

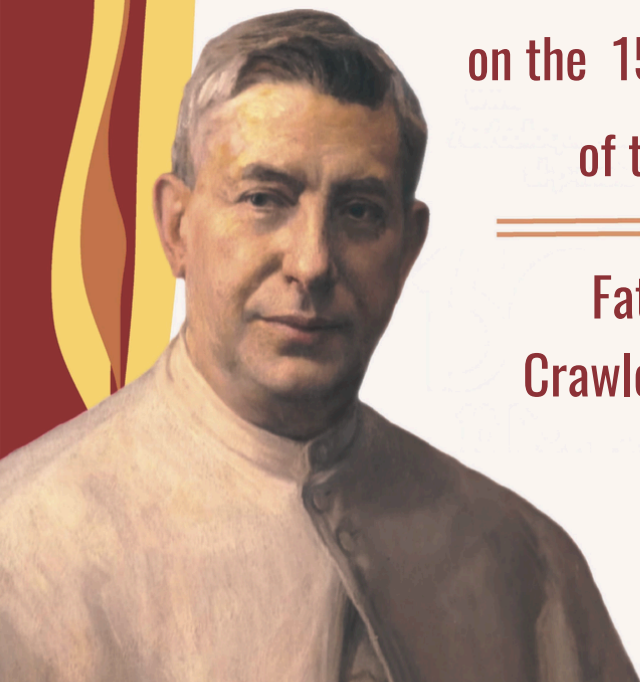


The Heart that transforms homes

International Colloquium

on the 150th anniversary
of the birth of

**Father Mateo
Crawley-Boevey ssc**



Rome, 2026

Études Picpuciennes, 12

**THE HEART
THAT TRANSFORMS HOMES**

International Colloquium

**on the occasion of the 150th Anniversary
of the birth of Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey ssc**

Commission for Spiritual and Historical Patrimony

Rome, 2026

Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey ssc
World Apostle
of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

*We are grateful to Fr. Ultan Naughton ssc,
of the Ireland-England Delegation,
for the English translation of this book.*

INTRODUCTION

In the context of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey ssc (1875-1960), the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts wished to turn its grateful gaze towards the man whom Pius XI called “the world apostle of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.”

The international colloquium held on the 15th and 16th November 2025 at Paray-le-Monial – an emblematic place associated with the message of the Heart of Christ - was a significant milestone in this journey of remembrance, study and spiritual renewal.

Bringing together SSCC brothers and sisters from different countries, together with representatives of other religious communities, lay people and scholars, the meeting was not only a historical evocation, but an exercise in ecclesial discernment: contemplating the life, the spiritual intuitions and the missionary dynamism of Father Matteo, in order to accept his legacy and make it a living task today. With the perspective of his planned beatification process, the figure of the founder of the *Work of the Enthronement* of the Sacred Heart in families, is presented to us not as a relic of the past, but as a prophetic stimulus for our time.

The interventions throughout the colloquium highlighted the biblical, spiritual and historical foundations of the consecration to the Sacred Hearts, the heart of the charism of the Congregation. The grateful memory of Henriette

Aymer, the “Good Mother”, recalled that all apostolic fruitfulness is born of a life deeply rooted in prayer, charity and humble service. This is also the source of Father Mateo's mission: to tirelessly proclaim the love of Christ and to promote the enthronement as a concrete path of family and social renewal.

Various presentations illuminated his life from complementary perspectives. Historical reflections provided a better understanding of the scope of his work and its international expansion. A renewed spiritual reading showed the coherence between his inner experience and his apostolic action.

The analysis of the so-called “publishing phenomenon” of his writings - such as *‘Jesus, King of Love’* - showed Father Mateo's ability to translate the theology of the Heart of Jesus into accessible and pastorally fruitful language. In a particular way, the study of the consecration of Spain to the Sacred Heart in 1919 placed his action in the wider context of twentieth-century ecclesial history.

The very context of the Chapel of Apparitions, where the central moments of our symposium meetings took place, constantly referred us back to the spiritual experience of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque and to the living tradition of the message of the Sacred Heart. When there, in Eucharistic adoration and in the celebration of the Eucharist, we were reminded, that the heart of Father Mateo's apostolate was not a pastoral strategy, but a theological experience of

absolute trust in divine Providence. As the colloquium underlined, this trust is the concrete face of hope.

The second day opened up a particularly topical horizon: the rereading of Father Matthew's message in the light of the contemporary magisterium, especially Pope Francis' encyclical letter *Dilexit nos*. This convergence revealed the profound harmony between the spirituality of the Heart of Jesus and the current call by the Church to rediscover the centrality of the merciful love of Christ at the heart of evangelisation.

The colloquium culminated in the Eucharistic celebration presided over by Mgr. Benoît Rivière, Bishop of Autun, who recalled that the way chosen by God to save us is love and that the only Saviour is Jesus Christ. This affirmation also encapsulates the essential message of Father Mateo: it is not a question of the Christian setting himself up as the saviour of the world, but of allowing the love of the Heart of Christ to transform homes, families and society as a whole.

The present volume brings together the main contributions of that meeting. It is not intended merely as an academic record of an anniversary, but as an instrument of spiritual renewal. The pages that follow offer theological foundations, historical perspectives, pastoral keys and testimonies that allow us to understand the relevance of a mission that remains open.

In a time marked by the fragility of bonds and cultural uncertainty, Father Mateo's invitation resounds with

renewed strength: to make the home a sanctuary of the love of the Heart of Jesus. An evangelised family becomes an evangelising family; a consecrated heart becomes a credible witness of hope. May this book help to transform grateful memory into a missionary commitment and may the spiritual legacy of Father Mateo continue to bear fruit in the Church and in our world.

Commission for Spiritual and Historical Patrimony

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERIOR GENERAL

Dear brothers and sisters, and all participants in the *Colloquium* dedicated to Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey ssc.

Please receive a fraternal greeting at the beginning of this *Colloquium* dedicated to our brother, Mateo Crawley-Boevey of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, apostle of the enthronement of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The 150th anniversary of his birth is a fitting occasion and this *Colloquium* takes place in Paray-le-Monial, the city of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, so precious to Father Mateo.

A little over 100 years before the birth of Father Mateo (27th December 1673, the feast of St. John the Evangelist), Sr Margaret Mary Alacoque had a profound experience of an encounter with Jesus that animated her life and ministry, to show God's passionate love for every man and woman. It is a love that remains offered and available, even when that love is not loved or received. All of this is symbolized in the burning and wounded heart of Jesus.

In the same chapel of the Visitation, on 24th August 1907, Father Mateo received confirmation of a mission, already glimpsed in Chile after the earthquake that devastated the city of Valparaíso in 1906, namely: to touch the hearts of individuals, families, and priests through consecration to the Heart of Jesus. May each person, each family, each Christian and religious community become a 'Bethany' to welcome Our Lord and brother, our king and servant, our

friend, Jesus. This mission would lead Father Mateo to carry out tireless evangelizing activity throughout the world, through the apostolate of enthronement and the preaching of God's love, manifested in the Heart of Jesus.

The two world wars he lived through and the different cultures and Churches he encountered, were a stimulus to find the words and images that would touch people's hearts, bringing them into fresh and renewed contact with God's passionate love for humanity and for the world.

May the longing for peace, for a more just and fraternal world, for solidarity with the poor and for care of our common home, inspire us to deepen the theological, spiritual, and pastoral insights that animated Father Mateo's missionary ministry.

May this be a good time for discussion, reflection, sharing, adoration, and celebration.

Fraternally,

Alberto Toutin ssc
Superior General

I.

THE CONSECRATION TO THE SACRED HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY

*according to Fr. Marie-Joseph Coudrin,
Founder of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts*

*Fr. Bernard Couronne SSCC
(Vice postulator of the Cause of Fr. Pierre Coudrin SSCC)*

CALL

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because the Lord has consecrated me... He has sent me to bring Good News to the poor. (Lk 4:18)

“Consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary is the foundation of our Institute.”¹

On 20th October 1792, Fr. Marie-Joseph Coudrin, a priest who resisted the ecclesiastical reforms of the French Revolution, left the attic² where he had been hiding for several months

¹Marie-Joseph Coudrin, *Memoir on the title of Zealots (Mémoire sur le titre de Zélateurs)*, Annales SSCC, n° 35, 1963, p. 220-223.

² Father Coudrin was hiding in a farm near the château d'Usseau (Vienne).

to escape the revolutionary police. A few weeks earlier, during one of his nightly vigils of Eucharistic Adoration, he received a vision: “we are a group of missionaries meant to spread the Gospel everywhere ... I also envisioned a society of women...”³

It began a missionary intuition that surprised a Church in disarray, divided and battered by the upheavals of history. Climbing down from his hiding place, the young priest⁴ took a few steps and fell to his knees, recounting:

“When I came out.... I prostrated myself at the foot of an oak... and there I devoted myself to death. For I had become a priest with the intention of suffering everything, sacrificing myself for the good Lord, and dying, if necessary, in his service.”⁵

This intuition took shape in an offering “for life and death”, to the very end, in the “service of the Good Lord”. The young priest decided to surrender his life, his future, to his Lord, and to belong to him in order to carry out his will, whatever that may be.

And this surrender of himself “to the Good Lord” is based on an act of total trust in God. To those who advised him to be prudent, he replied: “Go... the Good Lord will take care of me!” He knew the risks he was taking by leaving his attic

³ Hilarion Lucas, *Some remarks about Rev. Fr. Marie Joseph*, 1802, no. 62.

⁴ Father Coudrin had been ordained priest on 4th March 1792, in Paris, in the library of the Irish College.

⁵ *Ibidem* ... no. 64.

to begin his clandestine ministry: he was ready to make any sacrifice, including that of his life.

In response to the Lord's call, his Consecration to the Sacred Hearts would not be a half measure, but a radical commitment, even to the point of martyrdom if necessary.

On the threshold of his missionary adventure, the Founder of Picpus, whom one of his biographers, by the name of Hunermann, nicknamed the “Maquisard of God” (underground servant of God), resolutely followed in the footsteps of the One who “having loved his own, loved them to the end” (Jn 13:1), for he had “come to serve and to give his life for many” (Mk 10:45).

Do we not find here in his confidence the first formulation of the Consecration to the Sacred Hearts?

A few years later, he confided to Sister Gabriel de la Barre, one of the first sisters of his Congregation:

“I am constantly reminded of a painting... which was on the altar of my first sacrifice (Mass)... It was this painting⁶ or rather the one it represents, that received my first resolutions and those of many others ...”⁷

On 24th December 1800, before midnight Mass, the two Founders pronounced their vows in Poitiers, explaining their

⁶ Probably a painting representing the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

⁷ Marie-Joseph Coudrin, *Correspondance*, vol. 2, n° 192, p. 73, Rome 1995.

Consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary in these terms:

“I... vow poverty, chastity and obedience, according to the guidance of the Holy Spirit... as a zealot for the Love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, in whose service I wish to live and die.”

It is almost in these terms that the sisters and brothers of the Congregation still pronounce their vows today. This was the case for Father Mateo on 11th September 1892 in Valparaíso (Chile).

What had been until then a step, a personal choice, becomes a public commitment to God and to a community he brings to life.

“Sacrifice” and “service”, two recurring words, that express what the Consecration to the Sacred Hearts means for Father Coudrin, within the missionary perspective of a new evangelization made necessary by the dechristianization following the Revolution.

In 1816, the two Founders asked the Holy See to approve the Congregation. In response to certain objections raised by Rome, particularly concerning the name “Zealots” in the title of the Congregation, Father Coudrin took up his pen to defend this name passionately. In this “Mémoire sur le titre de Zélateurs” and enlightened by the spiritual insights of his long-time collaborator, Mother Henriette Aymer de la Chevalerie, he sets out the foundations (today we call it, the

historical and spiritual roots) and the meaning of the vocation and mission of the Congregation.⁸ This gives us a better understanding of what consecration to the SSCCs of Jesus and Mary meant to him.

FAITH:

We have recognised and believed in God's love for us.

(I Jn 4:16)

This Consecration is addressed “... to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary”. It is a personal act that creates a deep bond with people: in this case, with Jesus and Mary.

It is first and foremost a confession of Faith. The expression “Sacred Hearts” suggests that the God in whom we believe and to whom we entrust our faith has a Heart, and indeed “has heart”. He loves us in the Heart of Jesus despite our sin, which distances us from Him.

“This lovable Master... fills me with his favours” confesses Father Coudrin in a letter... “even if I am ungrateful, he still loves me, and I feel in my heart that he will always love me; ... Love him without reserve, and I assure you that nothing will separate you from him.”⁹

⁸ Title of Chapter 1 of the *Constitutions* which serves as the charter for the 3 branches of the Family of the Sacred Hearts: brothers, sisters and secular branch.

⁹ Marie-Joseph Coudrin, *Correspondance* (1804-1807), T 2, Rome 1995, Letter of 4 August 1804 to Sr Gabriel de la Barre, n° 192, p. 72.

With St Paul, he could continue:

“What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? No, in all these things, we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8: 35-39).

But this love is wounded: Jesus on the cross offers us a sign that speaks for itself - his pierced, wounded Heart, reminding us of a love that has been betrayed and rejected (Jn 19: 32-37).

In this manifestation of God's love, the Virgin Mary is closely associated with her Son, but not in the same way as the expression Sacred Hearts might suggest. Mary at the foot of the Cross, with us, looks at the “One we have pierced’ and offers her sorrow: “The Heart of Mary has been pierced (cf. Simeon's prediction at the Presentation), and it is by this path that we go to the Heart of Jesus”¹⁰, explains Father Coudrin in his *Advice on Adoration*. It is at the foot of the Cross that Jesus gives her to us as Mother: a new way for God to reveal His Love in its maternal tenderness.

¹⁰ José Vicente González, *Fr. Coudrin, Mother Aymer and their community* (French edition); IV, 151, *Avis sur l'Adoration* (Fr. Coudrin).

Consecration to the Sacred Hearts therefore takes its source and its impetus from this confession of faith in the Father's Love manifested in the Heart of Jesus and in the Heart of Mary, His Mother and our Mother.

REPARATION:

God has reconciled us to himself through Christ, and he has given us the ministry of reconciliation ... Let yourselves be reconciled to God.” (2 Cor. 5: 18-20)

Addressing the Roman Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, Fr. Coudrin offers a stark diagnosis of the state of the Church and the de-Christianisation of society:

“Everywhere we meet only Christians who are unfaithful or cowardly, forgetting all the duties of Christianity or fulfilling them only with sluggish half-heartedness ... they no longer know what the love of God means.”¹¹

It sounds like St Francis of Assisi exclaiming: “Love is not loved!”

It is in this post-revolutionary historical context that we must hear and understand what the Founders of the Congregation of Picpus meant by “Consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary”. For it was from this conviction that their commitment was born:

¹¹ Marie-Joseph Coudrin, *Memories on the title of Zealots* (6 December 1816), *Annals of SSCC*, n°35, 1963, p.220

“Placed in such circumstances, wishing to call men to trust in and love Jesus Christ, we dedicate ourselves by our vows to this good work.”¹²

In the Circular in which he announced the approval of his Congregation by Pope Pius VII, the Founder did not fail to recall:

“The greatness of our vocation. We are destined to adore the Heart of Jesus; to make reparation for the outrages he receives every day. We must enter into the interior pain of this Sacred Heart...”¹³

Let us remember that the two Founders and their first disciples intended to give a reparative meaning to their missionary religious life. Consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary will therefore have a reparative character. It unfolds within the realm of relationships and commits those who make it to restore the bonds broken or weakened by sin – between God and humanity, and among us. The consecrated person thus enters into a dynamic of forgiveness and reconciliation by uniting themselves to the Cross of Christ. As Fr. Coudrin affectionally put it, they become “a child of the Cross”.

¹² Ibidem. p. 220-221.

¹³ Marie-Joseph Coudrin, Circular of 14 April 1817, Annals of the SSCC, n° 23, 1960, p. 177.

LOVE:

There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. (Jn 15:13)

The use of the word 'Heart' suggests that 'Consecration to the Sacred Hearts', is first and foremost, an act of love that responds to the love of the Father manifested in the Pierced Heart of Jesus and the Heart of the Virgin Mary. Father Coudrin writes:

"If we are truly imbued with the tenderness of the Sacred Heart of Jesus for the salvation of souls, how can we fail to be inflamed with zeal to respond to the love of such a good Master? If we reflect on the maternal tenderness of the Heart of Mary....can we fail to feel our soul ablaze with a holy zeal to honour the Virgin of virgins."¹⁴

Consecration is a response to a call, a proposal of friendship from Jesus (cf. Jn 15:15). It draws us to enter into this divine dialogue between God and humanity, which is the guiding thread running through the history of the world and our own personal sacred stories.

It is born of an encounter and not from mere reflection – from heart to heart. It is a loving attachment to the person and work of Jesus, in the manner of Mary, the handmaid of the Lord and of his plan of love.

¹⁴ Marie-Joseph Coudrin, *Memories on the title of Zealots* (6th December 1816), *Annals of the SSCC*, n° 35, 1963, p. 221.

Yes, with St John, we can affirm: “He loved us first” (1 Jn 4: 19). The Consecration to the Sacred Hearts is a response of love to God’s love for us, manifested in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

THE WAY:

If anyone wishes to come after me, they must deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow me. For whoever wishes to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for my sake and the Gospel will find it. (Mk 16:24-25)

A Consecration is not just a declaration of intent; it must be lived day by day. The task of repairing humanity and the world in response to the Father’s love, is what Father Coudrin and his disciples dedicated themselves to through their vows. This is the only way to respond to this call, by being free to love, which is the aim of the vows. They are the concrete, daily expressions of this consecration to the Sacred Hearts. They form a way of life that aligns with that of Jesus who is “the Way” for all who respond to His call (John 14:6). “In Jesus we find everything,” says Father Coudrin, ‘his birth, his life and his death: that is our Rule’.¹⁵ From the very first lines of the Constitutions submitted to the Holy See, he sets out the path as follows:

“The aim of our Institute is to retrace the four ages of the life of Our Lord Jesus Christ: his childhood, his hidden life, his evangelical life and his crucified life;

¹⁵ Marie-Joseph Coudrin, *First Rule of the Good Father*, LEBP 2197.

and to propagate devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.”¹⁶

Consecration to the Sacred Hearts places us from the outset in the ‘following of Christ’ along the path of the Gospel. This journey, “with our eyes fixed on Jesus”. (Hebrews 12: 1-2), is emphasised by Father Coudrin as ‘indispensable’ in his “Memoir” on the title of “Zealots”.

- They must constantly “sacrifice themselves out of zeal for the Lord...they will fail in their most essential vow the moment they want to live only for themselves and not work for the salvation of their brothers...”¹⁷
- Adoration... a mission entrusted by the Church to the Congregation - to ‘adore, praise, thank, make reparation... like Jesus Christ before his Father’; to adore,¹⁸ for Him and with Him.
- Zeal, in other words, the zeal to live out this loving response to the love of the Heart of Jesus, who loved ‘to the end’ (Jn 13:1), that is, all the way to the cross. For “their vocation is entirely one of zeal, and a burning zeal!”¹⁹

¹⁶ Annales SS CC, 1961, n° 27, *Constitutions*, n+(1), p. 179.

¹⁷ Annales SSSC, 1963, n° 35, p. 221, *Memoir on the title of Zealots*.

¹⁸ José Vicente González, *Fr. Coudrin, Mother Amyer and their community* (French Edition); IV, 151, Advice on Adoration (P. Coudrin).

¹⁹ Annales SSSC, 1963, n° 35, p. 222, *Memoir on the title of Zealots*.

THIS CONSECRATION IS A MISSION:

The Burning Bush still burns...

This is how our Founder lived and spoke of Consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Today, his spiritual heirs express it in different terms.

The Brothers' *Constitutions* spell out the meaning:

“We live the consecration inherent in any religious profession as our ‘consecration to the Sacred Hearts’. We are called to enter with Jesus, as Mary did, into the plan of the Father for the salvation of the world through love.”²⁰

Chapter I of the *Constitutions*, common to the 3 branches of the Congregation, in no. 2 mentions: “The Consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary is the foundation of our Institute”. It adds that

“From this consecration our mission has its origin: to contemplate, live and announce to the world God’s love, which was made flesh in Jesus. Mary has been associated in a singular way with the mystery of God made man and with His saving work: this is what is expressed in the union of the heart of Jesus and the heart of Mary.

²⁰ *Constitutions and Statutes of the Brothers of the Congregation of the SSCC*, no. 13, Rome 2017.

Our consecration calls us to live the dynamism of saving love and fills us with zeal for our mission.”²¹

In the course of the Founder's journeys and writings, we have gathered - all too briefly, of course – some aspects of what he called the Consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Doors have been opened to what could be workshops to deepen our commitment as consecrated persons. The work is underway! It is like the garden of the Beloved from the Song of Songs. The door is open to whoever is led there by the Spirit. So, let Him speak to our hearts (cf. Hosea 2:16): “Arise, my friend, and come, my dove, into the clefts of the rock” - could this cleft be the wound in the Heart of Jesus... and in our hearts? “My beloved is mine and I am His” (Song of Songs 2: 13-14,16).

*Heart of Jesus burning with love for us,
Fill our Heart with Love for you!*²²

Pope Leo XIV: General Audience 2025

General Audience 2025

*The centre of our faith and the heart of our hope are
firmly rooted in the resurrection of Christ.*

²¹ *Constitutions and Statutes of the Brothers of the Congregation of the SSCC*, no. 2, Rome 2017.

²² Introductory verse of the Hours of the Little Office of the Sacred Heart of Jesus - *Petits Offices des Sacrés Cœurs de Jésus et de Marie* - Paris 1961.

When we read the Gospels attentively, we realise that this mystery is surprising not only because a man - the Son of God - rose from the dead, but also because of the way in which he did so. Jesus' resurrection is not a pompous triumph; it is not revenge or vengeance against his enemies. It is a marvellous testimony to the capacity of love to rise again after a great defeat and continue on its irrepressible way.

When we rise again after a trauma caused by others, our first reaction is often anger, the desire to make someone pay for what we have suffered. The Risen One does not react in this way. Having emerged from the depths of death, Jesus does not take revenge. He does not come back with displays of power but gently shows the joy of a love greater than any wound and stronger than any betrayal.

The Risen One feels no need to re-establish or assert his superiority. He appears to his friends - the disciples - and he does so with the utmost discretion, without forcing them to accept him. His only desire is to be in communion with them again, helping them to overcome their feelings of guilt. We can see this very well in the Upper Room, where the Lord appears to his friends who are locked in fear.

It is a moment that expresses extraordinary power: Jesus, after having descended into the abyss of death to free those imprisoned there, enters the locked room of those

paralysed by fear, bringing a gift that no one would have dared to hope for: peace.

His greeting is simple, almost ordinary: "Peace be with you" (Jn 20:19). But it is accompanied by a gesture so beautiful that it is almost inappropriate: Jesus shows the disciples his hands and his side, marked by His passion. Why reveal these wounds to those who, in those dramatic hours, had denied and abandoned him? Why not hide these signs of pain and avoid reopening the wound of shame?

Yet the Gospel tells us that when the disciples saw the Lord, they rejoiced (cf. Jn 20:20). The reason for this is profound: Jesus is now fully reconciled with all that He suffered. There is no shadow of resentment. The wounds do not serve to reproach, but to confirm a love that is stronger than any infidelity. They are proof that at the very moment of our failure, God did not retreat. He has not abandoned us.

In this way, the Lord shows himself naked and unarmed. He demands nothing - he does not manipulate. It's a love that doesn't humiliate - it's the peace of someone who has suffered for love and can finally say that it was worth it.

We, on the other hand, often hide our wounds out of pride, or fear of appearing weak.

We say, "it's nothing", "that's water under the bridge", but in truth, we are not at peace with the betrayals that

have hurt us. Sometimes we prefer to hide our struggle to forgive so as not to appear vulnerable or risk being hurt again. This is not the case with Jesus. He offers his wounds as a guarantee of forgiveness. And he shows that the resurrection is not the erasure of the past, but its transfiguration into a hope of mercy.

Then the Lord repeats: "Peace be with you! And he adds: "As the Father has sent me, so I send you" (v. 21). With these words, he entrusts the apostles with a task that is not so much a power as a responsibility: to be instruments of reconciliation in the world. As if he were saying, "Who will be able to proclaim the merciful face of the Father, if not you, who have experienced failure and forgiveness?"

Jesus breathes on them and gives them the Holy Spirit (v. 22). It was the same Spirit who sustained Him in obedience to the Father and in love, right up to the cross. From that moment on, the apostles could no longer keep silent about what they had seen and heard: God forgives, lifts up, and restores trust.

This is the heart of the Church's mission: not to wield power over others, but to share the joy of being loved without deserving it. This is the force that gave birth to and continues to give birth to the Christian community: men and women who discovered the beauty of returning to life so that they can give it to others.

Dear brothers and sisters, we too are sent. To us too, the Lord shows his wounds and says: Peace be with you. Do

*not be afraid to show your wounds healed by mercy.
Don't be afraid to draw near to those who are trapped in
fear or guilt. May the breath of the Spirit make us witnesses
to this peace and this love that is stronger than all
defeats.*

II.

THE CONSECRATION

TO THE SACRED HEARTS

as the foundation of the Congregation

following the example of Mother Henriette Aymer

Sr. Jeanne Cadiou ssc

(Vice postulator of the Cause of Mother Henriette Aymer ssc)

The Good Mother

I would like to begin with a quotation, which may seem like a joke in the place where we are. It's a quotation from the person who will accompany us for the 20 minutes I have been allotted this morning. The woman we are accustomed to calling the Good Mother (Henriette Aymer de la Chevalerie, was born on 11th August 1767 and died in Paris on 23rd November 1834) wrote in a note addressed to Father Coudrin on 3rd February 1802:

“The good Lord let me know that he had shown himself bodily to Sr Margaret Mary Alacoque so that she might make devotion to his Sacred Heart known. He granted this grace to the daughters of the Visitation because their rule is gentle and comfortable for everyone, even though it requires a great deal of interior spirit. He poured out on them a certain charity in order to make

them love and spread this devotion. Now that it has been adopted, he wants an Order that is destined to adore his Heart... that enters into the interior pain of that Heart... he wants us to enter particularly into the interior crucifixion of his Heart. That's why he only communicates himself inwardly and not perceptibly.”

The framework is set. The direction is given. If there are links between the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts and the Order of the Visitation - particularly through Father Mateo, to whom this *Colloquium* is dedicated - let us not confuse our religious family with the Order of the Visitation. If there was a Father Mateo, world apostle of the Sacred Heart, it is because there was a Pierre and Henriette, a Good Father and a Good Mother (as their first disciples called them), founders of a congregation whose foundation was, and still is, consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

While Bernard has taken on the task of presenting the male face of our Institute in the person of Father Coudrin, I will try to show how the Good Mother embodied her very personal way of living the Gospel and proclaiming the Good News.

Henriette did not engage in lofty theological reflections, but rather embodied faith in even the smallest things. I would say without hesitation that she paid passionate attention to daily life, rooted in her own spiritual experience. In a way, fully of her time – and as Pope Francis said in his beautiful

*II. The Consecration to the Sacred Hearts as the foundation of the
Congregation following the example of Mother Henriette Aymer*

encyclical *Dilexit nos* - Henriette was a woman “convinced that the world could change from the Heart” (DN 28).

The very serious and well-documented “Cahier de spiritualité” N° 10 - published by the brothers when the “Rule of Life” was being prepared - notes in No. 330:

“The wording 'the Sacred Hearts' must be related to a communication from the Good Mother in which the name of the new community was given to her: *Zélateurs et Zélatrices de l'Amour des Sacrés Cœurs de Jésus et de Marie*” (Zealots of the love of the Sacred Hearts....)

