

# Com-Union



***100 years  
of the Enthronement***

**Cover:**

Mural painting at Paray-le-Monial

1899: Fr. Mateo, the year after his ordination

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# Introduction

October 2007

Dear brothers and sisters:

This year we celebrate the centenary of that unique experience that Father Mateo Crawley had, when during a retreat in Paray-le-Monial, he sensed God confirming his inspiration to give himself completely to the work of the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in homes.

There are various reasons why we would propose that the Congregation reflect openly about the work of the Enthronement:

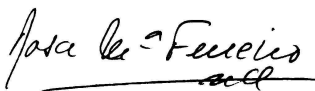
- Father Mateo's mission had a great impact in many parts of the world. Today there are still groups that continue promoting the Enthronement.
- It is a special ministry to the family in which numerous brothers and sisters have worked for many years. The Enthronement of the Heart of Jesus in the home is particularly interesting because it involves outreach to the whole family in its natural setting, inviting the members to welcome the Lord and allow him be present in their daily life.
- It reminds us of the centrality of Christ in evangelization (represented by the image of his heart) and the irreplaceable importance of preaching, speaking explicitly and directly about the Lord.
- It could be said that the Enthronement has been an example of a "proper work" of the Congregation. In other words it is a concrete example of what we call the "common mission." Could it be said today that if the Congregation's "common mission" is not expressed in similar works, we run the risk of our talk of common mission just remaining at the level of ideology, something unable to really create communion among us?

These and other reasons, which different brothers and sister might have, lead us to look toward the past and the present of the Enthronement and could serve – at least that is our hope – to stimulate apostolic creativity in the Congregation as we look to the immediate future.

We also hope that this edition of COM-UNION will be a sort of homage to the work of Father Mateo and a way of recognizing the missionary zeal of all the brothers and sisters who have spread the devotion to the Sacred Heart though the Enthronement in the home during these last one hundred years.

We want to thank all who have collaborated in this issue of COM-UNION, which as the last General Chapters said will from now on be published on our web page.

Affectionately in the Sacred Hearts,



Rosa Mª Ferreiro ss.cc.  
General Superior



Javier Álvarez-Ossorio ss.cc.  
General Superior

# The Enthronement, its beginning and its history

## The Work of Father Mateo

*Columban Crotty ss.cc.*

Edward Crawley-Boevey was born into an atypical South American family of the nineteenth century. The vast majority of families in that continent were poor, lived in humble circumstances and were Catholics living in the same area for generations. Edward's family lived in Tingo on the outskirts of Arequipa, 'an area of scenic landscapes, beautiful churches, colonial monuments, large houses and magnificent views.' While his mother was a Peruvian from a staunchly Catholic family, his father was English and Protestant. Edward was nine years old when his family moved from Peru to Chile and the young boy found himself in totally new circumstances, in a new school and seeking new friends. At age fifteen he entered the novitiate of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and made perpetual vows at the close of his seventeenth year. He was ordained to the priesthood at twenty three and became known as Father Mateo, the name he took in religious life.

A wide variety of circumstances and events during those twenty three years shaped the life and character of the young priest: parents of different nationalities and religious backgrounds; social and economic advantages; separation from his native land and from his family at an early age and incorporation into a religious family that stressed God's saving love and a family spirit. All of these contributed to his love for Christ, his zeal for the apostolate and his indomitable spirit in promoting the love and mercy of God on a global scale, and perhaps also to some idiosyncrasies.

At that time in Chile, money and power were in the hands of a small minority. The working class was impoverished and lived in slums and ghettos for the most part. After ordination Fr. Mateo was assigned to the College of the Sacred Hearts in Valparaiso and soon became aware that Christ and Christianity had little or no influence on the daily lives of many people. To help remedy the situation, he worked to establish night classes, employment offices and conferences of St. Vincent de Paul. All of these works were closely connected with Father Mateo's work with the Exterior Association of the Sacred Hearts, a secular branch of his Congregation. Mass, Communion, reparative adoration, devotion to the Heart of Jesus and to the Heart of Mary were the basic elements of the Association. Father Mateo's goal was to develop leaders: lay apostles whose words were backed up by prayer and the witness of Christian living. These leaders assisted him in bringing about the renewal of society by the Christian renewal of families through commitment to the Sacred Heart. He considered it his special vocation to bring people and families back to Christ and to make the kingdom of Christ known and loved. He found a picture in the attic, which was used in the ceremony of the consecration of Ecuador to the Sacred Heart in 1873. Father Mateo hung this picture in the reception room of the college and from there he started his apostolate of the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the Home.

Father Mateo was convinced of the importance of a good education for future lay leaders in the Church. *"It is up to us,"* he said, *"to take over the intellectual formation of students by founding the principles of law founded on the laws of God and on the obligations of a Christian*

*conscience.*” He was instrumental in reviving the law school of the Sacred Hearts in Valparaíso; the subsequent serious damage to the building by an earthquake was devastating to the priest, but even this serious setback did not dampen Father Mateo’s zeal for the spread of God’s Kingdom.

Father Mateo’s health was never robust and after the earthquake, it suffered further deterioration so that his doctor ordered a year of rest. His superiors allowed him to visit Europe at this time to study the organization of higher Catholic education and the various social apostolates founded for youth. Father Mateo, however, wished to make use of this occasion to explain his apostolate to his Superior General in Belgium. He also hoped to obtain the Holy Father’s approval and blessing for his apostolate and to make a pilgrimage to Paray-le-Monial to pray at the shrine where the Sacred Heart appeared to St. Margaret Mary.

The factors in Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey’s life that influenced the development of his apostolate seem pretty clear. The practice of devotion to the heart of Christ was prevalent in the Catholic world of his day. This devotion was not new in the Church; its origins went back to John’s gospel and the piercing of Christ’s side on the Cross. The form of the devotion that existed in the time of Father Mateo was very much influenced by the life of a French nun, Sr. Margaret Mary Alcoque who was favored with visions and conversations with Christ. Christ spoke to her of his great love of humanity and of his mercy and forgiveness, which were generally rejected causing him suffering. Sister Margaret Mary with the help of her Jesuit spiritual directors was successful in spreading this message of Christ throughout the Catholic world. The answer to Christ’s plea was expressed primarily in a series of devotional practices: consecration of families to the Sacred Heart, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; holy hours of reparation, the practice of the nine first Fridays and the wearing of badges and emblems depicting the pierced heart of Christ. This was the form of devotion to the Sacred Heart that young Edward Crawley-Boevey learned at his mother’s knee and that was deepened during his years of formation in the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. This was the form of the devotion that he sought to inculcate in the members of the Exterior Association of the Sacred Hearts in their apostolate to the people of Valparaíso, The great love of God for people and his mercy and forgiveness expressed in the old and new Testaments and especially in the life and words of Jesus sealed by the piercing of his heart on the cross contrasted with the indifference and rejection of so many Christians led him to conceive the idea of reclaiming the world family by family for Christ. Father Mateo was also keenly aware of the power of the Holy Spirit working in the world and in the lives of individuals. He encouraged prayer to the Holy Spirit, *“in your devotion always keep in mind the essential.”* To help people do this he composed what he called a rosary of the Holy Spirit which he urged people to pray frequently. Father Mateo’s conviction of the power of the Holy Spirit was another influence in the development of this apostolate.

