

“Études Picpuciennes” n° 3

M Y S T E R I U M C A R I T A T I S

CHARACTER AND MISSION

OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE SACRED HEARTS

By

R.P. Ansgar-Marie Deussen, SS.CC.

1953

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

V.C.J.S.

V.C.M.I.

M Y S T E R I U M C A R I T A T I S

CHARACTER AND MISSION
OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE SACRED HEARTS

By

Rev. P. Ansgar-Marie Deussen, SS. CC.

“Études Picpuciennes” n° 3

Translated by

Fathers and Brothers of the Sacred Hearts

PROVINCIAL HOUSE

Fairhaven, U.S.A.

1963

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	5
Chapter I: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CONGREGATION	7
1. The Tendency toward the Universality	7
2. Unity - Duality	10
3. Apostolate and Reparation	12
4. Central Place of the Sacred Hearts	14
Chapter II: BASIS FOR DETERMINING THE CHARACTER OF THE CONGREGATION	16
1. The general situation at the time of the foundation of the Institute.	16
2. The character of the Congregation studied in the light of Creation.	18
3. The Economy of salvation and the Congregation.	21
a) Our first parents in grace and disgrace	21
b) The work of salvation in Jesus and Mary.	23
Chapter III: THE CONGREGATION, IMITATION IN THE SERVICE OF ITS MODEL, THE MYSTERIUM CARITATIS OF THE SACRED HEARTS	28
A. ORIGIN OF THE CONGREGATION.	28
1. The vision of Motte d'Usseau.	28
2. The purchase of the first house in Poitiers.	29
3. The taking of Religious Vows by the two Founders.	30
B. THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CONGREGATION	35
1. The foundation of the Rule: the Rule of Saint Benedict.	35
2. The structure of the Congregation.	39
C. FINALITY AND WORKS OF THE CONGREGATION	43
Article I: The End of the Congregation	43
1. Positive Testimonies	43
2. Reflections on the preceding facts	46
3. Attempt to synthesize the End of the Institute.	48
Article II: Means for the realization of the End.	51
1. The special stamp of the Works of the Institute.	52
2. Reproduction of the Four Ages of Our Lord in the Service and in the Spirit of the Sacred Hearts.	53
<i>First scene:</i> The Infancy of Jesus retraced by Education and Teaching.	56
<i>Second scene:</i> The Hidden Life of Jesus retraced by the Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar	58

<i>Third Scene:</i>	The Public Life of Jesus retraced by Preaching and the Missions.	63
<i>Fourth scene:</i>	The Crucified Life of the Savior retraced by the Exercise of Mortification.	66

Chapter IV THE MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE SACRED HEARTS	69
1. The Character of Profession in the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts.	69
2. Children of the Sacred Hearts.	71
SYNTHESIS	75

PREFACE

This work is the third part of a more extended study concerning the divine plan in the order of nature and of grace. We have given to this study the title "*Mysterium Caritatis*" to signify that the exterior work of God is totally impregnated with His love.

This relation to the complete work explains the character of this third work of the "Picpucian studies." It is not a history of the Congregation but rather a study of its positive testimonies in order to bring to light the intimate nature of the Institute as well as its "raison d'être" in the divine plan. Hence the title "Study of the character and mission of the Congregation."

The foundation and the point of departure of this work are the facts that refer to the Congregation. Essentially, they are known in a general manner. Hence, they will only be mentioned by us in relation to the purpose we propose to follow.

To understand these facts the notations of our venerable founders, as well as the other official documents, are of the greatest importance. When, for a given point, their voices are silent or the documents are lacking, then we are forced to fill in this gap. The traditional opinion in the Congregation will then serve as our guide.

Our explanation of these facts will remain defective if we consider the Congregation only as a purely human work. The protection and assistance of God presided at its birth, they have made it prosper and grow. Following this, the approbation of the Church has intervened, which has sanctioned the work of our founders. This is the basis which authorizes us to believe that the Congregation answers to a design of God and that it has, by the divine will, a mission to fulfill in the Church and in the world.

But, as with the chapter of a book, so with the Congregation; it can only be understood in its relation to the whole. We will attempt, then, to place the Congregation in the framework of the time of its foundation and we will examine its characteristics in the light of the divine plan of Creation and Redemption.

It is evident that we cannot repeat here all that we have exposed in the first two parts of our complete work "*Mysterium Caritatis*." The reader will do well to content himself with some general views of the whole which, we hope, will suffice for him to follow the train of our ideas so that we will be able to shed a little light on the character and mission of our Congregation.

May this study render more profound our conviction that God has given us a very precious grace in calling us to bear the name and to be in truth the "Children of the Sacred Hearts" of Jesus and Mary.

Chapter I

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CONGREGATION

1. The Tendency toward the Universality

One of the characteristics of the Congregation which easily strikes strangers is the broadness of its plan and the extent of its ends. It embraces in effect a series of elements whose coherence does not at first appear; there is in fact, at first the temptation to believe that its unity is defective, or that the general lines of the plan of the Congregation lack clarity. Its tendencies could appear to be too general and too diverse, its end too vague. This broadness is accentuated the more one considers the more or less restricted number of religious who compose the institute and it can be asked if this does not serve only to produce results of little appreciable value. As long as the coherence of the divers elements is not known it is easy to take for multiplicity that which is fundamentally only variety and richness.

We can find a sign that the character of the Congregation reveals such a great richness in the fact that we ourselves can be embarrassed to say what we are and what we wish.

The title of the Congregation itself testifies to the difficulty that is experienced when, seeking to express this richness. No one can pretend that the name of our religious family is short or is of easy usage, unless we wish to drop half of it and say simply that we belong to the "Congregation of the Sacred Hearts." But such a denomination often brings with it the inconvenience of confusing us with some other Society of the Sacred Heart.

Even the complete title of "Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of the Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar" does not say everything. Upon reflection, it will be found that the accent is placed more on the contemplative element rather than the active element. Moreover the contemplative aspect is not rendered by even one word. In order to be complete, it is necessary to mention two characteristics of the Congregation one after the other: "Congregation of the Sacred Hearts and of Perpetual Adoration of the Altar."

The reader who knows the history of the events made at Rome from 1814 to 1816 for the approbation of the Congregation is not ignorant of the difficulties met in the choice of a title. In his letter to Father Hilarion of August 29, 1814, the Founder proposed the title: "Clerics Regular of the Order of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary." In his memoire of December 6, 1816 to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars he pleaded for the title "Zealots and Zealatrices of the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary." Three weeks later, December 27, 1816, he sent another memoire to the same Congregation and presented the title of "Zealots and Zealatrices of the Love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, Perpetual Adorers of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar." In the meantime, Pontifical approbation was accorded to the Congregation with the actual denomination. The difference of this last title with those that were proposed does not modify the essential signification: the difference is only in form. At Rome the preference was given to the more objective formula rather than the subjective appellation of Zealots. Let us make, in passing, this important note: all the titles envisioned as well as the one definitively chosen put in first place the names of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. The primacy which has been accorded them in the ideal of the Institute has never, then, been put in doubt.

The history of the title of the Congregation is only a significant example of the richness of the ideal which the Institute has been called to realize. It is easy to find others. Let us note some

summarily. The broadness of the plan of the Congregation, the treasure constituted by its ideal, appears in the fact that it has both a masculine and a feminine branch. The purpose that it seeks is to practice and propagate the cult of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and that of the Heart of Mary. In its daily life it unites activity to contemplation. It proposes to retrace the four ages of Our Lord and to propagate the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. One has only to read the preliminary chapter of the rule to have a clear idea of the broadness and the variety of our program. Five articles of the preliminary chapter are necessary in order to briefly enumerate the ends of the Institute.

Is such richness simply multiplicity, a mass of incoherent elements without any harmony? Does it not go beyond a wise measure of human possibilities and is there not the danger of dispersion by this division of forces?

If the problem is seriously examined, it will quickly be seen that there is a line which unites these seemingly heterogeneous elements. In reality, these elements complete one another and form a coordinated ensemble whose variety is the expression of its richness. We will return to this later. But that which comes immediately to the foreground is that this broadness reveals a tendency toward the universality. A relative tendency, without doubt, but one that is always apparent and which serves to dissolve that multiplicity.

Even the structure of the Institute has this character of universality which is for it like the style for a cathedral. It takes in a masculine and a feminine branch, it has both clerics and laymen. Hence it embraces humanity in all its essential elements. The same observation can be made for our manner of life. Religious Institutes are contemplative, active or mixed. Our Congregation chose to be mixed, uniting activity to contemplation. In the carrying out, then, of its life it is also marked by its preference for universality.

It is necessary for us to mention here that the foundation for our Rule is the Rule of St. Benedict, which is clearly monastic. The Benedictine Rule inspired our Founders: nevertheless they adapted it to their mode of living giving Constitutions proper to the Congregation. Thus the question of knowing whether they would make of their work an Order or a Congregation was decided only by the events which took place at Rome for the obtaining of approbation. This shows that our Founders had their eyes turned both toward the monastic ideal and the ideal of a modern congregation. Juridically, they finally chose the second but retained the first as foundation.

To illustrate these reflections let us cite a small event that happened a few years ago at the Vatican palace. It was February 2nd, the Feast of the Purification or "Candelas". Following the tradition, delegates of the secular clergy and of the religious institutes passed processionally before the Holy Father to offer him a candle. As the procession got under way someone near us said to his neighbor, "they (indicating us) wanted to be monks, but they weren't able to do so." He was mistaken; we could have been monks if we had given up the perpetual adoration to adopt the office in choir. But our Founders in no way wanted that. It is nevertheless, exact to say that they had before their eyes and contemplated for a long time the ideal of the ancient orders at the time of the foundation of their congregation.

Since this characteristic of imitating the ancient orders while adopting the ideal of the modern congregations is proper to our Institute and corresponds to its tendency toward universality, we must take note of it. Certainly the monastic and contemplative element in our Congregation is not to be exaggerated. But it would be an error of excess to eliminate from our life all that recalls the ancient orders.