For Henriette, it all began at the Hospitalières prison in Poitiers, where she was confined with her mother from October 1793 to November 1794. Denounced by a neighbour, this young girl from the aristocracy of Poitiers, and her mother, were imprisoned for sheltering refractory priests who were celebrating Mass in their home. What's more, they were mother and sister to two young emigrants!

The conditions of imprisonment were harsh, especially as they in no way corresponded to the worldly entertainments of the good old days, memories of which were still fresh in people's minds.

The thought of death was on everyone's mind. As a good and simple Christian (baptised in Saint Georges de Noigné, her native village, on 14th August 1767), Henriette was extremely charitable towards her mother and their fellow inmates and was particularly kind to the jailer's daughter. When a few

Catholic priests were able to enter the prisons, Henriette took advantage of the opportunity to make a general confession, followed by communion, of which she would later say: “I wanted to be all for God! ... if I had not taken advantage of this grace, my conversion would have failed.” This laid the foundation for a life wholly dedicated to God and others through the Eucharist and charity. She had discovered a source... though she didn’t yet know what to call it. Her spiritual vigilance was awakened. Henriette would strive to keep her lamp lit. The practice of charity and perseverance in prayer were the seeds of what would become her life for the next 40 years...

On leaving prison, Henriette was not quite the same person she had been when she entered... She longed for time alone to reflect and pray... She had become a ‘soul of prayer’. So, she sought out and found places in the city of Poitiers where pious people gathered clandestinely, in particular for Mass and for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Her favourite group was the “Association du Sacré Cœur”, which was set up a few months previously on rue d’Oléron, then rue du Moulin à Vent. “To nourish the fervour,” recounts one of the original historians, “a painting depicting the Heart of Jesus was secretly drawn.” Henriette soon joined the Association and was assigned an hour of adoration. She would later say that this was the beginning of “her destiny”.

Her aspirations and the personal demands of a life of self-giving led her to intensify her prayer, and she chose as her spiritual director Father Coudrin, a newly ordained priest

*II. The Consecration to the Sacred Hearts as the foundation of the
Congregation following the example of Mother Henriette Aymer*

with an ardent zeal, because, she said, “he preaches as I pray”. This was the beginning of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, an Institute of men and women who still devote themselves to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

Henriette freely chose, upon leaving the Hospitalières, to live henceforth for God, and for God alone. The earliest handwritten documents preserved in our archives bear witness to this. This life of total dedication translated into a commitment to religious life in service of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

The first pages of her correspondence (letters to members of the external Association and to the capitular vicars of Poitiers) speak of “the Association of the Sacred Heart of Jesus under the special protection of the Blessed Virgin Mary, His Mother” - an expression repeated in the formula of the first “resolutions placed in the hands of the Blessed Virgin... so that she might present them to the Heart of Jesus.” Marian devotion is deeply rooted in the spiritual journey of the future foundress.

This is not about making grand theological reflections... Henriette had already welcomed Jesus and Mary into her home, into her heart. She knew them by heart. She was filled with them... as if she saw them, spoke with them, learned their words, imitated their gestures. Everything she learned and lived day by day, she learned at the feet of the Blessed Sacrament, in adoration on a kneeler. Everything

*II. The Consecration to the Sacred Hearts as the foundation of the
Congregation following the example of Mother Henriette Aymer*

she understood and deepened took place within her interior life. It was a perpetual heart-to-heart that illuminated her and translated itself into an ever-renewed understanding of God's love. From this faith sprang a burning charity. How can we fail to mention Saint Teresa of Avila, to whom Henriette has sometimes been compared? In her "Interior Castle", Teresa wrote: "The measure of a person's perfection is their degree of charity, not the amount of data and knowledge they can accumulate"!

At heart, the theology of the Good Mother is love. Strengthened by her definitive consecration to the Sacred Hearts on Christmas Eve of 1800, Henriette lived divinely, radiating affection and tenderness toward all, especially each of her sisters.

In the manner of Jesus, gentle and humble of heart, Henriette showed docility in all circumstances - joyful ones, like the arrival of new young women to newly opened communities; and painful ones, like the material hardships, illnesses, and deaths of many sisters.

In imitation of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Henriette was deeply generous. She gave up all her possessions to purchase the house that would shelter the first community. She gave herself unreservedly, without division, offering up her physical and moral sufferings, choosing to put herself in the last and most inconvenient place.

In the spirit of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Henriette infused both small and great things with active, vibrant,

and practical love. She had a taste for God, a taste for living in God, and she knew how to share it with joyful energy with those around her. She communicated the joy of living together in community and expressed gratitude for even the smallest gesture of kindness toward her.

Like Jesus and Mary, though accustomed to worldly life in her youth, Henriette sought to fulfil God's will, paying a high price beyond her own aspirations, desires, and emotions. "Her strong character never let her fall into illusion", said Augustin Coudrin, nephew of the Good Father.

Following the example of Jesus and Mary and embracing Paul's declaration - "I want to know nothing but Jesus, and Jesus crucified". Henriette accepted trials, penance, and mortifications with faith, even to "being on the Cross," allowing her heart to be pierced. With Mary, mother and servant, she often found herself at the foot of the Cross. From Mary, she learned perseverance.

In imitation of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, in whom she found refuge, Henriette was filled with zeal and trust to proclaim God's love. She set out, leaving Poitiers with half the community to establish a new community with only a few sisters and almost no material resources. Her fruitful apostolate with children - whom she wanted to see happy in the schools linked to each of the 18 foundations - is a sign of the intensity of love she showed to her sisters. The radiance of her charity bore beautiful fruit.

*II. The Consecration to the Sacred Hearts as the foundation of the
Congregation following the example of Mother Henriette Aymer*

Listening to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Henriette was set apart, she was consecrated and she consecrated herself to them. Following their example, she let herself be energised by the Love of God they reveal, and she found herself filled with an apostolic zeal that was continually nourished and renewed during her hours of adoration.

At the risk of committing an anachronism, since the expression dates from Christmas 1975 (an anniversary for our Congregation!), I like to say that through her consecration to the Sacred Hearts, Henriette contributed, in her own time and in her own way, to the building of “the civilisation of Love” by drawing from the source of God's Love, revealed in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

During these days of the colloquium dedicated to Father Mateo, my hope is that we become ever more convinced that the life and work of this great apostle is built upon a lineage of men and women who preceded him, and that he followed in Henriette - the Good Mother's - footsteps.

III.

BIOGRAPHICAL OUTLINE OF FR. MATEO CRAWLEY-BOEVEY SSSC (1875-1960)

*Fr. Andrzej Łukawski ssc
(General Postulator)*

Introduction

The celebration of the 150th anniversary of the birth of Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey (1875-1960), a religious of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (Picpus) in Paray-le-Monial, raises a fundamental question: why do we dedicate such special attention to this figure, and why are we celebrating his milestone anniversary in Paray-le-Monial, where the Congregation is not present?

Those who have encountered this extraordinary religious will easily provide the right answer: we are talking about one of the greatest Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the 20th century, a man of profound spirituality and enormous influence on others, who, right here in Paray-le-Monial, in 1907, began his so fruitful, global mission: the renewal of Christian families and nations through the enthronement of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This is recalled

in the fresco in the Chapel of Apparitions, which depicts the figure of Father Mateo.

This is the first part of the answer, which concerns his apostolic work and its blessed effects. The second part, which is only just beginning to emerge in public awareness, is the intention to begin the beatification process of Father Mateo. The Postulator General of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts was authorized to do so by the 40th General Chapter of the Brothers of the Congregation, gathered in September 2024 in Rome. The desire to elevate the founder of the *Work of Enthronement* to the altars, however, has not only emerged now - but it has also been alive and remains alive in those who have encountered Father Mateo since his death. For various reasons, this desire has not yet been realized.

The purpose of this lecture is not to provide an in-depth study of the life and work of Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey. This will certainly happen in the future. At this point, it is only a matter of recalling the basic information about this exceptional priest, which will require further research and analysis in the context of the planned commencement of his beatification process.

The beginnings of his vocation in the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts

Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey was born in Tingo (Arequipa), Peru, on 18th November 1875. At his baptism he received the names: Edward Maxim. His mother, Maria (née Murga),

was a Peruvian and a devout Catholic; and his father, Charles Octave, was an Englishman and a Protestant, who later converted to Catholicism. In 1884, the family moved to Valparaiso, Chile, where at the age of 15 he entered the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts. He made his perpetual vows on 11th August 1892, in Valparaíso, and was ordained a priest on 17th December 1898, in the Cathedral of Santiago (Chile).

In 1897, while still a seminarian, he became fascinated by a painting of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It was the painting used by the Ecuadorian President, Garcia Moreno, during the solemn consecration, in 1874, of that country to the Sacred Heart. It later became a kind of banner for Father Mateo's enthronement crusade. It was most likely then that the young religious' heart was filled with the vision of his future work: to permeate social structures with the spirit of Christ and the Gospel. How? The most important means seemed to be a deeper Christian formation of families. The concrete and visible sign of their belonging to Jesus was to be the solemn enthronement of the picture of the Sacred Heart in the central place of homes.

From 1898 to 1906, the numerous contacts that Father Mateo established as a professor of the Faculty of Law with young people and their parents, allowed him to discover the meaning and importance of the family as the basic unit of society and the Church. Seeing the enormous work that had to be done in this apostolate, due to the shortage of priests, he turned to the lay faithful. He was not only interested in help to distribute images and leaflets, but

above all with help to prepare families to welcome the Heart of the Lord Jesus as the King of their homes and work environments. During the terrible earthquake that struck Chile in August 1906, this network of apostolate was transformed into a network of assistance to the victims. The health of the young priest, who had spared no effort to save the victims of the disaster, was seriously damaged at that time. He was offered rest and a trip to Europe.

The Founder and Zealous Apostle of the *Enthronement Work of the Sacred Heart of Jesus*

On 28th April 1907, Father Mateo arrived in Braine-le-Comte, Belgium, to meet with the Superior General of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts, to whom he presented for approval the vision of his future apostolic work. Then, in June 1907, he went to Rome, where he was received in audience by Pope Pius X. He presented to the Holy Father the main principles of the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in families. When he asked Pius X if he would allow him to dedicate his life to this social crusade of love, the Pope replied: “No, my son, I do not allow you; I command you to dedicate your whole life to this matter of social salvation...”²³

On 24th August of that same year, he arrived in Paray-le-Monial in France. Having entered the Chapel of Apparitions, he knelt near the reliquary of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque.

²³ André Mark, *Le Père Mateo. Éléments biographiques*, dans : Horizon Blanc, n° 1 (190) 2007.

Two sisters saw him enter: he was thin, very pale and could barely stand on his feet. However, during prayer, he rose and felt completely healthy. What happened next, he himself described in the introduction to his most famous book, "Jesus, King of Love". It was a turning point in his life, a kind of confirmation by the Sacred Heart of the path he wanted to follow, fulfilling one of the promises given by the Lord Jesus to St. Margaret Mary: "I will send an abundant blessing upon the homes in which the image of my Heart will be especially honoured."

Healed now in body, given the blessing of the Holy Father and his General Superior, Father Mateo, before returning to Chile, went on a journey to the Holy Land. But he didn't mean to make an ordinary pilgrimage. It had a deliberate intention. Father Mateo wanted to teach families to live according to the spirit of the Gospel, to transform homesteads after the model of Nazareth and Bethany. He wanted his sermons to be primarily evangelical, to draw inspiration and form not so much from dogmatic books, but directly from the Gospel. And nothing prepares one better for understanding this Holy Book than a stay in Palestine. From then on, words such as Calvary, Tabor, Sinai, Nazareth and Bethlehem all took on a special meaning on his lips, not only because he had delved into their content, but also because he had retained in his memory their enchanting image.

After completing this groundbreaking expedition to the 'Old Continent' and the Holy Land, Father Mateo returned

to his homeland, Chile, to begin the enthronement crusade there.²⁴

Over time, he expanded it to other Latin American countries. He gave retreats, explaining the essence of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He successfully conducted many enthronements of the Sacred Heart in families. Informed of the success of the enthronement in Chile, Pope Pius X sent Father Mateo a special blessing, adding in his own hand: "Apostolicam benedictionem ex animo impertimus"²⁵ (We wholeheartedly impart our Apostolic blessing).

After several years of very fruitful missionary work in Chile and other South American countries, Father Mateo decided to try his apostolate in Europe. He arrived at a time when war had broken out. It would seem that these circumstances would have a negative impact on the success of his apostolic work. However, it turned out differently. Huge crowds flocked to his conferences. Here, too, as before in Latin America, profound changes took place in many souls. From France, Father Mateo went to Spain. For a few months he preached there, mainly in Madrid, always with great success. However, difficulties began. The Bishop of Madrid banned him from preaching in his diocese, claiming that the devotion he was propagating had no theological basis.

²⁴ *Dzieło Intronizacji Najświętszego Serca Jezusa w ujęciu jego założyciela – o. Mateo Crawley-Boevey*, elab. A. Łukawski, Wydawnictwo Vox Domini, Katowice 2008, pp. 56-57.

²⁵ Benedictus Mikołajewski, *Wstęp*, in: Mateo Crawley-Boevey, *Oblicze Miłości*, vol. I, Wydawnictwo OO. Karmelitów Bosych, Kraków 1966, p. XLI.

The despondent missionary went to Paray-le-Monial to regain his spirit and then tried his luck in Paris. Unfortunately, he encountered the same difficulties as in Madrid. This time, Archbishop Gauthey, the Ordinary of Besançon, warned against the enthronement of the Sacred Heart, considering it a dangerous novelty. He also forbade Father Mateo to use the name “enthronement”. Archbishop Leon Gauthey considered the cult of the Sacred Heart to be his domain. He had been a chaplain at Paray-le-Monial and was also the biographer of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. He published her writings critically. Each wanted to be faithful to his own idea. Archbishop Gauthey wanted to be faithful to science, and Father Mateo stood firm by his intuition, by the sign of his vocation, approved by the Pope.²⁶

After his experience with Archbishop Gauthey, Father Mateo went to Cardinal Hector Irenaeus Sevin, Archbishop of Lyon, who welcomed him with the enthusiasm and cordiality of a father. The Cardinal asked Father Mateo to preach the message of love on a large scale in his area.²⁷ He considered the *Work of the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart* to be the crowning achievement of all the works in his Archdiocese. In doing so, Cardinal Sevin acted as if in defiance of all of Father Mateo's opponents.²⁸ We see, then, that from the very beginning, his apostolic work generated two extreme attitudes: enthusiasm on the one hand and opposition on the other.

²⁶ Ibid., p. XLIII.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., p. XLIV.

The adversities he encountered, however, did not demoralize Father Mateo; rather, they motivated him to seek ways to overcome them. How? By appealing to the recognized authorities of his time. To this end, Father Mateo came to Rome in April 1915 to present to the Pope the difficulties he had encountered in his work. He also requested a theological consultation from Cardinal Louis Billot, a Jesuit. The Cardinal enjoyed a reputation as a great theologian. Having taught for a quarter of a century at the Gregorian University, he exerted a great influence on his students. Father Mateo approached him, not so much as an undisputed teacher, but as a Jesuit. He did so because, since the time of St. Claude de la Colombière, the spiritual director of St. Margaret Mary, Jesuit priests had been the most fervent promoters of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.²⁹

Responding to Father Mateo's request, Cardinal Billot wrote him a letter, dated 26th April 1915, in which he masterfully demonstrates the theological and historical legitimacy of the Enthronement. At the same time, he also captured and emphasized what is new in it, namely a family and marital spirituality based on the sacrament of marriage and considered in the light of the Sacred Heart. Benedict XV himself, in response to Father Mateo, wrote a letter to him, published on 6th May 1915, in "Acta Apostolicae Saedis," in which he supported his work, explained the essence of the enthronement, and fully approved of the work. This was a tremendous success for Father Mateo, and a sign of

²⁹ Marcel Bocquet, *Le Père Mateo. L'amour présent au monde*, Roma 1963, p. 88.

recognition for his apostolic efforts by the Church's supreme pastor.

The sanctuaries in Paray-le-Monial, Lisieux and Ars were places that Father Mateo liked to visit and which gave him new inspiration. He spoke of the appeal that Jesus made to the world through St. Margaret Mary Alacoque. From St. Thérèse of Lisieux he adopted her "little way of holiness", which consisted in sanctifying ordinary everyday activities - fervent love, the simplicity of a child, complete trust, all of these characteristics borrowed from St. Thérèse. In his conferences for priests, he often referred to the Parish Priest of Ars - St. John Mary Vianney.

From the point of view of religious law, Father Mateo's life was a paradoxical situation. He could easily be found in Honolulu, Brussels, Tokyo or Manila rather than in the religious house of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts.³⁰ This status of "wandering religious" was given to him by the president of Peru, who appointed Father Mateo as a canonical advisor to the Peruvian Embassy to the Holy See. This minor event definitely made it easier for Father Mateo to conduct such extensive apostolic activity, making him an "eternal wanderer", a "Jew - a wanderer of the Sacred Heart", as he liked to call himself. The title of advisor gave him the right to a diplomatic passport, and consequently, the ability to cross borders even during warfare.³¹

³⁰ Benedictus Mikołajewski, *Wstęp*, in: Mateo Crawley-Boevey, *Oblicze Miłości*, op. cit., vol. I, p. XLV.

³¹ Marcel Bocquet, *Le Père Mateo. L'amour présent au monde*, op. cit., p. 97.

Father Mateo wrote that God's work requires a triple consecration: the approval of the Church, a miracle, and adversity. He himself was successful, but he also had to struggle with many difficulties. However, the adversities confirmed his belief that he was on the right path. The year 1918 was a time of great trial for him in relation to both the Enthronement movement and the competencies of the scope of its work. The matter was brought to Pope Benedict XV and the decision of the Holy See saved Father Mateo's beloved work.³²

Despite the difficulties, Father Mateo preached the love of the Heart of Jesus in dozens of countries around the world. He was charismatic and had great use of words. He was an ardent talker on the Heart of Jesus. This is how Pius XI described him. When he preached in Belgium's Namurois Cathedral, the cathedral was filled to capacity an hour before the sermon.³³ Father Mateo spoke in a very simple way. Simplicity was one of the features of his sermons. He spoke freely and naturally. The listeners knew that his words flowed from sincere faith and love. The dominant theme of all his sermons and conferences was love.

The various Popes, appreciating the importance of Father Mateo's work, often wrote him letters and received him in audiences.³⁴ At one such audience, Pope Benedict XV, hearing

³² Benedictus Mikołajewski, *Wstęp*, in: Mateo Crawley-Boevey, *Oblicze Miłości*, op. cit., vol. I, p. XLVII.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. XLVIII.

³⁴ Benedictus Mikołajewski, *Przez 22 kraje. Boży wagabunda - Ojciec Mateo*, Biuro Studiów i Propozycji, 1984, pp. 13-14.

of Father Mateo's successes, asked him about the reason for them. When Father Mateo told the Pope, that he spoke only of love, mercy and the kingdom of the Heart of Jesus, Benedict XV replied: "When priests speak of love, they become all-powerful."³⁵

The various Popes who he met, recognized the importance of Father Mateo's apostolic work, and did not want to link him to any specific territory. Father Mateo himself said that he did not want to be a parish priest.

The Peruvian ambassador intervened twice with the Holy See regarding Father Mateo's nomination as Archbishop of Lima and his subsequent creation as a cardinal. The intervention was always ineffective. Pius XI personally explained to the ambassador that the nomination of Father Mateo as Archbishop of Lima would tie him to a specific territory, which in turn would be a great loss for the entire Church. Pius XI added that Father Mateo was a "flying soldier" of the King of Love, not a "garrison settled in a fortress."³⁶

Father Mateo was convinced that his task was not to sit in a religious house or to run a parish, but to proclaim to the whole world the love of God - the love of the Heart of Jesus.

³⁵ Ibid., p.13.

³⁶ Benedictus Mikołajewski, *Wstęp*, in: Mateo Crawley-Boevey, *Oblicze Miłości*, op. cit., vol. I, p. XLIX; cf. E. Rinkes, *Le Père Mateo menace de la mitre*, in: *Annales Congregationis Sacrorum Cordium*, no. 28 (1961), pp. 274-285.

He was truly a missionary soul with a worldwide reach. This is also how Pius XI assessed him.³⁷

Throughout his life, Father Mateo visited 22 countries around the world,³⁸ primarily in the Americas, Europe, and Asia.³⁹ It should be added, however, that his teachings also reached countries he was unable to visit in written form, such as Poland, Lithuania, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, and some African countries. Father Mateo spoke in five modern languages, but also used Latin, especially when giving conferences to priests and seminarians.

In addition to the enthronement, Father Mateo strongly promoted the Holy Hour in general, but in particular in Catholic families. This hour of night adoration during the week or at least once a month in every Catholic family, was to bring the household members closer to the heart of God's love. Father Mateo strove to ensure that through the reign of the love of the Heart of God in Catholic families, that the social love of the King of love would reign. In his sermons, he opened the entire Gospel to his listeners, showing Jesus who inflamed the faithful with the love of his Divine Heart.

In addition to the spoken word, Father Mateo also used the written word. It should be added that his written work

³⁷ Benedictus Mikołajewski, *Przez 22 kraje...*, op. cit., p. 14.

³⁸ A detailed list of all Father Mateo's apostolic journeys from 1908 to 1944 can be found in: *Le Règne des Sacrés Cœurs*, No. 1 (1946), pp. 21-22.

³⁹ Cf. E. Rinkes, *Mémoires du R. P. Mateo. Le P. Mateo et les voyages*, in: *Annales Congregationis Sacrorum Cordium*, No. 55 (1968), pp. 201-207.

reflects to an imperfect degree what he expressed with his entire personality when he spoke – a vibrant word expressed by his deep faith and love.⁴⁰

From Father Mateo's literary output, it is worth mentioning his most famous and widely distributed book “Jesus, King of Love”, as well as such titles as: “The Holy Hour” and “Rosary meditations”. In addition, Father Mateo left in his literary legacy, among others, thousands of articles, circulars and letters. The Enthronement Archive in Rome also contains manuscripts of retreats for bishops and priests, seminarians and for superiors of male and female religious orders.⁴¹

Father Mateo's last mission: the sanctification of the clergy

Towards the end of his life, Father Mateo focused mainly on the mission of the sanctification of priests. He began to consider it his most important task, as he was convinced that many lay people depended on them. He believed that only holy priests - priests who have a fervent devotion to the Sacred Heart – can be effective evangelisers. He considered the spreading of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, without establishing it in priests, to be a mistake. He reduced all his work among priests to one word: “Diliges”⁴² (You will love).

⁴⁰ Benedictus Mikołajewski, *Wstęp*, in : Mateo Crawley-Boevey, *Oblicze Miłości*, op. cit., vol. I, p. LI.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. LIV.

⁴² *Ibid.*

In a report he sent to his General Superior in October 1945, he explained the reasons for this new direction of work. He admitted that the evolution had taken place gradually, while declaring that this idea corresponds perfectly to the desire that had given rise to the Enthronement in 1907. In his report, Father Mateo wrote:

“It seems obvious that the unexpected turn my preaching action took was simply a strengthening of what we rightly call the 'Kingdom of the Heart of Jesus', but this time based on the magnificent foundation, the sanctification of the clergy. This will therefore remain in the foreground, and the organization of this Work, dear to us, will come in its own time, like a ripe fruit, whose life-giving juice will be the ardent love of the priests for the Sacred Heart.”⁴³

In this context, it is not surprising that Father Mateo's last journey through the Far East, the United States and Canada, which was supposed to be a mission for the *Enthronement Work* he had founded, in reality became a work for the sanctification of priests. From then on, for the last ten years of his apostolic life, Father Mateo preached without respite almost exclusively priest retreats.⁴⁴

At the end of 1946, Father Mateo's physical strength, seriously impaired by the tiring apostolic work, forced him to stop

⁴³ Henry Systemans, *Szósty list okólny*, in: Mateo Crawley-Boevey, *Oblicze Miłości*, vol. III, Wydawnictwo OO. Karmelitów Bosych, Kraków 1970, pp. 458-459.

⁴⁴ Mateo Crawley-Boevey, *Oblicze Miłości*, op. cit., vol. III, p. 458.

wandering. He had to rest in the hospital, in a “trap for God's vagabond,” as he would say.

From then on, for more than 13 years, he devoted the rest of his strength to the apostolate of the pen and suffering. The latter was not spared him, especially in the last months of his life, thus becoming the greatest guarantee of the fruitfulness of his apostolic work.

Three months before Father Mateo's death, the doctors determined the need to amputate one of his legs. With great caution, he was informed of the surgeons' sad verdict in order to obtain his consent. However, it turned out that the precautions were unnecessary. Without hesitation, he replied: “I offer everything for the glory of the Sacred Hearts and for the good of the Congregation. I agree, and not only with resignation, but also with joy.”⁴⁵

Father Mateo died in Valparaiso (Chile) on 4th May 1960. His body was placed in the basement of the Church of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary in Valparaiso, a place very dear to him after the Chapel of the Apparition in Paray-le-Monial.

Conclusion

The person of Father Mateo undoubtedly deserves special attention. Throughout his early life, we see the work of Divine Providence in action, preparing him for his later mission on a global scale. He received a kind of vocation

⁴⁵ Henry Systemans, letter cit., p. 465.

within a vocation, which he pursued with extraordinary consistency and commitment, sometimes going against the grain of prevailing opinions and patterns.

He was faithful to his mission, because it was also a perfect realization of the charism of the Congregation to which he belonged. He was strengthened in this conviction by the countless graces bestowed by the Sacred Heart of Jesus upon families who had performed the act of enthronement in their homes.

While a great apostle, Father Mateo was not free from weaknesses and limitations. He was subject to the same laws of nature as any other person. He was aware of this! He confessed very often.

Yet God's grace accomplished great things in him and through him. This testifies to his openness and selfless cooperation with God. He once said: "Jesus gives grace, and nature should willingly accept it, so that together with it, it may bear the fruit of holiness."⁴⁶

Will these fruits that Father Mateo, with the help of God's grace has borne, prove sufficient to declare him a saint of the Catholic Church? Time will tell. However, the reputation of his holiness is firmly established in the hearts of many Christians, for whom he has become a guide on their path of faith.

⁴⁶ Mateo Crawley-Boevey, *Jezus, Król Miłości*, Wydawnictwo Maria Vincit, Wrocław 2002, p. 89.

IV.

FATHER MATEO'S RELATIONSHIP

WITH PARAY LE-MONIAL

*and his role in promoting
the message of the Sacred Heart of Jesus*

Fr. Etienne Kern

(Rector of the Sanctuary of Paray-le-Monial)

Introduction

When we show pilgrims the fresco in the Chapel of the Apparition, many ask who the religious kneeling on the right is. Although they can recognise most of the figures depicted, very few identify Father Mateo. It has to be said that he was not originally included in this painting, completed in 1966. The artist, Luc Barbier, added two figures at the request of Bishop Le Bourgeois a few years later, in 1974: Saint Jean-Eudes, on the left, and Father Mateo, on the right. The mere fact that he is depicted is a clear indication of the importance that this religious figure played in promoting the devotion to the Sacred Heart in the 20th century.

To address the theme of this conference - "Father Mateo's relationship with Paray-le-Monial and his role in promoting the message of the Sacred Heart of Jesus" - I will begin by evoking the founding event of August 1907; then the important place that the town of Paray had throughout Father Mateo's life; before showing how he was one of the great spokesmen for the message of Paray-le-Monial in the twentieth century.