In 1907 Fr. Mateo traveled to Europe and found that all his prayers were answered. In April he obtained the approval and blessings of his Superior General, Father Marcellin Bousquet, and then apparently had two audiences with Pope St. Pius X. It was during one of these audiences that the pope said *“to save the family is to save society. The work you are undertaking is a work of social salvation. Consecrate your life to it.”* In August of that same year Father Mateo made his long-desired pilgrimage to the shrine of Paray-le-Monial. While he was praying in the Chapel of Apparitions he felt that he was physically cured, that the Lord was approving his work and *“that the goals to be followed and the means to be employed were revealed in all their clarity”*. At Paray-le-Monial he saw clearly the whole plan of his apostolate: its goal was to promote the Social Reign of the Sacred Heart; the means to be used were to win families one by one by enthroning the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the home and to teach

each of these families to live a life of union with Christ. The scope of this apostolate would not be confined to Chile, but would embrace the whole world. In October Father Mateo was privileged to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and this visit intensified his personal faith and his desire to take the inspiration for his preaching from the Gospels. From now on, his apostolate would be a movement destined to associate all Christian families in the avowed goal of establishing the rule of Christ over the entire world

On his return to Chile, Fr. Mateo continued his apostolate with renewed zeal. He enlisted the members of the Exterior Association of the Sacred Hearts to promote the work. The Association formed the first Secretariat or cell to promote the Enthronement. The members of the Secretariat promoted the apostolate, explained it and prepared the homes for the ceremony. From that time on, the spread of the Enthronement was phenomenal, and Fr. Mateo became its worldwide apostle. From 1907 to 1914 he preached in Chile, Peru, Uruguay and Argentina. From 1914 to 1935 his apostolate was mainly in the countries of Europe. From 1935 to 1940 he was in the Far East and preached in China, Japan, Manchuria, Korea, Malaysia, Hong Kong, the Philippines, India, Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and Indochina. From 1941 to 1945 he preached in the United States after which, he moved north to Canada where he continued his preaching until he fell ill and entered a hospital in Montreal. In 1956 he returned to Chile where he died on May 14, 1960.

One of the extraordinary qualities of Fr. Mateo was his single-minded commitment to the apostolate to which he was certain the Lord had called him. He experienced great blessings and gifts from the Heart of Christ, but he also experienced seemingly insurmountable obstacles and disappointments. But neither obstacles, nor opposition, nor constant travel could dim the ardor of his zeal until he had accomplished all that he could do to spread the reign of the Sacred Heart around the world. Between 1917 and 1923 Jesuits of the Apostleship of Prayer challenged the Enthronement as a kind of glamorized version of the Consecration and attempted to have the work and its affiliates prohibited. They were initially successful but in 1923 the Congregation of the Council declared both forms of the devotion to be autonomous under the direction of the respective Religious Institutes. In 1928 the General Chapter of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary under the leadership of the Superior General, Father Flavien Prat (1912-1938) drew up regulations for the apostolate, saying in part that, *“overall leadership is needed to ensure unity in the content and shape of the work all over the world and to see that this undertaking remains centralized in the hands of the Congregation and guided solely by the Congregation.”* During this time also the Fathers, Brothers and Sisters of the Congregation were enthusiastically involved in promoting the apostolate of the Enthronement ‘as this new form of devotion to the Sacred Heart fitted extremely well into the overall spirituality of the period and of the Congregation. It was unfortunate, however, that among all the enthusiasm and zeal this form of piety was not accompanied by an in-depth theological study.’

Not only was Father Mateo a man of deep faith completely dedicated to God’s love as manifested in the heart of Christ and a gifted speaker whose words penetrated the hearts of those who heard him, but he was also a talented organizer. To help propagate his message and keep it alive he established Secretariats in every country he visited and recruited hundreds of collaborators and volunteers, eager helpers who assisted him to propagate his message through his publications and writings. His books *Jesus King of Love* and *Twenty Four Holy Hours* were translated into several languages and widely disseminated. Members of religious orders were enthusiastic about his retreats talks and conferences and transcribed, typed and made copies for those who were unable to attend his talks. He kept in contact with the Secretariats through regular Circular Letters and articles in Enthronement magazines published

in a number of languages. To extend his message to as many groups as possible he established subsidiary associations, Night Adoration in the Home, the Apostolate of Suffering, the Tarcisians and many more.

The clarity concerning the Enthronement apostolate that Father Mateo experienced in Paray and which is expressed in his writings may be summarized as an invitation to families to stir up the gift of faith received in Baptism; a commitment, both in family life and in society, to be witnesses to the risen Lord who "is always with us." It is an invitation to reflect on and respond to God's infinite love for us, which is recorded in the Scriptures and made manifest in the Heart of Christ. A family's response to God's love is made concrete in a domestic ritual whereby a family publicly acknowledges the Lordship of Jesus by installing his image in a place of honor in the home. They make a covenant or pledge, indicating that this is not a transient act, but the beginning of a way of life. Like leaven in bread, the witness of Enthronement families gradually permeates the whole of society with the spirit of the risen Lord, "a spirit of truth and life, holiness and grace, justice, love and peace," and furthers the social reign of the Sacred Heart.

To enthrone an image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in a place of honor in the home is an outward symbol of an act of faith and love that is essentially an act of adoration. This means an acknowledgement of Christ's divinity and of his kind and merciful headship over the members of the family whom he 'no longer calls servants but friends'. It is also an act of reparation by which the family explicitly accepts and proclaims Christ's reign of love in the home and in society, and helps repair the fabric of society torn by acts which by design ignore the reign of Christ in all public social life.

Although Fr. Mateo presided at Enthronement ceremonies in municipalities and in nations, he reminded his followers that, "*the Enthronement in all its evangelical splendor belongs above all to the humble and the poor.*" He urged the Secretariats to be faithful to promoting the Enthronement among the poor. He urged them to continue to be "*faithful to this – the choice of our Lord himself – for by doing so you will counteract the iniquitous and ill-omened campaign which is working to de-Christianize humanity.*"

In Scripture God reveals his love for all people and the response he seeks is the love of human hearts. The apostolate of the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart is a means to help people to do this - to respond to the love that God shows to them. It is a school in which people learn how to love God. Scriptures teaches too, that is not possible to love God without loving our neighbors also, so a response to God's love must include a love that is actively concerned with the welfare of our brothers and sisters. This response takes place first of all in families and then from families extends to the neighborhood and the whole of society. In today's world the Enthronement apostolate embraces all the issues that affect our global society: world justice and peace, human rights, local and global poverty, ecology and so many more. In short, the essence of the Enthronement is love. Its goal is to enable family members to realize and become more deeply aware of the love that God has for each individual and for the community, a love symbolized in the pierced heart of Christ "*drawing them into an active remembrance of worship and community and the struggle for justice and reconciliation.*" (Lifrak)

The Enthronement ceremony itself is a one - time event, but the commitment it signifies is for a lifetime. Incorporated into the Church through the living waters of Baptism, sanctified by the Sacrament of Matrimony and nourished by the frequent reception of the Eucharist, the members of the Enthronement family, individually and collectively, make a public commitment to strive for the sanctification of the family and the transformation of society. Fr. Mateo was convinced that the sanctification of the family was an indispensable means of promoting the reign of God on earth that the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the Home can powerfully

contribute to the sanctification of the family. It is no less true today that the family plays a vital role in promoting the reign of God and that the Enthronement is a proven means to achieve this, provided the essential components of the Enthronement in the home that Fr. Mateo stressed are observed.