It is possible to hold up the necessity of adaption to actual conditions against this affirmation. We know very well that the Church has a great deal of comprehension of the situation and urges a sane adaptation. The general congress of the States of Perfection, convoked

by the Sacred Congregation of Religious and which was held in Rome from the 26th of November to the 8th of December, 1950, furnishes us with the proof. Its general theme was precisely: "The renovation of the States of Perfection according to actual circumstances." Internal renovation of the Orders and Congregations according to the spirit of their founders was extolled. For the question of external adaptation to the present conditions of life, the opinion of the most diversified speakers in accordance with the direction of the congress was that no adaptation could take place at the expense of the specific character, the spirit and the spiritual patrimony of the existing Orders and Congregations. As to the more modern forms of religious life, new foundations will arise in the Church due to its perpetual fecundity. Certain adaptations in exterior works are perfectly justified, for example, in the methods of education, the forms of the apostolate, in conformity with the needs of the time and the progress of an authentic human culture.

Hence nothing obliges us to modify this trait of universality proper to the Congregation.

It is not without interest to ask ourselves if our Founders were conscious of this note of universality of their work. A remark written by the Foundress invites us to respond affirmatively to this question. She declares that she saw in spirit our heavenly protectors, the four founders of orders: Saints Pacomius, Augustine, Dominic and Bernard. Each one held in his hand his rule which they showed to Our Lord as if to say: "they (the members of the new Congregation) observe all this" (Notes of October, 1801). That scene confirms the existence of a deliberately willed tendency toward a certain universality. It makes no difference in this case whether the vision was supernatural or purely natural; the essential is that it reflects the opinion of the Mother Foundress.

Some other details also indicate a tendency toward the universality, for example, our obligation to reproduce the four ages of Our Lord. Which means to say concretely that we must retrace the whole earthly life of Jesus, from birth to death. It is then the ensemble, the universality of the life of Jesus, whose reproduction is the plan of our religious obligations, which is given to us to contemplate.

Another type of universality is connected with that which gives us as model the life of Jesus in its entirety and which has for us a very special interest. This is the universality which the Sacred Hearts represent. In itself, already, a general signification extending to all of life and to all activity comes from the symbol of the heart which expresses the motive of love.¹ The central place which the Sacred Hearts occupy, in our Congregation brings it about that our whole life tends to be impregnated with love and gives to it the most efficacious character possible, grandeur and universality. Let us note still further, that we unite intimately the cult of the Heart of Jesus and that of the Heart of Mary, which again implies universality, for the Sacred Hearts are, from different titles, the universal authors of salvation and to these two hearts alone the Church accords an official cult.

The examples cited show sufficiently that the tendency toward the universality is a characteristic of our Institute, to which we are indebted for the permanent actuality of our ideal and of the ends of the Congregation.

There is then, nothing to fear that the course of the years and the evolution of things will antiquate our Congregation or make it no longer of its time. The new currents that may rise in the church will not oblige it to change that which constitutes the essence of its life. The ends that it follows are only so extended because it makes its own the interests of the Sacred Hearts who embrace both space and time.

¹ St. Thomas, I, II, q. 28, art. 6

Independently of other reasons, this universality could already explain the extension of our institute, to the five parts of the world and to the most far away islands even though the number of religious is restricted and its means are modest.

2. Unity - Duality

Another characteristic of our Congregation, the "Unity-Duality," is in strict relation with the universality. The Congregation's external form already bears the imprint: it is one, but it is composed of both a masculine and a feminine branch.

One of the principal documents which testifies to the unity of the Congregation is the Bull sub plumbo "Pastor Aeternus" of 1817 by which the Institute was approved. Throughout the document the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts is referred to in the singular even though it treats of the two branches of brothers and sisters. For example, it says: "For that reason, Our dearly beloved sons and our very dear daughters, the Brothers and the Sisters of the new Congregation established at Poitiers, as will be seen shortly, under the invocation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of the Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, having made known to us that this congregation had been reunited and founded in the said city of Poitiers... It comprises many of the faithful both clerics and secular priests as well as lay people of both sexes... The certain hope is had that this Congregation will prosper and grow more... It proposes... to gratuitously raise in the fear of the Lord poor children of both sexes to repair the injuries done to the Sacred Hearts by the enormous crimes of sinners by means of the perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament both day and night especially in the houses of the sisters which are more numerous... The Brothers and Sisters of the said Congregation take perpetual but simple vows of poverty, chastity and obedience... Further they live a common life under the Rule of St. Benedict... The above mentioned Brothers and Sisters of the said Congregation have a very great desire to maintain and to propagate this recommendable and useful Institute, and to obtain in perpetuity the approbation and confirmation of the Constitutions and Statutes mentioned above... On our own initiative and with the plenitude of the Apostolic power, We approve and confirm in perpetuity, in virtue of the petitions, by the apostolic authority, the above mentioned Constitutions and Statutes..."

Hence the Congregation forms one unity whose juridic expression is constituted by the powers of the Superior General of the two branches. For this reason he is designated as Superior General of "the whole Congregation" both in the Rule of the Brothers and in the Rule of the Sisters, even though the branch of the Sisters is equally governed by a Superior General ²

This unity is not only juridical but also internal since the two branches follow together one purpose: the reproduction of the four ages of Our Lord Jesus Christ and the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (Preliminary Chapter, article I). The Rule of the Sisters indicates this same purpose with the difference that it does not attribute the reproduction of the evangelical life of Jesus to the sisters but to the "brothers." It follows that the Congregation is essentially one for it is only because of this unity that the Rule of the Sisters could also say: "The purpose of our Institute is to retrace the four ages of our Lord Jesus Christ" (first part, article I).

On the other hand, it is no less evident that the Congregation comprises two branches, each of which leads, in a certain fashion, its own life. This is so true for the branch of the sisters that even though they are dependent upon the Superior General of "the whole Congregation" (in

² Preliminary Chap. of the Rule, art. VIII & IX. -- Rule of the Sisters, passim, e.g. , Chap. II, III.

certain cases, the Superior General and his council), they still have their own Superior General to govern them.

It follows that the unity of the whole and the duality of the branches are real so that the Institute truly forms a "Unity-Duality."

Upon other points we could also make the same observation, for example, in regard to the nature of the life of the Institute which unites external activity to the contemplative life. It is evident that external activity and contemplation are totally different. But this apparent duality does not divide our life in two and does not break its unity, at least it shouldn't do so. Occupations can vary. From an exercise of piety one can pass to action according to the commands of obedience, and then return to prayer from whence is drawn new strength. This is especially true for the perpetual adoration which goes on during the time of work. Do not think that it is necessary to divide life into two parts, one for work and the other for piety. According to the spirit and character for the Institute we are invited to reduce this apparent duality to an interior unity. The spirit of prayers should supernaturalize and fructify the external activity in the same way as the supernatural purpose of our activity should be the object of our prayers. After all, with us action and contemplation tend to the same purpose: glorification of the Sacred Hearts, in whose service we wish to live and die.

Thus we find again the unity-duality in the tasks to which the members of our Congregation devote themselves: on one hand, the reproduction of the four ages of Jesus by education, perpetual adoration, evangelization, mortification; on the other hand by the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts. All of these duties enter into the two categories of action and contemplation and so form two different but united groups. The whole is marked with the seal of the relation to the Sacred Hearts, in whose service we accomplish these two types of duties. This relation reduces the duality to a unity. "The Religious of the Sacred Hearts" says the whole thing clearly in a few words insofar as it indicates as the purpose of the Congregation the practice and propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts. This signifies: unity of Object: the cult of the Sacred Hearts; and duality of duties: practice and propagation of this cult (contemplation and action).

The last and supreme manifestation of the unity-duality is the union of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary as expression of the purpose of the Congregation. On one hand, we establish a distinction between the Heart of Jesus and the Heart of Mary by reason of the infinite distance that exists between the persons of Our Lord and His Blessed Mother on the other hand, we unite them in the whole Life and in all the works of the Institute. We are convinced that the words of Holy Scripture, "*Quod Deus conjunxit, homo non separet*"³ apply more to the Sacred Hearts than to our first parents.

We can conclude then that the Congregation is profoundly impregnated with the law of unity-duality both in its life and in its works. Is this not the law of the structure of the Institute? In reality the "Unity-Duality" is at the base of the constitution of the Congregation.

Furthermore, the fact that the Institute is entirely oriented toward the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, distinct yet united, leads us to think that between the Congregation insofar as it is "Unity-Duality" and the union of the Sacred Hearts, there is a special relationship which is still to be considered.

³ Math. , XIX, 6

3. Apostolate and Reparation

Another characteristic trait of the Congregation must be mentioned here: the union of reparation and the apostolate.

When a visitor is shown a chapel of one of our houses, his attention is often attracted to the red mantle and he asks with interest what it means. The mantle, we know, is the symbol of our duty of reparation. And it is this union of our works of the apostolate and reparation which must attract and hold our attention.

There is no doubt about the eminently apostolic character of our Institute. This was precisely one of the reasons why the Good Father insisted so much upon the title of Zealots and Zealatrices. In his memoirs of December 6, 1816 he says: "The title of Zealots presents among other things great advantage relative to the purpose that we desire to attain: that of the sanctification of souls by the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary... A name is necessary that will each day remind the brothers of their duties and obligations, which will make them recall at every instant that they must sacrifice themselves by zeal for the Lord; that they are lacking in their most essential duty as soon as they would wish to live for themselves, without working for the salvation of their brothers; that they must enter into the silence of the cloister only to find new strength to combat the enemies of religion; finally that their vocation is of zeal and of an inflaming zeal... The same reasons apply to our Sisters. If the daughters of Zion, by a natural bent, would wish to rid themselves of the painful duties of education in order to give themselves exclusively to the sweetness of contemplation, their title of Zealatrices will call them back unceasingly to the obligations of a more extensive charity."