I. FOUNDING EXPERIENCE AT THE CHAPEL OF THE APPARITIONS⁴⁷

What happened at the Chapel of the Apparitions (Chapelle des Apparitions) in 1907 and what importance did the town of Paray-le-Monial have throughout Father Mateo's life? These are the questions we will try to answer.

The story is well known. Father Mateo arrives at Paray-le-Monial. Exhausted, he enters the Chapel of the Visitation and is instantly cured and receives the mission of spreading devotion to the Sacred Heart by enthroning His image in the home. But on closer examinations, things are more complex.

⁴⁷ We refer you to Marcel Bocquet's book, *Père Mateo, apôtre mondial du Cœur de Jésus* written in 1963. I will quote the 2007 edition of Téqui under the acronym PM.

A long gestation period

Like most of the founding events of our lives, including our spiritual journeys, what appears to be an illumination, that bursts into our consciousness like an unheard-of novelty, turns out to be, in fact, the fruit of a long gestation period. The water that gushes forth does not come from nowhere. It has already travelled a long underground journey, and while it is true that it appears in a given place, at a given time, it is nonetheless charged with minerals from the hidden rocks of the mountain it has traversed over many years.

He was ordained a priest on 17th December 1898. At the age of 23,⁴⁸ Father Mateo was severely tested by the Valparaíso earthquake of the 16th August 1906. His strong involvement in accompanying the population shook him psychologically. It should be noted that enthronement already existed at that time, as shown by the testimony he would later give in his book *Jesus, King of Love*. He explains that, after the earthquake, he arrived at a house in ruins. The mother confided in him:

“Look at what's left of the house, nothing. But I feel such peace, such courage, that I would even dare to sing the *Magnificat* at this hour. You said it on the day of the Enthronement: everything passes away one day, everything, except Bethany and Jesus of Bethany. Yes,

⁴⁸ 5 months before Pope Leo XIII published his first encyclical on the Sacred Heart, *Annum Sacrum*, on 25 May 1899

we still have him and in him our peace, which nothing and no one can take away from us.”⁴⁹

Overworked, he reached a point of total exhaustion, unable to react, in a state of collapse where he could no longer say anything and where all work was forbidden. It was at this time that Father Auguste, provincial of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, sent him to Europe. Such a trip was unusual in the Congregation, where it was only offered to religious with 15 or 20 years of priestly life. It was this state of overwork, exhaustion and neurasthenia that explained this favour.

A few days later, on 28th April 1907, Father Mateo went to Braine-le-Comte in Belgium, to the Mother House of the Picpussian Congregation, where he met the Superior General. Father Bousquet welcomed him and expressed his full confidence in him, encouraging him to follow his intuitions.

Father Mateo was in full agreement with his superiors and saw his apostolate as being in line with the spirituality of his Congregation. In fact, on 17th June, he wrote to his Superior General that he had already composed a short enthronement ceremony when he was still in Chile, i.e. before February 1907.

⁴⁹ *Jésus, Roi d'amour*, recueil des prédications du R.P. Mateo Crawley-Boevey, Téqui Editions, 2008, page 67. Now quoted as JRA.

A few weeks later, Father Mateo went to Rome where he was received in a private audience on 7th June 1907 by Pope Pius X, three times by Cardinal Merry del Val, Secretary of State, and also by Cardinal Vives y Tuto, who was to become the confessor of the Pope. After explaining to the Pope what motivated him, Father Mateo outlined his intuitions.

The Pope encouraged him, as shown by this famous dialogue with Saint Pius X, which Father Mateo recounts in these terms:

“Holy Father, allow me to be the apostle of the Sacred Heart, to go and work for Him, conquering the world home by home, family by family.”

“No, my son.”

I looked up at the Holy Father, and he, clasping me to his heart, said to me with that smile tinged with a certain mischief that was personal to him:

“I command you, do you hear? Not only do I allow you, but I order you to give your life for this work of social salvation. It is an admirable work; devote your whole life to it.”⁵⁰

It is helpful to recall the simple chronology of events that preceded Paray-le-Monial, since when Father Mateo recounted what he had experienced, he did so in reverse

⁵⁰ Quoted in PM, p. 23

order—first evoking the illumination at Paray, then the audience with Pius X, and finally his meeting with the Superior General. Later, we will return to the implications of this inversion of the chronological sequence.

The illumination at Paray

Father Mateo had always been extremely reserved about what had happened. It was a very intimate, foundational experience, the meaning and depth of which would only become clear over the years. We have several versions of the events.

First of all, in his diary, where he noted the highlights of his days, he wrote simply:

“24th August. Left Paris for Paray. Arrived at the Sanctuary at 5.30am. First prayer. Rosary - Heaven - Margaret Mary - Sunday 25th Shrine (night) Vivat Cor Iesu.”⁵¹

The description is very sober, to say the least, and there is no hint of the upheaval he had just experienced.

A little later, he wrote his first, more detailed account:

“I saw this altar [in the Chapel of the Apparitions], the most beautiful and the holiest after Calvary. I prayed, and suddenly I felt a strange jolt within me. I was struck by a stroke of grace, at once very violent and infinitely

⁵¹ Quoted in PM, page 19.

sweet. I got up completely healed. Prostrate in the sanctuary, absorbed in thanksgiving, I understood what our Lord wanted of me. That evening, I conceived the plan to reconquer the world, home by home, family by family, for the love of the heart of Jesus.”⁵²

In a memoir addressed to the Holy See in 1919, twelve years later, he gave another version:

“I was suddenly healed in the chapel of the Apparitions. That evening, I finalized - on my knees - the plan and the ceremonial for the crusade to win over families that I had sketched out during my first stay in Rome. I believed I was obeying a clear request from the Heart of Jesus. At that moment, it seemed to me that I saw, through a very intimate light, the global victory that would one day come, as an explicitly promised result at Paray-le-Monial, of the work that proclaims the kingship of love. Distrustful of myself, I carried for years the inner doubt of someone who believed he had merely dreamed. Only later did the supernatural success of the work, surprising even to me, prove that the reality of the graces was even greater than I could ever have imagined.”⁵³

Before leaving Paray-le-Monial, on 1st September 1907, Father Mateo had a red marble ex-voto placed on the entrance

⁵² Quoted in PM, page 18.

⁵³ Quoted in PM, page 18.

door to the Chapel of the Apparitions, on which he had two inscriptions engraved. The first is in Latin:

“Here is the sanctuary of divine love, here is the inexhaustible source of life. It was enough for us to come once to the Most Sweet Heart of Jesus to say that it is good to live here’. The second is in Spanish: ‘This is the mysterious door through which we enter the paradise of your heart as King, Brother and Friend, O sweetest Jesus. In heaven you have already inscribed our names in indelible characters. May we, hidden in this intimate wound, be eternally united to you in a life of holiness, in a thirst for glory, in a love of reparation. 1st September 1907.”⁵⁴

Interpretation of the facts

Everything we have just said calls for a few explanations. First of all, how can we explain that such an intense experience was recounted so soberly that very evening by the person who had lived it?

“God was there and I didn't know it”, exclaimed Jacob (Genesis 28:16) after his encounter with the Lord. Scripture teaches us that God can only be seen “from behind” (cf. Exodus 33:23).

According to our contemporary mentality, the point is to stick as closely as possible to the event, and the immediacy

⁵⁴ Quoted in PM, page 83.

of the story guarantees its authenticity. This is not the case for the Bible, and for the experience of the believer: the distance between the event and the account of it allows us to better grasp its real depth and fruitfulness. In fact, Father Mateo confided that he had been suspicious of himself and for years had doubted that he had not dreamt. It was the extraordinary and unexpected fruitfulness of his apostolate that confirmed for him the reality of the grace he had received that day.

Another question is how to understand this 'backwards' account, in which Father Mateo reverses the chronological sequence of events experienced historically in Rome, in Belgium and then in Paray. In fact, in his account of his founding intuition, Father Mateo first evokes his experience at Paray, followed by his meeting with Pius X in Rome and then with his Superior General in Belgium, encounters that are presented as confirmations of what he had experienced.

This is where we need to distinguish between chronological truth and theological and spiritual truth. In his encyclical on the Heart of Jesus, *Dilexit nos*, Pope Francis invites us to put ourselves in the school of Mary, who kept all these things in her heart (c.f. Lk 2:19 and 51):

“She was able to dialogue with the things she experienced by pondering them in her heart, treasuring their memory... What Mary “kept” was not only her memory of what she had seen and heard, but also those aspects

of it that she did not yet understand; these nonetheless remained present and alive in her memory, waiting to be “put together” in her heart.” (*Dilexit nos*, 19)

So, when we pray with our history, to use Pope Francis' expression, the deep truth of events and the links between them are gradually revealed in a providential plan of the Lord, beyond the chronological sequence of events. This is certainly what explains Father Mateo's inner re-reading of events, as he attaches fundamental importance to the experience he had in the Chapel of the Apparitions.

There is, however, something at stake in recalling the chronological truth. In Father Mateo's experience, the institutional aspect (the mission received from the Church through the Pope and his religious superior) precedes the mystical dimension (the illumination at Paray). The “charismatic” confirms the “institutional” and not the other way round.

II. THE SHRINE OF PARAY-LE-MONIAL THROUGHOUT FATHER MATEO'S LIFE

For Father Mateo, the town of Paray was not limited to the founding event of August 1907. Throughout his life, he would return to Paray whenever he travelled to France. I thought it would be interesting to mention these various times. We have identified around ten of them up to 1934.

1. At the end of August 1914, Father Mateo returned to Paray-le-Monial to recharge his batteries for several days:

“He spent the whole day in the chapel of the Apparitions, from 6 in the morning until 3 in the evening (...) He was taken away to preach in the basilica. Despite his little knowledge of French, his pronounced accent, his fiery eloquence, his cries followed by imperceptible murmurs, it was a success’. It was ‘an uninterrupted feast for 16 days”, he wrote, during which he had to speak up to four times a day. Following a method that he would never abandon, his preaching to the faithful was coupled with conferences to religious communities - so numerous at Paray-le-Monial - to whom he asked for the support of their prayers and even their direct apostolate.⁵⁵

He then founded a secretariat for the Works of the Sacred Heart with three young girls who had come to him after his conferences. He enthroned the image of the Sacred Heart in the room made available to him by the shrine chaplains. It should be noted that Father Mateo could not rely on his Congregation's real estate support. The Order, like other religious in France, had been expelled from the country by the 1905 laws and had no premises.⁵⁶

2. At the end of January 1915, after his stay in Spain, Father Mateo went directly from Madrid to Paray-le-Monial.

⁵⁵ PM, page 102.

⁵⁶ See PM, page 102.

Instead of finding light and comfort there, he was tested by the opposition of Mgr. Gauthey, Archbishop of Besançon, especially as Mgr. Gauthey was a former chaplain at Paray and himself a specialist in Saint Margaret Mary. Following in his footsteps, others adopted an attitude of suspicion towards the Picpussian. It should be noted that this particularly uncomfortable episode came to an end the same year, following Benedict XV's letter in which the enthronement became part of the Church's official apostolate and Cardinal Billot's letter, to which we shall return. The archbishop of Besançon quickly made amends before becoming an apostle of enthronement himself.⁵⁷

3. A few months later, in June 1915, Father Mateo returned to Paray to take part for the first time in the feast of the Sacred Heart at Paray-le-Monial. In 1916, a booklet was published with the conferences given at Paray-le-Monial. The first 9,000 copies sold out quickly.⁵⁸
4. The following year, in 1916, while travelling between Italy and Paris, he was again (in June) at Paray-le-Monial for the Feast of the Sacred Heart and to preach a retreat to the zealous women of France.⁵⁹
5. In the winter of 1916, he returned to Paray-le-Monial after being in Switzerland. When he came to rest, he had

⁵⁷ See PM, pages 105-106.

⁵⁸ See PM, page 119.

⁵⁹ See PM, pages 134-135.

to flee to the nearby abbey of Sept-Fons because he was so besieged. Dom Chautard, the abbey's famous abbot, asked him to preach a retreat to the monks. These lectures were published the following year and translated into 9 languages.⁶⁰

6. It is reasonable to think that he visited Paray during his six-month stay in France, between 1917 and 1918, but I have found no trace of this.
7. In October 1921, Father Mateo returned to Paray-le-Monial where he preached the second of the three Triduum's that concluded the Jubilee granted for the canonisation of Saint Margaret Mary in 1920. This is what he had to say about Paray-le-Monial: "We have come here to receive, it is true, because we are all in need. But above all, we have come to offer ourselves through an intimate and total gift of the heart and will to the King of love and mercy."⁶¹
8. We do not know whether he came on his next trip to France, between the end of August 1922 and the end of March 1923. We think he did.
9. In October 1930, Father Mateo made a 10-day retreat at Paray-le-Monial. "After Mass, he took refuge behind the

⁶⁰ See PM, page 143.

⁶¹ PM, page 183. This remark about Paray made a fortune: "when a pilgrim asked if we would ever see the crowds of Lourdes in Paray, a humble woman replied: "No, because in Lourdes we go to receive, in Paray we come to give" (PM, page 184).

altar, in his trench as he called it. He remained prostrate on the ground between the wall and the steps from 8am to midday and from 2pm to closing time, even on cleaning days when he was covered in dust. My retreat was simple," he told a friend: "no special exams, no spiritual reading. I don't know if I bored the King, but I was very happy with him."⁶²

10. It was during his stay in France in 1933-34 that he came close to being appointed Archbishop of Lima, which would have forced him to give up his missionary vocation. He left for Rome, where he met Pope Pius XI on 19th October 1934. On the way back, he stopped off at Paray-le-Monial: "after my visit to the king's vicar [i.e. the Pope], I had to go to the king himself [i.e. Christ] and ask him to confirm Peter's blessing."⁶³

From January 1935, Father Mateo set off for the Far East on a long missionary journey that would last until the outbreak of the Second World War. In 1940, he left for the United States and then Canada. After the war, his health deteriorated and he never returned to Paray. However, two circumstances should be noted to show that his links with the city of the Heart of Jesus have always remained very strong. Firstly, in 1947, when he wanted to launch a large-scale campaign to promote the feast of the Sacred Heart, he approached Monsignor Lucien-Sidroine Lebrun, then bishop of the diocese of Autun, Mâcon and Chalon

⁶² PM, page 221.

⁶³ Quoted in PM, page 228.

(to which Paray belongs), with a draft pastoral letter. Clearly, there was no response from the bishop at the time, a sign that times had changed.⁶⁴ Indeed, in post-war France, and more broadly in Europe and North America, the enthusiasm aroused by the Sacred Heart was giving way to a certain indifference, even muted hostility and suspicion.

Finally, the 50th anniversary of his experience at Paray, and therefore of the Enthronement, was solemnly celebrated in August 1957. The Picpus Congregation asked Pope Pius XII for the opportunity to hold three uninterrupted days of celebrations with Masses at the shrine of Paray, from 21st to 23rd August. 160 Masses were celebrated by pilgrims from around fifteen nations. The sisters of the Visitations said that the triduum was “unique and incomparable”, while the pilgrims marvelled: “You'd have thought we were at Tabor.”⁶⁵ Because of his age - 82 - and his health, Father Mateo was unable to attend. However, he insisted on being closely associated with the celebration by convening the directors from the Americas. He surprised them by preaching a magnificent retreat, despite his tired voice: ‘the flame of the apostle constantly keeps the little cenacle in high tension. The testimonies of the participants echoed those of Paray: an unforgettable retreat.’⁶⁶ This was perhaps Father

⁶⁴ See PM, page 288.

⁶⁵ Quoted in PM, page 304.

⁶⁶ PM, page 304.

Mateo's last opportunity to preach a retreat to a large number of people.

Let us conclude this second part by pointing out that Paray was not the only place of renewal and inspiration for Father Mateo. Lisieux and St Thérèse also had their place - both geographically as a place to recharge his batteries and spiritually as a place of inspiration:⁶⁷

“During his long and frequent stays in France, we see him constantly oscillating between these two poles of attraction, which for him were Paray and Lisieux. His spirituality, his preaching, his leadership and his writings were inspired by them. To Margaret Mary he asked for certain elements of her devotion to the Sacred Heart: worship and exposition of the image; consecration; the Holy Hour of Reparation; First Fridays; the certainty that this doctrine was made for our time and promised victory. From the “little Thérèse” he borrowed what she herself called her “little way”: the importance of fulfilling one’s daily duties and offering small, everyday acts out of love; childlike simplicity; total trust. He would often return to their shrines to recharge his spiritual batteries and deepen the message that it was his mission to pass on to the crowds.”⁶⁸

⁶⁷ For example, he mentioned Saint Theresa several times during the August 1945 retreat in Outremont (Quebec), the notes of which were published in the magazine *Le sel de la terre*.

⁶⁸ PM, page 118.

In this, Father Mateo foreshadows Pope Francis' encyclical *Dilexit nos*, which goes on at length about Saint Theresa of the Child Jesus,⁶⁹ even more than Saint Margaret Mary.

III. GIVING VOICE TO THE MESSAGE OF PARAY⁷⁰

The right theological understanding of Paray and the events of Paray

Father Mateo recognised that certain places are the bearers of a special grace, and that Paray was one of them: "There are privileged places: Paray-le-Monial, Lourdes; God gives graces there that he does not give elsewhere."⁷¹ However, he gradually came to understand that Paray was simply an echo of New Testament Revelation, an echo that had a unique place in the history of the Church, but an echo nonetheless.

"As I progressed, I came to understand more clearly that in this apostolate of the social Kingdom, it was necessary to bring together Saint Paul's sublime thesis on charity and the lights shining from the Sun at Paray-le-Monial.

⁶⁹ See DN 90, 129, 133-142, 195-199 and 216.

⁷⁰ In this section, we will base ourselves mainly on the book *Jesus, King of Love* published in 1928 by Father Mateo Crawley-Boevey, in the 2008 edition (Téqui).

⁷¹ Retraite à Ottawa, ST 52, page 145. The magazine *Le sel de la terre* (ST) published in issues 52 to 59 unpublished extracts from notes taken during the retreat he preached from 26th August to 1st September 1945 in Outremont (Quebec) to the superiors of various religious communities. We quote from this conference, quoting the number of the magazine and the page.

If devotion to the Sacred Heart had its official and principal cradle in the chapel of Saint Margaret Mary, the great theology of the Heart of Jesus dates from Bethlehem, Gethsemane, Calvary and the Cenacle, Saint John the Evangelist and Saint Paul.”⁷²

This progressive deepening of the message of Paray and its fundamental link with the Gospel is noteworthy.

He also links the mystical experience of Paray to ordinary Christian life and the sacraments:

“The miracles of Paray-le-Monial and Lourdes are small miracles next to the Mass; even all the miracles of the Gospel remain small next to the Mass. All the miracles are contained in the miracle of Calvary: that is the pure doctrine.”⁷³

Further on, he reminds us forcefully that Revelation cannot be placed on the same level as private revelations:

“For doctrine, I have no need of Margaret--Mary; she teaches me nothing; for doctrine is given to us by the Gospel and Saint Paul. What is the basis of this doctrine?”
“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart.”

⁷² Quoted in PM, page 283.

⁷³ Retreat to Ottawa, ST 55, page 205.

This was said long before Margaret-Mary, Father de la Colombière, Saint Gertrude; long before Saint John, Saint Paul, Saint Thomas, Saint Bernard, Saint Bonaventure.⁷⁴

It is good to hear these unambiguous statements from a man who was to become the spokesman for the Paray 'revelation' throughout the world. In no way can Paray be compared to Jerusalem, or the revelation of Saint Margaret Mary to the Christian Revelation, and even less can it replace it.

Father Mateo is well aware that devotion to the Heart of Jesus did not begin with Paray. What was new with Margaret Mary was that the devotion became popular, leaving the monasteries and theological universities to spread to all Christians: "the devotion as we have it on the first Friday of the month, the holy hour, dates from Paray-le-Monial: from Margaret-Mary and her director [Claude de la Colombière]."⁷⁵ Father Mateo's conviction was that Paray is the second most important place in the world:

"Leo XIII rightly says that the only great Revelation is the Gospel. The other revelations are private revelations, but the most important of them is that of Paray-le-Monial. The greatest altar is Calvary; next to Calvary is Paray-le-Monial. The thought and love of the Church revolve around the altar and Paray-le-Monial."⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Retreat to Ottawa, ST 59, page 156.

⁷⁵ Retreat in Ottawa, ST 59, page 155.

⁷⁶ Retreat to Ottawa, ST 59, page 155.

The message of Paray-le-Monial⁷⁷

In a letter dated 28th April 1914, Father Mateo wrote:

“I took the dominant and exclusive idea of the enthronement directly from the revelations of Paray. In other words, I wanted to give substance and concrete form to the desire manifested by our Lord to Saint Margaret Mary.”⁷⁸

This is the definition he gives of enthronement: “the providential work which fulfils in its entirety the requests and promises made to Saint Margaret Mary.”⁷⁹ To understand Father Mateo's apostolate properly, we need to return to Paray-le-Monial and recall the fundamental spiritual dynamic of the apparitions to Saint Margaret Mary.

The events at Paray-le-Monial took place at the end of the 17th century. Three great apparitions of Jesus to Margaret Mary concentrate the message that was delivered there, for the attention of all mankind. They took place between the end of December 1673 and June 1675. The message has three main dimensions: a declaration of love **(1)**, a complaint **(2)** and a request **(3)**.

1. This declaration is most developed in the first major apparition. Jesus expressed himself as follows:

⁷⁷ We refer you to the website of the Sanctuary of Paray-le-Monial: <https://sacrecoeur-paray.org/le-message/>

⁷⁸ Quoted in PM, page 271.

⁷⁹ Quoted in PM, page 271.

“My divine Heart is so passionate with love for mankind, and for you in particular, that since it can no longer contain within itself the flames of its ardent charity, it must spread them by means of you and manifest itself to enrich them with its precious treasures that I am revealing to you.’ (Autobiography, § 53).

The best-known expression of this love is found in the third great apparition. Jesus said:

“This is the Heart that so loved mankind that it spared nothing to the point of exhausting itself and consuming itself to show them its love.” (Autobiography, § 92)

2. In the second great apparition, in 1674, Jesus expressed his sorrow that his great love was not reciprocated:

“Only ingratitude and indifference, coldness and rejection for all my efforts to do them good.... This is much more sensitive to me than anything I suffered in my Passion.” (Autobiography §§ 55-56).

This lament is deepened in the third great apparition:

“In return for my love, I receive from most only ingratitude, through their irreverence and sacrileges, and through the coldness and contempt they show me in this Sacrament of love. But what pains me most is that it is the hearts consecrated to me that act this way.” (Autobiography, § 92)

3. Jesus expressed several requests, which could be summarised as follows: "At least you, love me." Saint Margaret Mary testifies to this:

"I received from my God excessive graces of his love, and I felt moved by the desire to return love for love."
(Autobiography, § 92).

The origin of the *Enthronement* and Father Mateo's intuition

To give concrete expression to this return of love (*redamatio*), Jesus made several requests of Margaret-Mary, in particular that she carry the image of the Sacred Heart on her person and to display an image where she was staying.⁸⁰ During the first apparition, on 27th December 1673, Margaret-Mary had a vision of the Heart of Jesus on a throne of flames, bearing its wound, surrounded by a crown of thorns and topped with a cross. Jesus then asked her to honour his Heart, the image of which he wanted her to wear over her own heart and displayed in the monastery. He added that "Wherever this holy image is exposed to be honoured, I will pour out

⁸⁰ The other requests are:

- Communion as often as possible, especially on the first Friday of the month.
- the "Holy Hour", every Thursday from 11pm to midnight, to keep him company while he suffered his agony in the Garden of Olives and to intercede for sinners.
- the institution of a great feast of his Sacred Heart for the whole Church. This feast was definitively instituted by Pope Pius IX in 1856.

my graces and blessings.”⁸¹ A promise is attached to this practice, as Margaret-Mary testifies:

“[Jesus made it known that] as He is the source of all blessings, He would spread them abundantly in all the places where the image of this Sacred Heart would be honoured. He would reunite divided families and protect those in need. He would spread this sweet unction of His charity in all the religious communities where He would be honoured, and which would place themselves under His particular protection; that He would hold all their hearts united, to become one with Him.”⁸²

Father Mateo will often refer to this promise, and more broadly to what has been called the “twelve promises”.⁸³ A clarification is in order. These “twelve promises” do indeed come from the writings of Saint Margaret Mary and contributed greatly to the spread of devotion to the Sacred Heart. From this point of view, recourse to them is legitimate and was very fruitful. It could be pointed out that there are many other promises in the dialogues between Jesus and this Saint.

On the other hand, there is a risk of reducing the message of Paray-le-Monial to devotional practices, to a simple list of requests and promises. It could lead us to think like this:

⁸¹ Letter 123 to Father Croiset, November 1689.

⁸² Letter 121 to Father Croiset, August 1689.

⁸³ For example, in ST 59, page 155 or JRA, page 51.

'If I want to obtain what Jesus promises me, I must do what he asks of me'.

Unfortunately, the history of spirituality confirms that we have indeed fallen into this trap. Margaret-Mary's experience is much more than all that, it is an inner burning: loved by the Lord, she wants to offer herself entirely to him in response to his love, without worrying about what this will bring her. Father Mateo does not fall into this devotional trap and reminds us of the importance of "distinguishing between external worship and doctrine, between devotion and theology. Devotion is only external worship; it presupposes doctrine. Don't confuse devotion with theology."⁸⁴

The other key notion that Father Mateo draws from the writings of Margaret Mary is that of the Reign of Christ. St Margaret-Mary returns to it on numerous occasions in her letters: "All my prayers and everything I can do are directed towards this single goal, to establish the reign of the Sacred Heart"⁸⁵ or "We must love this Sacred Heart with all our strength and all our ability. Yes, we must love him, and he will establish his empire, and he will reign in spite of all his enemies and their opposition."⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Retreat in Ottawa, ST 59, page 55.

⁸⁵ Letter 61, to Mother de Saumaise, March 1687.

⁸⁶ Letter 87, to Mother de Saumaise, June 1688.

Father Mateo does not fail to recall the words of Saint Paul,⁸⁷ quoted by Pope Benedict XV in the decree of canonisation of Margaret Mary: "*Oportet illum regnare*: He must reign" (1 Cor 15: 25).

In the face of the tragedies afflicting the world and society, "the remedy is revealed: to win back families, one by one, through the *Enthronement of the Sacred Heart*, in order to prepare for the social reign of Our Lord."⁸⁸ These are Father Mateo's key ideas.

Cardinal Billot's letter

These intuitions are admirably summarised in the letter Cardinal Louis Billot gave to Father Mateo during his visit to Rome in 1915. It accompanies the letter given to him by Benedict XV. The Jesuit was a renowned theologian who taught for 25 years at the Gregorian University, where his books were widely read.

This letter deserves to be quoted at length, in particular because of the quality of its author, but also because it offers a summary of Father Mateo's fundamental intuitions, highlighting their accuracy and their link with Paray-le-Monial:

"It is indeed the pure, simple, frank devotion to the Sacred Heart, as it has been transmitted to us in the

⁸⁷ For example, during his retreat at Sept-Fons in 1916, recently published by the magazine *Le sel de la terre*, n. 70, page 116.