An essential feature of Enthronement apostolate is adequate preparation: "*If the Enthronement is to produce marvelous fruits,*" said the Founder, "*the ceremony must, as a rule, be well prepared for.*" He urged his fellow workers to prepare family members carefully for each Enthronement, and not to judge success by the number of families enthroned. He suggested that it might be necessary to return to some homes "ten times or more". Father Mateo often deplored that Catholics frequently do not really know Jesus. The Lord can still say to many today the words he addressed to Philip: "*Have I been so long a time with you and you do not know me.*" (John 114:9) Apostles of the Enthronement need to read and meditate on the Gospels and encourage families to make this a regular part of their spiritual lives.'

There are many people in our society -today who want to privatize religion. They say religion should have nothing to say about public life, politics, economics, etc. Father Mateo's apostolate of the Enthronement is strongly opposed to this view — "*we always oppose those who try to banish Jesus from the life of the family, society and the nations. Christ's dominion, - he said- must extend to parliaments and legislation.*" Enthronement families today need to be the leaven of our society so that all of society might be transformed.

If Father Mateo enrolled many collaborators in the promotion of the Enthronement it was because he was convinced of the important role the laity should play in the life of the Church; in this he was ahead of his time: "*the Catholic laity is no longer to be considered as benevolent spectators, or beneficiaries of sacerdotal actions, they often occupy the dangerous outposts on the battlefield.*" The Enthronement stresses the importance of the family in society and the Church, and encourages the laity to become more actively involved in the apostolate of the Christian community.

The words of the Lord's Prayer, "*Thy Kingdom come, they will be done on earth as it is in heaven,*" is truly the prayer of the Enthronement Apostolate which is a relevant apostolate in today's world. However, the earth/world where we live and work today and where we pray that God's will be done is a very different world from the one Father Mateo lived in; there has been and continues to be profound changes in our world, in our Church and in the family itself.

Contemporary apostles, committed to Christian renewal of families through the heart of Christ must be aware of the strengths and weaknesses of our society; the safeguards of Christian marriage and the family and the problems that threaten to tear them apart. They need to study and discuss what the Holy Father and the Bishops have written about the family; they must be steeped in the conviction that the Sacrament of Baptism calls and empowers us to follow Christ in his mission as priest, prophet and king. They must be aware of the gift that the Sacrament of Matrimony is to the family and that their spirituality must be deeply rooted in the Eucharist. I say this not to overwhelm you or discourage you, but rather to challenge you to develop your many gifts and blessings even farther. "*Many make their whole devotion consist in reciting vocal prayers*", Father Mateo commented. That was not sufficient in Father Mateo's day and it is not sufficient today, when our times call not only for a faith-filled, deeply committed laity, but a laity thoroughly educated in the faith seeking to read the signs of the times. If we are committed to this, then we will continue to make the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the Home relevant to today and to tomorrow.

# So that the world might believe in love

Bernard Couronne ss.cc.

In the train which is bringing me back to Paris after a week preaching in Paray-le-Monial I am thinking of you who receive these prayer brochures. Some of you participated in the pilgrimage for the centennial of the Enthronement in Paray on July 1. A few privileged ones – myself among them- had the grace to pray in the room which has been transformed into an oratory<sup>1</sup> where in 1907 Father Mateo had the inspiration to launch his “crusade of love.” Such happy moments, filled with fire and... today outside the sky is grey, what a change!

While the countryside sped by I took myself back to that little room in Paray. From there a spring bubbled up. The grace that got Father Mateo back on his feet<sup>2</sup> took hold of the young Latin American religious and carried him away on an adventure that we are still part of today.

It is useless to celebrate a centenary unless it is an opportunity to immerse ourselves once more in the original grace so as to set out once again to follow Jesus today.

Various thoughts come to mind and I must share them with you lest our everyday concerns or today’s trends distract us from the mission that Father Mateo received in Paray-le-Monial.

## 1. A missionary outlook

First of all, we can never forget that what Father Mateo’s wanted to do was be a missionary. Father Mateo launched the Enthronement in families to “*reconquer the world for Christ, family by family!*” For him the goal was always “*the social reign of the Sacred Heart of Jesus,*” something we express in other terms today when we speak of the Civilization of love.

We have to continually resist “simplistic” ideas of what the Enthronement is all about. Hanging and blessing an image of the Sacred Heart in the house is not just a nice ceremony, an occasion to have a little party with friends that has no lasting effect. If there is no commitment of one’s life, it is like nothing more than putting up a lightning rod or buying fire insurance.

The Enthronement includes the Consecration of the family or the individual to the Sacred Heart but it is much more than just a prayer of consecration.

## 2. The four pillars of the enthronement

In order to explain what he was proposing to families, Father Mateo liked to speak of places in the Gospel like **Nazareth** and especially **Bethany**.

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<sup>1</sup> This room on the second floor of the Foyer du Sacré Cœur (14, rue de la Visitation) is just opposite the chapel of the apparitions.

<sup>2</sup> It would be interesting to read the biography of Father Mateo by father Marcel Bocquet which has been republished this year (in French) by Tequi. In English it is available from the Enthronement Center in Fairhaven MA (USA)

***I. To have the Enthronement is to recognize that the place where we live everyday is a sanctuary where God – Emmanuel - makes his abode.***

The family, “my home,” “my place,” where I welcome those who are closest to me, where love is manifest, where it is born and where it grows and where it is “recharged” when weakened...

Ubi caritas, Deus ibi est! “Where there is love, God dwells...” A free translation perhaps, but it reminds us of something essential to humanity. The family is the first sanctuary of love and therefore the first place of God’s presence.

To put up the image of the Sacred Heart, symbol of this God of love, is first and foremost **a profession of faith in God who is Love!**

And so the first commitment of those who have the Enthronement is to nourish that faith by cultivating a special relationship with Jesus just like Martha, Mary and Lazarus in Bethany. **Prayer (night Adoration but also simply by family prayer, faithfulness to the Eucharist and the Sacraments) and Formation** (catechesis, courses, retreats, reading etc.) are the living stones that constitute the “central pillar” of Father Mateo’s work and on which everything else is built.

**A prayer corner** arranged around the image of the Sacred Heart can help us to remember this.

***II. To have the Enthronement is to commit ourselves to make of our house “a school or a laboratory of love.”***

The family and the home is the first place where the most intimate relationships (husband-wife, parents-children, brothers-sisters) open up and develop. It is the place where one learns to love self and to love others as Jesus teaches by giving of ourselves and serving one another. This is expressed by looking upon one another with kindness and compassion and often by forgiveness and reconciliation. This learning to live as Jesus in the Gospel opens us to a love which is broader and which goes beyond the limits of the family. It leads us to welcome those who need to know what it means to be loved.

**The manual or the practical guide for this school is the GOSPEL**

Remember that each of the sessions of the Second Vatican Council began with the enthronement of the Gospels; why not enthrone the Book of the Gospels or even the Bible at the same time as the Sacred Heart?

***III. To have the Enthronement is to make of our home a “springboard for mission.”***

The Love that is at the heart of the Enthronement and which is its driving force is meant to be spread and shared with others. Otherwise it dies. The Love of the Heart of Jesus is missionary. Someone who is part of a family that has had the Enthronement has to be a missionary. He has to share the fire. This apostolic Love will show itself in different ways according to the circumstances and situations. But it will always manifest itself by the quality of our day to day relationships: with neighbors, at work, when recreating, and according to our situation, by our commitment in our parish, at school, in a movement, charitable work etc.