Similarly in his letter of April 14, 1817 to the Lord Grand Aumônier (Chaplain) of France, the Good Father places the apostolate in the first place, saying: "From the beginning of this infant Institution I conceived the project of forming a Congregation destined to spread the faith, to propagate the devotion to the Divine Heart of Jesus and the Sacred Heart of Mary, to repair, by perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, the outrages committed against the Divine Majesty..." In his Memoire of December 26, 1814, addressed to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, Father Hilarion already wrote: "The primitive and fundamental purpose of our institute is to procure the glory of God and the salvation of souls. We are convinced that one of the best means for doing this is to propagate the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary."

The apostolic spirit, then, is plainly indicated in our traditions. But there is nothing extraordinary in that. There are so many Orders and Congregations who give themselves to apostolic works.

Considered in itself, neither can it be said to be something extraordinary that we are vowed to reparation. We are not even the first to follow this purpose. The Benedictines of the Blessed Sacrament, for example, who were founded well before us, make perpetual adoration in a spirit of reparation well marked out. They also profess devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. But these religious live a purely contemplative life. And since reparation is equally of a contemplative nature, it easily fits into their type of life.

But for us it is another story: we carry on a life of intense apostolate - our works in the foreign missions witness to this, but at the same time, our life is impregnated with a spirit of reparation. It is this combination of two distinct concepts of life which is worthy of remark since it is another characteristic trait of our Institute, even though it is not something unique.

From the beginning, our Founders willed this union of the Apostolate and reparation. While Father Coudrin and his first companions dedicated themselves to their apostolic charges, the Good Father longed for the moment when, thanks to the increase in the number of religious,

it would be possible for the masculine branch to equally carry on perpetual adoration. During the first years of the institute, our Founder already had the habit of reciting before Mass a prayer of reparation to the Holy Heart of Mary, which he composed⁴. Apostolate and reparation went hand and hand.

There is much that could be said on this subject concerning the Mother Foundress and her first companions. We know of her burning zeal for the reparative adoration. For her, to found a new house was to erect a center of adoration. Nevertheless, the immediate cause which was at the base of a new foundation was, ordinarily the will to consecrate herself to the education of young girls. From the beginning of the Institute, the Foundress welcomed children into the house at Poitiers in order to instruct and form them. Even here reparation was not without the apostolate.

Nothing has changed in this regard right up to the present time. No one casts any doubt upon the apostolic character of the Congregation. It is so evident that the branch of the Fathers is often taken for a purely missionary society, even though this is a mistake. On the other hand, if the circular letters of our third Superior General, Very Reverend Father Euthyme Rouchouze, are read, it will be strikingly noted how the accent is placed on reparation. Considered in themselves and without explanation, his words even seem too exclusive for the non-initiated. The thought of Father Euthyme would be in danger of being deformed if it would not be kept in mind that he does not seek to limit the place given to action in the Institute but rather to conserve and increase the interior spirit which is the soul of every apostolate. In any case, his testimony is well suited to support our opinion on the union of the apostolate and reparation.

The same affirmation imposes itself in regard to the Sisters. Schools, Colleges and boarding schools testify to their zeal for the formation of a profoundly Christian youth. But while some devote themselves to this labor of education, one sister robed with the red mantle is kneeling before the tabernacle. She watches before Our Lord present in the Blessed Sacrament in order to keep Him company in His solitude and offer a tribute of reparation to His Heart and to that of His Holy Mother for their unacknowledged love.

A remark is here necessary to prevent any misunderstanding. In speaking of reparation we have been treating especially of reparative adoration because of its special place in our Institute. But it would be an error to believe that our obligation of reparation is limited to this exercise. Duty of reparation and reparative adoration are not synonymous. The duty extends beyond the time spent before the altar. He who would not consider this fact and only think of reparative adoration when there is question of reparation risks the danger, for example, of considering as something accessory his duty of reparation to the Holy Heart of Mary. These restricted thoughts would be contrary to the manner of acting of our Founder, as is proven by the text of the reparative prayer about which we are to speak. As the Circulars of Father Euthyme clearly demonstrate, the duty of reparation must rather penetrate our life and this spirit ought to animate our actions.

This strict union between the apostolate and reparation in the Institute proves that our Founders had seen an intimate relation between these two elements. This relation is real, for the apostolate and reparation base themselves on the fact that the efforts to establish the kingdom of God have in view a fallen and sinful humanity. From that comes a double task: the apostolate in regard to souls in order to obtain for them salvation and the duty of reparation toward God and the Sacred Hearts in order to make amends for the outrages that they receive from men.

The spirit of universality is not absent from this union of the apostolate and reparation. It makes us regard in their turn both the Creator and the creature and not forget either one. This is equally true in the fact that in our reparation we regard the Sacred Hearts as the universal authors of salvation.

⁴ R.P. Antoine Hulselmans, *Études Picpuciennes*, No. 1, p. 145

4. Central Place of the Sacred Hearts

Since our readers are Religious of the Congregation who know the place that the Sacred Hearts occupy in our life, we will limit ourselves here to giving a general explanation and present some principles, for we will return to this subject later on. But we cannot omit this point which touches the essence, the soul of the Institute.

We give the name of central to the place of the Sacred Hearts in our Congregation. We would be just as correct to call them the cornerstone or the foundation of the Institute, for, in effect, the Sacred Hearts are all this for the Institute.

The title of the Congregation gives us our first indication on this subject: the Sacred Hearts give their name to the Institute, and rightly so, for the intention of the Founders was to entirely consecrate the Congregation to Them.

They did not only think that, in the final analysis, everything belongs to Jesus and Mary and that their reign is all of love, but rather that the Congregation would be consecrated, to Them in a special way. In his memoir of December 6, 1816, addressed to the highest authority in the Church represented by the Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, the Father Founder clearly said: "The Consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary is the foundation of our Institute."

These affirmations are not simply pious expression made for the occasion but rather the expression of a determined will which the Church has sanctioned, including it in the Ceremonial of the Congregation which was composed eight years later by the General Chapter of 1824 and approved by Rome on September 27, 1825. In his petition for the approbation of the ceremonial, the Founder declared: "We have adapted for our usage some blessings and ancient prayers used in other congregations and which seem to us to suitably indicate the end of our Institute, we have added only that which is necessary to express in a special manner that we are consecrated forever to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary." (October 20, 1824). In fact, this intention to indicate our consecration to the Sacred Hearts appears constantly in the prayers of the Ceremonial, although it does so in a variety of ways. In the prayer after the *Te Deum* which follows the taking of vows, we read: "*Omnipotens, sempiterna Deus, qui praecepisti ut tibi promissa teneamus, votaue reddamus, praesentem famulum tuum, Sacratissimo Cordi Domini nostri Jesu Christi et Sanctissimo Cordi Mariae consecratum, benedicere et sanctificare digneris, quatenus in proposito Regulari permaneat.*"⁵

The idea of this consecration is found in the correspondence of our Founder. Toward the end of his life, he wrote to Sister Eudoxie: "Let us remember only that we are consecrated to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and that to this precious profession are undoubtedly attached some sweet and holy sufferings, inseparable from our vocation" (July 17, 1835).

The Congregation and its members, then, are consecrated to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. That is why both the Institute and its members are their property in a special manner from the title of a free gift. That is the basis, the point of departure for our whole life and for the works of the Institute.

The immediate consequence of this consecration is that the Congregation is completely given over to the service of the Sacred Hearts. There is then, nothing that can be withdrawn from this service because this is the foundation of the whole structure upon which all must stand. There is nothing that can be built if it is not on these supports. For this reason the reproduction of the four ages of Our Lord Jesus Christ must equally be considered in function of this service to the Sacred Hearts. The "Service of the Sacred Hearts" is, then, as the resume of all our

⁵ "Almighty and eternal God, who commanded us to be faithful to our promises and fulfill our vows, deign to bless and sanctify your servant consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Our Lord Jesus Christ and to the most holy Heart of Mary, so that he may persevere in his proposal to live the regular life."

activities. The only difference in our diverse works consists in the fact that some have for their immediate object the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary considered in themselves, their persons or their cult, whereas others serve the interest of their Kingdom by the collaboration in the work of salvation.

It is for this reason that the Religious of the Congregation make vows, in a general manner, to "live and die in the service of the Sacred Hearts." Their religious obligations and their service to the Sacred Hearts are co-extensive, whether that be before the tabernacle, in the classroom or in the ministry. Let us note, too, that the formula of profession has never varied on this point which goes back to the origins of the Congregation. From the time of the first profession which was made in the Institute by our Founders on Christmas, 1800, we already find expressed their will "to live and die in the service of the Sacred Hearts as Zealots of their love."

It is so even now. The program of the Congregation has always remained the same. The Congregation is vowed to the Sacred Hearts, the service of the Sacred Hearts is its reason for being, its primary characteristic.

Chapter II

BASIS FOR DETERMINING THE CHARACTER OF THE CONGREGATION

Both nature and grace work together for the foundation of a Congregation. We must, then, examine the circumstances of time and place which surround such an event, without forgetting the action of God which the foundation of an Institute implies, for it only came about by a special assistance of Divine Providence.

In this event these historic circumstances have their importance. They show the work of the Founders since it is true that the Founder's work is often postulated by the religious or social situation of their milieu or time. But the consideration of the creative work of God can equally give us precious indications. This is also true for the economy of salvation and, for our Congregation, the collaboration of Jesus and Mary in the salvific designs of God. We must not lose sight of the fact that our Congregation is completely oriented toward the Sacred Hearts and that it is destined to reproduce the four ages of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. The general situation at the time of the foundation of the Institute.

The beginnings of the Congregation go back to the time of the great French Revolution. Passions and violence had triumphed. The members of the clergy and the nobility had been especially persecuted and many had lost their lives on the scaffold while others sought refuge in emigration. The clergy were forced to take an oath to the Civil Constitution of the Clergy which tended to detach them from Rome. For the priests remaining on French soil there was no other choice except heroism or culpable weakness.