⁸⁸ *Retraite à Sept-Fons*, ST 70, page 99.

revelations of Blessed Margaret Mary (...) that the work aims to establish in the domestic home. So, what is it about? To enthrone, that is to say, to place in the place of honour in the home the image of the Sacred Heart, in recognition of the sovereign right of Jesus over the whole family and above all over each of its members; to pray the common prayer before this image every day, also renewing there every day, through the mouths of the father and mother, the consecration of the first day; to be faithful to communion and, as far as possible, to the holy hour on the first Friday of the month; to draw inspiration from the lessons and examples of the Divine Heart, and to have recourse to this source of all graces, in the joys as well as the sorrows of the family (...) Now, what is there in all this that is not contained in the devotion in use in the Church? All we are doing is simply making it a part of family life, and in such a way that it takes its rightful place there, that it is not a dead devotion, but an active devotion, that it warms the souls of the whole household with its gentle and life-giving warmth (...) I see in this a simple and practical way of fulfilling the wishes expressed to Blessed Margaret-Mary. As you say, my Reverend Father, Our Lord asked the Blessed to make His Heart the object of a special veneration in families. Who does not remember the two promises he made to his servant, which sound so sweet among so many others: 'I will bring peace to families. I will bless the houses where the image of my Sacred Heart is

displayed and honoured'? Hence this ceremony that you put at the top of your programme."

The cardinal adds that if Margaret Mary had in her hands the ritual of the *Enthronement of the Sacred Heart* in the home, developed by Father Mateo,

"She would have recognized in it the continuation of the gesture so gracefully sketched by her little novices and would have seen the true fulfilment of the august desires of which she had been the confidante."⁸⁹

Conclusion

We have come to the end of this long journey, which has recalled the founding character of the experience of August 1907 at the Chapel of the Apparitions (I). We have seen the importance that the town of Paray-le-Monial retained throughout Father Mateo's life (II), and which shows that the message of the Apparitions to Saint Margaret Mary is an essential source of Father Mateo's preaching. What can we take away?

Throughout Father Mateo's life, Paray-le-Monial remained an essential place for him, "the most beautiful, the holiest place after Calvary", as he would say. In the years following 1907, he felt the urgent need to go there regularly. As time went by and his missionary commitments increased, he

⁸⁹ Letter from Cardinal Billot to Father Mateo, quoted in JRA, page 20-22.

had fewer opportunities to come to Paray. It was also because he had interiorised the presence of this Shrine in the sanctuary of his own heart. He was inhabited by Paray and therefore had less need to go there physically. For all that, Paray remained the place where the King lived (see what he said about it in 1930 and 1934).

For Father Mateo, Paray was first and foremost a place of spiritual renewal, the place of his great conversion, where he received his mission and was healed. It was also the place from which his apostolate would develop, with the foundation of the first Centre in Europe, which would become the "Secretariat of the Works of the Sacred Heart", which still exists today, still run by the Servants of the Heart of Jesus called by him to this mission. Paray was also a place of mission, where he preached numerous retreats to both pilgrims and the religious communities around Paray.

Finally, it was the place of which he spoke, in constant reference to the mystical experience of Margaret-Mary, whose voice he made known throughout the world. Enthronement was the privileged means he used to establish devotion to the Heart of Jesus in families in order to establish the social reign of Christ. While the vocabulary may have changed, these insights are still relevant today, in an age that is rediscovering the vitality and beauty of the spirituality of the Heart of Jesus, as evidenced by the recent success of the documentary *Sacré-Cœur* in the cinema.

V.

FAMILY ENVIRONMENT AND ITS INFLUENCE ON FATHER MATEO'S APOSTOLIC MISSION

*John Streeter Prieto
(nephew of Hilda, the youngest sister of Fr Mateo)*



María Francisca Murga y Murgía, Father Mateo's mother, born in Arequipa, Peru in 1852, was a devout Catholic. Throughout her long life she was subjected to harsh trials, including the loss of four of her children, which she faced with the fortitude and resignation, typical of a Catholic woman accustomed to seeing suffering as a natural part of human existence. She was not only influential in educating young Edward in the Catholic faith and practice, but María also succeeded in

achieving the conversion of her husband Octavius, born an Anglican, to Catholicism.



February 2, 1891
Brother Joseph Stanislaus



- On the last day of 1890, at the age of 15, Edward entered the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary in Valparaiso, Chile.
- On February 2, 1891, on the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple, Edward Crawley-Boevey made his religious profession and took the name Joseph Stanislaus.

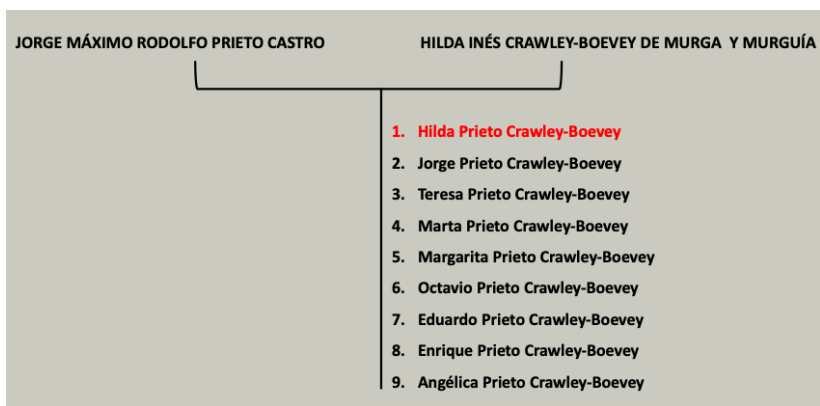
“My vocation was formed in the greenhouse of a beloved family circle. Without exaggeration I think I can state that the dawn of reason and the sun of grace illuminated my mind almost simultaneously. I began to think of my future when I was nine or ten years of age. I can’t remember having any other ideal than that of being a religious.”



He was the fourth of the twelve children of Octavius and María Francisca. Our grandmother Hilda, the youngest of the Crawley-Boevey Murga family, later formed a strong bond of friendship with Father Mateo, despite his being twenty-one years older. Through his work at the Law School, he had also met a young lawyer, Jorge Prieto, who would eventually marry Hilda Crawley-Boevey—at Father Mateo’s own “suggestion.”

Hilda was a profound admirer of her older brother and of his work as an apostle of The Sacred Heart.

PRIETO CRAWLEY-BOEVEY FAMILY



The names include Teresa after St. Therese of Lisieux; Margaret Mary after St. Margaret Mary and Mateo's favourite saints; and Eduardo after Mateo's brother.

How this close but geographically distant relationship was maintained between the Prieto Crawley-Boevey generations is a complex matter, as Father Mateo basically only spent his last years in Valparaíso, Chile, and by then was affected by advanced diabetes, previous heart disease suffered in Canada and hypertension. Then 80 years old and exhausted, arriving back in Chile as ordered by his doctors in Canada, it is believed that he may have also been subject to a mild form of cognitive decline.

Fr Mateo's worldwide apostolate of the *Enthronement of the Sacred Heart*, from the 9th Promise of Our Lord to Saint Margaret Mary, was spread and made well known in our

family circle by his mother María Francisca, his cousin Juan Landazuri in Arequipa (later Archbishop of Lima and Cardinal appointed by Saint John XXIII) and by his sisters Ella Margaret and Hilda.



María F. Murga y Murgía
1852-1935



Cardinal Juan Landazuri
1913-1997



Hilda and Ella Crawley-Boevey, around 1911

Living on his return to Chile in late 1955 in the SSCC residence on *Avenida Independencia* in Valparaíso, his sister Hilda frequently visited him, and she would be accompanied by

one or both of her daughters, Martha who lived in nearby Viña del Mar and Margarita María.

These close encounters with their much-admired uncle, of whom they had heard so many stories of his complete surrender to The Sacred Heart by their mother Hilda, left a deep and indelible seal on them.

Father Mateo's niece, Angélica, at the time 15 years old at the time and the youngest of the Prieto Crawley-Boevey family, recalls visiting her uncle with much nervousness, because he always reprimanded them for the clothes they wore. Today, she recalls often the blessing that he bestowed upon them.

After Father Mateo's death on 4th May 1960, Hilda Crawley was given by the SSCC Congregation some personal belongings of Father Mateo. These were kept by some of her sons, including the precious image of The Sacred Heart which accompanied Father Mateo in his last years in Valparaíso.



The life, work and legacy of Father Mateo among members of the Crawley-Boevey family fell into apparent oblivion for many years, although The Sacred Heart reigned always in all of our homes.

The question we must ask is why there has been very little involvement by the present generation in the Enthronement Apostolate of Fr Mateo?

After all Pope Saint Pius X said:

“I not only permit you, but I command you to preach this crusade of salvation throughout the whole world. This is an inspiration from Heaven! Bring the Heart of Jesus into the home and make every family a sanctuary of love and reparation: that is a divine work.”

The former Rector of the Sanctuary of Paray-le-Monial, Fr. Edouard Marot said, “The devil has worked hard to eliminate the spirituality of the Sacred Heart of Jesus from the Church” and presenting the devotion to the Sacred Heart as something “obsolete”, “not for our times”, “absolutely retrograde” and as sinners, we also fell into the complacency of these fallacies.

Suffice to say, the essence and spirit of Father Mateo’s Apostolate on behalf of “The King of Love” has been latent within all who bear the Crawley-Boevey name. It is most encouraging and gratifying to see, after the pandemic, a renewed interest in working towards fully revitalizing the apostolate of *The Enthronement of the Sacred Heart*, as well as spreading the word on the extraordinary life and work of Father Mateo, within the Church and society in general.

For such a demanding task, great nephews and nieces of Fr Mateo generously agreed to participate in all matters concerning the *Enthronement Work*, which has permitted the Apostolate to expand the number of homes opening their doors to His Sacred Heart.

In Chile, since 2022, more than 1500 families have enthroned “The King of Love” in their homes and the “Apostolate of The Sacred Heart” (www.vensagradorazon.cl) is now very active with the participation of some of Father Mateo's great-nephews.

A tri-lingual web page is being prepared on Father Mateo. The start of the beatification process has also brought renewed interest from many countries on the *Enthronement of The Sacred Heart*, but particularly in Peru and Chile. In these two countries, so close to Fr Mateo, this Servant of God will, we hope, help promote strong, peaceful and complementary ties for the benefit and development of their citizens.

VI.

ENTHRONEMENT

OF THE SACRED HEART IN FAMILIES

AS THE LIFE MISSION OF FATHER MATEO

Fr. Richard McNally ssc
(Moderator of the Colloquium)

Introduction

Where better could we have this symposium on Father Mateo's life and work than here in Paray-le-Monial, a place that transformed and gave shape to his life and his mission?

This is the place where Saint Margaret Mary, the beloved disciple of the Lord's Heart, was called to proclaim to the Church the riches of the love of the Heart of Jesus Christ. Her mission was the fruit of her radical consecration to Our Lord's infinite love. How often in her writings she speaks of things like "abandonment to Jesus' pure love"? Saint Margaret Mary's immersion in the abyss of Jesus' love is the message of Paray le Monial as much as, even more than, her accounts of the revelations of the Heart.

Margaret Mary was the constant inspiration for Mateo and he saw his mission as an embodiment of the message of Our Lord to her.

He lived devotion to the Sacred Heart in the deepest sense. In his memoirs he writes:

“A really ‘devoted’ person is the one who believing with a living faith, loves with all his heart the Lord in whom he believes, he adores the one to whom he renders homage with the interior and exterior submission that he is due. He fulfils and observes the law because he believes in the adorable Legislator and he loves Him. True devotion is a gift from heaven which never unbalances or confounds the practical Christian life nor one’s private life, nor one’s home life. On the contrary, it makes it more solid and more beautiful...it divinizes it.”

That was the power that propelled his life and mission of spreading the social reign of the Sacred Heart, family by family.

Father Mateo: a child of the Congregation

Father Andrzej has outlined Mateo’s biography. I will just note that having entered the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts at fifteen, his formation in our charism and spirituality left a deep mark on him. He was the living embodiment of our founders’ words, “The consecration to

the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary is the foundation of our institute.”

Father Bernard and Sister Jeanne spoke of Fr. Marie Joseph and Mother Henriette wanting us to be zealots and zelatrices of the love of the Sacred Hearts. Who, more than Mateo, ever fulfilled that call? Already after his ordination Mateo wrote to one of the French fathers whom he had known in Chile and who had returned to France. He asked for a remembrance “for this young priest whose only desire is to be a saint and to make known and loved until death the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.”

Call of Father Mateo, society in need of Jesus Christ King

As the nineteenth century was ending the Congregation in Chile saw the need for what would be called “social action”, going beyond the traditional teaching apostolate to influencing the direction of society by outreach to past and present students. One vehicle was through the Sacred Hearts Association. Another was the establishment of social centres. One such centre had been started in Santiago and the provincial foresaw another in Valparaiso. Writing to the Superior General he said,

“The director is ready-made. He is Father Mateo, who has an incomparable hold on these gentlemen to draw them to do good and to get them to go to confession. He is indeed a man of the Sacred Heart.”

Two traits that stand out throughout his life are noted: he draws them to do good and to get them to go to confession. Father Mateo's ministry all through his life will be known for his charismatic preaching and conversions.

Mateo's work in our school and following his students as they went to the university, made him aware of the uphill battle for their minds and hearts in a society in which secularism had made inroads. His ministry among university students, some whom he could see battling for the faith in the faculty of law, led him to found a law school to prepare Catholic leaders for the future of the nation.

There were strong secularizing forces in the society and government that were affecting marriage, family and education. Some saw their goal as "removing it (the family) from the tyranny of the church."

Mateo was quite sensitive to the situation of families having grown up in a home where there was tension, given his parent's difference of religious faith, his father embracing Catholicism completely only in his later years.

Father Mateo's vision was social not merely sociological but it was radically evangelical. He preached the Gospel of God's love as inspired in the message of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He called people to conversion by accepting the kingship of Jesus Christ. Nothing less than that. He was a tireless, forthright, preacher of Jesus Christ as King. Jesus began his own mission proclaiming, "The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand, repent, and believe in the

Gospel.” (Mark 1:15) This was the fire always burning in Mateo’s heart.

One politician who was a freemason famously said to Father Mateo, “You can have the churches, we want the family.” Believing that the family was the basic cell of society, Mateo would not let the secularists and freemasons have it. He conceived a plan, which he would eventually call *the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart*. Jesus Christ is King and his royalty had to first be recognized in the home. On that basis society and the church would not just be stronger but transformed from the bottom up. His crusade, as he would call it, did not look primarily to the transformation of social structures on the mega level, as we would say today, but to the micro, the family in its home and connecting the family to the Church through the local parish and its sacramental life. Thus, would the social reign of Jesus Christ be fomented in society.

An inspiration for his work was Garcia Moreno (1821-1875), the president of Ecuador (1871-1875), who in 1869 consecrated the nation to the Sacred Heart. Mateo’s favourite image of the Sacred Heart was the one used in that consecration, where Jesus holds the globe in his left hand and streams of light shine upon Latin America from his Sacred Heart.

Rising from the ruins

Mateo began his great project of a law school in 1904. He was surprisingly well fit for it, despite having just the seminary education which priests received at the time. He was professor of natural law and his hard work and study yielded outstanding results. The provincial would say of him:

“He enjoys the absolute trust of professors and students. He could well be called ‘the apostle of the upper classes of society.’ I do all I can to help him maintain his attitude of religious simplicity.”

After the earthquake of 16th August 1906, with the law school laying in ruins, all was not lost, as Mateo was receiving other lights from the Holy Spirit. In the ruins of the building lay Mateo’s treasured image of the Sacred Heart (of García Moreno) hanging on the wall of his still standing room. One of the brothers climbed over the rubble, retrieved it and gave it to Mateo. This was confirmation that, while the building might be destroyed, the Lord was calling him in ways resounding within. Soon enough it would take shape in the ever-creative mind of Mateo, always responsive to the Lord’s call.

The destruction of the law faculty into which Mateo had put incredible amounts of time and energy, led to physical collapse. The provincial and council gave him permission, extraordinary at the time, to make an extended trip to Europe, ostensibly to study higher Catholic education and

the organization of the social apostolate. The trip was the occasion for his new mission to be clarified and confirmed. Fr. Marcellin Bousquet ssc, the Superior General of the Congregation would bless the work and Pope Pius X would declare, "The work you undertake is a work of social salvation. Consecrate your life to it." However, for Father Mateo it was here in Paray le Monial that he encountered the Lord, was healed and commissioned for this new work. That was on 1st September and then confirmed on 19th October 1907. Father Mateo never described exactly what happened, but it was decisive. He wrote to a friend in Chile:

"From this shrine the Heart of Jesus requests, pleads and demands that there be spread throughout the Church, this Love that surpasses all love, the cult of reparation, of zeal, of sacrifice in honour of His Sacred Heart. At this altar will be regenerated the paganized home of today. Before it the church will sing a magnificent hymn celebrating the genuine triumph of Jesus Christ..."

The message of the Sacred Heart given through Saint Margaret Mary here in Paray-le-Monial and the grace Father Mateo received there, would be a continual reference for him in his *Enthronement Apostolate* and in all his work as a zealot of the love of the Sacred Heart.

He saw the Enthronement as a fulfilment of the revelation of Our Lord to Margaret Mary and as giving concrete form to the devotion, which she was called to spread.

A letter from Saint Margaret Mary to Sister Jeanne Madeleine Joly of the Visitation Monastery in Dijon could have been written to Mateo.

“He will reign, this divine Heart, in spite of those who will want to oppose Him. Satan will be in disarray with all his crowd. Blessed are they whom He will use for the establishment of his rule.... The adorable Heart of Jesus wants to establish his reign of love in all hearts, to destroy and ruin that of Satan.”

With the same faith, Father Mateo was tireless in proclaiming the reign of the Sacred Heart until his last illness.

In one of the letters of Saint Margaret Mary to Father Jean Croiset SJ, she relates the establishment of his reign and the conversions it will occasion:

“...the great number of souls that this devotion to his divine Heart will bring back from the way of perdition, to restore them to the way of salvation. This is what gives Him such a burning desire to be known, loved and honoured by men, in the hearts of whom He has such a desire to establish the rule of His pure love, that he promises great recompenses to all those who will work to bring about His reign.”

Conversion to Christ of those who did not know Him or who were alienated from Him in sin, was a key aim of Mateo's work.

In that same letter Margaret Mary goes on to speak of the blessings the Lord will give to those who are faithful to His heart, many of which would be numbered among the “twelve promises” taken from her writings in the modern era. Among which is the following:

“As He is the source of all blessings, He will pour them out abundantly on every place where the image of His Sacred Heart is honoured, because His love urges him to pour forth the inexhaustible treasure of his sanctifying and saving graces in souls of good will, seeking empty hearts to fill them with the sweet unction of his burning charity to consume them and transform them in Him.”

Through Father Mateo and the Enthronement Movement it would give the Lord an opportunity to fulfil this promise.

Speaking in 1918 to lay co-workers in Lyon, Father Mateo said:

“And the faithful disciple (Saint Margaret Mary) so well understood her Master’s lesson that she said over and over, the expression that became her life’s refrain: “He will reign in spite of his enemies and He will become Master of the hearts which he wants to possess”...And so it is Paray-le-Monial, which we must realize...and this is the very *raison d’être* of the work which I am preaching to you: the *Enthronement of the Sacred Heart* in the family...”

Father Mateo conceives of an apostolate and a work

Father Mateo was clear on his motivation for the *Enthronement*, but he foresaw so much more. He was convinced that no matter how solid the motivation was, that was not enough. He would speak of the *Enthronement* as an apostolate but also as an “organized work” with a stated purpose, a method and a ceremonial.

Early on he organized “secretariats” as a key part of his method of promoting the work. A secretariat would take responsibility for furthering the apostolate in a given area. The secretariats were manned mostly by laity and often lay women. These were people who had already experienced the blessing of *Enthronement* in their own families.

The *Enthronement* was never without a ceremonial, that could be easily reproduced and given to laity and clergy. On his first visit to Rome, he already had one that he presented to Pope Pius X and then to the Superior General. Over the years he would update it, but he was clear on the importance of following the ceremonial and not changing it without his consent.

How does Father Mateo describe the Apostolate?

Father Mateo’s mission was never just about enthroning an image of the Sacred Heart for veneration but establishing in the family the reign of the Sacred Heart. Jesus would be the king who commands and governs, and who is obeyed because He is the King of love, because the parents and

children, his intimate friends, love him in truth with their whole heart, whole soul and whole strength.

In May 1934 there was an Enthronement Congress at the generalate of the Congregation.

Father Mateo outlined six elements that, as he said, “form the soul and marrow of our work”.

1. *The Enthronement truly lived in the home.* The true reign of faith and love of the Heart of Jesus by a life solidly Christian and pious. [The *Enthronement* is not just a ceremony but a commitment to a deeper Christian life and that inevitably involved conversion, sometimes dramatic.]
2. *Intensification of the Eucharistic life.* Daily Mass, both the Holy Sacrifice and Holy Communion whenever possible. [The *Enthronement* in the family could only be deepened by the necessary link to the church/parish and faithfulness to the Eucharistic celebration.]
3. *A spirit of reparative love.* The spirit of penitence and sacrifice inseparable in every Christian life and the devotion to the Sacred Heart. [Communion with the crucified Lord and sharing his mission of repairing/healing sin was essential to true devotion to the Heart of Christ. The *Enthronement* lived was a way of making reparation for so many homes where Jesus was not loved or even welcomed.]
4. *And in the spirit of reparation and penitence, night adoration in the home.* [With Mateo’s SSCC formation,

Eucharistic adoration, including adoration at night was in his blood. He saw the impracticability, if not impossibility of asking families to make adoration in a church or chapel. He creatively came up with adoration in the home, adoration before the image of the Sacred Heart in communion with the Eucharistic presence in the parish church.]

5. *The great urgent duty of social apostolate.* The apostolate is but the logical consequence of the love we preach, which is the foundation of our work. We can't really love the Heart of Jesus without wanting to make Him loved. [The *Enthronement* was an apostolate, not just in the sense of moving families to enthrone the Sacred Heart but apostolic in the sense of forming apostles - families that would go into the many places they were involved (school, work, church associations etc.), bringing the love of the Sacred Heart and inspiring others to conversion.]
6. *The sick – the apostolate of suffering.* [Early on Father Mateo would meet people who were physically unable to join him in his apostolate. He quickly foresaw their participation by offering up their limitations and suffering for the world-wide reign of the Sacred Heart. Mateo himself would live this form of mission in his last years, unable to leave, what he called, "The Cloister of the Divine Good Pleasure."]

Father Mateo always characterized the *Enthronement* as "a work of social redemption." It was not limited in scope but truly catholic/universal. He emphasized over and over the

royalty of Jesus Christ, “the King of Love.” His was a work of direct evangelization, proclaiming Jesus Christ, calling people to living faith in him.

Lived faith in Jesus Christ meant letting him be King, Lord of one’s family and one’s life - and that necessarily involved conversion. He told great stories of conversion. He was forceful without being offensive. He was strong with the strength of God’s love. He was not interested in merely propagating a social message or even theories or theologies of marriage and family life. He was about proclaiming Jesus Christ as King of families, of religious communities, of the priesthood and even more insistently, of civil society. He began and continued doing it family by family.

If Jesus Christ is King of Love, then Father Mateo saw the *Enthronement* as a form of adoration. Using the traditional term “latria’, it was a family worshiping the King of Kings in reparation for the rejection of the Lord from homes, schools, courts, legislatures and royal/presidential palaces.

There was a discussion for several years among some members of the Congregation of the possibility of enthroning the heart of Mary with the heart of Jesus. Father Mateo wanting to put an end to the conversation and with great concern for the apostolate wrote:

“There is certainly a very noble sort of filial respect evident in the effort but, which without meaning to, introduces something not very doctrinal in the doctrine of the *Enthronement*. If it were but a simple “consecration”

there would be nothing wrong with such, on the contrary. But the *Enthronement* is and must remain a homage of social adoration to Christ, God and King, a homage which is essentially an act of latria, which cannot be offered to the Virgin Mary. She is Queen, yes, but not in the same way Christ is King...we would commit a great error “enthroning” on the same throne the heart of Jesus and the heart of Mary.”

Father Mateo was very clear on this point. To another father of the Congregation, he said that doing such would “destroy the apostolate.” No one could ever accuse Mateo of having little devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. One has only to read his Meditations of the Rosary to see his deep love for her. However, his great concern was the solid theological and doctrinal base of the Enthronement of the Heart of Jesus.

Style of the apostolate

Many of Father Mateo’s earliest writings about the *Enthronement* are conferences given to “apostles”. For the most part these were not religious of the Sacred Hearts, other priests, seminarians, or religious women. They were laity.

The style of the apostolate from the beginning was what we would call today “collaborative”. Many of the lay apostles were women. Gradually he also employed the service of religious women, including significant service by our SSCC

sisters. The secretariats were mostly staffed by laity. Mateo stayed in touch with the secretariats by periodic circular letters, sent from almost anywhere he might be in the world.

Though early on Father Mateo had the support of the Superior General of the Congregation and the *Enthronement* was recognized as an apostolate and a responsibility of the Congregation by the General Chapter of 1919 but his collaborators were not just SSCC for it truly became an ecclesial movement.

Father Mateo's favourite and frequently repeated definition of an apostle was "a chalice full and overflowing with Jesus." Apostles were men and women who knew and loved Jesus Christ and from that deep source brought His reign to others. His formation of apostles was not meant merely to provide tools for the work but a spirituality which would give life and purpose to the work.

Mateo emphasized that the apostolate was not a "luxury", something done after the more necessary aspects of life were attended to. It was a duty that came with baptism deeply lived in the heart of Jesus. Apostles must respond to the call to sanctity. Promoting the *Enthronement of Jesus* as King of the family, meant allowing Jesus to reign in one's life. Mateo told of a young man who came to him and said:

"What must I do to be an apostle, for I absolutely must be one... Father, I am poor, with no great qualities nor great talent or great culture, but I love Jesus with a big

heart, and I want to make him loved at no matter what the cost.”

Mateo concluded, “he became an admirable apostle of the Sacred Heart.” That was the depth of what Mateo understood as an apostle of the Sacred Heart, and he had great confidence that there were many called and many capable.

Speaking to promoters in Switzerland in 1916, Father Mateo said:

“I am going to speak to you of holiness... My purpose is to speak to you about what true holiness is and to make you understand that it is a duty for us, the duty which contains all our duties” ... Later to the same group he explained, “It’s not necessary to be just good persons... You must be saints to do the work of sanctity (i.e. the Enthronement). Saints, through love, through devotion, through sacrifice. Not a sanctity of feeling, or enthusiasm but real solid sanctity. Be zealous, but with supernatural zeal. May you seek God and God alone.”

Father Mateo included in his mission – “little people”, little in two senses. Early on he reached out to the young, often to young women in Catholic schools. He would have them copy out letters, even in languages they did not know. They would then be sent all over the world to awaken interest in the *Enthronement*. He also founded the Tarcisians, a group for children and youth, named for Saint Tarcisius, a young Roman martyr. They were to support the apostolate by small acts of sacrifice and by prayer, especially the

Eucharist. And as I said, early on he founded the Apostolate of Suffering and considered it essential to the mission.

The apostolate that Father Mateo envisaged, promoted and organized was one that transformed families, one family at a time, bringing about conversions, some startling ones. It was an apostolate that created apostles, who would continue and expand the work. Mateo depended on his co-apostles, without their fruit bearing work, his preaching tours were useless.

This was not “light” evangelization. There are always well-known, dynamic preachers who attract a crowd and stir up excitement but leave no great lasting effect. This was not what Mateo wanted. He wanted a work which would change lives, renew families, bring Christ’s reign in society and do so by conversion of life and arousing the apostolic spirit in the people whose lives had been changed and renewed.