We must be known as "people who have heart" for the Heart of God has come to dwell among us.

**Our house becomes then a true Cenacle, a new Bethany.**

It is good to find a symbol that reminds us of this call to mission and then place it near the image of the Sacred Heart and the Gospel. **Why not a small globe?**

**IV. To have the Enthronement is to “take Mary into your home.”**

Jesus is “never without his Mother.”

**The Enthronement is a bit like the wedding feast at Cana, “Jesus was invited to the feast and the Mother of Jesus was there.” (John 2:1-2)**

If the Enthronement means welcoming Jesus to your house, it also involves welcoming his mother. When you enthrone the Heart of Jesus, by that very fact you have also “enthroned” Mary in her place as “the humble Servant of the Lord” (the only title she ever gave herself!) For that reason we never speak of enthroning Mary. It is Jesus and Jesus alone who is the “center” of her life and so of ours also.

Mary is our Mother, our “educator,” who leads us to Jesus and who teaches us to live like him and to be his witnesses. She is our model in welcoming the God’s Word and his will.

As the image of the Church, she reminds us of whom we are called to become and she invites us to a love which is always greater and more missionary.

Certainly a statue of the Virgin Mary has its rightful place in our prayer corner, as well as Saint Joseph and the patron saints of the family members.

**And so the Enthronement is meant to make of our homes, “domestic churches”...**

**Not so we can just stay there all warm and cozy.**

**But to help us “with the power of love of Jesus heart to truly build the Civilization of Love.”<sup>3</sup>**

**This is Father Mateo’s heritage** to us. We are called to build on it at the beginning of the third millennium so that “**the world might have life and have it in abundance.**”

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<sup>3</sup> This was the theme of our centenary pilgrimage to Paray-le-Monial June 30 to July 1, 2007

# The Enthronement: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow

Richard McNally ss.cc.

Once in the course of a talk on marriage I said that the most important thing for spouses to attend to was communication. After the session a participant came up to me and said, "*Father, communication? That's all you have to say to us?*"

In July 2006 when Pope Benedict went to Spain for the Fifth World Meeting of Families he gave an informal news conference on the plane. Given the family policy of Spain's government, the journalists prodded the Pope to give a preview of what he would say in response. Rather than go negative, Benedict said that he was going to proclaim the beauty of what we as Christians believe about the family.

It was the beauty of what we believe about marriage and the family that my talk on communication lacked. Communication is important in any social unit but the family is much more than a mere social unit.

Celebrating the sacrament of marriage I am always touched when I ask the couple about their intention. Are they resolved to be faithful forever? Are they resolved to commit themselves exclusively to one another? Are they open to cooperating in the work of creation by bringing forth new life? This is the beauty of our faith. Human beings are capable not only of desiring profound committed live-giving love; they are also capable of living it. That only happens with God's grace. With God's grace the love of a man and woman becomes a sacrament of God's faithful life-giving love for his people, the Church. This is our faith.

In Marriage Encounter they say, "*A wedding is a day; a marriage is a lifetime.*" The Church has been faulted for holding up lofty standards but not doing enough to help couples and families meet them. We ask married couples to commit themselves to the virtues of faithfulness and fruitfulness in the midst of a society that offers so little encouragement. At times we leave them at the altar and do not accompany throughout their life. In 1907 our brother Mateo Crawley-Boevey was inspired by God to renew society by strengthening family life, one family at a time. He came up with a simple and practical way for families to open themselves to God's grace and thus be a blessing for the world around them. Witnesses still abound as to the blessing that the Enthronement has been.

Mateo's vision of the Enthronement had four elements which are as valid today as a century ago.

**1. Jesus as the King of the Family:** Jesus begins his ministry proclaiming, "*This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.*" (Mark 1:15) The Kingdom is Jesus'. It comes in Him. In the Enthronement the family proclaims that Jesus is their center, He is their Lord, and that they want to live according to His Gospel. Proclaiming Jesus as Lord they are better equipped to be faithful and thus become a leaven in society.

**2. Public Witness:** During the ceremony the family places an image of Jesus showing his love (a picture or statue of the Sacred Heart or perhaps even a crucifix with Jesus pierced side opened and giving life) in a place in their home where it will be clearly seen by family members and others who come to visit. It is not hidden away somewhere suitable only for private

devotion but put in a place where it clearly proclaims that Jesus is the Lord of this family and that the family commits itself to live His Gospel.

**3. A Way of Life:** The Enthronement is not merely a ceremony or a pious act but a commitment to deeper Christian life. It does not mean taking on new responsibilities but living those involved with Christian initiation and the sacrament of marriage more profoundly day by day. To symbolize this it is recommended that the family renew the commitment at significant moments (wedding anniversaries, birthdays etc.).

**4. Open to the Church:** As any faith commitment, the Enthronement can not be lived in isolation from the body of Christ. Thus there is the connection to the Eucharist. In the Eucharist the family goes beyond itself and enters into communion with other families and with the great family of the Church. In the Eucharist the family receives the Bread of Life, the sustenance to live its commitment to holiness and witness.

Of course some of the bases of the Enthronement as envisioned by Mateo (the value or propriety of public religious witness, Christian marriage and its relationship to society etc.) are questioned today. We religious and priests, committed to public ministry in the Catholic Church, have to examine ourselves and ask if we have not absorbed some of the values of the “world” with regard to these foundational elements.

As a Congregation we declare, *“To make the Kingdom of God present, we seek the transformation of the human heart and we endeavor to be agents of communion in the world.”* (CC 6) The ideal place for the human heart to begin to beat and to be formed is the family. What if we were to really give ourselves to transforming families in Christ and thus transforming hearts? What a different world we would live in! This was Mateo’s basic inspiration. May we find there a source of new imagination in our effort to make present the Kingdom of God.



1. February 2, 1891: brother Joseph Stanislas.
2. December 17, 1898: Father Mateo's priestly ordination.
3. March 22, 1930: Mondovi, Italy. It was said: "His Mass is his best sermon".
3. 1919, Cerro de los Ángeles, Madrid (Spain).



1. Fr. Mateo in Chicago (Illinois), in 1942.
2. Fr. Mateo in Soleure (Switzerland), in 1934.
3. July 1952: Fr. Mateo in Montreal where it was held a Congress on the Enthronement.
4. Fr. Mateo in Hawaii, in 1940.

## The Enthronement Secretariats listening to Father Mateo

*Antoinette Delsaux ss.cc. and Anita Lino ss.cc.,  
Picpus Enthronement Secretariat*

After the celebration of the centenary of the Enthronement in Paray-le-Monial June 30 to July 1 of this year, and following the letters of our Superiors General in "INFO", we are delighted to see the beautiful figure of Father Mateo, that great Apostle of the Sacred who so loved the Congregation, emerging from obscurity.

On August 24, 1907 in Paray-le-Monial, Father Mateo came to a clear vision of his mission: to promote the Reign of the Sacred Heart in families by proclaiming the love of that Heart. That evening, kneeling before the Blessed Sacrament, he drafted an outline of the Enthronement apostolate. His mission seemed clear cut and urgent.