The young deacon Pierre Coudrin placed himself immediately in the camp of the heroes. He had the courage to be ordained a priest while the revolution roared and the seminaries had already closed their doors. On her side, Miss Henriette Aymer de la Chevalerie was thrown into prison at the same time as her mother for having given shelter to refractory priests. This was for her the occasion of attaining that grandeur of soul that would bring her to be associated with the designs of Father Coudrin after her liberation and to found, with him, the new Congregation. It goes without saying that these cruel years left deep impressions on the sensible souls of the future founders, whose traces we can find in their work.

In order to have a more exact idea of the situation at the time, it is necessary to make some other considerations. This tidal wave of the Revolution was not a sudden crisis. It would be more correct to say that the Revolution had already taken place in certain spirits. An atheistic philosophy had already undermined the basis of the religious mentality and the Christian life. Impiety and a frivolous life had taken the place of respect for God and His commandments among the ruling classes. Hence, there should not be any surprise in the fact that the revolution attempted to chase God out of public life and to raise up on the altars the "Goddess of Reason." In itself, this fact can be considered as one of the excesses of the revolution, but this would give insufficient value to it if it were only considered as such, and not rather as the sign of the changes that had already come about in men's minds. It shows clearly that an anthropocentric concept of the universe was taking over more and more, while denying the bonds which unite the Universe to its Creator. Every thinking man will easily understand that this new current of ideas would

result in Neo-paganism. It was like the fall of the human race back into the lamentable condition which preceded the coming of the Redeemer.

To increase the unhappy picture, to the upsetting of the social and spiritual order were joined heretical and schismatic pressures, or at least influences of this type in the religious life of France.

By the rigor of its doctrine, Jansenism had extinguished among its adherents the fire of love for the God of Mercies. The severe conditions required for Holy Communion made of the Bread of Life a rare reward rather than a nourishing food. It can be understood, then, that the cult rendered to the divine love under the symbol of the Heart of Jesus was an object of loathing for the Jansenists, who thus rejected this love in its most touching manifestation.

We must also note the Gallican tendencies which were making progress among certain members of the French clergy and which contained the seed of a national church.

It is in this epoch, the knowledge of which illumines our origins, that we must refer in order to understand the character of the Congregation. Let us remember, first of all, the broadness of its program and the universality of its ideal. Its action is not concerned with any determined or passing needs. The order established by God was itself under attack. Also, the distress was universal. It was necessary to be present everywhere and to set in motion efficacious means. Prayer and contemplation were necessary. But the hidden life, alone, was not enough. It was necessary to go to the masses and in order to save souls, to take up the apostolate in a form, that would reach as much of the world and its different classes as was possible. This explains why one of the ends of the Institute is the preaching of the Gospel and popular missions (Preliminary chap., art. IV). Youth, upon whom depends the future, required special attention. Hence the necessity of consecration to the education and formation of girls as well as boys (*ibid.*, Art. III). Thus, a branch of religious women was equally necessary as that of men.

Even these remedies would not suffice for that tormented epoch. The horrors that were perpetrated and the crimes committed demanded reparation, a reparation that is always necessary, but at that time more than ever. The predilection of Our Institute for reparation can thus be understood. It is to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, whose love is misunderstood, that the Congregation in a special way addresses its reparative homage by the Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. Reasons of internal order joined to external circumstances led to this choice, as well as the relations of the Founders to the Association of the Sacred Hearts, which already held the perpetual adoration in honor. Also of influence in this choice was the devotion to the Sacred Heart which we have the duty of propagating, not only in the spirit of St. John Eudes but also in that of the apparitions of the Sacred Heart to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque who placed in evidence the duty of reparation and the relation of the cult of the Sacred Heart with the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. Our Founders, tending to let themselves be led by this motive of love, were pleased to live in this supernatural atmosphere, taking this view contrary to the cold doctrine of Jansenism, whose ravages to souls they were able to see.

Concerning the broadness of our Institute, the epoch of its origins can equally furnish us with some suggestive indications. All the Congregations and Religious Orders in France had, at that time, been destroyed or were no longer operating in public life. It was for this reason that the new Institute wished to bring back, as it were a condensation of the religious ideal in all its diverse manifestations. The ancient and the new were thus united, the apostolate and contemplation, the monastic observances and the more modern practices.

But the events of the revolution cannot be separated from their historical causes. We have already seen that they were the manifestation of a change in the concept of the world: the ancient theocentric and Christian concept gave way to an anthropocentric concept. The years were no longer reckoned from the birth of Our Lord but from the beginning of the new era starting with

September 22, 1792, the day of the outbreak of the revolution. Men began to speak of liberty, equality and fraternity and to proclaim the rights of man. No one bothered to speak of the rights of God and of the duties of man in relation to his Creator. Openly or implicitly, the sovereign domain of God over all sectors of life was ignored. This was the rejection of the salvation merited for us by Christ with the collaboration of Mary.

To this evil of a universal character which menaced humanity, the Congregation wished to oppose a remedy equally universal, and to respond to the negation by an affirmation. It pointed out that it is necessary to seek salvation in the work of redemption, the only means for re-establishing the order willed by God. Desirous of leading humanity back to the source of all good, the Congregation will do it by service to the principal Author of salvation and by an imitation of Him. This is why it offers itself to serve Jesus, the only Savior, and Mary, the coredeptrix. Thus, its collaboration began by seeking to conform itself to the example of the life of the Redeemer. Its principal task will be to reproduce this characteristic of the Redemption of being a work of love. This explains the central position occupied by Jesus and Mary in the Institute since their work of redemption was accomplished by the love which filled their hearts to overflowing. On the other hand, its works reproduce the life of Jesus in the whole of its four ages and reparation here is united to work for the salvation of souls. Thus the remedy will be applied to the evil in all its extension and the Congregation will fully imitate the example of the Savior.

This is all that is at the origin of this program of universal character which is, at the same time, well determined by reason of the concentrated form given to it. It can be qualified as "concentrated" or "complete." The ideal of the Congregation is not, then, a restricted ideal but rather the universal Christian ideal, valid for all men and for all times, with this characteristic note, nevertheless, of being at the same time complete and concentrated. In one word, it is the love of the Sacred Hearts in the work of salvation.

2. The character of the Congregation studied in the light of Creation.

Since grace, in a certain manner, builds upon nature, there is already a foundation for the proper character of the Congregation in the work of Creation. Therefore it seems useful for our study to examine the work of Creation, especially since the program and ideal of the Congregation have a well-marked character of universality, as we have previously seen.

An intimate understanding of creation makes us see it as a manifestation of God under the forms of created images or symbols which reveal exteriorly the perfections of God and procure for Him external glory.

All of creation then is already, by its existence, a unique, grandiose and symbolic revelation of God. It is as the radiance of the light of His spirit, the effusion of the ardors of His love in space and time. "Everything is called good according to the resemblance that it has with the Divine goodness."⁶

The symbolic character of the revelation of God by Creation destines this to be an image of more elevated, divine truths. It is of the essence of a symbol to be the sign of the thing symbolized. Every creature, then, is destined, by its very nature, to turn back to God by signifying something of Him and His perfections. Thus, creatures should never be our last end, but simply guides and aids in the way that leads to God. This is the most profound significance of Creation. It is a noble mission that even a creature reduced to inactivity can, nevertheless, fulfill. It is always in its power to reflect God in. Creation, to be a created expression of His perfection by shining on the candlestick or silently shining before God alone, as the sanctuary lamp.

⁶ St. Th. Summa Theo. I, q. 6, art. 4

Rational creatures, endowed with liberty, have moral obligations flowing from their essential vocation of symbols of the divine. Consciously and freely, each one of them must symbolize that which God intended them to manifest. Now, the glory of God is infinite, from whence comes the multiplicity of symbols and the immense variety of creatures. Each species must sing the glory of the Creator according to its own fashion in the choir of the universe, each individual, every one of the created beings, must do this in his own manner. But all the voices must harmonize in one great concert filling the whole universe: *Te Deum Laudamus!*

Those who pay particular attention to this concert of creation understand that all beings are singing a canticle of Love in honor of their Creator. Every creature, in fact, has its reason of being. Now, the principle of this finality is love,⁷ which can be either spiritual or sensible. In plants themselves and even in inert matter, a sort of love can be found. Ordinarily we call this a "natural tendency," because love, which signifies a movement toward a good, is found, in an analogous manner, in this blind tendency.⁸

Now God is the last end of every creature. Everything, then, goes toward Him. "In tending toward its perfection, every creature tends toward God, because the perfection of everything consists in a certain divine resemblance."⁹ Everything, then directs itself in some manner toward God, at least toward His visible image which is the creature, because even in that, a ray of His glory is unconsciously desired to be possessed.

Also for rational creatures, the great natural law by which the purpose of the Creator is definitively realized is: "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy spirit and with all thy strength. This is the greatest and the first commandment."¹⁰

It is not only the canticle that interests us, but equally the form of the voices that make up the choir. Let us, then attentively consider the creatures themselves.

In the visible creation, each species is represented by millions and millions of individuals. Even in this God has not proceeded indiscriminately for we note that a good number of the variations of the same species finally reduce themselves to two fundamental forms which, in their opposition, correspond one to the other. These forms are now completely finished, now simply sketched by certain details or certain dispositions. Moreover, for each category of beings, there are different modalities. In the inorganic world, "polarity" is spoken of. In electricity, for example, we distinguish a positive and negative pole. For living beings, double forms are already found, more thorough and more complete. The human species finally shows us the most perfect duality that exists: man and woman.

In the field of creation, we note, then a double series of manifestations for each category of beings. This makes the choir of creatures a "mixed" choir and gives to the canticle in honor of the Creator the characteristic of being executed by two series of voices of different forms. It is the role of love for the same common end which harmoniously unites these "mixed" voices. Unity in the duality is, then, before all else a mystery of Love, a "*Mysterium caritatis*."