As I said earlier, Father Mateo had the support of the Congregation in the person of the Superior General. In fact, he was invited to give the retreat to the General Chapter of the Congregation in 1919 and the General Chapter of the Congregation assumed full responsibility and direction for the work.

He had outstanding collaborators in SSCC’s like Father Eusebius Rinkes (1899-1973) who was named Secretary General and who worked for many years in that position. He was a great support of Father Mateo. Possessing doctorates in philosophy and theology and being multi-lingual, Eusebius

was perfect for the work. When Mateo went to Spain in 1917, he had the generous support of Father José Calasanz Baradat (1887-1976), who was already zealously promoting the *Enthronement*. Later in the US, Fr. Francis Larkin (1903-1980), the first vocation to the Congregation from the US, would spend most of his priestly ministry “on the road” promoting the *Enthronement*.

Among other things, he translated Mateo’s “Vers le Roi d’Amour” into English as “Jesus, King of Love”, adding to the original several other conferences by Mateo. Until today it continues to be published in new editions. Larkin also translated Mateo’s retreat for priests.

An early collaborator of Mateo was Father Gonzalo Barron (1899-1936) also from Spain. At least once, he travelled to France to meet with Mateo about the progress of the apostolate in Spain. On 2nd September 1936, Gonzalo was martyred for the faith. When Father Mateo got the news, he called him “our hero.” Blessed Gonzalo is the first apostle of the *Enthronement* to be beatified.

There were also many other brothers who caught Mateo’s fire. However, one would get the impression that Father Mateo was somewhat disappointed that there was not more enthusiasm. When one reads *Jesus, King of Love*, for example, one gets a glimpse of the fiery zeal of Mateo. I knew Francis Larkin as a young priest. Inspired by Father Mateo, he was consumed with the reign of the Heart of Christ. Such zeal is evangelical but also perhaps a burden for those of us not so gifted who can be too “ordinary” to catch the zeal.

Father Mateo received great support among his Sacred Hearts sisters. Some of them headed very active Enthronement Secretariats. The first to mention would be Sister Marie-Jacques Pinatel, who soon after her profession in 1922 was assigned as secretary for the *Enthronement Apostolate* in Picpus. For many years she was a devoted and effective co-worker of Father Mateo, her organizational gifts seconding his charismatic mission. The circular at the time of her death said, “she collaborated with all her strength and energy in the world-wide apostolate of Father Mateo.”

The memoirs she left are an interesting and important historical commentary on the work. Another was Sister Renee Dumonteil (1950), a French sister, who for most of her religious life was in the Weymouth community in England. Without ever leaving the convent in Weymouth she stirred up great interest through her letters, especially in India and Sri Lanka. Father Mateo would arrive somewhere and find that a letter of hers had already paved the way. In one place they thought she was a male cleric, referring to her as “Monsignor Renee.”

Conclusion

Saint Margaret Mary would often say, “Whatever happens to me, provided that the Heart of my kind Jesus is known and loved and that He reigns, that is enough.” Her whole life was consumed with the desire that the Sacred Heart be known, loved and reign. Father Mateo’s life and mission are an embodiment of that.

How else can we explain his constant activity and extensive travel in a time when international travel was so much more difficult than today?

Particularly impressive is the five years he spent in Asia (1935-1940), crisscrossing the region, finishing a retreat in one place, and traveling to the next and beginning a retreat the evening of the day he arrived. Sometimes he gave as many as 20 talks a day and often in Latin.

His travel schedule was incredible as he did not just work in one country and then go on to the next, but he went back and forth all over Asia for five years. And it was an important time for the apostle of the King of Love to be there, as he prepared the missionaries and Christians to endure the second World War which would begin the year after he left Asia. Some of the missionaries who attended his retreats were to die in prison camps.

In a very human sense, his years in Asia would demonstrate how ready Mateo was to give all for the King of Love. Like many of us, Father Mateo was a man very set in his ways. Evidence of that is his need to have apples every day. One bishop in Asia wrote to another asking for apples or advice on where he could get them because they didn't grow in his diocese. Mateo still needed apples! It's humorous in a way, but we need to remember the many inconveniences he endured and how he had to step out of his comfort zone, as we would say today, to travel to some ten Asian countries, adapting to different climates, languages and customs. In this we can see his deep devotion to the Heart of Christ so

that He may “be known, loved and reign.” It was his blessed obsession.

Preaching to the missionaries in Asia would show Mateo’s resilience in another way. Prepared to invite Asian missionaries into his world-wide apostolate to families, Father Mateo met with resistance. The missionaries are not interested in the *Enthronement* or in the Sacred Heart of Saint Margret Mary, which they saw as just another small devotion. Mateo was taken by surprise given his own fiery enthusiasm for the message of Paray but the shock didn’t stop him or even slow him down. He immediately pivoted to the Gospels and Saint Paul to preach the love of God and the call to be “shepherds after the heart of God.” (Jer. 3:15)

Father Mateo wrote in a letter that while the *Work of the Enthronement* had not conquered hearts in some missions that did not mean that his time there had been a failure, “Absolutely not. Because well before and quite above the Enthronement there is a transcendent work, that is the sanctification of priests.”

In another he says: “I gave a complete course on the theology of the Sacred Heart, *fons vitae et sanctificationis*.” In fact, that experience would encourage Father Mateo in a new aspect of his mission. “The king of love upset our plans and without consulting us made my apostolate come together around sanctification of the clergy, by means of the doctrine of the Sacred Heart deeply lived.”

Father Mateo's apostolate to families through the *Enthronement* was always one important aspect of his life and broader mission as a "zealot of the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary." As a young priest of twenty-three he would say, "(my) only desire is to be a saint and to make known and loved until death the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

Challenge of the "Life mission of Father Mateo" today

Father Mateo's "life mission", the *Enthronement of the Sacred Heart* in the home, was a response to a society in need of conversion, in need of Jesus Christ. He travelled tirelessly spreading the fire of the Heart of Christ. And that was because of the fire burning within "the global apostle of the Sacred Heart of Jesus", as Bishop Augusto Salinas calls him in the subtitle of his biography. Mateo's work quickly catches on; the numbers of Enthronements and Secretariats seemed to multiply exponentially.

What practical effect did his life mission have on the society, to whose needs he was trying to respond? Did it have any? I doubt Mateo would have been too concerned about the answer.

We know that the society and church in which we live present us with challenges equal to those of Mateo's time. Can we find in his life's mission inspiration to respond?

Society (and I speak from the reality of the USA, though I imagine there are similarities in other “developed countries”) presents many challenges. I will mention two.

First, *the state of the family*. A friend who works in a “middle school” (ages 10 to 13) told me that in her class this year there is not one student who comes from an intact family, i.e. a family in which both biological parents are present in the home. When she began teaching thirty years ago, all the students except two or three would be from an intact family. The school where she teaches is not in an area where there would be socio-economic pressures on the family due to poverty or violence. It’s rather middle, even upper middle class. Families who participate in the church and its sacramental life may be in better shape, but not necessarily, for they too live in the society that places stress on the family in many ways.

Second, *lack of clarity about the meaning of family*. What does “family” mean for large numbers of people today? The very concept of family seems to have very little widely agreed upon meaning. The influence of gender ideology is one key factor, an ideology that does not just call into question our Catholic belief in marriage and the family and our appreciation of human sexuality, but also our Catholic concept of reality as based in the physical.

Societal institutions, including schools, promote this new ideology, so it becomes the “new normal” and any individual or any institution that rightly resists is penalized. This is

just one “stressor”. We could name others: the state of the economy, education, various addictions, etc.

Church: In the Church there is the challenge of religious indifferentism, the attitude that Jesus Christ is one of many ways to God, all considered valid. This is not just present among well-meaning but poorly catechized laity, but also evident among some members of the hierarchy, priests and religious. Such indifferentism neutralizes the Church’s evangelizing mission. As a result, the church’s social teaching lacks evangelical content. If Jesus is not recognized as “the (not “a”) way” (Jn 14:6) how can we even begin to speak of his “royalty”? To recognize Jesus Christ King of Love, as Mateo would call him, is impossible. Before Jesus sent the apostles on mission saying, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them...” (Mt. 28:19), he proclaims his kingship, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” (Mt 28:18)

The Church’s universal mission rests on Jesus’ kingship. Witness to this are the martyrs. All through the history of the Church and until today so many have died rather than deny Christ. They could easily have lived by offering sacrifice to some small non-god, but they died because Jesus Christ is King.

How do we respond?

We respond inspired by Father Mateo’s zeal for the King of Love and his creativity in exercising his mission. We look at

the society in which we live and the Church and respond in ways consistent with the Lord we serve.

The internet and social media have affected the way we speak and communicate with one another, and not always for the best. Behind a computer screen it's easy to speak harshly and even violently. We see the effects in the polarization of society and even the Church. This is not the way of Jesus, King of Love. We take a lesson from Father Mateo and his life-long mission.

We need his conviction that Jesus Christ is King, the King of Love. I would suggest if you have not read this book, or have not read it in a while, to do so. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you get beyond some concepts and language which may seem outdated to the substance of his message. Knowing the King of Love will give us constancy and patience in the mission before us. The reign of Jesus Christ is the big picture for us as Church; it's the inspiration and energy for all we do. Love for Jesus and conviction about his reign in the world is the background and basis of all we do. It's our source of Mateo-like zeal.

For all Father Mateo did, the millions of Enthronements he would report, apostles inspired, secretariats established, he never, as far as I have read, spoke of actual societal transformation as a result. Yet he kept going and he always held that the apostolate was meant to transform one family at a time, as he would say "family by family". In today's English we would call his approach "grassroots", in spite of what could be said to be his grandiose style. His purpose was

very simple and basic. And so should ours be. The primary focus is the family inviting Jesus, King of Love, into their home, being consecrated to Him and letting him be Lord of their lives. Family by family, simply and straightforward.

Families being renewed around Jesus Christ then become apostles. Two forms of apostles come to mind. The first is by extending the reign of Jesus to their friends, again “family by family.” The second is by outreach to the poor and marginalized, in whatever form that takes in their local community. As we promote the *Enthronement*, like Father Mateo, we can never ignore the primary element of the formation of apostles.

Like Father Mateo, we continue the apostolate in collaboration with the laity. Many lay people see the value and need for Jesus’ presence in their family. They do wonderfully creative work as promoters. We can serve as their advisors and support them with a service that most are only too happy to receive. They take the lead. It’s impossible for us to coordinate the whole apostolate anymore. If you “google” *Enthronement of the Sacred Heart* all kinds of groups, come up that are promoting it.

We as a Congregation have no contact with most of them. It’s a great sign of the blessing of Mateo’s original inspiration.

I have been inspired by Mateo’s creative turn in Asia. When the missionaries didn’t want the devotion to the Sacred Heart ‘a la’ Margaret Mary and the *Enthronement*, he went another route. As he would say:

“In order to preach the Sacred Heart, we do not need the events of Paray or Saint Margaret Mary, the Gospel and our theology are enough.”

Having our priorities in order and the larger picture of Jesus’ reign before us, we can find new ways of continuing Father Mateo’s life mission in collaboration with laity, clergy and religious, who have experienced the life changing power of the *Enthronement* and who desire to shout the good news far and wide.

VII.

**THE CULMINATION
OF FATHER MATEO'S
ENTHRONEMENT MOVEMENT:
THE SOLEMN CONSECRATION
OF INDIVIDUAL NATIONS
TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS,
EXEMPLIFIED BY SPAIN**

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On 30th May 1919, on the Cerro de los Ángeles, near Madrid, considered to be the geographical centre of the Iberian Peninsula, the act of consecration of Spain to the Sacred Heart of Jesus took place, presided over by King Alfonso XIII. It was the culmination of a long process of preparation, in which Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey played a prominent role.⁹⁰

⁹⁰ Miguel Ángel Dionisio Vivas, "El Padre Matéo Crawley-Boevey, apóstol del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús", in P. Cervera-J. Boccherini Stampa, "Sus heridas nos han curado". *Memoria documental del Centenario de la*

Father Mateo's first steps in Spain

After beginning the apostolate of the *Enthronement of the Heart of Jesus* in Chile, Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey extended his work to Peru, Uruguay and Argentina. He travelled to Europe in 1914, where the First World War had broken out, with its aftermath of disasters. He preached in Paris, a city threatened by the German Army. He visited Rome, where he met Pope Benedict XV who blessed his work as had Benedict's predecessor, Pius X done. At this time, he resolved some theological doubts that had arisen, with the intervention of Cardinal Billot.

From France he went to Spain, founding thirty-eight centres of Enthronement. He also gave retreats, spreading devotion to the Sacred Heart.⁹¹ His work enthused the nuncio, Francesco Ragonesi; Cardinal Victoriano Guisasola, the Archbishop Primate of Toledo; and the Archbishop of Seville, Cardinal Enrique Almaraz y Santos. The Cardinal Primate addressed a letter to Father Juan Oliver Copons,⁹² who was the Director General of the Union of Spanish Ladies of the Sacred Heart. The letter encouraged the Union to establish a board, under the direction of Father Calasanz Baradat, a religious of the Sacred Hearts, with the mission of promoting in Spain the consecration of families to the Sacred Heart, through the practice of *Enthronement*. Cardinal

Consagración de España al Sagrado Corazón de Jesús, BAC, Madrid 2021, pp. 186-202.

⁹¹ *ABC*, 15 November 1914, p. 21.

⁹² Official Bulletin of the Archbishopric of Toledo (hereafter BOAT), 1 February 1916, pp. 52-55.

Victoriano Guisasola was a great promoter of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and protected the work of Father Crawley.

Proof of this is that the Cardinal had the letter of Pope Benedict XV to Father Mateo reproduced in the diocesan bulletin, adding, in addition, various documents concerning devotion to the Sacred Heart.⁹³ In early 1916, in addition to reprinting Benedict XV's letter to Father Crawley, the diocesan bulletin also published a letter addressed to Father Mateo by Cardinal Billot. This letter encouraged and recommended the practice of Enthronement, while also clarifying supposed difficulties regarding the disapproval by the Sacred Congregation of Rites of the coronation of the image of the Sacred Heart, emphasizing that the two practices were not identical.⁹⁴ When June arrived, the month dedicated to the Sacred Heart, the Primate would annually address his flock with a written message about this devotion and how it should be celebrated in parishes.

Under the patronage of Cardinal Guisasola, Father Mateo established in Madrid his *Work of Enthronement*, creating a National Secretariat of the Enthronement, linked as a section to the Union of Ladies.⁹⁵ The decree was given by the Bishop of Madrid on 17th June 1914.⁹⁶ It was presided

⁹³ Boat, 1 June 1915, pp. 251-258, p. 139.

⁹⁴ Boat, 1 February 1916, pp. 44-51.

⁹⁵ Luis Cano, *"Reinaré en España": la mentalidad católica a la llegada de la Segunda República*, Encuentro, Madrid 2009, p. 85.

⁹⁶ Archivio storico Congregazione dei Sacri Cuori (hereafter ASCSSCC), 119-2.

over by the Duchess of the Conquest, María Quindós de Tejada y Villaroel, lady-in-waiting to the Queen Mother, María Cristina of Habsburg. The spiritual direction was the responsibility of Father Baradat. The Duchess, through the nuncio Francesco Ragonesi, wrote to the Pope in February 1916, asking him for a special apostolic blessing for the board in charge of promoting the *Enthronement* in the homes.⁹⁷ Ragonesi, in addition to pointing out that the Duchess was an excellent Catholic, indicated that the Cardinal Primate approved and praised the formation of the board and asked that the Pope's request for his blessing be granted. Benedict XV responded by expressing his pleasure at this work.⁹⁸ Diocesan secretariats were also created in various dioceses.⁹⁹

Father Mateo found in Spain a favourable environment to introduce this new form of devotion of the Sacred Heart, which was the consecration of homes and the Enthronement.¹⁰⁰ Indeed, since the 19th century, devotion to the Sacred Heart had been spreading in Spain, becoming, together with Marian piety, the most important expression of spirituality. On the other hand, the Society of Jesus, so important in the Restoration of Spain, had been promoting devotion to the Sacred Heart since its re-establishment in the country in 1815, under the reign of Ferdinand VII, with

⁹⁷ ASV, Archivi delle Rappresentanze Pontificie, Nunziatura di Madrid (hereafter, ASV, Arch. Nunz. Madrid), b. 741, f. 205.

⁹⁸ ASV, Arch. Nunz. Madrid, b. 741, ff. 202-203.

⁹⁹ ASCSSCC, 119-2.

¹⁰⁰ José Caballero, "Corazón de Jesús en España (Devoción)", in Quentin Aldea Vaquero (Dir.), *Diccionario de Historia Eclesiástica de España I*, C.S.I.C., Madrid 1972 pp. 612-614.

the revival of suppressed congregations and the promotion of different devotions to the Sacred Heart, such as the practice of the first Fridays.¹⁰¹

Enthronement involved consecrating families before an image of the Sacred Heart, previously placed in a prominent location within the home. This image would become the 'king' of the household and the centre of family life, inspiring peace and charity in relationships between spouses, between parents and children, and even with household staff. It promoted a truly Christian life, renewing faith and love, cultivating a spirit of reparation and apostolate, and taking as its ultimate model the Holy Family of Nazareth.¹⁰²

The model of the home of Lazarus, Martha and Mary in Bethany, where Jesus had found a place of rest and affection, was also proposed. Enthronement could be defined as "the official and social recognition of the loving kingship of the Heart of Jesus in a Christian family", a recognition that took on a sensitive form by definitively and solemnly installing an image of the Heart of Jesus in a place of honour in the house, "offering it to him without reserve by an act of consecration."¹⁰³ In short, a path to holiness.

¹⁰¹ Manuel Revuelta González, *La Compañía de Jesús en la España Contemporánea Tomo III: Palabras y Fermentos (1868-1912)*, Pontificia Universidad Comillas, Madrid 2008, pp. 380-407.

¹⁰² Luis Cano, *Reinaré en España...*, op. cit., p. 61.

¹⁰³ Mateo Crawley-Boevey, *Jesús, Rey de Amor*, Secretariado Central de la Entronización, Madrid 1927, p. 17.

For Father Mateo:

“Enthronement, in its true spirit, should essentially be a Jesus who lives in the home - a Jesus with whom the entire family life is consulted and shared, a Jesus in whose presence one sings, suffers, and dies, making His Heart a tabernacle for parents and children.”¹⁰⁴

Regarding how the ceremony was carried out, a newspaper account describes how Father Mateo, standing on a platform in the courtyard of a tenement house, gathered fifty poor families who were about to enthrone the image in their homes. After his talk, the priest blessed the images, then led the singing of a verse from “Corazón Santo,” a popular song to the Sacred Heart, whose refrain said: “Sacred Heart, you shall reign, you shall always be our delight.” The consecration of the homes followed, with three cheers for the Sacred Heart and the ceremony concluded with a Eucharistic hymn.¹⁰⁵

The enthronement could take place in humble settings as well as among members of the nobility and aristocracy. For example, the Marquises of Torrelaguna held a solemn ceremony attended by the Bishop of Madrid-Alcalá and Nuncio Ragonesi.¹⁰⁶

Given the growth of the Association of the Sacred Hearts and the increase in the number of families performing the enthronement, Father Mateo published a manual, in the form

¹⁰⁴ *Biografía y pensamientos del Reverendo Padre Mateo Crawley-Boevey*, p. 15.

¹⁰⁵ *ABC*, 21 January 1915, p. 17.

¹⁰⁶ *ABC*, 22 January 1915, p. 15.

of a devotional book, where he collected all the practices and exercises proper to this devotion. It was called: "Manual of the Sacred Heart; Devotional Guide of the Association of the Same Name and of Families Consecrated to the Divine Heart."¹⁰⁷

Divided into various parts, the first was a list of traditional devotions, arranged throughout the day. Morning prayers included: *The Angelus, The Our Father, The Hail Mary, The Creed, Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity* and the *Marian Prayers* such as the *Memorare* and the *Blessed be your purity* prayer. Evening prayers include the *Salve* and the 'I, a sinner' prayer. For Mass, it included the Association's own liturgy, a prayer to Blessed Margaret Mary, and various prayers to deepen Eucharistic communion. It also offered guidance for a good confession and included the Rosary and the Way of the Cross.

The second part focused on the specific practices of the Association of the Sacred Hearts, centred on both the Heart of Jesus and the Heart of Mary. It gave special importance to living the month of the Heart of Jesus - the month of June - and the devotion of First Fridays, with a series of exercises for each month. It also insisted that after Eucharistic communion, the main exercise of the children of the Sacred Hearts was adoration, complemented by daily visits to the Blessed Sacrament, and the Holy Hour on Thursday night,

¹⁰⁷ Mateo Crawley-Boevey, *Manual de los Sagrados Corazones. Devocionario propio de la Asociación del mismo nombre y de las familias consagradas al Divino Corazón*, Imprenta Ibérica, Estanislao Maestre, Madrid 1917.

from eleven to twelve o'clock at night, or in the afternoon, from two o'clock in summer and from four o'clock in winter.

This booklet promoted, in a special way, devotion to Saint Joseph. It established the feast of the Patronage of St. Joseph as the main feast of the Association, over and above the popular Spanish feast of 19 March. This popularity stemmed from a boom in this devotion to the holy patriarch since the 16th century, when it had been promoted by St. Teresa of Jesus. Likewise, every 19th day of every month, St. Joseph was to be venerated with some devotional practice.

Alongside this devotion to St. Joseph, it urged that the feasts of the Epiphany, Holy Thursday, Corpus Christi, the Incarnation of the Lord, Blessed Margaret Mary, Saint John Francis Regis and Saint Gertrude be celebrated in a special way.

The third part of the manual contained the rules of the Association. It was here that Father Mateo clarified what was unique to the Association and the devotion it promoted. For him, devotion to the Heart of Christ was tied to a specific mission, aligned with the needs of the times—a devotion linked, “upon the piled ruins left by the horrors of the French Revolution, and upon still-smouldering debris.”¹⁰⁸ The goal of the Association was to gather devout faithful in a shared spirit of self-offering, serving to glorify the Hearts of Jesus and Mary by making reparation for the offenses they received from sinners. Its core purpose was

¹⁰⁸ Mateo Crawley-Boevey, *Manual de los Sagrados Corazones ...* op. cit., p. 355.

to practice and spread this devotion. What did this devotion consist of? Its tangible object was the physical Heart of Christ—His heart of flesh—worthy of adoration, “because of its union with the divinity in the person of the Word.”¹⁰⁹ This heart was a symbol of the love Jesus Christ had for humanity. That love, symbolized in this way and presented as both burning and unrequited, was the spiritual and central focus of the devotion. Its aim was to return love for love and to make reparation for the offenses received. This was expressed in the image of the Sacred Heart, aflame with charity and surrounded by thorns that wounded and pierced it. As a result, the principal practice of the Association was perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, since it is in the Eucharist that this gift is poured out upon humanity.

Devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary was to be understood in a similar way; here the sensible object was the maternal heart of the Virgin, the heart of the Mother of God, the spiritual object being “the heroic love of Jesus for us, often paid for with forgetfulness, indifference and contempt.”¹¹⁰ The aim was to correspond to Mary’s maternal love with a truly filial love, “consoling her for the ingratitude of her children, for whom she has suffered so much.”¹¹¹

For Father Mateo this devotion was not just any devotion, but had an exceptional character, a mission of “extraordinary greatness and....of marvellous opportunity.”¹¹² In his view

¹⁰⁹ *Ibidem*, op. cit., pp. 358-359.

¹¹⁰ *Ibidem*, op. cit., p. 360.

¹¹¹ *Ibidem*, op. cit., pp. 360-361.

¹¹² *Ibidem*, op. cit., p. 361.

it was called to revive Christianity both in souls and in society, thus realising the divine plan in the world. The spirit of the Association was to be marked by love and reparation, therefore, the mission of the members was to love and atone, especially for the blasphemies, profanations, irreverence and neglect of the Blessed Sacrament, offering themselves “as victims of expiation for the crimes of the earth.”¹¹³

It was not, therefore, an association for people who were satisfied with a half-hearted Christianity, but for fervent and courageous Christians. To this end it laid down a series of obligations, consisting of the practice and propagation of devotion to the Sacred Hearts; adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; monthly communion and attendance at the monthly general meeting. He recommended frequent, even daily communion - monthly communion was a minimum, to be celebrated on the first Friday of the month. The celebration of the Holy Hour and reparative Communion was strongly recommended, as was the recitation of the Little Offices of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, the veneration and promotion of their images, and above all, the consecration of the home to the Sacred Heart through enthronement. All of this constituted the perpetual worship of the Sacred Hearts, which meant “habitually living in the blessed presence of Jesus and Mary,”¹¹⁴ considering them as models to be imitated.

¹¹³ *Ibidem*, op. cit., p. 363.

¹¹⁴ *Ibidem*, op. cit., p. 368.

These practices were clearly outlined in the Association's Constitutions.¹¹⁵ The purpose was to practice and spread devotion to the Sacred Hearts and to dedicate oneself to the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament as a means of reparation for the offenses committed against it. Faithful men and women, who led a devout life and promised to observe the duties imposed by the Association, could become members. Those wishing to join would first be aspirants and later full members, with a solemn reception held on the feasts of the Patronage of Saint Joseph, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Blessed Margaret Mary, or during the monthly First Friday meetings. Each member would be given, on admission, a badge consisting of a medal of the Sacred Hearts with a crimson ribbon and a diploma signed by the director. The obligations were to attend adoration of the Blessed Sacrament on the days and at the times assigned to them; to recite a Salve every day - a requirement to obtain the indulgences granted to the Association; to receive communion monthly and on the principal feasts of the Association; to attend the general meeting of the members, which would be held on the first Friday of each month; when one of the members died, a communion or a rosary was to be offered for the repose of their soul; to meet weekly, as far as possible, for the recitation of the Offices of the Sacred Hearts, on the day and hour to be appointed by the Council, in agreement with the Director. None of these obligations were binding under sin, whether mortal or venial, but anyone who failed to fulfil them for six months would be considered outside the

¹¹⁵ *Ibidem*, op. cit., pp. 372-381.

Association. It was established that on the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart—or another day in June if necessary—a Mass would be celebrated for the spiritual benefit of the members, who would offer their Communion for that intention. In the November meeting, a Mass would be celebrated for the deceased, with Communion offered for the same purpose. Members would contribute a fee set by the council. Father Mateo placed the Association under the patronage of St. Francis Regis and of the then Blessed (now Saint) Margaret Mary Alacoque. The Association was to be directed by a priest and a council. There was to be a council for men and one for women, and the regulations set out its composition, functions and mode of appointment. They also detailed the indulgences that members could gain and the ritual to be used.

In 1919 he published a new pamphlet in which, after collecting letters of encouragement and approval, both from Pope Benedict XV and various prelates, such as Cardinal Billot and Cardinal Van Rossum, he described the nature of the act of enthronement in the home, as well as its history, the spirit of the work and the way in which it was carried out.¹¹⁶

After his stay in Spain, he returned to France, although he maintained correspondence with our country,¹¹⁷ and from

¹¹⁶ Mateo Crawley-Boevey, *Entronización del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús en los hogares mediatne la solemne consagración de las familias al mismo Divino Corazón por un padre de la Congregación de los Sagrados Corazones*, Colegio de los Sagrados Corazones, Madrid 1919.