A few days later, he asked Pope Pius X for authorization to dedicate himself to that work. The Pope responded, *"No, my Son, I do not allow it...rather I command you to consecrate everything you have to it."*

Returning to Chile, he passionately put himself to the task. First he wrote to the bishops of his country explaining his work to them. Then he asked his students to make copies of the ceremonial and the act of Consecration to the Sacred Heart. He translated his messages into several languages, which he then sent to different countries. Then he began to celebrate the Enthronement in families. Soon he would be called to Peru and Ecuador. At that time he opened the first Secretariat in Valparaiso where they would publish brochures and the Garcia Moreno image of the Heart of Christ.

If Father Mateo had had a computer, a cell phone and the Internet, his work would have been much easier! But he relied on the Heart of Jesus, his trust was unshakable and the help he received turned out to be very effective.

In six years, from 1907 to 1913, some 400,000 families in three different counties celebrated the Enthronement in their home.

Then he turned toward Europe. He was able to leave because the central Secretariat in Valparaíso was so well organized. He was counting on that one and the 150 other Secretariats that were already up and running.

When he landed in France on August 25, 1914, the German armies were marching on the capital. He was counseled to go to Spain. Off he went. When he arrived there he was surprised to see that the Enthronement had already spread and was organized. His letters had borne fruit. Numerous bishops invited him to their dioceses. In the cities that he visited, he opened Secretariats as he had come to understand their importance. They would be the foundation on which his work would develop. And it was with their aid that the Enthronement developed as rapidly as it did.

It was at this time that a Secretariat was opened in Picpus (1915). Several sisters answered the mail which poured in. They organized Father's apostolic visits and they saw to the publication of tracts and circular letters. Very quickly it became the center from which documents, books, posters and images went out to Secretariats in other cities. Two years later,

they would begin to welcome to the motherhouse, the “zelatrices” (promoters) for days of recollection and retreats under the direction of Father Mateo who taught them and gave them direction and marching orders.

To preserve unity, Father Mateo sensed the need for a connection between the numerous Secretariats. In a Congregation newsletter, *L’Echo des Sacrés Cœurs* (The Echo of the Sacred Hearts), he published a message to the secretaries. From then on the newsletter would be called the *Echo of the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart*. In the May 1917 edition he included a circular letter. Here are some extracts. “*I really want to congratulate your constancy and tell you how much your zeal makes my mission easier.*” Then he invited them to prepare for the feast of the Sacred Heart with the Enthronement families. And he adds, “*It would be a source of great satisfaction if periodically you would send news of your work and the results obtained to the national Secretariat...*”

In 1927, Father Mateo issued a call. He founded “**Night Adoration in the Home.**” No sooner had it begun than thousands of registrations from all over arrived. And it was the joy of the secretaries to organize “**nights of adoration.**”

When a letter arrived from Japan in 1934, signed by eleven Vicars Apostolic, asking that Father Mateo come to preach priests’ retreats for the missionaries, he did not hesitate. He was able to leave as the Secretariats were fully active and functioning well, each with a director who gathered his group together each month. (Often the director was a Sacred Hearts father and sometimes a diocesan priest.) The director’s task was to coordinate activities and see to the formation of the zelatrices. He was assisted by secretaries (sisters or volunteers) who answered the mail, drafted reports of meetings and recruited other zelatrices. It was their task to make the Enthronement and Night Adoration known by regularly visiting families in the area confided to them.

From 1935 to 1940 by way of letters, circulars, photos and other news word spread about the journey of Father in Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Philippines, Ceylon and Hawaii. He was always concerned to keep contact with his friends in Europe and America.

In 1940 the world Apostle of the Sacred Heart was called to the United States and then to Canada. It was there that he would be laid low by sickness. He would write, “*When I can no longer preach, I will write...and if I can no longer write...I will pray and suffer...by loving.*” A beautiful program to end a beautiful life!

Father Mateo’s career as a vagabond came to an end in late 1946. The hospital became “*his monastery of the divine good pleasure.*” The time had come for him to continue his mission by writing, first “Jesus, King of Love” and then “Twenty Holy Hours”, “The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass” in 1948 and “Meditation on the Rosary” in 1950. Finally, he wrote a series of circulars addressed to the Enthronement Secretariats.

For several years, Father Mateo’s writings and directives appeared in “The Social Reign of the Sacred Heart”. Its purpose was to be the official mouthpiece of Father Mateo and to serve as the link between the Secretariats. Subsequently, “Rex Amoris” fulfilled the same purpose. In 1976 “Adveniat Regnum Tuum” ceased to be published. News no longer got around; many Secretariats ceased to function and were closed.

In France, the Picpus Secretariat continued with several sisters who worked zealously and quietly but so quietly that sometimes people thought that the Enthronement was dead!

Not at all, it is alive! For the last ten years, with the help of Fathers Bernard Couronne ss.cc., Richard McNally ss.cc., André Mark ss.cc. and Sister Marie-Gabrielle Renou ss.cc. we have been working to present our resources in a new way.

In order to respond to the wishes, so often expressed, by our night adorers, we send them three or four times a year "Prayer in the Home" (Prière au Foyer), pamphlets that include news as well as suggestions for prayer according to the liturgical year.

For those in the Paris region who desire, we organise get togethers for information and formation once or twice a year.

As 2007 began our main concern was the preparation of the centenary of the Enthronement. And June 30 at Paray-le-Monial was the celebration. Participating were several bishops, numerous SS.CC. brothers and sisters, night Adorers and Enthronement families. Together they caused a mighty hymn of praise to be offered to the Lord.

"The International Apostle of the Sacred Heart" left his mark on the five continents. Saturday evening in Paray we wanted to recall that global mission by symbolically offering documents attesting to the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in families of different nations. Each participant went home with a souvenir candle to remind him/her of the message Father Mateo leaves us today, *"It is from the Heart of Christ that we draw light and strength to love and to build the civilization of love."*



**(Building together the civilization of Love  
with the power of the Heart of Christ)**

**(Centenary of the Enthronement of the  
Sacred Heart in the Family)**

# **The Spirit of Father Mateo and the devotion to the Sacred Heart. Elements for a new Enthronement**

*Richard Lifrak ss.cc.*

As a new acting director of the Men of the Sacred Hearts, I am grateful for the opportunity to share with my brothers and sisters in the Congregation some reflections concerning the legacy of Father Mateo. After one hundred years, it's a good time to take a fresh look at his spirituality of the Sacred Heart and also at the nature of the apostolate he founded, the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Family. What I will say in this article is my own preliminary viewpoint, based on a few months of reading, reflection, prayer, and discussions with some of the dedicated members of the Men of the Sacred Hearts. So feel free to accept my ideas as helpful or to question their reverence, faithfulness, practicality, or truth.

Who is Father Mateo to me? He is my brother in the Congregation, sharing a spiritual heritage based on being consecrated to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary in this Picpus spiritual family that we know and love so well. Yet, I have come to realize that Father Mateo was more than that. He seems to have been a prophet, an amazingly effective pastoral worker, and the most outstanding evangelizer for the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus of his time. All of these aspects of his words and work need to engage us if we are to be good stewards of the gifts bestowed on us by his inspired efforts and those of his successors. I have found the following verse most useful in getting my bearings on the role we must play: *"Then every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old."* (Matt 13:52) Yes! We must respect and reverence the spirit and spirituality of older forms of devotion to the Sacred Heart, even as we change some aspects to fit the present age.