Why is this so? This is the question which interests us. Why is there this double series of manifestations in creation? Why is the canticle of creation a canticle of love sung, in the final analysis, in honor of the Creator, the Sovereign Good? It is not a matter of an immediate answer to only this question which creatures can know without difficulty, but it is a matter of the root of the problem, which also must have a character of a divine manifestation, as is the case for all creatures.

⁷ I, II, q. 26, art. 1.

⁸ I, II, q. 26, art. 1.

⁹ St. Th. I, q. 6, art. 1, ad 2^{um}.

¹⁰ Matt. XXII, 37; Mark XII, 30.

It is not necessary to seek for long the solution to this last problem. It is contained in the words of St. John, "God is love"¹¹. Certainly, in Himself, God is as much power, wisdom, justice, etc., as He is love. But no one doubts that insofar as He is Creator, He is revealed especially as God of love. In answer to the question of why God created, why He became Creator, all the world answers with

St. Augustine, "We exist, because God is good."¹² Nothing obliged Him to create. The creation of His external works was perfectly free. It pleased His love to communicate His infinite riches outside of Himself and to allow creatures to participate in His perfections. Creation, then, reveals in a special manner the God of love when it speaks of its Creator. For this reason the canticle of creatures in honor of their Creator is a canticle of Love for the Sovereign Good.

Again, why this double series of manifestations in creatures? The answer to this question, demands that the facts written in nature be examined more profoundly. Let us take a known example: man and woman. They are essentially the same because they both possess the same human nature. Nevertheless, they are each different realizations of this human nature. In effect, they concur in a total manifestation of humanity. In the metaphysical sense, it can be said that the active element and the passive element (cf. "*potentia et actus*"), which are found in the essence of every creature, are manifested in each of the two in inverse senses: for the man it is the proportion of active-passive, for the woman, on the contrary, the proportion is passive-active. Their diversity, then, consists in the difference concerning the manifestation of the one and the same nature, a difference which is not essential but accidental, not "*in*" but "*ad*." These distinct and diverse dispositions could be called metaphysical virility and femininity. We will treat of these metaphysical qualities in our study. Thus, in regard to the manifestation of human nature, man manifests it in a more absolute manner, in the glory which God has given him as chief and the head of creation, who disposes and directs things. That is why the man, more than woman, is the more excellent representative of humanity, the more perfect image of God the Creator, and the symbol of the divine idea. In regard to human nature as it is represented by woman, she rather shows man in his relativity, in his submission of a creature, and his ordination toward a sovereign being. That is why woman appears as the heart of creation, who, on one hand, depends upon the head, but on the other hand, exercises an influence over all. She has been the symbol of love, considered in its expression. She shows us man as creature par excellence, whose unique power which is truly proper to him is to be able to give oneself, to dedicate oneself.

It is not difficult to see how these two representations of man, distinct, but who correspond to one another, have found, in the plenitude of time, a unique and ideal realization in Jesus and Mary. All creation, and in it the double series of manifestations of created being, tend toward them. It is in Christ, hypostatically united to the divinity, that humanity in its double form, man and woman, finds its most sublime representation. But humanity in its double form, man and woman, finds its most perfect realization not in Christ alone, but in Jesus and Mary. It is then, toward them that the double series of manifestations of creation converges as toward its highest perfection. It is in consideration of Jesus and Mary that the choir of creatures is a mixed choir. And in the canticle of love which the choir sings for the God of love, the eye of the Christian distinguishes the praise in honor of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

This conception of the divine plan of Creation contains several ideas useful for a study on the character of our Institute.

Once more it can be seen that the Congregation follows the broad lines of the divine plan. It copies them in their general effect. It places them in evidence and accentuates some important details. Make note of love, the fundamental law of its existence; the distinction into two branches

¹¹ I Jo. IV, 16.

¹² De Doctrina Christiana, lib. I, c. 30

in order to represent creation in its totality; the ordination toward Jesus and Mary, considered in the love of their Hearts.

Irresistibly the idea comes to our mind that the Congregation is called to be a manifestation of a divine plan, as is the case for all creation, and it will be especially destined to reveal the divine love under the double symbol of the Sacred Hearts. An indication leading to this explanation is already found in the fact that the general purpose of creation is to manifest the divine glory and perfections, each being doing this according to its nature, the Congregation according to its own. All this is conformable to one of our special ends which is to propagate devotion to the Sacred Hearts and make every effort possible to spread it.¹³

3. The Economy of salvation and the Congregation.

The special orientation of the Institute toward the Sacred Hearts, united in the work of salvation, as well as its dedication to retracing the life of the Savior by its different activities invites us to meditate for a moment on the economy of the Redemption. If we omit to do this, then our study of the ideal of the Congregation and its character would lack a theological basis.

a) Our first parents in grace and disgrace

"God created man to His image; He created him in the image of God; He created them, man and woman."¹⁴ That is the wording of the brief communication made in Genesis on the divine origin of man, the noble grandeur of his spiritual soul and his duality.

In their creation itself, God elevated Adam and Eve to the supernatural state. Both of them, then were in the order of grace. They were children of God by an accidental participation in the divine life.

According to the initial plan of salvation, God established that the life of grace would be communicated to the descendants of Adam in their very generation. The elevation to the supernatural state had been conferred on Adam in such a way that as a consequence of his fidelity or infidelity toward God, this life would be acquired or lost for all his descendants. God could so determine things because the supernatural goods are not due to us. Moreover, the role of chief of humanity, which was Adam's, served as a material basis for this decision.

But that which God had freely granted, man had to freely conserve in like manner. That is why God gave a commandment to our first parents, that of not eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil which was placed in the heavenly paradise.¹⁵ This small restriction on their liberty was imposed upon them so that they could freely recognize God as their principal and end by the observance of the precept.

Adam and Eve knew that this commandment had these consequences for the human race, otherwise Adam could not have acted as chief responsible for all his posterity. He was, then, well disposed to faithfully conserve this treasure of grace for himself and for humanity. Eve would be his "collaborator" and aid him to freely observe the divine precept. By means of motherhood she would cooperate in the foundation of a family ennobled by the grace of God. It was for this that she, as a collaborator symbolizing the heart of humanity, was at the side of man who represented the head of this same humanity. She would be the mother of the family given to the father of the family as a companion, a companion similar to himself.

¹³ Preliminary Chap. , art. I and art. VI.

¹⁴ Gen. I, 27.

¹⁵ Gen. II, i6, 17.

We know only too well that things worked out in a completely different manner. The fallen angel, in his jealousy, could not stand to see man in such a state of happiness and he sought to bring about his fall. Cleverly he profited by the special character of the human couple. Woman was the instrument that his astuteness used to bring about the fall of man. His purpose was to get at Adam, who had primary responsibility, but Eve was the way that he used to arrive at this end. These two phrases clearly tell us that his plan was very successful: "She (Eve) took some fruit (of the tree) and ate of it, she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate of it."¹⁶

No one can deny the part that Eve played in the fall of Adam. It is the part of the heart in the work done by the chief, the head of humanity. Certainly, the sin of Adam had a decisive importance in the loss of original justice for humanity, because in the last analysis, everything depended upon Adam, but in this lamentable fall, Eve had a real share of the responsibility. Before this evil that had been committed, it is not sufficient to only examine the moral aspect of the sin of Adam. Its ramifications are such that it created a profound clash between the essence of things and the subjective attitude of man, and with him, of all creation. According to his essence, creatures are totally turned toward God, because without Him they are nothing and can do nothing. Creatures are then essentially in a state of receptivity in relation to God. This is the attitude that was characterized above as being metaphysically feminine. This is equally true for man in regard to his Creator, even if, in his comportment with other creatures, he shows a viril character.

On his part, the creature must freely accept these objective conditions of dependence; only then will there be complete harmony between the objective reality and the subjective attitude; otherwise there will be disorder and discord. This discord was produced by the fall of Adam, who being the chief of humanity, subjectively turned all creation from God at the same time as he turned himself. The first link, upon which all the others relied, is broken and the whole chain has fallen. Adam placed both himself and all creation in contradiction with its intimate being. Man, by considering himself as absolute master, overturned subjectively at least, the very order of things. A groan, a cry of distress poured forth from all nature before this violence inflicted on it by the first man.

The eyes of Adam and Eve were opened and they had the experience of good and evil. They lost the friendship of God, the gift of grace, and the other gifts surpassing their nature. The supernatural end, which despite all, remained their destiny, became inaccessible for them in the manner that a disproportion between the end and the means was born.

Standing thus before the debris of their happiness, they heard the voice of the divine Judge calling them to answer for their crime. Adam placed the blame on Eve who in turned sought to excuse herself by reason of the trick of the "serpent," instrument of the devil.

God immediately pronounced his condemnation of Satan. Our guilty first parents were not condemned, but each one was punished according to his own character, the man in his pre-eminence, that is to say as chief and king of creation; the woman in the exercise of her dedication as mother and spouse. Their life would be from now on painful and hard up until the last act of reparation would terminate it and they would return to dust. "The wages of sin are death."¹⁷

The verdict was immediately put into effect. Adam and Eve were driven from paradise. With them we all departed into exile, to dwell in the "galley of tears."

But our first parents did not go without hope or consolation. Even before their expulsion, while pronouncing the condemnation of the serpent, God allowed them to see a glimpse of the future whose details remained confused; a child would be born of a determined woman and He

¹⁶ Gen. III, 6.

¹⁷ Rom. VI, 23.

would change the victory of Satan into a complete defeat. He would open again the gates of salvation.¹⁸

That is the resume of the *proto evangelium*. Every hope of being saved will henceforth reside in the "woman and the child." Without them there is no salvation.

b) The work of salvation in Jesus and Mary.