¹¹⁷ ASCSSCC, 223-1, s. n.

there he moved to Switzerland, Austria, Holland and Italy. He returned to Spain in 1919, where he travelled along the Mediterranean coast, and Andalusia, Santander and the Basque Country. On Holy Thursday he preached the Holy Hour in Madrid, in the *Reparadoras*, with the church full of people from Madrid's elite, who came well in advance to hear his sermon.¹¹⁸ With this new trip to Spain, he was able to participate in the inauguration of the monument to the Sacred Heart of Jesus on the Cerro de los Ángeles, a work in which he was fully involved, and which would become the most prestigious chapter of his apostolate.¹¹⁹

The construction of the Monument at Cerro de los Ángeles and the Consecration of Spain to the Sacred Heart

From 1914, Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey had been promoting home enthronements in Spain. As these multiplied, the idea of a national enthronement began to take shape. Jesuit Father José María Rubio, Father Crawley, and the Ladies' Association began to promote the initiative.¹²⁰

It was during a lecture given at the Centre for Social Defence, as part of the series organised by Rafael María Lázaro and Severino Aznar, that Mateo proposed the idea of erecting a monument to the Heart of Jesus in Spain. Once the idea matured and the approval was given by the bishop of

¹¹⁸ ASCSSCC, 222-5, s. n.

¹¹⁹ Mateo Crawley-Boevey, *Padre Mateo...*, op. cit, pp. 132-140.

¹²⁰ Luis Cano, *Reinaré en España...*, op. cit. p. 85.

Madrid-Alcalá, the Secretariat of the Enthronement took on the task of promoting and organising it throughout Spain, looking for ways to raise funds.

The Secretariat operated from the College of the Sacred Hearts, presided over by the Duchess de la Conquista. Father Calasanz Baradat, a religious of the Sacred Hearts and its director, travelled throughout Spain to promote the project and organise the subscription. Father Baradat was the founder, on 1st May 1918, of the magazine “Reinado Social”.

However, this idea was not new but stemmed from a proposal made by Francisco Belda y Pérez de Nueros, the Marquis of Cabra, and deputy governor of the Bank of Spain, in a letter published in “La Semana Católica” on 13th May 1900. In this letter he expressed his desire to see a monument to the Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Conception inaugurated on the Cerro de los Ángeles.¹²¹ Two years later, Mercedes Escalera, a person of great confidence to the Queen Regent, Maria Christina of Habsburg, proposed to her that Spain be consecrated to the Sacred Heart and that a temple be erected in His honour. In 1911, Father Postius, Secretary General of the 22nd National Eucharistic Congress, presented the idea of a national consecration,¹²² which was carried out during the Congress. The Cerro de los Ángeles project was not forgotten and was revived by Ramón

¹²¹ Luis Cano, *“Reinaré en España...”,* op. cit. p. 84.

¹²² *Ibidem*, op. cit. pp. 77-81.

García-Rodrigo de Nocedal, who shared it with Father Rubio and Father Mateo.¹²³

The first stone was laid on 30th June 1916, in a celebration presided over by the bishop of Madrid-Alcalá. Pope Benedict XV granted indulgences to those who collaborated in the construction after being requested to do so on 2nd August that same year by the Duchess de la Conquista and Ramón García-Rodrigo.¹²⁴ Fathers Crawley and Baradat travelled the country promoting the project, which received extraordinary financial support, including contributions from the royal family. In fact, more than the required half a million pesetas were raised.¹²⁵ As “El Debate” noted, in a country where so many projects dragged on indefinitely, “this one was built with complete regularity,” and had the virtue of uniting people of all classes and backgrounds.¹²⁶ The work was carried out by the sculptor Aniceto Marinas and the architect Carlos Maura. The monumental statue of Jesus Christ, nine meters tall, was funded by the Count of Guaqui. It bore the inscription “He shall reign in Spain,” as if fulfilling the promise made to Father Bernardo de Hoyos. On either side were two sculptural groups: one representing sanctified humanity, with statues of Saint John the Evangelist, Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, Saint Augustine, Saint Teresa of Jesus, Saint Gertrude, and Father Hoyos; the other representing humanity aspiring to holiness, with figures

¹²³ *Ibidem*, op. cit. p. 85.

¹²⁴ ASCSSCC, 119-3.

¹²⁵ Luis Cano, “*Reinaré en España...*”, op. cit. pp. 85-86.

¹²⁶ *El Debate*, 3 May 1919, p. 1.

symbolizing Charity, Humility, Repentance, and Virtue.¹²⁷ Although the inauguration was scheduled for the autumn of 1918, it had to be postponed until 30th May 1919, the feast of King Ferdinand III of Castile.

Given the limitations of the location, it was necessary to restrict the number of attendees, so the organizers sought to unite devotees from across the country by involving local parishes. The Bishop of Madrid-Alcalá, in inviting the Cardinal Primate to the consecration, requested: that general Communion be celebrated in all parishes and churches; that at noon, as the Act of Consecration would be read, the faithful gather before the Blessed Sacrament to renew their consecration to the Sacred Heart; that bells be rung at that hour following the Angelus; and that parishioners be encouraged to decorate their homes with banners and lights.¹²⁸

Father Mateo attended the dedication of the monument and the consecration of Spain to the Heart of Jesus on the Cerro de los Ángeles. The days before, on the instructions of the Bishop of Madrid-Alcalá, he had preached the solemn preparatory triduum in San Jerónimo el Real, “perhaps the finest sermons he had ever given in his life.”¹²⁹ The triduum was attended by the Madrid prelate and some 5,000

¹²⁷ Alberto Bárcena Pérez, “Historia de las consagraciones de España al Sagrado Corazón de Jesús”, in P. Cervera-J. Boccherini Stampa, “*Sus heridas nosh an curado...*”, op. cit. p. 269.

¹²⁸ Boat, 16 May 1919, pp. 166-168.

¹²⁹ *Reinado Social*, June 1960, p. 9.

people.¹³⁰ He addressed three themes: the intimate reign of the Sacred Heart in souls through the Eucharist; its social reign through the sanctification of the family - the foundation of society; and its national reign through the infusion of authentically Christian spirit into institutions, legislation, and all aspects of national life.¹³¹

The inauguration and consecration ceremony took place on the morning of the 30th of May. King Alfonso XIII arrived at eleven thirty, and at a quarter to twelve the nuncio blessed the monument.¹³² The bishop of Madrid-Alcalá then celebrated Mass. Before the end of the Mass, the master of ceremonies of the Cathedral read a telegram from Rome authorising the Madrid prelate to impart the papal blessing. Once the Mass was over and the Blessed Sacrament had been exposed by the Cardinal Primate, Victoriano Guisasola, the Duke of Infantado and the Bishop of Sion went to the royal tribune to accompany the King to the presbytery, followed by the whole royal family, who knelt before the Blessed Sacrament. The Monarch, once there, read the act of consecration of Spain to the Sacred Heart, given to him by the Duke of Infantado. The text was based on the consecration that had taken place at the first National Eucharistic Congress in Valencia in 1893, and on the one used at the International Eucharistic Congress in Madrid in 1911. It had been drafted by Antonio Maura and revised by

¹³⁰ ASCSSCC, 222-5, s. n.

¹³¹ Marcel Bocquet, *Father Mateo...*, op. cit, p. 135.

¹³² For the chronicle, see Boat, 2 June 1919, pp. 187-194.

Father Rubio. The King made no additions,¹³³ simply approving the text.¹³⁴ After a moment of adoration and the singing of *Pange lingua*, the King stood and read:

“Sacrament of the Heart of Jesus, Heart of the God-Man, Redeemer of the World, King of Kings and Lord of all those who rule:

Spain, the people of your inheritance and your favour, reverently kneels today before this throne of your goodness, raised for You in the centre of this Peninsula. All the races that inhabit it, all the regions that comprise it, have formed through centuries of shared trials and mutual loyalties, this great Spanish Homeland, strong and steadfast in its love for Religion and its loyalty to the Monarchy.

Feeling the Catholic tradition of Spanish royalty and joyfully continuing the history of its faith and devotion to Your Divine Person, we confess that You came to earth to establish the Kingdom of God in the peace of souls redeemed by Your blood and in the happiness of peoples governed by Your holy Law. We recognize that it is a mark of Your divinity to grant participation in Your power to the princes of the earth, and that from You all just laws receive their efficacy and sanction, upon which the empire of order and peace rests. You

¹³³ However, Father Mateo pointed out that the king had made corrections by his hand. See L. CANO, *Reinaré en España...*, op. cit. p. 88.

¹³⁴ Alberto Bárcena Pérez, *Historia de las consagraciones de España al Sagrado Corazón de Jesús*, in P. Cervera-J. Boccherini Stampa, *Sus heridas nos han curado...*, op. cit. pp. 270-271.

are the sure path that leads to the possession of eternal life; the inextinguishable light that illuminates minds so that they may know the truth and the propelling principle of all life and of all legitimate social progress, and in You and in the power and softness of Your grace all the virtues and heroisms that elevate and beautify the soul are strengthened.

May Your Most Holy Kingdom come to us—a Kingdom of justice and love. Reign in the hearts of men, in the heart of homes, in the minds of scholars, in the halls of science and letters, and in our laws and national institutions.

Thank You, Lord, for mercifully sparing us from the common misfortune of war, which has bled so many nations. Continue with us the work of Your loving providence.

From these heights which we have chosen for you as a symbol of our desire that you should preside over all our undertakings, bless the poor, the workers, the labourers, so that in the peaceful harmony of all social classes they may find justice and charity which will make their lives easier and their work more bearable.

Bless the Army and the Navy, the armed forces of the Fatherland, that in the loyalty of their discipline and the courage of their arms, they may always be the safeguard of the nation and the defence of the law.

Bless all of us gathered here in the unity of holy love for Religion and the Homeland. We wish to consecrate

our lives to You, asking as the reward for them to die in the certainty of Your love and in the cherished embrace of Your adorable Heart.

Amen.”

Once the Mass concluded, the procession with the Blessed Sacrament began. Cardinal Guisasola carried the monstrance, while the canopy was borne by Infante Don Carlos, the Minister of War, the Dukes of Infantado and Villahermosa, the Marquis of Aguilafuente, and the Viscount of Val de Erro. Behind them, holding lit candles, followed the bishops, the royal family, government officials, representatives of the military orders and the Catholic Action committee, members of the Madrid garrison, and an artillery commission from Getafe. During the procession, the Royal March, *Tantum ergo*, *Pange lingua*, and a Eucharistic hymn were performed. The procession reached the prepared altar, where the Cardinal Primate gave the blessing. The Blessed Sacrament was then taken to the chapel, accompanied by the singing of the Eucharistic Congress hymn, marking the end of the ceremony.

In Father Crawley's opinion, no nation had ever achieved such an apotheosis of glory - Spain being at the head of the enthronement apostolate. Father Mateo said he had never witnessed such an act, so much so that he believed he would not see it anywhere again.¹³⁵ His presence at the event did not go unnoticed, as the “ABC” newspaper noted him on its front page, reporting the procession of religious

¹³⁵ Mateo Crawley-Boevey, *Entronización del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús...*, op. cit. pp. 50-51.

to the monument, under the heading “El Apóstol” (The Apostle), where it also reported the popular proposal that he be given the title of “adopted son of Spain”.¹³⁶

After the inauguration of the monument, Father Mateo preached at various pilgrimages to the monument.¹³⁷ In fact, numerous associations, parishes and Catholic groups of all kinds went on pilgrimage to Cerro de los Ángeles¹³⁸ in the following months. Alongside this activity, Father Crawley continued to hold acts of enthronement, like those at the Sacred Hearts College and editing the magazine, “Reinado Social”.¹³⁹ Before leaving Madrid, he preached another triduum, which was also a great success.¹⁴⁰

King Alfonso XIII received him in audience, expressing his esteem for him, as well as his desire to make him an adopted son of Spain. Likewise, the Queen Mother, María Cristina de Habsburgo-Lorena, indicated her great esteem for Mateo.¹⁴¹

From Madrid, he travelled to Barcelona, where the bishop had a strong interest in his visit and wrote to the Father

¹³⁶ *ABC*, 31 May 1919, p. 1.

¹³⁷ *El Siglo Futuro*, 7th June 1919, p. 1; *La Acción*, 8th June 1919, p. 5; *Reinado Social*, July 1919, pp. 222-224.

¹³⁸ Thus, for example, in October, the important Confederación Nacional Católica Agraria held its consecration on the Cerro, an event to which its president, Juan Francisco Morán, invited Nuncio Ragonesi. See ASV, Arch. Nunz. Madrid, b. 769.

¹³⁹ *El Correo Español*, 8th June 1919, p. 2.

¹⁴⁰ ASCSSCC, 222-5, s. n.

¹⁴¹ ASCSSCC, 222-5, n. s. n.

General to request permission for the trip to Catalonia.¹⁴² Father Mateo gave conferences there, spoke to the clergy, and even managed to dispel the misgivings that some Jesuit fathers had about him.¹⁴³ An eyewitness said that Father Mateo's presence was indescribable, with churches full to capacity, people came to take their seats well in advance, and who openly expressed the conviction that Father Mateo was a saint.¹⁴⁴ While in Barcelona, he conceived the idea of a traveling novena, preaching each day in a different neighbourhood. The novena concluded on the Feast of the Sacred Heart with a massive procession through the city, presided over by the bishop.¹⁴⁵

In September 1919, the general chapter of the congregation was held. There, Father Mateo presented his work to the attendees. By that time, the enthronement movement had spread to fourteen countries in Europe, nineteen in the Americas, six in Asia, fifteen in Africa, and seven in Oceania. As a result, the Congregation officially adopted the movement, forming a governing committee composed of the Superior General, Father Mateo, and a Secretary General, Father Eusebio Rinke.¹⁴⁶

Father Mateo continued his work, preaching in twenty-eight countries and also giving many retreats for priests. He

¹⁴² ASCSSCC, 222-5, n. s. n.

¹⁴³ ASCSSCC, 222-5, n.s., n.pl.

¹⁴⁴ ASCSSCC, 222-5, n. s., n. s.

¹⁴⁵ Marcel Bocquet, *Father Mateo...*, op. cit, p. 137.

¹⁴⁶ Marcel Bocquet, *Father Mateo...*, op. cit.,139.

returned to Spain in 1920 and then from October 1925 to November 1926.¹⁴⁷

After his departure, he maintained correspondence with numerous people,¹⁴⁸ not losing contact with the country. Upon his death in 1960, a funeral Mass was held at San Jerónimo el Real in Madrid, where he had preached in 1919.

Following the centennial celebration of Spain's consecration to the Sacred Heart in 2019, Father Mateo's legacy and work have gradually been rediscovered and appreciated. A testament to this revival is the reissue of his book *Jesus, King of Love*, edited by Pablo Cervera Barranco.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁷ *Social Reign*, June 1960, p. 9.

¹⁴⁸ ASCSSCC, 223-2, s. n.

¹⁴⁹ Mateo Crawley-Boevey, *Jesús, Rey de Amor*, BAC, Madrid 2019.

VIII.

THE PUBLISHING PHENOMENON OF “JESUS, KING OF LOVE” AND “NIGHT ADORATION AT HOME”

Antoine Mennecier ssc (France)

INTRODUCTION

When opening two of the books necessary for this research, I came across two documents that evoke the intertwining of my religious history with the figure of Father Mateo: in the biography by Marcel Bocquet ssc, the train ticket from August 2019 for my departure to the novitiate; in *Jesus, King of Love*, the invitations for my first vows in 2020. Since my postulancy in the SSCC Congregation, it is rather Father Mateo who has come to meet me than the other way around—both on a personal level and in my work for the Province of France. The most recent milestone, following a decision taken by the General Chapter to open his cause for beatification, is the opportunity to work in the Archives of the Chile–Argentina Province to establish the catalogue of files concerning him, from January to May 2025.

This is what today allows me to speak to you on this theme: the publishing phenomenon of Jesus, King of Love and Night Adoration in the Home.

What should we make of this term "phenomenon"? It is indeed a rather vague word: it is often applied to a cultural production to evoke an impact that reaches the masses. As a classicist by training, I like to return to the Greek etymology: "φαινομαι," - "to shine," but first of all "to appear" (cf. Epiphany). What appears is what is already there, simply manifesting itself, and which will remain visible, or not. Keeping this idea in mind, we will ask ourselves:

- What are 'Jesus, King of Love' and 'Night Adoration in the Home'?
- What is their place in the journey of Father Mateo? (Phase of manifestation and genesis.)
- In what does the "phenomenon" consist of, that is, the impact, of these publications?

The aim of this work will not only be to give you numbers, but to observe—by deciphering—the action of Christ and the spirit of Father Mateo's work through these signs of the Reign that these "phenomena" represent.

I. "JESUS, KING OF LOVE" and "NIGHT ADORATION IN THE HOME"

A) What are they?

These two works are of different natures, but they graft themselves onto the same project: the enthronement.

1. **Jesus, King of Love**

Jesus, King of Love is a **collection of sermons** of more than 400 pages (in A5 format). It first establishes and develops the spirituality of the Sacred Heart linked to the practice of the enthronement (Part 1); then it deepens the spirituality of “Apostle for All” (Part 2).

Regarding the enthronement: it explains it doctrinally; it exhorts people to practice it; it illustrates it with examples of graces linked to the action of the Sacred Heart in souls. It is therefore “the spirit of the enthronement preached” (and published as a book)—the Spirit of the Heart of Jesus, one might say. Several testimonies report that, when hearing Father Mateo preach, they believed they were hearing Jesus Christ himself.

2. **Night Adoration in the Home**

Night Adoration in the Home is a **reparative prayer practice** that first appears as a proposal within the enthronement (one hour per month—the Holy Hour of the first Thursday). It was then, at the moment of its formal creation in 1927, situated at the boundary of the enthronement, since anyone may participate, even without being part of the enthronement movement. It depends on the Secretariat of the Enthronement, directly or indirectly. In its diffusion, it is linked to an explanatory booklet whose production can be quantified.

What does this reparation practice consist in?

"Is it too much to ask for one hour of night adoration per month, when thousands and thousands of people spend entire nights losing their consciousness and their health? Can Judas keep watch to betray... Will the Apostles always be overwhelmed by sleep?"

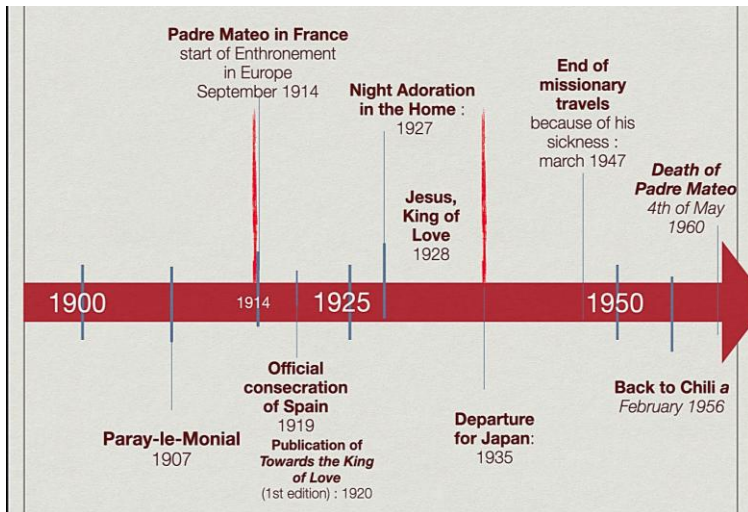
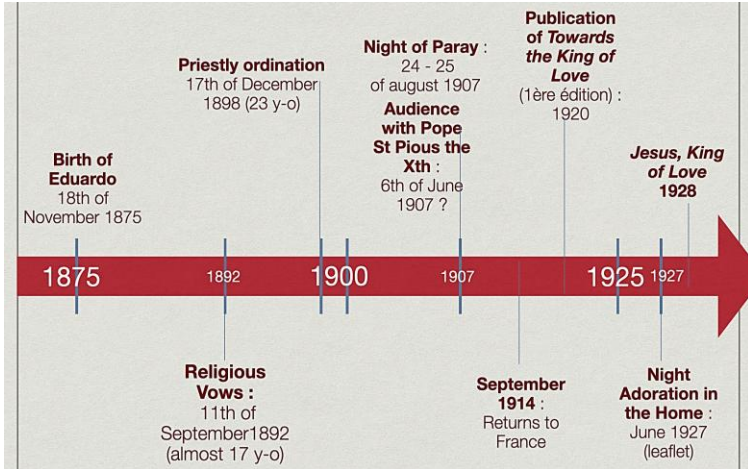
Father Mateo invites the faithful to practices of a reparative dimension: symbolic counterpoints to the sins or coldness that wound the Heart of Jesus or deny his primacy in social acts and in the collective unconscious. Can one claim that Jesus is King and never give him a single hour of prayer at night, when one willingly gives ten hours to entertainment? The prayer aims both to join Christ in Gethsemane during the mystery of Redemption, and to bring before him the iniquities of the present (drunkenness, violence, impurities committed during nighttime activities).

The project is to establish a relay of adoration without the Real Presence, yet consciously linked to the Eucharistic mystery, from within one's own home. This relay is national and international; it brings together adorers of the same household when possible and unites ("morally") households or individuals who are physically isolated. The goal is to organize a vigil so that every night from 9 p.m. to 6 a.m. is covered by someone praying in a spirit of reparation (one person = one hour). This time of prayer does not have a fixed form. But its positive content is often the Holy Hour, in its various versions and editions, which help orient the intention and the heart.

B) Development: appearance and growth of the movement during the life of Father Mateo

Chronological Perspective

(Below) Chronology of Father Mateo’s life,



The two works *Jesus, King of Love* (1928) and *Night Adoration in the Home* (1927) appear during the same phase of Father Mateo's life: the period when he was preaching the Enthronement in the countries of Western Europe. This is the final third of his mission in Europe, since he left in 1935 for the Far East, never to return. One may consider this period as the maturation of the Work of the Enthronement. At this moment, the autonomy of the secretariats and their various branches "freed" Father Mateo for other, more itinerant missions. This concern for establishing local leaders is found in *Jesus, King of Love* (Bocquet, p. 326).

II. ROOTS

Although the phase of appearance takes place in Europe at the end of the 1920s, the roots of these two phenomena are much older in the life of Father Mateo—before and just after his priestly ordination—and traces of them are found in the Provincial Archives of Chile.

For *Jesus King of Love*, since it is a collection of sermons,

- **preaching:** The great zeal of Father Mateo and his oratorical gifts were already evident in the care taken to have him preach from the time of his diaconate in the churches of the SSCC Congregation. This is what we learn from the certificate of the

Archdiocese dated November 1897. He was 22 years old.

- The relationship to be established between the Heart of Jesus and society, notably through Christian humanism. Documents from the Chilean archives give us information about his involvement in Valparaíso with the Sacred Hearts Social Centre and with the student groups of the Sacred Hearts Academy. These works included elements of religious instruction and social doctrine, charitable practices, and aspects of general or Christian artistic culture (particularly in the Academy).
- In 1905 he re-founded the Law Course (the precursor of the Catholic University of Valparaíso), where he taught Philosophy of Law: social questions, private law, social law and divine law were addressed there, in a society shaken by riots caused by poverty, lack of education, and the spread of revolutionary ideologies.

Already at this time he intertwined the themes of divine love and the social structure that must allow that love to radiate and grow. Thus, at the beginning of 1904, in his reworking of a conference by a confrere, Fr. Drinot y Piérola ssc (Peruvian, future bishop of Guanaco in Peru), he insisted on these points: Love needs "a Word (as when speaking between friends), Presence (as brothers in the home), figures of fatherhood (parents), Intimacy (conformity

to the one we love)." By contrast, false love is that of "the worldly man, who does not love: he idolizes."

For night adoration

The Holy Hours: This prayer resource for groups or individuals presents itself as an alternation of dialogues between Christ and the soul, with more formal prayers between the meditations addressed from one to the other. It is meant to help lay people (...without excluding others) to pray at home in a spirit of reparation.

These Holy Hours begin in Valparaíso between 1908 and 1910. The archives of Santiago, Chile preserve handwritten notebooks—some by Father Mateo, others by a certain Matilde Echeverría Formas. This highlights the early involvement of lay women in Father Mateo's pastoral work. Far from having a merely subordinate role, young lay people were expected to "test" the Holy Hour in prayer, make comments or suggestions for improving the spiritual method, and spread it within their circles.

Father Mateo would later recall, toward the end of his life (from 1947 onward), that the success and fruitfulness of these Holy Hours came from their gestation: "on one's knees, in prayer," tested and refined by hundreds of "praying testers." He attributed the fruitfulness of these prayer manuals to their supernatural spirit: forged in prayer, they allow the Holy Spirit—who guided their origin—to act in those who use them.

III. A PRELIMINARY PARADIGMATIC STAGE: TOWARDS THE KING OF LOVE

Jesus, King of Love (published in 1928) is an expanded composition based on an earlier collection, '*Towards the King of Love*', published in 1920 in Lyon by the Monastery of the Visitation.

It brings together Father Mateo's sermons, spontaneously compiled from his first conferences in France:

- Sept-Fons [Seven Fountains location in France] (August 1917 - February 1918, 200,000 copies printed)
- Fribourg (October 1916), Le Puy (September 1917)
- Visitation convent of Lyon (February 1917) (200,000 copies printed)
- A compilation of other unpublished handwritten notes.
- A compilation of written circulars by Father Mateo for the Work of the Enthronement and "Homage to France."

This is what the foreword to the 1920 edition tells us:

"All sorts of pens contributed to the original drafting of '*Towards the King of Love*': the pens of monks, priests, religious sisters, and even lay people. Notes were taken during the Father's conferences, capturing the most striking passages. Little by little, these handwritten notes circulated, passed from the private sphere to the

printing press, sometimes without the preacher being informed."

This was already the emergence of a phenomenon, that of a spontaneous generation of publications. FM complained a little about this, so a unification project was proposed. He revisited and corrected the content (particularly with regard to the oral expressions) and gave it its title.

However, other versions continued to appear. FM therefore decided to translate one of his Spanish manuscripts into French. The content became twice as long as *Vers le Roi d'Amour*. This is not a simple reissue. It is *Jesus, King of Love*.

The progression between the two works can be appreciated by comparing the chapters in the table of contents (see appendix). It should be noted that even the chapters that are reproduced almost verbatim have minor modifications: Father Mateo often develops his argument with an example or a reference from the Gospel.

We can appreciate the progression between the two works by comparing the chapters in the table of contents. It should be noted that even the chapters that are reproduced almost verbatim have undergone minor changes: often, PM develops his argument with an example or a reference from the Gospel.

These elements therefore show us Father Mateo's preliminary groundwork: prepared since the beginning of his apostolate, the roots and stem have reached maturity. We must now turn our attention to the phenomenon itself.

V. THE PHENOMENON

a) Material: the publication

1. ***Night Adoration.*** The work was launched in June 1927. By June 1930 it already counted 125,757 adorers across 5 continents. Nearly 15,000 nights, a little more than 4,000 adorers per night, 579 adorers per hour. Night adoration was uninterrupted in 20 countries.

From 1927 to 1958, there were 18 editions of the leaflets. Fr. Mouly ssc estimates 100,000 copies, which seems low, but one must remember that other Enthronement brochures also promoted this practice, allowing for indirect diffusion.

In 1959: Ireland had 135,000 adorers; Spain had 49,000; Italy had 60,000; USA had 300,000 and India had 189,000. (According to Fr. Marcel Bocquet ssc, based on data from *Le Règne Social*). French editions of the Holy Hour exceeded 140,000 copies.

If in 1927, at the launch of "Night Adoration", there were around ten million enthronements; by 1958, shortly before Father Mateo's death, there were over one-million-night adorers.

The special edition of the "Holy Hour for Night Adoration" was published in 17 languages. It reached places where Father Mateo never went, and where Jesus, King of Love was not distributed either (Arabic-speaking countries, sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern Europe).