Therefore, as we Sacred Hearts religious do the work of discerning and helping the apostolate of the Enthronement, it is good to see from where we have come, where we are, and, if possible, where we are going. Though devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus first arose among the early Fathers of the Church, based on the contemplation of Christ's wound that poured out blood and water (John 19:34-35) and the heart that lay beneath, the devotion took a decisive new turn with the advent of the revelations of Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque.. This nun of the Visitation at Paray-le-Monial in Burgundy, France, saw, in the year 1673, while praying before the Blessed Sacrament, saw a vision of Jesus with His Sacred Heart. This Heart was enthroned in flames, was surrounded by a crown of thorns, and had a cross protruding. Margaret Mary then had a profound experience of divine love, first by leaning close to His Heart, then through the strange experience of feeling her heart being removed and placed in the Heart of Christ, before being returned to her. Accompanying this mystical experience, she heard the following words: *"My divine heart is so impassioned with love for humanity... The flames of my burning charity... must spread through you and show itself to humanity so that they may be enriched by all the sanctifying and saving graces need to draw them back from the*

*abyss of destruction.*” It required courage and certain wisdom to accept this “new” form of devotion to the Sacred Heart. Readers familiar with the books of the prophets will recognize some of the language and imagery of a prophet of God being called and appointed to deliver God’s message.

A further message was given, which many devotees remember as the core of her revelation: *“Behold this Heart, which has loved Humankind so much, that it has spared itself nothing...in order to show them its love; and in return I receive from most only ingratitude through their irreverence and sacrileges, as well as through the coldness and contempt in which they hold the Sacrament of Love.”* In subsequent messages, devotees were asked to receive Holy Communion on the First Fridays of nine consecutive months. Later, she wrote to her spiritual director, *“It seemed to me that He promised... that He would pour down His blessings in abundance on every place in which the image of this amiable Heart should be exposed, in order to be loved and honored.”*

What Saint Margaret Mary’s revelation offered was more than a devotion to be prayed. Her concept of reparation implied a sharp assessment of the signs of the times from God’s point of view, a prophetic judgment in support of a Church that was experiencing dwindling fervor among its supporters and opposition from its secular and religious enemies. The Sacred Heart of Jesus, in the form presented by Saint Margaret Mary was God’s appeal for zeal and action in support of His Church and His people. And thanks to St. Margaret Mary, this spirit continues among the supporters of devotion to the Sacred Heart to this very day.

Yet some in the Church doubted and perhaps still doubt that what Saint Margaret Mary revealed was truly prophetic. Was it truly the Lord who was speaking through her? And was every word she said portraying the sentiments of Jesus truly a reflection of the Jesus we know from the Gospel? Paragraph 67 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church offers a clarifying statement: *“Private revelations...do not belong to the deposit of faith. It is not their role to improve or complete Christ’s definitive Revelation, but to help (others) live more fully by it in a certain period of history. Guided by the Magisterium of the Church, the sensus fidelium know how to discern and welcome in these revelations whatever constitutes an authentic call of Christ or his saints to the Church.”*

Helping believers to live more fully their covenant of faith is the role of the prophet, but the Church is empowered to discern the validity of the word and actions of the prophet. In the case of St. Margaret Mary, the Church affirmed the validity of her message firmly and directly, the Magisterium speaking for the Church in its pastoral as well as prophetic function.

When Father Mateo experienced his healing at Paray-le-Monial and subsequent calling to promote the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the home, it seemed like a confirmation of St. Margaret Mary’s prophetic message of adoration, reparation, and defense of the Church’s life through the Sacred Heart of Jesus. And yet the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart envisioned by Father Mateo was also something new, a prophetic inspiration, and, therefore, had to be approved by the Magisterium of the Church, which it was. In the time of newness of the Enthronement Apostolate, Father Mateo showed his own “creative fidelity” to St. Margaret Mary’s message, devising new strategies of ministering to Catholics and new prayers. His apostolate was prophetic, but also evinced a greater pastoral energy, communicating in a personal way the truth of the Gospel for the good of the family. Two points were central for his ministry and message, “Jesus personified as the King of Love” and a new evangelization utilizing a picture or icon of Christ with His Sacred Heart. This picture was enthroned and then served as a focus for an act of consecration by at least some members of a Catholic Christian

family. They committed themselves to welcome Jesus as the king and friend of the family, to return love for love, to renew their participation in the Church.

Being an immensely fervent person of great faith and love for Christ, Father Mateo knew how to transmit his faith, hope, and love to others through teachings, dialogues, prayers, and ceremonials that he wrote himself. In doing so, he was faithful to the inspiration of St. Margaret Mary, but expressed that inspiration in his own way and in harmony with the teaching and spirit of the Catholic Church of his own time. In relation to the Sacred Heart, he focused on the simple and profound love of our Savior for each Christian believer. He taught about the Heart of Christ as a privileged place for access to the person of Jesus, both as glorious Lord and as humble friend. Reading his writings, one can see that Father Mateo was knowledgeable about the history of devotion to the Sacred Heart from its beginnings, based on the piercing of Jesus' side as portrayed in John 19:34-35, up to his own time. Thus, he was not attached to just one fashion of devotion to the Sacred Heart. He was perspicacious and realistic in appealing to the heart of his listeners, while holding to a high ideal of devotion and faith.

With the death of Father Mateo, his dream of a world-wide evangelization effort, to transform and conquer with love every single Catholic family in this world through the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart and the Social Reign of the Sacred Heart persisted among those who followed him. Nevertheless, his powerful spirit, his creative energy was somewhat diminished in his successors.

A large part of this diminishment may have been due to the shock of the Church's transformation via the peaceful revolution of the Vatican II Council, which challenged the Church to reintegrate its oldest traditions, while, at the same time, imbibing a modern spirit. It appears that most religious Catholics did one or the other, but not both. The result was a decreased emphasis on popular devotions, including devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Also, there was a growing division between the faithful of the Church which persists even today. The natural response was defensiveness in both "traditional" as well as "progressive" Catholics. Such defensiveness has made intellectual, emotional, moral, and communal conversions more difficult.

My own concern is that as a result of a hardening of competing ideologies of religion, the incarnational faith which can and should be integral part of our lives, became weakened. What is incarnational faith? It is a faith that leads us to pray as if everything depends on God and to act as if everything depends on us.

Incarnational faith is encouraged by our devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, for His Heart is a symbolic invitation for us to be both, more human and more divine, grounded in reality, yet reaching for the heavens. The alternative to incarnational faith is a dreamy supernatural conception of faith, in which divine signs are more important than authentic Gospel life. Do we really believe that the "Twelve Promises" made to St. Margaret Mary take the place acts of personal witness and appropriate pastoral action? This is not the kind of faith that Father Mateo demonstrated as he served pastorally the human reality of countless people, while living a saintly life according to the transcendent reality of God.

Genuine love and incarnational faith are two of the primary gifts that come from a genuine devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, yet they also pose a challenge to us, even those of us who are publicly consecrated. I view the apostolate of the Enthronement as a very good way, but not the only way, to receive these gifts and face their challenge. Can we do so without praying, working, and teaching in the spirit of Father Mateo? To live his spirit, we need to pay attention to how centered we are in Christ, how much we are His willing prophets, how much

we seek to say and do only what glorifies Him. It also means offering a more integral pastoral service to those we are serving. If we are truly concerned with renewal of faith in a culture which is progressing in the direction of being post-Christian, we have to pay more attention to the lives of the people we wish to touch in an irreversible way.