The accomplishment of the divine promise was long awaited. How was it realized? The sources of revelation, scripture and tradition teach us. The Fathers of the church, the doctors and theologians, under the direction of the teaching church, have sought ever more fully to explain the content of Divine Revelation. We can do no better than to follow the way they have indicated to us stopping first of all to consider the mystery of the Incarnation by the divine Maternity of Mary. Here in effect is found the foundation of all further development. The foundation also upon which is based our explanation of the mutual relations of Jesus and Mary, are of special interest to us.

When the angel Gabriel came from God to ask Mary for her full consent to the execution of the new plan of salvation, the Holy Virgin answered with her "Fiat." That word was the most sublime one ever uttered by a merely human mouth. By its significance it reached every corner of creation and rose to the throne of God itself. Through Adam all creation denied its essential dependence on God; through Mary, who sums up in herself all receptivity of Creation in relation to God and all its power of giving itself to Him, the divine work turned itself once more toward the Creator. Mary then here represents all Creation. "She gave her consent in place of all human nature,"¹⁹ which represents all creation. There is no need to be astonished that a woman could represent all creation. It was in the power of man to call the loss of salvation; but the attitude of submission proper to the character of woman was alone apt to receive salvation once more. Woman, also was the person best indicated to bring this about especially since it was a question not of paternity but of maternity.

It is nevertheless preferable not to confer on Mary the title of "Chief." The only chief that we have is Christ. But God here made Mary the "heart" of all creation, because she represents all that there is in creation of dedication in relation to its Creator. In this capacity Mary spoke her "Yes," and in Her Creation turns itself toward God, in regard to its subjective attitude. Thus could it receive the gift of salvation that was offered to it once more.

It is then by the intermediary of Mary that this salvation was given, that is to say, thanks to the Incarnation brought about by the divine maternity. In this fundamental mystery of salvation once more granted to men, the sacred humanity of Jesus was anointed by the Divinity as with holy oil. Thus was born the Man-God, the chief of the new humanity, the second Adam. In this same event Mary was "consecrated" so to speak in the divine maternity as the heart of regenerated humanity, as the new Eve, "companion" of the new Adam in the whole work of salvation.

Thus, God willed a total representation of humanity as well as creation in Jesus and Mary according to distinct modalities it is clear, but which nevertheless, harmonize intimately. If we view man only in that which is essential, humanity would have been perfectly represented by Christ alone by the Man-God as by its chief. But according to the double line of manifestations of visible beings that we have pointed out in creation, it is convenient that there was also another form of representation of humanity and this in Mary subordinated to Christ as the heart is to the head. These two modes of representation would be in a manner conformable to the two concrete

¹⁸ Gen, III, 15.

¹⁹ S. Th. III, q. 30, a. 1; cf. Leo XIII "Octobri mense" and "Fidentern"; Pius XII, "Mystici Corporis Christi."

realizations of human nature and not only to its essence. Thus it was not only the fall of Adam but also the part played by Eve that would have their counterpart in the Redemption. The reparation for the fall in the earthly paradise would be perfect not only in the essential but also in modalities.

The union of Jesus and Mary is simply unique. It carries within itself the secret of combining in perfect harmony a universal association and a total submission of Mary to Jesus. This is so precisely because their union is a mystery of love: it is love which is in effect the soul of their union making them live and act in a perfect and intimate union. So the mystery of the love of Jesus and Mary is basically a mystery of the amorous union of their hearts, that is to say a mystery of love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

A comparison borrowed from nature will aid us to comprehend how such a representation of the human race by Christ and at the same time by His Mother is compatible with the prerogatives of Our Lord as God-Man. Think of our solar system which comprises a principle center of attraction, the sun, around which the earth revolves. But it does so in such a manner that the earth, in turn forms a secondary and subordinated center around which the moon rotates. Christ is the *sum* of all creation and of all humanity, including Mary; He is truly like a universal center of gravity. The Blessed Virgin could be considered as taking the place of the earth, a secondary pole for humanity and for all creation. But Mary herself converges toward Christ with all that is disposed around her; everything is Christocentric and Mary is equally so. In creation, everything gravitates around Mary in order to take part in her absolute orientation toward Jesus. Thus the soul who lives closely united to Mary finds in her the best assurance of leading a life entirely Christocentric: for Mary, with Mary and in Mary.

Those are the relations between Jesus and Mary who are united by the love of their hearts in the work of salvation both for the acquisition of grace as well as for its continual dispensation. It can be clearly seen that they form a unity-duality even though the superiority of one and the subordination of the other are evident. These spiritual relations between Jesus and Mary entered into the Incarnation of the Word itself by the divine maternity of Mary.

When the life of Jesus is thus considered with the eyes of faith, Mary and Jesus are always united. And everything in their earthly life seen together is in the service of the work of salvation even though it is certainly recognized that the decisive act was the sacrifice of the cross.

The infancy and education of men has been sanctified by the Infancy of Jesus. The humble life of all men who each day live a life of sacrifices in a hidden abandon to the holy will of God is sanctified by the hidden Life of Jesus. His public life contains the basis of the whole life of the Church with its multiple relations that we see today between the teaching Church and the faithful. The sorrowful passion finally constitutes the culminating point of this life which finds in it its accomplishment as reparative work.

It is significant that Mary, mostly hidden during the public life of Jesus, enters the scene again at the moment of the sacrifice of the cross. The "Fiat" that she pronounced once more to give her assent to the sacrifice of Christ as victim for the salvation of the world has a profound sense: it indicates a real cooperation in the sacrifice of Jesus, one that is subordinated and secondary, it is true. Christ in effect in a certain fashion and measure still belongs to her. This truth is founded on the essential concurrence brought to the Incarnation by Mary in her divine maternity and on the mutual gift of self here included bringing it about that one belongs to the other and constituting Mary as the new Eve and the collaborator of the new Adam. This is the way that we understand the words of Pope Benedict XV saying: "She (Mary) suffered and almost died with her suffering and dying Son. She gave up her rights as mother over her Son for the salvation of the world. She sacrificed Him to appease the divine justice insofar as it depended

upon Her. It can then rightly be said that she redeemed the human race with Christ."²⁰ The expression, "insofar as it depended upon Her" clarifies things. It means that Mary had real rights to participate in the sacrifice of her Son on Calvary, but it also means that these rights were not such as to render possible an adequate immolation of Christ by his Mother independent of Himself. So Mary really cooperated in the work of Redemption without being, for all that, the "*Redemptrix*" but only the *collaboratrix*.

The holy Church which resembles the renewed and saved humanity is born thanks to the death of Christ upon the cross. Christ thus becomes the chief and the spouse of the Church. Mary is its spiritual heart and the mother of all the children of the Church. The Church only comes forth from the side of the new Adam in order to be conceived in the Heart of Mary as in the maternal heart of the new Eve. In Mary then was the maternal womb of the new Church being born. That is why after the Ascension the Blessed Virgin had to remain for a time with the new born Church as a mother close to her little infant. At Pentecost, Mary presents herself to us as the heart of the Church, of whom the Holy Spirit takes complete possession in order to diffuse the divine life by the intermediary of His visible representatives, the Apostles and their successors who continue the mission of Christ on earth.

At the Assumption, Mary was once more reunited with her Son and was crowned Queen of heaven and of earth at the side of Christ, the King of glory. From on high, these two continue their glorious task associated as they were during their earthly lives. All the graces which Christ grants us come to us through the intermediary of Mary who will continue to do this until Christ will take up the Church, his spouse, into the glory of heaven where it will rejoice for all eternity in union with Mary and sharing her happiness.

In this outline of the Mystery of love of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary we can find the elements that will permit us to set down the theological foundations for our religious ideal. We note again that the Congregation has not chosen for its ideal only a part of the redemption work but rather it considers this work in its entirety in order to retrace the principal lines.

As the whole redemption finds its center in Jesus and Mary so the whole life of the Congregation revolves around the Sacred Hearts. These are then the same persons which we have in view, only considered under the aspect of the source of their redemptive work, the love of their Hearts. The redemption is a work of love above all "God so loved the world that he gave His only Son"²¹ who on His part, "loved us and purified us of our sins by His blood."²²

The cult which the Congregation renders to the Sacred Hearts takes account of their mutual relations while seeing their respective places in the work of Redemption. The Heart of Jesus occupies an eminent place that is absolute; the Heart of Mary is everywhere associated with Him but in a subordinated, and in a certain sense, in a relative position by virtue of the relation which unites her to Christ, her Divine Son. Thus distinct and united these two hearts are the special object of our cult.

The Congregation imitates the example given us by Jesus and Mary, not in all its details, but in its principal lines. In every way, basing itself on the needs of the actual time, the Institute corresponds to their example by giving a character of symbolic imitation to their activity. The life of Jesus, from His Incarnation to Calvary, represents in its concrete form the realization of salvation brought once more to humanity by Christ with the collaboration of Mary. So the Congregation cooperates in the redemptive work by means of a union of a masculine and a feminine branch, whose works have the same orientation as that of their models. The life of the

²⁰ Inter sodalicia, A.A.S. 1918, p. 182.

²¹ Joan, III, 16.

²² Apoc. I, 5.

Redeemer tended, in effect, to procure salvation for souls by rendering to God reparative homage. So the apostolic work of the Congregation is, at the same time, a reparative work.

The Sacred Hearts, considered in their union and their collaboration in the Redemption can then be well called the "exemplary cause" of the Congregation which imitates them in their characteristic traits.

We may speak of a certain symbolism of the Institute by reason of the metaphoric form of this imitation of the Sacred Hearts by the Congregation. It is of the essence of a symbol to be a concrete sign, a metaphoric illustration of a superior reality. This superior reality which is here the union and the cooperation of the Sacred Hearts in the work of salvation, is above all a work of love. It represents the most perfect "Mystery of Love": the most perfect duality in the most perfect unity of life and works. The Congregation then is a symbol of the Mystery of Love of the Sacred Hearts in the Work of Salvation. It is a natural symbol, for its symbolism does not depend upon mere convention but it has its foundation in the very nature of the Institute by reason of its internal structure. It is then an objective symbolism.