2. ***Jesus King of Love.*** Despite the numerous editions prior to the final form—whether leaflets or “Towards the King of Love”—this work remains a “publishing success.” As a result of limited access to certain archives, precise numbers of editions or copies sold are lacking. However, we can examine its publication by language.

Confirmed publications total 13 languages, in about 21 countries, across three continents (Europe, America, Asia). They roughly follow Father Mateo’s travels, with exceptions such as Brazil, Hungary, and Poland.

(See Table in Appendix II.)

b) Spiritual/ecclesiastical impact

The numbers seem eloquent, but in reality, they are not enough. The following analysis applies to many of Father Mateo’s works. To understand the material phenomenon of publication, one must keep in mind the driving forces behind this effective propagation.

- **The supernatural dimension** at every stage of these works: whether concerning the founder, hierarchical collaborators, local collaborators, the faithful, the composition or the diffusion, everyone was convinced of this dimension. This spirit was maintained in the way the work was carried out and preached, and the actors were attentive to the signs of the Reign that authenticated the mission. There was boldness, a kind of Pentecostal effect despite everything—

especially the war. These were "front-line fighters": the whole movement was called the "Crusade of the Enthronement," a war of Love, and the exploits of collaborators were celebrated (for example: in Brazil, two people introduced Night Adoration and obtained 10,000 enrolments).

- **Everyone can be an Apostle of the Sacred Heart.** This is a leitmotif of Father Mateo, regardless of state of life or gender. He had complete confidence in those who joined a Work he did not see as his own but as Christ's. Numerous collaborators were spread across countries notably leagues of women, especially in Uruguay from the beginning of his work, then in Italy. He was supported by the Sisters and Brothers of the Congregation wherever they were established, and also by other congregations (the Visitation in Poland). Local secretaries are highlighted in anecdotes, contemplations, and examples of the spirit of the Enthronement. These figures appear in *Jesus, King of Love*.
- **The entire work has a genuine enterprise** in the best sense of the word: Printing and distributing images, working on Father Mateo's public figure (cf. Eusebe Rinkes requesting photos of missions and updates), brochures, posters, national and international networks, local parish networks, specific missions, even a documentary film project in the 1950s. It is evangelization using the technology of the time, reminiscent of St. Maximilian Kolbe.

- **Approved by Popes and Bishops.** From Pius X to John XXIII (the latter to a lesser extent), Father Mateo and his work were approved by the highest magisterial authorities of the Church, who identified themselves with his pastoral approach. It was not a congregational work, but a Catholic, universal one. Pius XI said:

“Here is a work that realizes my entire thought” (1928 on night adoration) and he named Father Mateo “Missionary to the Missionaries” because of his doctrine, sending him to train missionaries in Asia.

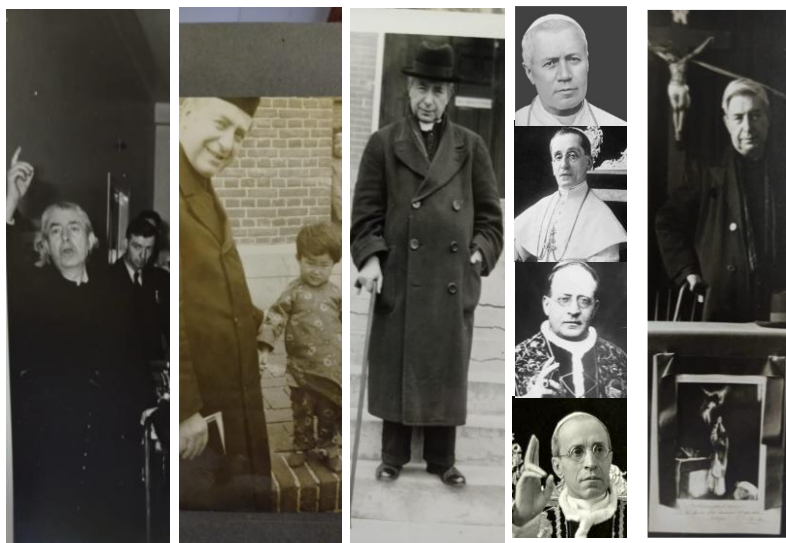
- **Father Mateo himself**, through his tours and his personality, impacting both crowds and individuals, he constantly recalled its supernatural objectives and placed the Reign of the Heart of Jesus at the centre.

“He possessed a very special personal radiance, natural—because he was very gifted—but above all supernatural. He had much of the penetrating tenderness of Saint John, the ardent and conquering faith of Saint Paul, and the burning love for Jesus of both. He had the gift of attracting crowds, and once one had met and heard him, one never forgot him.”

- Fr. Jean du Cœur de Jésus d’Elbée ssc, in ‘**Croire à l’Amour**’

VIII. *The publishing phenomenon of “Jesus, King of Love” and “Night adoration at home”*

Below: various photos of Father Mateo on his tours and the Popes that blessed his work: Pius X, Benedict XVI, Pius XI and Pius XII



Fruitfulness of the phenomenon (... in progress)

This final section is limited due to a lack of access to the Archives, and consequently a lack of figures after 1960. The long-term impact of *Jesus, King of Love* and “Night Adoration in the Home” is, moreover, difficult to distinguish from the rest of Father Mateo’s work and from his person. It is not difficult to find figures who were completely set ablaze by Father Mateo’s preaching—so much so that they changed their lives or discovered their vocation. Father d’Elbée, Father Carlos Monge in Chile (former Provincial, reputed for holiness, who died young) ... We can find many such examples scattered here and there in letters. But how many of these are directly linked to *Jesus, King of Love*?

The **three portraits** that follow reveal a complementarity between Father Mateo and his works.

- **POLAND: Bolesław (Aleksander) Wartałowicz** was the first Polish member of the Congregation and a pioneer of the SSCC in Poland. He entered the novitiate in France at Montgeron in 1926 after having read—according to legend—*Jesus, King of Love*, and after coming to France to meet Father Mateo. Considering the date, it was more likely a version of *“Towards the King of Love”*. What is certain is that this inspired zeal for the Hearts of Jesus and Mary would only end with his death at the hands of the Nazis in February 1943, after laying the foundations of the Polish Province.
- Along with another Polish priest, **Father Alexander Zychlinski**, who was deeply struck after meeting Father Mateo, he translated *Jesus, King of Love* into Polish in 1929. The book received a glowing review from Cardinal August Hlond, who called it “the best book after the Scriptures,” which opened every door in the country.
- **JAPAN: Soishi Iwashita**, was a Japanese philosopher studying in France/Belgium in the 1910s–1920s, who met Father Mateo in Belgium (before 1919) through Shinjiro Yamamoto, a Japanese naval admiral converted to Christianity. Deeply moved, he decided to become a priest.

When Father Mateo came to Japan in 1935, it was Iwashita who translated his sermons and facilitated his connection with the wider public. Was he the one who

obtained permission to publish *Jesus, King of Love* in Japan in 1936? In any case, he remained a key figure of Japanese Catholicism in the 20th century as a theologian and author.

- **FRANCE:** *Jesus, King of Love*, as a model retreat for Apostles, greatly influenced "Believe in Love" (Croire à l'Amour) by Father d'Elbée. The latter, a married man, radically changed the meaning and direction of his marriage with his wife after hearing Father Mateo preach. He entered the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts while his wife entered a Carmelite convent. He later became the Superior General. His spiritual work "Believe in Love" (1969, first edition 100,000 copies) was published in several languages and enjoyed lasting success during a period of declining faith, especially among young people, from the 1970s to today. Remarkably, it has endured even though it is not promoted by the SSCC Congregation.

One can observe, through the following quotations, central expressions and ideas from *Jesus, King of Love* appearing verbatim in "Believe in Love":

"Engrave in letters of gold and fire in your souls and in your hearts: immense trust, unalterable trust in this King of Love who is called Jesus the Savior."

"I do not fear the cross, because I do not fear you, King of Love."

"Be apostles... according to Father Mateo's beautiful definition: 'An apostle is a chalice filled with Jesus that overflows onto souls'. Be these chalices first, and even before you act, you will be apostles."

The comparison of chapters reveals a similar dynamic. Without *Jesus, King of Love*, there would be no *Believe in Love*.

CONCLUSION

Through these two distinct works—*Jesus, King of Love* and "Night Adoration in the Home"—we touch upon a key moment in Father Mateo's mission in service of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This is a worldwide ecclesial phenomenon (that is, a manifestation) set in motion long beforehand by deep spiritual fidelity and the cultivation of particular gifts on the part of its author. As we see from the success of the publications, the participation in night adoration, and the testimonies referring to him, Father Mateo knew how to embrace the methods of Christ, who always works for the glory of his Father (and Father Mateo always kept this supernatural end in view). He exhorted by letting his own heart overflow (his gift for touching hearts), gave a place to all who desired the Kingdom of God (the involvement of everyone, like a proto-synodality), and awakened in the depths of hearts the desire to respond to the call of the Sacred Heart (vocations born through Father Mateo).

At a time when technology is far more efficient for communication than in Father Mateo's era, when markets are open and translators accessible, one cannot help but reflect, it was not the tools that made Father Mateo's work successful. The phenomenon was founded first on the power of the Holy Spirit acting in him, and maintaining this bond was always his concern—not only for himself, but for the whole Church and for all the baptized (cf. "His Rosary of the Holy Spirit"). Are we, for our part, ready to be consumed in service of the Heart of Christ? He was—and that is why God blessed his work.

APPENDIX

SOURCES

- Archives SSCC from Santiago, Chile (Province Chile-Argentine)
- Archives SSCC from Montgeron (Province of France)
- « L'Adoration nocturne au foyer », (Night Adoration in the Home) official leaflet, Paris, 1930.
- R.P. MOULY D. ssc, *Le Père Mateo ssc, Apôtre mondial du Sacré-Cœur*, Montgeron, 1960.
- R.P. V. BECK ssc, *Le Règne social du Cœur de Jésus*, Paris, 1954.
- R.P. BOCQUET M. ssc, *Père Matéo, Apôtre mondial du Sacré-Cœur*, Téqui, Rome, 1963.

VIII. *The phenomenon of the publication of “Jesus, King of Love” and “Night adoration at home”*

II. International publication “Phenomenon of Jesus, King of Love”

The bold characters are for the countries where Father Mateo never visited:

Language	Publication year	Diffusion (in thousands)	Known countries of diffusion
French	1928	70	France
Spanish	1928	> 48 (Spain)	Spain, Chile, Peru, Argentina, Uruguay, Bolivia
Italian	1928	> 100	Italy
Flemmish/Dutch	1931		Belgium, Netherlands
English	1933		UK, USA, India, Canada
German	1930		Austria, Germany
Chinese	1948		China
Polish	1929/1930		Poland
Portuguese	1929 (Pt) /1939 (Br)		Portugal, Brasil
Hungarian	1938		Hungaria
Malayalam	1940		India (Kerala)
Konkani	1940		India (Mangalore Region)
Vietnameese	1960		Vietnam
Japaneese	1936		Japan

III Structure Comparison between “Towards the King of Love” (1920), “Jesus, King of Love” (1928), and “I believe in Love” (1969)

	<p>Towards the King of Love (Father Mateo)</p> <p>What is Enthronement? Its importance, its practice</p>	<p>Jesus, King of Love (Father Mateo)</p> <p>I. What is Enthronement? Its importance, its practice</p>	<p>I Believe in Love (Father D'Elbée)</p> <p>Chapter X (mentions Enthronement and Father Mateo)</p>
<p>Chapters and Sections</p>	<p>Letter from Benedict XV (1915); Letter from Pius XI (1923); Letter from Pius XII (1942)</p> <p>Ch II. Final touches to the painting of Bethany. Letter from Cardinal Billot</p> <p>Ch III. Bethany becomes a tabernacle. Nightly adoration at home Portal of Bethany</p>	<p>Letter from Benedict XV (1915); Letter from Pius XI (1923); Letter from Pius XII (1942)</p> <p>Ch II. Final touches to the painting of Bethany. Letter from Cardinal Billot</p> <p>Ch III. Bethany becomes a tabernacle. Nightly adoration at home Portal of Bethany</p>	<p>Chapter X. (mentions Bethany) The final prayer of Father d'Elbée in the appendix also follows Father Mateo's main thematics</p>
	<p>II. Retreat of the Apostles Ch I. Opening instruction: “Let me do it” Ch II. The spirit of living faith</p>	<p>II. Trust (I) I. Love for Love</p>	<p>“Inner life retreat” II. Trust (I) I. Love for Love</p>

VIII. The phenomenon of the publication of “Jesus, King of Love” and “Night adoration at home”

	<p>Life of love</p> <p>Trusting love</p> <p>Simplicity in love</p>	<p>Ch III. Life of love - I have loved you. — Love me</p> <p>Ch IV. Trusting love, -It is I, do not be afraid</p> <p>Ch V. Practice of love: - humility - simplicity b - abandonment</p>	<p>III. Trust (I)</p> <p>IV. Abandon</p> <p>V. Great desire - peace - humility</p>
<p>Holiness</p> <p>Sacrificial love Jesus in the Gospel Jesus always the same Jesus prisoner of love Reparation</p>	<p>Ch VI. Holiness: what it is.</p> <p>Ch VII. Holiness: lesson from the star of Lisieux</p> <p>Ch VIII. Sacrifice of love — Value of the Cross</p> <p>Ch IX. Jesus in the Gospel, Our Brother, yesterday and today</p> <p>Ch X. Jesus prisoner of love, Holy Hour</p>	<p>(Thematics from previous chapter)</p> <p>VI. Brotherly Love</p> <p>IX. The Eucharist</p>	

VIII. The phenomenon of the publication of “Jesus, King of Love” and “Night adoration at home”

<p>Apostolate Apostolate of prayer, Apostolate of sacrifice Apostolic action Way of practicing Host! Apostle!</p>	<p>Ch XI. Duty and possibility of the apostolate Duty of love, justice, gratitude The Apostle, Channel and Reservoir The Cross, Powerful Weapon of Apostolate</p> <p>Ch XII. Practice of the Apostolate Seek Only Jesus See Only Jesus Love, Soul of All Apostolate Reparation through the Apostolate</p>	<p>VI. Fraternal charity</p> <p>VII. Apostolate</p> <p>VIII. The Cross</p>
<p>Mary</p>	<p>Ch XIII. Mary, Mother of Beautiful Love Mary, Teacher of the Apostles Mary, Mother of the Heart of Jesus Mary, Way to Jesus-Host</p>	<p>X. Jesus, Mary, the Saints</p>
	<p>Ch XIV. Devotion to the Pope - the Prime Minister of the King of Love</p>	
<p>Paray-le-Monial</p>	<p>Ch XV. Social significance of the Enthronement The Feast of Christ the King</p>	<p>X. Jesus, Mary, the Saints</p>

IX.

A HEART THAT LEADS US TO BETHANY: *the message of Father Mateo in light of 'Dilexit nos'*

Fr. Fernando Cordero Morales ssc

“HE LOVED US”, Saint Paul says of Christ (cf. Rom 8:37),
in order to make us realize that nothing can ever
“separate us” from that love (Rom 8:39)”
(Dilexit nos, 1).

“Be open to the Friend of man,
the only Friend who is always selfless and faithful,
the Friend who does not change, betray or die.
Open your Bethany to him,
for it is never too late for the Friend Jesus”
(Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey)¹⁵⁰

Introduction: two windows on a unique landscape

It is a challenge to immerse ourselves in the thought of Fr. Mateo Crawley in '*Jesus, King of Love*' and in the encyclical '*Dilexit nos*' of Pope Francis. They are two characters, two styles, two contexts, two very different eras. I began with some trepidation about both authors, with a language and an approach to the Heart of Jesus that reflect distinctly different

¹⁵⁰ Mateo Crawley-Boevey, *Jesús, Rey de Amor*, BAC, Madrid 2019, p. 35.

sensibilities. Yet, when you go deeper into the texts, when you travel and make a pilgrimage with them, not just skim the surface, you discover what unites them beyond context, language and style. There is a solid, evangelical foundation, grounded in the Word, that intertwines them and makes fruitful dialogue possible.

That is my aim in this reflection: to share the “photo album” of my pilgrimage around these two giants of devotion to the Heart of Jesus. We will see colours and landscapes in different tones, helping each of us to enter into our own pilgrimage. At the end, a common landing point, a place of friendship and encounter: Bethany.

We will contemplate the Heart of Christ through two windows that open onto a unique landscape. The first, that of the passionate person of Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey ssc, tireless apostle of the Sacred Heart. And the second, that of the fresh and tender words of the fondly remembered Pope Francis in his encyclical *Dilexit nos*, 24th October 2024, on the Heart of Jesus. Both men already called to the House of the Father, tell us: “Christ loves you and wants to make your heart his home.”

The connection between Mateo Crawley-Boevey's *Jesus, King of Love* and Pope Francis' encyclical *Dilexit nos* lies in their shared focus on the Sacred Heart of Jesus and His redemptive love for humanity. Both works seek to deepen and promote devotion to the Heart of Christ as a source of love, mercy and transformation for the world.

To speak from this place has a special meaning. Father Mateo was captivated by devotion to the Heart of Jesus when he visited Paray-le-Monial: "he had felt that the Sacred Heart was sending him into the world with the mission of being its missionary."¹⁵¹ From this emblematic shrine I would therefore like to invite you on this journey.

To approach the spirituality of the Heart of Jesus is to place ourselves on this journey of interiority-exteriority. The heart allows us to enter into a relationship with others in a particular way. We realise that our daily life is a collection of very scattered pieces, like jumbled pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. Each piece is not something isolated but acquires its meaning in the whole of the puzzle to which it belongs.

The encyclical *Dilexit nos* is part of a long tradition of reflection on and devotion to the Sacred Heart. However, it lacks any explicit mention of the figure of Father Mateo. This is a pity, since the Pope himself acknowledges in the encyclical the "precious reflections of preceding magisterial texts and of a long history going back to the Holy Scriptures" (presentation of *Dilexit nos*). This omission hurts and also reveals that, as a Congregation, we must continue to work to restore Father Mateo's rightful place in the history of this devotion.

¹⁵¹ Augusto Salinas Fuenzalida, *El Padre Mateo. Apóstol Mundial del Sagrado Corazón de Jesús*, Paulinas, Santiago de Chile 1983, p. 63.

Differences and similarities that situate the work of Francis and Mateo

Like a travel guide, in order to orientate ourselves in the landscape we are going to visit, we will look at the differences and similarities between the two authors, who as we pointed out previously, are quite distinct in both personality and style. This will help us to better contextualise the analysis of some central themes and our final synthesis.

KEY DIFFERENCES AND NUANCES

The encyclical *Dilexit nos* is a comprehensive magisterial document, offering a general theological, historical and pastoral reflection on devotion. *Jesus, King of Love* is a book written by a missionary, primarily focused on promoting the *Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the Home* as a specific “crusade”.

- **Emphasis on trust and “littleness”:** Although *Dilexit nos* mentions trust and humility, *Jesus, King of Love* places a much stronger and recurring emphasis on unlimited trust and the “Little Way” of simplicity and littleness, influenced by St. Therese of the Child Jesus, as an antidote to fear and mistrust (potentially linked to Jansenism of the time of the revelations to St. Margaret Mary).
- **Integration of other devotions:** *Jesus, King of Love* explicitly integrates devotion to Mary (United Hearts) and devotion to the Pope as important and related

elements of devotion to the Sacred Heart. The encyclical mentions Mary's mediation and is framed within papal authority but does not develop them as devotions united in the same way.

- **Style and tone:** The language of *Jesus, King of Love* is often passionate, emotional, direct and personal, seeking to “burn with divine fire” and using exclamations and personal anecdotes. The encyclical, while warm, maintains a more formal, systematic and structured tone befitting a papal document.
- **Concept of “consolation”:** *Dilexit nos* devotes a specific section to the “devotion of consolation” (no. 157), exploring the mystical possibility of consoling Christ in his passion through our participation in his suffering and the paschal mystery. *Jesus, King of Love* speaks of suffering and self-offering, but uses the term “consolation” in a less prominent way to describe the mystical interaction of the believer with Christ's suffering.

In summary, *Dilexit nos* offers a broad theological foundation and a panoramic view of devotion in the history and life of the Church. *Jesus, King of Love*, on the other hand, focuses on a specific practical aspect (Enthronement). It develops a spirituality of intimacy, trust and littleness, closely linking the Heart of Jesus and mentions the Eucharist, Mary, and the Pope, in a fervent and direct tone. Both texts, however, converge on the fundamental truth that the Heart of Jesus

is the inexhaustible source of God's love, which calls us to a personal relationship and to live according to the Gospel.

KEY SIMILARITIES

- Both consider the Heart of Jesus as a central symbol of his infinite love, both divine and human.
- Both present Him as the source of divine life, grace and sacraments, related to His pierced side.
- Both emphasise the need for a personal, intimate and friendly relationship with Christ through His Heart.
- Both link devotion to Christ's mercy and the need to trust in Him.
- Both connect devotion to the Eucharist as a privileged place of encounter with the living Heart of Jesus.
- Both see devotion as a path to holiness.
- Both relate it to suffering, sacrifice and participation in the passion of Christ.
- Both see it as a source of inspiration for the apostolate and mission.
- Both cite the significance of the revelations to St Margaret Mary Alacoque as a key moment in the history of the devotion.
- Both recognise that the devotion is not a novelty but is rooted in the Gospel and the tradition of the Church.

One of the great biographers of Mateo Crawley, Fr. Marcel Bocquet, gives his assessment of the contribution of the

tireless Picpus missionary and apostle to the devotion to the Heart of Jesus:

“He thus stands on two levels, that of action and that of thought. On the level of action, he enjoyed prestige among the masses as well as among the crème de la crème of souls and clergy, as emphasized by the word ‘worldwide,’ with the depth attested to by countless testimonies.

On the level of thought, we should certainly not look to him as an authoritative teacher, but rather as a pioneer who gave the devotion a rich orientation full of possibilities - if not entirely new, then marvellously illuminated. For him the Sacred Heart is: a doctrine firmly rooted in the Gospel and in St. Paul which, permeating all institutions, especially families, aims to establish the Social Reign of Jesus, King of Love; a source of spirituality for families and for priests, with a strong emphasis on the values of love that permeate such vocations...”¹⁵²

Pillars of Father Mateo's teaching

Here we highlight three essential stops on our pilgrimage - three so called “Michelin-star” destinations that you would find in a guidebook, which represent the core of Father

¹⁵² Marcel Bocquet, *Padre Matteo presenta al mondo l'Amore*, Editrice Ancora, Milan 1965, p. 246.

Mateo's teaching, and relating them to Pope Francis's *Dilexit nos*.

If we were to lay them out as parallel columns, we would run the risk of making a merely synoptic analysis. But what we need to do is to discover the common dynamic that is at the heart of the spirituality of the Heart of Jesus. That is why I propose three transversal keys which will later be reflected in the Bethany model: *presence, reparation and trust*.

a) *Presence: the Love that seeks to dwell among us*

We begin not by speaking directly about the Love of the Heart of Jesus, which is undoubtedly the central message, but by starting from one of Father Mateo's pastoral initiatives that has resonated most: Enthronement. This refers to the solemn installation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus as King and centre of love in Christian homes. It is not simply placing an image in a house but explicitly recognising the loving inspiration of Christ on the family, committing to live according to his Gospel. Mateo proposed to make every home a place where Jesus reigns with his love. But today this may sound distant, even archaic. What does it mean to "enthroned" in a world that runs screaming and forgetful?

In *Jesus, King of Love*, Mateo addresses the importance of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus within families and promotes the enthronement of his image in homes as an act of recognition of his kingship and a commitment to a deeper Christian life. He emphasises the need-to-

know Jesus intimately through the Gospel and the Eucharist, encouraging prayer, reparation for sins and a life of sacrifice that mirrors His love. Father Mateo also stresses the importance of *Night Adoration* at Home and the attainability of holiness in everyday life, advocating simplicity, humility and trust in the mercy of Jesus, even in the midst of suffering and temptation. The *Work of Enthronement* and *Night Adoration* are presented as providential movements seeking the renewal of Eucharistic fervour in a society that sometimes turns its back on God.

In his writings, Father Mateo repeats something that is still very relevant: Enthronement must not be seen as an isolated act or a simple devotional practice, but as the beginning of an ongoing and transformative commitment in family life. This commitment involves recognising Christ as King of the home and living according to his love and teachings:

“This 'enthroning' must be the initial gesture of a new life, much more intimate in faith, much more ardent in charity, in the home that acclaims the Heart of Jesus as its King of Love. Therefore, we must first of all assume that the consecration made is *a lived* consecration and not a formulaic one. *Lived* means that, by the power of a great supernatural and Christian spirit, the happy home comes, little by little, to transform the Heart of Jesus into the divine soul of the family, whose only law is that of the Gospel,

and whose only happiness is to do the will of the Master of the house"¹⁵³ .

Indeed, devotional practices such as lighting a candle, saying a prayer or placing a sacred image in the home can be beautiful gestures, laden with symbolism. However, they also run the risk of remaining on the surface if they do not touch the heart. When they become empty routine or mere obligation, they lose their power.

But if lived authentically, these same practices can be the doorway to a deeper commitment. They can lead us into a living relationship with God, awaken compassion, renew daily love. They cease to be just gestures: they become a path. And that path leads to the heart of the Gospel, where it is not enough to look at the Heart of Jesus, but to let Him transform us. The key is not to stop at the symbol, but to let ourselves be touched by what it represents.

On the other hand, the concept of home is included in the Argentinean Pope's encyclical in a suggestive quotation from Romano Guardini, revealing the characteristics of the heart, among them, that of depth and home:

“For only the heart creates intimacy, true closeness between two persons. Only the heart is able to welcome and offer hospitality. Intimacy is the proper activity and the domain of the heart.” (DN, 12).

¹⁵³ *Jesus, King of Love*, o. c., p. 39.

This perspective underlines that enthronement is a way of life that transforms the home into a space where Christ reigns with love and mercy. Moreover, it highlights that there may be a devotional spirit without true love for Christ: "Formulas have invaded everything, they substitute everything. There is no shortage of more or less devout homes but loving families where a living and lived Jesus truly resides are rare."¹⁵⁴

In *Dilexit nos*, Pope Francis does not explicitly use the term "enthronement" in relation to the Heart of Jesus. However, the document does elaborate on the importance of welcoming the love of Christ into our lives and homes, which aligns - without naming it - with the spirit of enthronement.

A significant quotation reflecting this idea is found in number 21 of the encyclical: "Everything finds its unity in the heart, which can be the dwelling-place of love in all its spiritual, psychic and even physical dimensions. Simply put, if love reigns in our heart, we become, in a complete and luminous way, the people we are meant to be, for every human being is created above all else for love. In the deepest fibre of our being, we were made to love and to be loved."

This reflection underscores how the human heart, in welcoming the love of Christ, becomes the unifying centre of the person, which resonates with the practice

¹⁵⁴ *Jesus, King of Love*, ibidem, p. 40.

of enthroning the Heart of Jesus in homes, recognising it as a source of love and spiritual guidance.

Furthermore, in paragraph 25, the Pope stresses the importance of a personal and profound relationship with Christ: "Accepting his friendship is a matter of the heart, it is what constitutes us as persons in the fullest sense of that word."

To Enthroned today would be to travel to Bethany. That little home where Jesus was welcomed, listened to, loved. Bethany is enthronement lived: Martha serves, Mary listens, Lazarus trusts. It is there that Jesus finds rest, intimacy, friendship. Isn't that what we need today? Houses where love has priority. Communities that listen. Churches that accompany. "Bethanies" where the Heart of Jesus can be a guest and a friend.

b) *Trust: Love that calls for trust*

Both Francis and Mateo repeat: the Heart of Jesus is radical trust. Father Crawley fought against mistrust and fear, proposing a Jesus who wants to be friend and king in our homes. *Dilexit nos* reminds us that accepting his friendship is a matter of the heart. Only from that place can faith be lived authentically.