We who have had the experience of sharing people's struggles know that there are at least three large burdens that make family renewal difficult in our time. First, there is a prevailing ignorance of our beautiful religious tradition by parents who are overburdened and distracted by the pace of modern life. How can we help them with this? Perhaps, we could help them develop a family covenant that would order the priorities of their lives, including mutual understandings and rights. Second, there is the burden of addiction, which is, most often, connected to alcohol, but could also take other forms, such as television and work. When such addictions are not dealt with by family members, there is increasing dysfunction, that is, unless and until enablement ceases and intervention happens. Could we inform families about this without prying into their personal lives? Third, there is the burden of interpersonal and intergenerational conflict. Though forgiveness is our Gospel goal, conflict resolution and peacemaking are often necessary as intermediate steps. Sometime, a healing of the family tree may be necessary. The presupposition of these suggestions is that, yes, Jesus is our king, our physician, our friend, but we, being his body, are His arms, His legs, His mind, and ultimately, His Heart in a heartless world. I must confess that I am haunted by the memory of a family I visited that had no less than three images of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, but lacked a covenantal and incarnational understanding of their family that could have given them unity and peace.

I am not advocating a substitution of ministry for devotion, but making an appeal through the Heart of Jesus, for the integration of devotion with ministry. To accomplish this goal, it would be necessary for pastors, active lay apostles, and families to all be on the same page. It would be necessary for all to commit themselves to a "Social Reign of the Sacred Heart", that pregnant phrase that Father Mateo gave us for the goal of the Enthronement. We have yet to put it into flesh.

What would Father Mateo be saying, how would he be reacting to the proposals I am making? To me, that would be a crucial question for the future of the Apostolate of the Enthronement. Of course, we may differ in our answers to that question. But, first, I wish for all of us to use our Catholic imagination to envision Mateo's response to the changing times. I myself see him reading for the first time *Nostra Aetate*, the Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, from the Vatican II Council. I see him, in the light of these documents rethinking some of his normal thoughts and expressions. Then I see him making the decision not to use the word "crusade," to describe an evangelization campaign, because the word reminds people of other faiths of our violence against the Jewish people, against Moslems, and against our Eastern Orthodox brothers and sisters in Christ.

I see Father Mateo reading the newest Christology texts that have brought to light the centrality of Jesus' preaching and acting in support of the Kingdom of God. A light goes on in Father Mateo's head, and he sees a connection between the Kingship of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom Jesus proclaimed in all the Gospels. Mateo realizes that the Kingdom, though present in the Church, is not the Church, and so exists wherever there is generous charity, social justice, peaceful relations, and joyful worship of God. Mateo puts this new understanding in his preaching of the Enthronement or perhaps lets others learn as he did from the Psalms, the books of the prophets, and the preaching of the Kingdom throughout the Gospels.

I see Father Mateo learning from the present pope, Pope Benedict XVI, especially from the Pope's writings on love, "God is Love" (*Deus Caritas Est*) as well as "Behold the Pierced One,"

the Pope's essay on the essence of teaching about the Sacred Heart in our times, a teaching that does not mention Saint Margaret Mary and her revelation at all. I see Mateo learning that properly teaching and witnessing about love is based on the Sacred Heart and leads to devotion to the Sacred Heart, though the Sacred Heart is not mentioned explicitly. And I see him pondering what the Pope says about the intimate connection of the Sacred Heart with the Easter Mystery. I see Father Mateo's face lighting up as he comes to understand that Christ's Heart moves and urges us toward Resurrection faith and life. "*Now I understand why,*" I hear Mateo saying, why Jesus said, "*Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes in me will do the works that I do, and will do greater ones than these, because I am going to the Father.*" Now that I am deceased, I can participate even more in the building of the Social Reign of God through the Enthronement Apostolate.

And I see Father Mateo among the laypeople and clergy seeking to carry on, enliven, and renew the Apostolate of the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart. He sees how so many people directly and indirectly support this work, for like the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts, it is a work of God.

What do you see, my sisters and brothers in the Sacred Hearts? What do you see?

# **Celebration of the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart**

## **in the family**

*André Mark ss.cc.*

Faithful to the spirit of the Church's liturgy:

- by the priest's instructions, this celebration is a CATECHESIS of FAITH in God's love manifested in Jesus Christ whose heart is the sign offered to people of all time, a source of faith, hope and charity for all.
- by the liturgy of the Word of God, the celebration is a RECOGNITION of God's LOVE by the family that solemnly commits itself to him by rendering homage to his love and by witnessing to it in all their private, professional and social activities.

### **1. Rite of welcome.**

**The priest can explain his ministry with the family in the following manner:**

Dear friends, it is clear that you have not invited the priest to your home just to install a picture. Enthroning the Heart of Christ means recognizing the love with which *"He loved us and delivered himself up for us."* This is why you want to offer the Lord the homage that is due Him. This is why you desire to commit yourself to live by Him, with Him and in Him. The goal of the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart is a profound transformation of your family in Christ. In calling families to respond to the love of Christ present in the world, Father Mateo rightly insisted that *"even more than having the place of honor in the house, Christ must have the place of honor in our hearts."* To remind you of that, in the name of the Church I greet you with the words of Saint Paul to the Ephesians,

***"May Christ dwell by faith in your hearts. Remain rooted in love, grounded in Love...so that you may be filled with the fullness of God."***

**Family: Amen.**

### **2. The Revelation of the love of God.**

**Priest:** *"Heart" can have a merely sentimental or vapid meaning. However to say of someone that he has "a good heart" or "a heart of gold" or that he is "open hearted" is to speak of what kind of person he is. The Bible, the Word of God, using human language says that God expresses His love with his "heart." God's love is compared to the love of fiancés, of spouses or to the love of fathers and mothers of families. Let us listen to what the prophets say about the love of God for His people.*

**First READING: Hosea 2:21-22, 11:1-4, 8a-9** (It can be read by a member of the family).

The Word of the Lord.

**Family: Thanks be to God.**

**Priest:** *If the heart of God is made known in the words of God (St. Gregory the Great) it is in Jesus that God reveals himself definitively. Like the Apostles let us welcome the manifestation of God, the love of the Father revealed in his Son. Jesus makes God visible. He says, "The one who sees me sees the Father." **As a witness to the Lord Jesus and as one who understood the sign of his opened Heart, the apostle John in his first Letter, speaks to us of the truth of God's love, the love that is God himself.***

**Second READING: First Letter of John 4: 7-12**

The Word of the Lord.

**All say (or sing):**

**ALLELUIA.**

**God so loved the world as to give His own Son.**

**ALLELUIA.**

**Priest:** *The gift of God is not something but SOMEONE, Jesus Christ, the word made flesh living among us. In Him, the love of the heart of our God comes to visit us. The whole Gospel speaks to us of this Good News. But the greatest proof of this love is given us when Jesus comes to His "hour," hanging on the cross; He loves his own to the very end. That was the first and greatest enthronement of the Heart of Jesus.*

**Priest:** *A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John.*

**Family:** *Glory to you, O Lord.*

**Gospel:** John 19:31-37

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

**Family:** *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*

### **3. From the act of faith to faith in action.**

The priest then gives a brief explanation of the Enthronement of the Heart of Jesus in the context of the Gospel. The family that celebrates the Enthronement will look upon the image and symbol of the Savior's love daily. For the evangelist, to look upon Him is to believe in Him. Understood correctly, far from mere sentimentalism, the Enthronement demands living faith in the love of Christ. His love calls for ours in return. We must commit ourselves to love him more deeply and to bring others to love him. This desire for holiness and this apostolic commitment are the real expressions of our response to the Lord's love. This is the spirituality offered to families by Father Mateo, who at the command of Pope Pius X, went out into the world to spread the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart. Since then this apostolate has been approved by all the Popes as a way of helping families be aware that they are the building blocks of society and living cells of the Church. In the world and the church families are responsible for the coming of the Lord Jesus' reign of love.

