the Son. However, the method which is most conformable to the spirit of our Congregation is to adore the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar by the Immaculate Heart of Mary; the Good Father explicitly said so.

Our venerable Founders conceived of adoration as a source of sanctity. Here also, let us give a very great place to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Jesus has associated His Mother with all His work, His sufferings, His fatigues which had a part in the redemption of mankind, in His entrance into the divine paternity, in His sanctification. The raising up of man is traced on his fall. Adam and Eve, first man and first woman, caused our loss; Jesus and His Mother have saved us. Saint Augustine: "Just as the head of the Mystical Body has come from the Womb of the Virgin

Mary, in the same manner, its members, that is to say, we ourselves proceed from the soul of that Mother - *Corpore Mater capitis eius, Spiritu Mater - membrorum eius.*" Bossuet said: "Her maternal charity having contributed so much to our salvation in the mystery of the Incarnation which is the universal principal of grace, will here contribute eternally in all the other operations which are no more than dependencies."

As we kneel in adoration before the tabernacle, let us confide to the maternal Heart of Mary the care of obtaining for us the graces which we need to belong entirely to Jesus. Let us ask her to begin over again each day, in each of our souls, her office of maternity which she affected for the Body of Jesus, really present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. Her First-born was a Masterpiece; we, the younger brothers and sisters, can also become masterpieces. What she has marvelously realized for the Head, she will know how to do equally well for the members.

Close to the sacrament which recalls the Passion and the Bloody Sacrifice of the Cross, the Mother of Sorrows will obtain for us the spirit of victim. Mary, the "Virgo fidelis," will obtain for us fidelity in little things. She will teach us to defend ourselves against cowardice and slackness in the accomplishment of the duties of our state of life.

We are consecrated to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. By the consecration of the Church and humanity to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, His Holiness Pius XII has demonstrated in the most solemn manner the transcendent place which devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary occupies in the actual life of the Church, as well as the inseparability and the parallelism between the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. May we, by the fidelity and by the fervor which we bring to our perpetual adoration, hasten the triumph of the love of the Son and the Mother, the triumph of the Church.

The mission of forming and protecting the Church belongs to Mary. Like a real mother she assisted the Apostles and the disciples in their difficulties; she directed and encouraged them in the painful beginning of the Church. Nor in the course of time has she failed in her mission. She is the best of mothers; the hearts of all the mothers in the world are as a piece of ice compared to hers, said the holy Cure of Ars. She sacrificed her Son according to nature in order to gain sons in the order of grace.

Mary does not abandon her children, she nourishes and protects them after giving them life. She is the Mother, the Queen of the whole human family, the educator of all the brothers of Jesus. She brings the grandeur and the virtues of Jesus down to our level, shows them to us under the most amiable aspect as only a mother can do.

When we adore the Sacred Heart of Jesus, let us adore It with and by the Heart of His Mother. She knows the meaning and the value of our adoration; she is the mother of Jesus, the mother of our souls, the mother of the Church.

At the end of our adoration, united to the Heart of Mary, let us leave our heart in the keeping of the adorable Heart of Jesus.

## CONCLUSION - EPILOGUE

We have come to the end of our work. The sole desire of approaching the truth as closely as possible was our constant guide. If in spite of prayer, study, and the counsel and advice we asked we have written or included some inaccuracies, we regret it sincerely from the bottom of our heart. We have not given our work the rectilinear development of an abstract thesis - the richness and vitality of our subject is broader than the limits of abstraction. We could not escape touching questions which were delicate and somewhat obscure - it would not have been loyal to avoid them. In these we have sought the theological basis which had the most breadth and the most solidity.

It is now time to recollect ourselves and draw up the balance sheet of our results.

It is an acquired point that it is the Sacred Heart of Jesus Which should constitute the central and habitual object of our reparative adoration: to adore and make reparation for the ingratitude, willful ignorance, and un-mindfulness of the love of Jesus in the sacrament of His love, the Eucharist. It is the conclusion which we can draw from the writings of our venerable Founders (first part), conclusion which rejoins the theological considerations (second part). This central object is however in no way exclusive, as indicated by the historic and the doctrinal expositions. That is to say that we must practice our adoration with a great deal of liberty. The mystery of the Blessed Trinity and the dogmas of the Marian devotion both have their indicated place. Let us not fear also to orientate our adoration towards God the Father and God the Holy Ghost Who equally have a right to it. Let us know how to associate it in the most intimate manner with the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Let us love to see our adoration in the magnificent framework of the great dogmas of Trinitarian, Christologic, and Marian theology. But above all, let us apply ourselves to making of our adoration a source of effective sanctity, that it may produce in us the virtues of love, meekness, humility, generosity, and fraternal charity. "*Vita plus est quam disputation*" (Eramus). That which comes before everything else is for us to harness ourselves to the great work of our sanctification. Let us not be of the number who make lengthy dissertations on the life of Our Lord, but who entirely forget to look at Him, to listen to Him, and to imitate Him.

Our joy will be great if the few considerations which we have here given, disappear behind the high and wide doorway which they might have opened to personal reflection, to the spirit of prayers and to personal effort toward perfection. We can do no better than terminate our work in citing the words which Saint Anselm wrote at the head of his "Cur Deus homo":

"In the same way that I become indignant every day when I see poor unworthy artists give our Lord a face without beauty, I fear that the same thing will happen to me, if my treatise is found below the beauty of its subject matter - let us not - forget that no matter how much a man can say and know, there will always remain secrets and higher reasons to consider in this mystery." This fully applies to our subject.

May the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary teach us their mysteries and form us in the school of their love!