The Heart of Jesus is the living core of the first proclamation and the wellspring that keeps Christian convictions alive. It represents the synthesis of the Gospel according to the encyclical (no. 83). Through

him we have come to know and believe in God's love for us (DN no. 1).

Dilexit nos further deepens the nature of this love, highlighting a threefold love symbolised in the image of the Heart: an infinite divine love, the spiritual dimension of his humanity, and his sensitive love. These loves are not separate capacities, but act and express themselves together (DN no. 66).

It continues that devotion to the Heart of Christ is not the worship of a separate physical organ, but the adoration of the whole of Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man, with the heart of flesh being the natural symbol of his immense charity. This devotion naturally and directly leads us to Christ and calls for a precious friendship made of dialogue, affection, trust and adoration (DN no. 51).

The heart is also an anthropological symbol, the inner core that discerns thoughts and intentions, capable of unifying personal history. From a theological perspective, the believing heart loves, worships, seeks forgiveness, and serves, allowing one to recognize oneself as God's "you" and to become a person (DN no. 26).

Historically, the devotion is rooted in the pierced side of the Lord on the cross, seen as a source of grace and the sacraments and as a call to an intimate encounter of love (no. 78). Saints such as St. Augustine, St. Bernard, St. Bonaventure, St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, St. Charles de

Foucault and St. Therese of the Child Jesus, among others, have contributed to its development and understanding.

The encyclical stresses that the Risen Heart retains his wounds as a constant memory of his self-giving (DN no. 151), and devotion includes the mystical experience of sharing in his passion and desiring to console Christ (DN no. 154). At the same time, this love impels us, under the action of the Spirit, towards the Father (DN no. 77). The Heart of Christ is also a source of meekness and humility, teaching us the way of abasement and littleness in order to love others (DN no. 202). It is manifested in the missionary work of the Church.

Father Mateo presents the Heart of Jesus as love itself, the King of Love. It is a symbol of His infinite love, a love that is flame and life. He sorrowfully insists that “Love is not loved”.

His focus is strongly on intimacy and friendship with Jesus. Jesus calls us friends and seeks this intimate familiarity, coming down to our level to establish a bond of friendly trust. This friendship implies a very intimate communion of life, feelings, affections, joys and sorrows.

Father Mateo also stresses the infinite mercy of the Heart of Jesus. He calls it the “Merciful-Love” and sees the abyss of our misery attracting the abyss of his goodness. He harshly criticises mistrust, considering it an outrage to His goodness and a great crime. Faith and unbounded trust are key to penetrating this sanctuary of the Heart.

The Peruvian missionary highlights the intimate relationship between the devotion of the Sacred Heart and the Eucharist. The Eucharist is the “substantial and living love”, and Jesus, present in the tabernacle, is the same living King and Friend. The renewal of deep Eucharistic love is the foundation of the effective reign of the Heart of Jesus:

“And that Bethany which we have already so often praised; that happy abode of the Lord and His friends, that multiplied across the whole earth, is the tabernacle. There we rest at His feet; there He rests in fervent intimacy, listening to the confidences of His loyal friends. There, as in Bethany, are outpourings and tears of peace and comforts unknown elsewhere. And that is because the Master is truly there—there is His Heart”¹⁵⁵ .

Today, in a world overcome by suspicion, anxiety and control, this call to stay, listen and trust sounds almost provocative. The profession of the future, in the words of the philosopher Byung-Chul Han, in his work “The Expulsion of the Different”, will be that of the “listener”. The true disciple of the Heart of Jesus will be someone capable of listening, of welcoming, of trusting, even when everything invites one to close oneself off.

¹⁵⁵ *Jesus, King of Love*, p. 206.

c) *Repairing: Love that repairs the pain of the world*

The encyclical *Dilexit nos* and *Jesus, King of Love*, through different approaches and in different times, lead us to the concept of reparation as a central element of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. For Father Mateo, reparation was to console the wounded heart. It was not a matter of guilt but of tenderness. Pope Francis builds on this idea, expanding it into the social realm: reparation as a way to love amid a torn world. Today, where so much is broken - relationships, communities, meaning - devotion to the Heart is a profoundly counter-cultural act.

The encyclical focuses on the depth of Christ's love manifested in his Heart as a response to the needs of a world that often forgets the tenderness and joy of the Gospel. While it does not devote an exclusive section to "reparation", the idea is implicit in the need to respond to that love and to console the Heart of Jesus for the offences it endures. The emphasis is on contemplation of Christ's redeeming love and on authentic devotion leading to a personal relationship with Him and to the service of others. Reparation, in this context, is understood more as a natural consequence of loving and reciprocating that wounded love. Paragraph 184 seems to be particularly relevant:

"Precisely because evangelical reparation possesses this vital social dimension, our acts of love, service and reconciliation, in order to be truly reparative, need to

be inspired, motivated and empowered by Christ. Saint John Paul II also observed that 'to build the civilization of love', our world today needs the heart of Christ. Christian reparation cannot be understood simply as a congeries of external works, however indispensable and at times admirable they may be. These need a 'mystique', a soul, a meaning that grants them strength, drive and tireless creativity. They need the life, the fire and the light that radiate from the heart of Christ."

Reparation is thus understood in a broader way and connected to love. It manifests itself in living an authentic Christian life, responding to Christ's love through faith, hope and charity, and being attentive to the needs of others. There is an invitation to reconciliation and to become bearers of peace. The encyclical emphasises the communitarian dimension of faith and love for one's brothers and sisters as a way of loving Jesus. The main motivation for the implicit "reparation" is the grateful love for Christ who first loved us and gave his life for us. It seeks to console His Heart wounded by sin and indifference.

In *Jesus, King of Love*, Father Mateo commits himself to promoting the *Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in homes and in society* as an act of acknowledging His reign of love. Reparation plays a fundamental and explicit role. It is presented as an urgent need to atone for the offences, negligence and ingratitude committed against the Sacred Heart by individuals, families and nations.

Reparation is conceived as an act of justice and love that seeks to console the Heart of Jesus and obtain mercy:

“And with the sob of the Lord, falling to the ground, soaking it with His Blood, from the depths of His mortally wounded Heart springs forth this cry: Reparation, atonement!

Yes, Jesus wants to forgive and save even those offering Him gall and vinegar... But since He is a God of infinite Justice, if there is no penitent love, no reparation, He will be forced to unleash the thunderbolt of avenging justice.”¹⁵⁶

Reparation is presented in a more specific and concrete way, involving acts of prayer, penance and offering sacrifices with the intention of making reparation to the Sacred Heart. The importance of frequent communion and Eucharistic adoration as means of reparation is stressed. The motivation is both love and compassion for the offended Heart of Jesus and the need to implore His mercy and obtain the conversion of sinners. There is a strong awareness of sin and its personal and social consequences.

Both works share the centrality of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the importance of responding to his love. However, *Jesus, King of Love* has a more direct and detailed focus on the practice of reparation as atonement for offences, while *Dilexit nos* integrates the idea of reparation within a broader reflection on the love of Christ and the need for authentic

¹⁵⁶ *Jesus, King of Love*, p. 382.

devotion that translates into an active and charitable life of faith. In *Dilexit nos*, reparation seems to flow naturally from contemplation; in *Jesus, King of Love*, it becomes a necessary and explicit act to console and honour the Heart of Jesus.

To repair is to love when others hurt, to hope when everything disappoints, to sow when it seems pointless. It is not a museum-piece devotion but a gentle revolution that transforms history from within.

Bethany today: a space of encounter and “enthronement” of everyday love in the light of *Dilexit nos*

To our modern sensibility, the concept of “enthronement” evokes images of solemn ceremonies, ancient rituals and monarchical imagery. It might seem a term distant from the immediacy and everydayness that mark our times. However, if we turn our gaze to the Gospel, we find a singular place that offers us a renewed perspective on what it means to ‘enthroned’ a fundamental value in our lives, and a desired place to land in our pilgrimage: Bethany. A home-place well frequented in the meditations of Father Mateo.

This small village near Jerusalem became a refuge for Jesus, a home where he found the warmth of friendship and the sincere welcome of Martha, Mary and Lazarus. The Gospel scenes here reveal a place where love is manifested in simple but profound gestures: Martha’s diligence in service, Mary’s attentive listening to the Word, and the trust and closeness that Jesus shared with His friends.

In this atmosphere of genuine affection, the encyclical *Dilexit nos* resonates with special force. It reminds us of the centrality of God's redeeming love, fully manifested in the Heart of Jesus. A love that is not limited to the theological sphere, but which radiates and challenges our daily existence, inviting us to live and act from that same inexhaustible source of self-giving and mercy.

How, then, can we translate the concept of “enthronement” into our contemporary reality? We propose that Bethany stands as an inspiring paradigm. Far from pomp and formality, true “enthronement” today might consist in giving a central and indeed a place of priority to love in the fabric of our lives, in our interpersonal relationships, in our decisions and in the way we inhabit the world.

Bethany: A living model of “enthroned” love

The scenes of Jesus in Bethany are eloquent. We find Martha, engaged in service, offering her time and energy to welcome the Master. Her dedication speaks to us of a love that translates into concrete action, into concern for the welfare of others. Beside her, Mary chooses to sit at the feet of Jesus, giving herself to listening to his Word. Her contemplative attitude reminds us of the importance of pausing, of welcoming the presence of the other and of nourishing our relationship with deep attention.

The dynamic between Jesus, Martha, and Mary reveals authentic friendship, grounded in trust and mutual affection.

Bethany thus becomes a symbol not just of a physical space, but also of an inner and communal one—where love is cultivated through unconditional hospitality, active listening, and selfless service.

***Dilexit nos*: The call to “enthroned” love in the heart of the world**

The contemplation of the love that flows from the Heart of Jesus, as presented to us by *Dilexit nos*, illuminates and gives meaning to the gestures of love that we encounter in Bethany. The encyclical invites us to a profound inner transformation, to let this redeeming love occupy the centre of our hearts and from there radiate to the world around us.

“Enthroning” this love in our daily lives means, first of all, paying attention and caring for those around us, creating those spaces of welcome and listening that Jesus found in Bethany. It means stopping in the midst of our daily busyness to offer a word of encouragement, a helping hand, a compassionate presence.

Like Mary, we need to cultivate a contemplative dimension in our lives, learning to recognise God's presence in others, especially the most vulnerable. This contemplative outlook enables us to act from a deep awareness of the intrinsic value of each person and of the universal call to love.

And like Martha, we are called to translate that love into concrete action and generous service. It is not just a matter

of feeling love, but of making it tangible through our commitment to others, responding to their needs and building a more just and fraternal world.

Friendship and community, lived in a spirit of openness and welcome, become the “Bethanies” of our time, privileged places where love is shared, strengthened and radiated. In these spaces of authentic encounter, we can experience the joy of being loved and the fullness of loving.

In a world so often marked by individualism, indifference, and shallow relationships, the proposal to “enthroned” love in the spirit of Bethany, illuminated by *Dilexit nos*, becomes ever more urgent and transformative.

Conclusion: Being Bethany today

Bethany is not just a Gospel memory: it is a living model. If the future belongs to the “listeners”, then Bethany is their school. There, the Word is heard, the visitor is served, one weeps with those who suffer, rejoices with those who are present. It is the place of tenderness, of unconditional friendship, of love made flesh every day.

It is not just about “enthroning” with gold and sceptres. Today, the crown of love is the towel of service and the apron of care. The Heart of Jesus invites us to let Him reign in the beatitudes, never with empty gestures, always with actions of self-giving.

The journey that began in Paray-le-Monial culminates in Bethany: a place of the heart, a home of friends, a school of the Gospel.

Bethany offers us a timeless model of how love can be the centre of our lives. It's not about formal enthronement but a way of being, expressed in welcome, listening, service, and sincere friendship. In the light of the infinite love of the Heart of Jesus, revealed in *Dilexit nos*, we are called to build our own daily "Bethanies", spaces where love becomes the driving force behind our actions and transforms our world. May the warmth and simplicity of Jesus' encounter in Bethany inspire us to "enthroned" love in every corner of our lives.

Germán Pravia sings beautifully and poetically about this city of welcome in a song entitled *Bethany*:

"Bethany, a resting place, a place of encounter, an open heart ready to listen.

Brothers and friends offering their arms, their love and their lap for rest.

What a feast for the soul to be unhurried, barefoot, safe, in intimacy...

A jar breaks, perfume fills the air, a deep certainty: the Kingdom is here!"¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ Link to the song:

https://youtu.be/0MIWnmqkZyA?si=NQ0db108V7zSxL_q

Let us go to Bethany, let us go to the Heart of Jesus!

Let us not only go, let us be Bethany today: in our homes, our communities, our workplaces: small spaces of welcome, listening and tenderness in a world that grows ever more indifferent.

Make Bethany not only a biblical place, but the destination of a journey that unites the depths of our hearts.

X.

TESTIMONIES OF GRACES RECEIVED THROUGH THE INTERCESSION OF FATHER MATEO

Fr. Christian Flottes ssc (France)

Introduction

The question of the graces received through the intercession of Father Mateo is directly linked to the second objective of this Colloquium: a look at the founder of the *Work of Enthronement* in the context of the forthcoming opening of his process of beatification. This decision was taken by the 40th General Chapter of the Brothers of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary in September 2024.

At this stage, therefore, it is not a question of admiring the greatness of Father Mateo's work as World Apostle of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, impressive though it is. Rather, it is a serene, thoughtful and objective analysis of his personal relationship with God, the holiness of his life, the motivations for his actions and the effectiveness of his intercessory prayer. This last point constitutes a form of divine confirmation that the person whose cause we are promoting truly enjoys the glory of the saints in heaven and

may, in the future, be the object of public veneration by the faithful.

The supernatural effectiveness of the *Work of Enthronement*

Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey ssc, is best known as the founder of the *Work of the Enthronement* of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Families. From the very beginning, we have witnessed an extraordinary divine intervention. For some time, the young religious had harboured a burning desire to fulfil one of the wishes of the Sacred Heart of Jesus revealed to Saint Margaret Mary. In this revelation, Jesus expressed his desire to see his Sacred Heart reign in every Christian family, and not only through the general consecration of the whole world to the Sacred Heart, as was proclaimed by Pope Leo XIII in 1899. This desire, however, came up against a major difficulty. This time it wasn't about the consent of his superiors or even of the Pope. The difficulty lay in Father Mateo's state of health.

It was mainly for this reason that he was sent to Europe to recuperate - as his health had been seriously compromised by the considerable efforts he had made to help the victims of the earthquake that struck Chile on 16th August 1906. How can one claim to want to become a worldwide apostle of the Sacred Heart when one's health is so fragile? At that time, Father Mateo could barely stand. How could he, in such poor health, travel hundreds, even thousands of kilometres to proclaim the love of the Heart of Jesus and

win millions of families around the world for his Kingdom? What good is a well-disposed spirit if the flesh is weak?¹⁵⁸ But on 24th August 1907, in the Chapel of the Apparitions at Paray-le-Monial, a truly extraordinary event took place that transformed the fragile religious with great desires into a powerful spirit, absolutely convinced of the rightness of his apostolic mission. Father Mateo himself describes this event as follows:

“At Paray-le-Monial, I prayed before the altar that was dearest to me after that of Calvary. Suddenly, I felt an extraordinary interior upheaval; my heart was touched by a singular grace; I experienced a kind of violence within me, but at the same time, a strange sweetness. After this time of prayer, I got up, completely healed. Prostrate before the Blessed Sacrament, totally filled with thanksgiving, I resolved to do whatever the Lord Jesus asked of me. That evening, I resolved to win over the whole world, family after family, to the love of the Heart of Jesus.”¹⁵⁹

This extraordinary grace that Father Mateo received at Paray-le-Monial was only a prelude to what was to come. From its earliest years, the *Work of Enthronement* showed how truly it was the work of God, and Father Mateo became a chosen instrument. The supernatural graces that were poured out on the families taking part in the enthronement

¹⁵⁸ Cf. Mt 26:41

¹⁵⁹ René Henry CSsR, *L'intronisation du Sacré-Cœur de Jésus dans les familles chrétiennes: son histoire, ses merveilles, sa pratique.*

were so great and so numerous that Father Mateo was able to rightly affirm that the *Work of Enthronement* bore the undeniable divine mark of a miracle. Jesuit Father Anzuini, who zealously directed the Work in Italy for many years, declared that miracles of grace and conversion were the distinguishing mark of this Work.¹⁶⁰ As for the reasons for the great effectiveness of the *Work of Enthronement*, let us recall a statement by Father Mateo himself, who clearly identified its source:

“The enthronement is nothing other than the perfect fulfilment of all the requests of the Sacred Heart expressed at Paray-le-Monial and of all the promises that accompanied these requests.”¹⁶¹

It would be difficult to list all the miraculous conversions that have occurred thanks to Father Mateo's *Work of Enthronement*. Many of these conversions have been described in numerous brochures and bulletins devoted to the enthronement movement. Father Mateo himself gives several examples in his book *Jesus, King of Love*, and in numerous articles. These divine interventions were so characteristic of the *Work of Enthronement* that Father Mateo once told the Pope: “Holy Father, I have lost faith in

¹⁶⁰ *L'intronisation du Sacré-Cœur de Jésus dans les foyers par la Consécration solennelle des familles à ce Divin Cœur*, Procure des Sacrés Cœurs, 1917.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*

miracles. Only those who can't see can believe; but I see miracles every day.”¹⁶²

This was the case in Father Mateo's day. Has the situation changed today? In a way, yes. External conditions have changed; the world has changed. The *Work of Enthronement* itself is no longer structured as it was in the first half of the twentieth century. In a sense, it is a private affair. It depends largely on the parish priests themselves and their understanding of Father Mateo's ideas. However, it has to be said that in the face of the challenges facing the modern family, the *Work of Enthronement* has lost none of its relevance or topicality. In many countries, implementing the principles on which it is based is becoming even more urgent. What's more, Jesus remains the same Jesus, the King of Love, concerned for our salvation and expecting our love in return. He continues to act, as witnessed by the stories of those who currently practice the *Enthronement of the Sacred Heart* in their families. One of them shares her beautiful testimony, collected in July 2020:

“My name is Silvia Báez, I come from Paraguay, I've been married for 17 years, and I have four children: two with me and two who are already resting with God. I'm writing to share the miracles that the *Work of Enthronement*, founded by Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey, has accomplished in our lives. Since we discovered the great treasure of this work at a conference given during our community's novena, led by Father Pablo Pérez, we

¹⁶² Mateo Crawley-Boevey SSCC, *Jesus, King of Love*.

have been practising the *Enthronement of the Sacred Heart* in our home. Seeing so many positive changes in our lives, my husband and I decided to invite other families to do the same. Under the guidance of the priest mentioned above, we have been visiting chapels and homes for the last three years, sharing our testimony and the benefits of the Enthronement. Families, delighted to discover this hitherto unknown work, have attended training sessions and prepared for this great family event with Masses, confessions and prayers, following the instructions of Father Mateo in his book "Jesus, King of Love" (...). Last year, I launched a YouTube channel to spread devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, starting with the Enthronement, which consists of opening the doors of houses so that He can enter and do His work. Through the intercession of Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey, so many things have happened: miraculous conversions, healings, priestly and religious vocations, hundreds of testimonies from families who have found jobs and housing, legal victories, pregnancies carried to term despite unfavourable clinical prognoses, the appearance of great apostolates, the reunification of families torn apart - in short, countless graces have spread through these places. (...) We were stunned to discover such a treasure, and even more so, we couldn't understand why Father Mateo hadn't yet been canonised, because only a saint could have founded such a Work."

The importance of the graces received through the intercession of a candidate for canonisation

The testimony of Silvia Báez, from Paraguay, mentioned above, is useful in illustrating the essential distinction between the graces received through the act of enthronement of the Sacred Heart carried out within a family, and those obtained directly through the intercession of Father Mateo. In the process of beatification of the Founder of the *Work of Enthronement*, as for any candidate for canonisation, these graces are of primary importance. The reputation for signs or graces that the faithful receive through the intercession of the candidate, during his lifetime, and after his death, is crucial in any process of beatification and canonisation. As we said in the introduction, it is a form of divine confirmation that the person we are proposing truly enjoys the glory of the saints and will be able to be the object of public veneration by the faithful. This is why it is so important to invoke his or her intercession in various needs and to inform the Postulator General of the graces received. This information is also essential because, except in the case of martyrs, beatification requires the recognition of at least one miracle—and such a miracle may be among the reported graces.

Of course, the type of miracle that can be examined in detail by the Dicastery for the Causes of Saints is strictly defined. Most often, these are miraculous cures of life-threatening illnesses. To be accepted by medical and theological experts, these miracles must be sudden, lasting and complete, and must be supported by appropriate documentation and testimonies. Furthermore, it must be shown that the healing

occurred solely through the intercession of the Servant of God, and that in prayer no other saints, blessed, or candidates for sainthood were invoked.

We are still waiting for such a miracle in the case of Father Mateo. However, we can cite two interesting examples of graces received through his intercession in recent years.

Testimonies of graces received through the intercession of Father Mateo

The first case occurred in Paraguay at the turn of 2020-2021. It concerns Aurora Giménez, who belongs to a lay movement called “Consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.” The informal patron of this movement is Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey. At the age of 40, Aurora became pregnant, which turned out to be high-risk, even life threatening, for both the baby and her, due to the presence of a uterine fibroid, which was growing as the foetus developed. By the sixth month of pregnancy, the fibroid was already larger than the baby in her womb. Doctors gave her no hope for a successful birth, save for a miracle. If she had opted for an abortion, the deadline for making a final decision was 20th November, the seventh month of pregnancy. However, if she had decided to carry the pregnancy to term, doctors believed only a miracle could have ensured a successful outcome - especially since Aurora had additional health conditions, such as hypertension. Every day, members of the Movement prayed to Father Mateo to intercede for a successful delivery and good health for Aurora and her

child. Aurora is financially very poor, but she was willing to sacrifice her life so that her child could be born.

What was the outcome of this story? On 4th January 2021, Aurora's son, who they named Pablo Mateo, was born. He turned out to be a healthy baby, weighing 3.5 kg at birth. He did not require an incubator. In addition to a caesarean section, doctors removed a fibroid tumour, weighing over 3 kg, from Aurora's uterus, which Pablo Mateo had been battling. He succeeded despite the constant risk that a rupture of the tumour could lead to the death of both the child and the mother. Despite all these adversities, as well as the mother's advanced age and other complications, (such as I mentioned, hypertension) a miracle occurred thanks to prayers through Father Mateo's intercession!

It's also worth noting the symbolism of the dates: the deadline for terminating the pregnancy was 20 November, and Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey was born on 18 November. The child's birthday is 4 January, and Father Mateo passed away on 4 May. Even though it's a different month, it's the same day of the month!

The second case occurred in Father Mateo's family in Chile in 2022. It concerns Cristobal Garcia-Huidobro, the then 11-year-old grandson of John and Hilda, the latter being Father Mateo's youngest sister. Cristobal was hospitalized in early April 2022 due to severe cardiomyopathy. His only option was a heart transplant, although doctors were unsure if this would be possible, due to his mild lung disease. Cristobal was then placed on the transplant waiting list. His

family prayed fervently for him through Father Mateo's intercession, even at Father Mateo's graveside. They also invited friends to join in this prayer by creating a special WhatsApp group. Over 300 people signed up. At the end of April 2022, one of the children who preceded Cristobal on the list received his organ for transplant. In May 2022, another child followed. This quickly catapulted Cristobal to the top of the transplant waiting list. Unfortunately, in the second week of June, Cristobal's health began to deteriorate more seriously, including breathing issues. He had to be placed on an oxygen machine. His health began to deteriorate rapidly. On 17 June, at 8:00 AM, he was scheduled to be connected to a mechanical heart, if a donor wasn't found. The medical team also informed his parents that the outcome of the heart pump was highly uncertain. Meanwhile, at 7:15 AM that same day, doctors received information that a 15-year-old donor was found in the north of the country, 400 km from Santiago.

After examination, it was determined that his heart was ideal for transplantation into Cristobal. A few hours later, after the heart was delivered to the hospital in Santiago, the surgery began, which lasted 10 hours and was successful. A month after the transplant, Cristobal returned home. His mother, Fernanda, and everyone involved in these events are absolutely convinced that it was Father Mateo's intercession that made Cristobal's new life possible. Fernanda is currently a very active member of the Apostolate for the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in families and plans to dedicate

the rest of her life to fulfilling the commitment she promised God in her prayer for Father Mateo's beatification.

Conclusion

The examples of graces received through the intercession of Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey confirm the effectiveness of intercessory prayer of those who are already in God's presence and were close to His Heart on earth. Although they do not need our prayers, we need them because they help us grow in faith and become increasingly open to God's reality. If we want their veneration to grow among the faithful, let us share information with others about the graces received through their intercession. This is also important for every postulator of a beatification or canonization process.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	5
MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERIOR GENERAL	9
I. THE CONSECRATION TO THE SACRED HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY ACCORDING TO FR. MARIE-JOSEPH COUDRIN, FOUNDER OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE SACRED HEARTS	11
<i>Fr. Bernard Couronne ssc</i> <i>(Vice postulator of the Cause of Fr. Pierre Coudrin ssc)</i>	
II. THE CONSECRATION TO THE SACRED HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY AS THE FOUNDATION OF THE CONGREGATION FOLLOWING THE EXAMPLE OF MOTHER HENRIETTE AYMER.....	28
<i>Sr. Jeanne Cadiou ssc</i> <i>(Vice postulator of the Cause of Mother Henriette Aymer ssc)</i>	
III. BIOGRAPHICAL OUTLINE OF FR. MATEO CRAWLEY-BOEVEY SSC.....	36
<i>Fr. Andrzej Łukawski ssc (General Postulator)</i>	
IV. FATHER MATEO'S RELATIONSHIP WITH PARAY LE-MONIAL AND HIS ROLE IN PROMOTING THE MESSAGE OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS	52
<i>Fr. Etienne Kern</i> <i>(Rector of the Sanctuary of Paray-le-Monial)</i>	

V.	FAMILY ENVIRONMENT AND ITS INFLUENCE ON FATHER MATEO'S APOSTOLIC MISSION.....	80
	<i>John Streeter Prieto (nephew of Hilda, the youngest sister of Fr Mateo)</i>	
VI.	ENTHRONEMENT OF THE SACRED HEART IN FAMILIES AS THE LIFE MISSION OF FATHER MATEO	87
	<i>Fr. Richard McNally ssc (Moderator of the Colloquium)</i>	
VII.	THE CULMINATION OF FATHER MATEO'S ENTHRONEMENT MOVEMENT: THE SOLEMN CONSECRATION OF INDIVIDUAL NATIONS TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS, EXEMPLIFIED BY SPAIN	114
	<i>Miguel Ángel Dionisio Vivas King Juan Carlos University (Madrid)</i>	
VIII.	THE PUBLISHING PHENOMENON OF "JESUS, KING OF LOVE" AND "NIGHT ADORATION AT HOME"	137
	<i>Antoine Mennecier ssc (France)</i>	
IX.	A HEART THAT LEADS US TO BETHANY: THE MESSAGE OF FATHER MATEO IN LIGHT OF 'DILEXIT NOS'	160
	<i>Fr. Fernando Cordero Morales ssc</i>	
X.	TESTIMONIES OF GRACES RECEIVED THROUGH THE INTERCESSION OF FATHER MATEO	184
	<i>Fr. Christian Flottes ssc (France)</i>	