One of the characteristics of a symbol is to only reveal the signified thing in a veiled manner. A certain obscurity is always present. There is nothing strange then in the fact that the profound signification of the Congregation is not immediately apparent.

As a symbolic imitation, the Congregation ought to bear in itself, even though in a veiled manner, the marks of the Mystery of Love of the Sacred Hearts. It is, itself equally a sort of "Mystery of Love," brought about by the unity of one Congregation in the duality of the branches, after the example of the Sacred Hearts.

By its symbolism, the Congregation comes back once more to the general significance of the Creation which is to be a symbolic expression of the glory of God, and above all of His life with the simple difference that the Congregation has as its object the Love of God considered directly in its most perfect exterior manifestation which is the love of the Sacred Hearts. In them we can see the confluence of all love: divine and human love, hypostatically united in the heart of Jesus; the most perfect merely human love in the heart of Mary. There does exist, then, a relation between the symbolism of the Congregation and that of Creation in the sense that the first is more precise than the second.

But the Sacred Hearts, considered in the work of Salvation, are not only the model but also the immediate final cause of the Congregation. In Heaven, they follow through their work of mediation by the dispensation of the graces of the Redemption distributed by the intermediary of the Church. They continue then to be Mediator and Mediatrix of our salvation. So the Congregation places itself in the service of the Sacred Hearts in the continuation of their salvific activity. It gives itself without reserve by all that it does and by all that it is. It is then truly in the service of its model, the Sacred Hearts.

Following its characteristic of universality, the Congregation also tries to serve the Sacred Hearts in the most complete manner possible. It thus places itself at the service both of the persons as well as the work of the Sacred Hearts: the first purpose being attained by the practice and propagation of their cult, the second by its collaboration in the saving of souls. But the Sacred Hearts can also be considered from a twofold point of view. First of all, as object of our veneration, then as mediators on the way that leads to God. The Congregation takes account of this fact for in order that its service might be complete, it offers its tribute of reparation not only to the Sacred Hearts but also by Them, with Them, and in Them, to the offended Majesty of God. It goes without saying that in the cult of the Sacred Heart, this last phase is already attained by reason of the Divinity of the person of Christ, the real term of all cult rendered to Our Lord, even that cult which has His blessed humanity for its object, for cult always addresses itself to a person, as its end.

In summing up then it can be said that the Congregation is an "Imitation in the Service of its Model," the Mystery of Love of the Sacred Hearts in the work of salvation. Because it is at the same time, a representation of the Mystery of Love, it has for its mission to symbolize objectively the Love of the Sacred Hearts in the work of Salvation, and by its activity to place itself at the Service of that love. It is for this reason that its emblem bears the image of the Sacred Hearts united and surrounded by the same crown of thorns, the symbol of their Mystery of Love in the work of salvation.

It seems to us that we have thus solid foundations for a more profound study of the Congregation. These foundations are truths of both the natural and supernatural order. In their light let us now consider the origins, the being and the work of the Institute.

Chapter III

THE CONGREGATION, IMITATION IN THE SERVICE OF ITS MODEL, THE MYSTERIUM CARITATIS OF THE SACRED HEARTS

A. ORIGIN OF THE CONGREGATION.

For our study, it is necessary to take note of three events in the history of the origin of the Congregation: The vision of the Founder at Motte d'Usseau (1792), the acquisition of the first house at Poitiers (1797), and the profession of our Founders (Christmas, 1800).

1. The vision of Motte d'Usseau.

According to the constant tradition of the Congregation, the idea of its foundation was not simply the fruit of human reflection. It is related to an extraordinary event, the Vision of the Good Father at la Motte d'Usseau.

It was September 1792. Father Coudrin, who had been ordained a priest several months ago, found it necessary to flee from the revolutionaries and live hidden in a miserable shelter, the poor loft of the farm connected to the chateau (castle) of Motte d'Usseau. In great secrecy, he had celebrated Mass around midnight in the room of Mr. Maumain. He then went back to his hiding place to make his thanks giving, having brought with him the corporal in the hope of keeping the real presence, thanks to some particles fallen from the paten. He was suddenly inspired to found the Congregation. It was the hour of his "Annunciation."

Historical accuracy requires that it first be noted that the Founder was silent for a long time concerning this event about which we would like to have more details. "It is good to keep hidden the secret of the King"²³ said the angel Raphael to Tobias. Father Coudrin was of the same mind. It was only in 1797, on seeing the house which was to be the "cradle" of the Institute, that in front of the Mother Foundress and Miss de Viart, this phrase escaped him: "This is truly what I saw!" It can be concluded that Father Coudrin already had in spirit an image of the house which was to be the first of the Congregation. That is why the two ladies said to him: "but what have you seen?" The Founder would have preferred to keep his secret but it was too late. Overwhelmed by questions he told all that had happened.

Unfortunately no one thought to immediately put in writing the words of the Founder. Later, every type of pious trick was used to make him speak of it, and more than once it was possible to catch him unaware, but as soon as he realized what was going on he changed the conversation. We have some direct testimony of a few brief words spoken on different occasions, but these were only written down much later. Because of that there are some differences in the testimonies, but they do not contradict one another but rather complement each other. Essentially, they all say the same thing: The Founder believed that he saw a group of young men around him, ready to leave to preach the gospel, and also many women who would aid the priests. He even saw the house which would be the cradle of the Institute. Father Euthyme

²³ Tob. , XII, 7.

Rouchouze, the third Superior General, who as a young religious, heard some of these brief confidences of Father Founder, made this interesting remark: he says that Father Coudrin saw the Congregation under the image of a long procession of religious both male and female all clothed in white who advanced in two columns, the beginning of which could be seen, but not the end.²⁴

Let us limit ourselves to the essential of the vision which contains all the characteristics of an illumination from on high but which, nevertheless, retains its value even if it was purely natural. What is important for us is to know how the Founder represented to himself the Congregation from the beginning. The light which we have shed by our study on the character of our Institute, imitation in the service of its model, enables us to see without difficulty the main characteristics of the "*Mysterium Caritatis*" in the vision of Father Coudrin. It brings out, in effect, the duality constituted by a branch of men and another of women united in their labor for the salvation of souls to which they each contribute according to their fashion.

It can also be noted that the vision did not take place during Mass but rather while Father Coudrin was in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. It is possible to see a relation between this circumstance and the special importance attributed to the exercise of perpetual adoration in the Congregation. Being Christians, the Mass, as the act of Eucharistic sacrifice, already holds and conserves the central place in our lives. Christ's function of Mediator between God and ourselves is more apparent in the Holy Mass rather than in the other Eucharistic devotions. For us we consider this act of the sacrifice of the altar in its more or less permanent effect, having in view Christ in His condition of victim always present in the Blessed Sacrament. In that way, Christ remains, nevertheless, both Lamb victim and Mediator, but the permanence of His Eucharistic presence is emphasized. Thus, the person of Christ, considered in itself is put more forward. He appears to us in His proper dignity of God-Man, being thus adorable even in the condition of Eucharistic victim and He is the object of our special cult and our love. At the same time this manner of viewing things is an indication for us that we must not only make sacrifices, but we ought to live in the state of sacrifice.

The vision of Motte d'Usseau, then has some connection with the special character of our Congregation and agrees with the explanations we have given. Because of this relation to the special character of the Congregation as brought out by our study, we consider the vision to be authentic.

2. The purchase of the first house in Poitiers.

With the purchase of the First House at Poitiers in 1797, the foundation began to take form. It is also evident that at the same time, Mother Henriette was unmistakably chosen to be the Co-Foundress of the Institute. Up until that time Father Coudrin had not done anything definite. He had not even declared himself concerning the person of the Co-Foundress. But one day as Miss Henriette spoke to him concerning the fact that the establishment of the true religious life was not making any progress, Father Coudrin told her to look for a house and to thus help with the foundation of the Congregation. This took place.

In this way the vision of Motte d'Usseau began to be fulfilled. The duality of the branches already had its representatives in the Founder and Foundress with some of their companions. The house they acquired made possible the beginning of the true religious life, the very house that the Founder had seen in spirit. Even the works already revealed that double character of action and contemplation. Father Founder devoted himself to the ministry while the first religious women made perpetual adoration before the tabernacle.

²⁴ R. p. Patern Roue, "Nouvelles," 1952, p. 114

The development of the work came about then in just the direction of purpose of which we spoke earlier. Our study is only an uncertain groping in comparison to the grand lines of the actual work. The special cult rendered to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is already a proof that from the beginning love was the predominant motive that animated the new Institute. It would soon be apparent that this love was not only addressed to the Sacred Heart of Jesus but equally to the Heart of Mary, to the Sacred Hearts.

3. The taking of Religious Vows by the two Founders.

Christmas, 1800, was the final point of this period of foundation, understood in the strict sense. It was the "hour" of the birth of the Congregation. In this event all that had gone before was concentrated and crystallized. This point can be seen as the declaration of the program of the Institute.

In the different chronicles this event is described for us in the following manner:

"Docile to the designs of Divine Providence and faithful to the inspiration of grace, our Very Reverend Father perpetually consecrated himself to God Christmas eve, 1800 by the perpetual vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience."²⁵

"It was only with a low voice, although in the presence of many, that he pronounced the following vows in our chapel on Christmas eve":

"On the 24th day of December at 11:45 p.m. in the year 1800, I, Brother Marie Joseph, make vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience according to the light of the Holy Spirit for the good of the work as Zealot of the Love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary in whose service I wish to live and die. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. Fr. Marie Joseph."²⁶

"And immediately he ascended to the altar to begin midnight Mass."²⁷

We also read in the Memoires of Father Hilarion on the Life of Mother Henriette (1836)"the venerable Mother, according to the inspirations of grace, took the three religious vows for life before midnight Mass."²⁸

In order to fully penetrate the sense of this double profession, it is necessary to place it in the moving setting of the ceremonies of Christmas night. In the midst of the silence of that night, when the Church celebrates the birth of Christ, the Congregation, which was called to reproduce the life of Our Lord in His four ages, was also born by the visible, although still secret, taking of vows by its two legitimate representatives. Spontaneously the words of the Antiphon to the Magnificat of the Sunday within the Octave of Christmas come to mind: "*Dum medium silentium tenerent ornnia, et nox in suo cursu medium iter perageret, omnipotens Sermo Taus, Domine, a regalibus sedibus venit, alleluia.*" - "While the whole world was wrapped in silence and during the middle of the night, Your all-powerful Word, O Lord, came down from His royal throne, alleluia." It is in these terms that the church describes the birth of Jesus, the visible and nevertheless veiled revelation of the Son of God and of the Mother of God united in the unique mystery of the love of their hearts. No other hour could be imagined which would be better suited for the birth of an Institute which we have defined as an imitation in the service of its model, which is for it, the union of the Sacred Hearts in the work of Redemption.