**Priest:** *In the spirit of faith, conscious that our baptism makes us members of Christ and called to bear fruit as the branches on the vine, let us renew today our commitment to God's plan of love expressed in the CREED.*

**All say together:** *I BELIEVE IN GOD...*

#### **4. God's love upon us, our hope is in Him.**

**Priest:** *It is our faith in Christ that gives us the courage to approach God in complete confidence (Paul to the Ephesians, chapter 3). In the firm assurance of God's merciful love which is always with us, let us pray to the Lord.*

(This prayer may be said silently, in the secret of hearts trusting in the Heart of Jesus. Or the family can spontaneously express their intentions. Or the following text could be used.)

**Priest:** *Lord, you desired to live as part of a family in Nazareth and to work there until you were thirty. Direct our lives and our actions according to your love and keep us in your way, your TRUTH and your LIFE.*

**All say:** ***Sure of your love and with the strength of our faith, we pray to the Lord.***

**Priest:** *Lord Jesus, You responded to the invitation of the spouses at Cana and you performed your first miracle for them. Listen to the prayer that Mary your Mother and our Mother makes to you for us.*

**All say:** ***Sure of your love and with the strength of our faith, we pray to the Lord.***

**Priest:** *Lord Jesus, come seek and save what was lost. You told Zacheus that in welcoming you, salvation had come to his house. Grant that we might find peace in your unbounded forgiveness.*

**All say:** ***Sure of your love and with the strength of our faith, we pray to the Lord.***

**Priest:** *Lord Jesus, you enjoyed the hospitality of Bethany and offered Martha, Mary and their brother Lazarus your friendship. May we show you our fidelity in good times and in bad.*

**All say:** ***Sure of your love and with the strength of our faith, we pray to the Lord.***

**Priest:** *Lord Jesus, you returned to your Father to prepare a place for us. Receive into your presence the deceased members of our families who have placed their hope and their faith in you.*

**All say:** ***Sure of your love and with the strength of our faith, we pray to the Lord.***

Whatever the form chosen, **the priest concludes** the family's prayer:

***United in the love of God our Father revealed to us in his son Jesus, who comes to the human family so that we might be part of God's family, we dare to say:***

***OUR FATHER...***

**Priest:** *With the prayer of the Church, let us ask the Lord to bless this image that you have chosen as sign of his love manifested in Jesus Christ.*

*"Almighty God, our Creator and our Father, you who know that we need visible signs that help us to recognize you, You fully reveal your Love in giving us your Son, the Word made flesh who dwells among us. Bless this image (or this statue) which will remind all who live in this house (or this apartment) of your Love made present and offered to the world in the Heart of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. To those who believe in Him and who desire to render homage to Him, grant, infinitely good Father, in the name of your beloved Son in whom you have placed all your Love, your grace here below and your glory in the world to come. Through Jesus Christ our Lord."*

**All respond: AMEN**

The priest blesses the image or statue

## **5. Act of Consecration: Commitment to live in charity.**

**Priest:** *Dear friends, this is not a pious formula asking protection or a passing act to salve the conscience. This is a continuation of your baptismal consecration by which you are going to reaffirm your commitment to the Lord Jesus and renew your decision to conform your lives to his commandment of love. For devotion to the Sacred Heart has as its purpose "to lead us to the perfection of that love which unites us to God and to other people." That is the spirit in which you are to live your consecration to the Heart of Jesus, whose charity urges you to extend his reign in everything you do.*

### **The family slowly reads its act of consecration.**

*Lord Jesus, in choosing Saint Margaret Mary to remind the world of the love which burns in Your Heart, You manifested your desire to reign in Christian families. Today we want to proclaim Your Kingship over our family.*

*We want to live from You and for You. We are resolved to become your witnesses in our Christian community and in our society.*

*May You reign over our minds: may we always believe firmly in Your Love, and may we continually be converted to the spirit of Your Gospel.*

*May You reign in our hearts: may we draw from Your Word and Your Eucharist the love of God and neighbor by which your true disciples are known.*

*May You reign over our wills: may we follow You, always docile to Your Spirit, in the mission that You have confided to Your Church and in which we desire to participate.*

*Lord Jesus, may Your Love reign over our family life, to inspire all our spiritual and temporal undertakings and to sanctify our joys and our sorrows.*

*If one of us is ever so ungrateful to turn from You, Lord, remind him or her that Your mercy and Your forgiveness is never lacking to the repentant sinner.*

*And when for any of us, the hour to pass from this earth to the house of the Father arrives, watch over us, Lord, in the hope that one day all the family reunited in heaven will celebrate forever the blessings of Your Love.*

*May the Virgin Mary, Your Mother with the Immaculate Heart, and Saint Joseph, who lived with you in the holy family of Nazareth, present to You this consecration of our family and keep us faithful to it all the days of our life.*

*Live the Heart of Jesus, our Lord and our God. AMEN.*

## **6. With the Virgin Mary, let us give thanks to God.**

**Priest:** *Dear friends, in God's plan of love, Mary is inseparable from Jesus. In saying "YES" to God, the Virgin accepted the coming of the Savior in the name of all of humanity. Her accepting to be the Mother of Christ went hand in hand with her recognition of God's love extending from age to age. Having solemnly welcomed and recognized God's love this day, proclaim also your "THANKS" to the Lord with Mary's MAGNIFICAT.*

### **All say or sing:**

*My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;  
my spirit rejoices in God my savior.*

*For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness; behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed.*

*The Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.*

*His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him.*

*He has shown might with his arm, dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart.*

*He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly.*

*The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent away empty.*

*He has helped Israel his servant, remembering his mercy, according to his promise to our fathers, to Abraham and to his descendants forever.*

## **7. Invocations and Blessings.**

### **All say:**

*Heart of Jesus, King and Center of all hearts, have mercy on us.*

*Heart of Jesus, generous to all who call upon You, have mercy on us.*

*Heart of Jesus, salvation of all who hope in You, have mercy on us.*

*Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us who have recourse to you.*

*Saint Joseph, protector of the universal Church, pray for us.*

*Saint Margaret Mary, pray for us.*

**Priest:** *May the blessing of almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit descend upon you and remain with you forever.*

**All respond: AMEN.**

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**N.B.** – After the ceremony is a good time for the family to fill out the Enthronement certificate, which the priest also signs and the family sends to the Enthronement Center, (Prière au Foyer) 35, rue de Picpus 75012 PARIS.

The Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the family is not just a ceremony for one day:

- The family must take it to heart and renew the consecration on the feasts of the Sacred Heart and Christ the King as well as at other times of great importance for the family.
- The family must stay faithful to the commitment entailed and so the family that celebrates the Enthronement must be an active part of the Church participating in its mission and working for the reign of Christ in society.

**Cum permissu Superiorum.**



Mural painting in the Chapel of the Sacred Heart  
at Paray-le-Monial, France

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