²⁵ Father Hilarion, Vie du. T.R.P. Marie-Joseph Coudrin, (1847).

²⁶ Mere Gabriel de la Barre: Memoires sur la Congregation, (1802).

²⁷ Father Hilarion, ibidem.

²⁸ Father Hilarion, Memoires sur la vie de la Mere Henriette, (1836).

The circumstances surrounding this event are no less significant. Both Founder and Foundress oblige themselves at the same time to work together in the service of the Sacred Hearts, whose life is a model for them. The Symbolic character of the Congregation of being an imitation of the unity in duality of the Sacred Hearts already appears from the hour of its birth. What is most striking is the fact that the activity considered here is not of two parts but rather of two physical persons as in the Mystery of Love of the Sacred Hearts.

The Liturgical setting in which the profession takes place is also very suggestive: it is the holy night of Christmas and before the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Here are two divine mysteries, one of which recalls the birth, the other the death on the cross of Christ, that is to say the beginning and the end of the life of Jesus. It is easy to perceive the relation between these mysteries and the foundation of a Congregation called to reproduce the life of Jesus in its four ages.

This profession also has a particular relation with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Our Founders could unite the sacrifice which the taking of vows constitutes with the sacrifice of Christ at Mass and so from the beginning, impregnate with the character of reparation the new-born Institute which they represented and which they destined to collaborate in the application of the graces of the Redemption.

The circumstances of the profession of vows of our Founders correspond then to the character of the Congregation as a symbolic imitation of the "*Mysterium Caritatis*" of the Sacred Hearts in the work of salvation.

The destination of the Institute of being at the service of its model, the mystery of love of the Sacred Hearts, also finds a very clear expression in the formula of vows which is as complete and profound as it is simple. It forms an accomplished whole and contains in its concentrated, but well defined form, all that could be expected from a formula of vows in our Congregation; it expresses first of all the essential duties of the religious state: the observation of the evangelical counsels by the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. It then adds the characteristic note of our Congregation by indicating that the taking of vows is done by the subject considered as "Zealot of love" of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, in whose service I wish to live and die."

"Zealot of the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary"; this denomination has a rich and profound meaning. Even if our Founders did not invent this title, which was already contained in a prayer book of the time, nevertheless it is necessary to recognize that their choice was a happy one that was perfectly suited to their purpose. To be filled with zeal for the love of the Sacred Hearts! That is the vocation which we ought to seek to realize by the exercise of the propagation of their cult as well as by the reproduction of the four ages of Jesus. The love of the Sacred Hearts is then the true end of our Institute.

It could be asked what is this love mentioned in the title given to us. Is there question of the love of the Sacred Hearts which we wish to develop in others, of our love toward the Sacred Hearts, or of the love which burns in these hearts?

The answer to these questions will be given by our Founder himself because evidently, better than anyone else, he knows what manner of love he had in mind when he chose that title. He writes: "The title of Zealots presents among others great advantages relative to the purpose which we wish to attain, that of the sanctification of souls by the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Truly, if someone is penetrated with the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus for the salvation of souls, would it be possible not to be inflamed with zeal to respond to the love of such a good master? If someone often thinks of the maternal tenderness

of the Heart of Mary for men who have become her children in the person of St. John, would it be possible not to feel his soul on fire with a holy zeal to honor the Virgin of virgins?"²⁹

We see from these explanations that the title of "Zealots of the Love of the Sacred Hearts" includes three kinds of love.

It designates first of all our love toward the Sacred Hearts, inspired by the "love of the Heart of Jesus" and by "the tenderness of the Holy Heart of Mary" which makes us "inflamed" and brings it about that our soul is "on fire with a holy zeal."

This love must develop into zeal, which is according to St. Thomas, an effect of love.³⁰ Zeal is according to the holy doctor, a powerful movement which drives the one who loves toward the object of his love, inciting him to seek what is best for his beloved and to remove all that would be disagreeable. Because of it he wishes to increase the happiness of his beloved and if he does not succeed, his failure saddens him, driving him to seek another good for his beloved in compensation. Here then is what is understood by zeal, a powerful movement of our love toward the Sacred Hearts making us seek to impede the sins which offend them, inclining us to repair the injuries which wound them and give us sadness; zeal leads us to console the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, to make amends to them by a love always more ardent than the offenses and to attempt by every possible manner to bring about the triumph of the love of the Sacred Hearts in the hearts of men.

In the title "Zealots of the love of the Sacred Hearts" can also be seen expressed the love which burns in the Sacred Hearts themselves. The expression "Sacred Hearts" tells us that already. This opinion is confirmed by the fact that, in his Memoires, Father Coudrin explains the word "Zealot" by referring to the "love of the Heart of Jesus" and to the "maternal tenderness of the Heart of Mary." This love of the Sacred Hearts is considered in the formula which we are explaining from a twofold point of view: first of all as the stimulant of our love as well as our zeal, that is to say as the point of departure of our love; then as the object and the end of our love.

But the love of the Sacred Hearts is directed to God as well as to men. Whence the question: which love is meant by our formula? The answer to this question is of great importance to us since it determines our cult toward the Sacred Hearts. If there is question of the love of the Sacred Hearts for us, then it constitutes the immediate object and direct end of our love. But if there is question of their love directed toward God, they are considered rather as the means and the way to aid us to love God.

In the true devotion to the Sacred Hearts, these two points of view coexist. So there can be no question of excluding one or the other form of our cult of the Sacred Hearts, but rather the question of determining whether we consider more directly the love of the Sacred Hearts for men or their love for God.

In the justification for the title of "Zealots of the love of the Sacred Hearts," the Founder speaks of the "love of the Heart of Jesus for the salvation of souls" and of the "maternal tenderness of the Heart of Mary for the men who have become her children." We must then conclude that Father Coudrin had in view in a particular manner the love of the Sacred Hearts for us. So it is this love which is the immediate object and the direct end of our cult and our love.

But the formula "Zealots of the love of the Sacred Hearts" also includes the love that other men ought to bear toward the Sacred Hearts. This love is the special purpose of our efforts for the salvation of souls as the Founder says: "the title of Zealots presents, among others, great

²⁹ Memoire of Dec. 6, 1816.

³⁰ St. th. I, II, q. 28, art. 4.

advantages relative to the purpose which we wish to attain, that of the sanctification of souls by the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary."³¹

Let us note also that the Father Founder considered the Sacred Hearts in their love "for the salvation of souls," that is to say, in their efforts for the work of salvation. But since in this work the Sacred Hearts form an indissoluble unity-duality, the Good Father really considered them in their mystery of love, in their *Mysterium Caritatis*. Even the expression itself, "the Sacred Hearts" already indicates this to us, for it shows that these two Hearts are regarded as forming a certain unity.

So the title of "Zealots of the Love of the Sacred Hearts" permits us, according to the explanation of the Founder himself, to discover the major traits of the ideal he wished to realize by the foundation of the Congregation and which defines its character in the best possible manner. That is to say that an understanding of the character of the Institute requires us to place ourselves at the heart of the work of Redemption, for salvation only comes from there and our Founders wished to collaborate in the work of salvation: they see here the Sacred Hearts both united and distinct at the same time, bringing about our salvation and constantly working to apply the merits of it. They consider then the Sacred Hearts in their *Mysterium Caritatis* as the unique source of salvation. And how do men react in the face of such touching advances of the Sacred Hearts? Some do not think of it at all, others fall into error concerning the manner of responding, others finally only have contempt for them, they scoff and oppose them. "The spontaneous effect produced by like considerations in the hearts of our Founders is contained in these words: love is not loved! It is necessary to make loved the love that is not loved! The ardor of their love drives them to forget themselves in order to only think of making reparation both for the outrages committed against these August Persons represented by the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and for the damages caused to their salvific work. They wish to collaborate with the Sacred Hearts in the saving of souls so as to gain them for Their love and to offer at the same time a compensation to Their Hearts for the outrages they unceasingly receive. For this purpose they founded the Congregation whose theme will be that of love, referring themselves both to the persons and to the redemptive work of the Sacred Hearts, whence the union of the apostolate and reparation. In order to match the means to the end which they envisaged, they founded their Institute, conforming to their ideal, as a Congregation of two branches, who would strive together in the same work. So the Congregation came into being as a unity-duality, a symbolic imitation in the service of its model, the *Mysterium Caritatis* of the Sacred Hearts in the work of salvation. Founded for Them and for the collaboration in Their work, the Congregation only exists for the purpose of realizing these ends. That is why "the consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary is the foundation of our Institute."³²

This exposition permits us to conclude without exaggeration that a special Divine Providence watched over the origins of an Institute which has within it an admirable coherence and is the realization of a sublime ideal. Some positive testimonies can be cited to support our opinion concerning the fact that the Sacred Hearts willed the foundation of our Institute and that they enlightened and directed our Founders as docile instruments in their hands, so as to realize a work which visibly bears the imprint of their love.

Concerning the Sacred Heart, Mother Henriette explicitly stated in one of her short, notes: "The Good God has made me understand that He appeared to Sister Marie Alacoque in corporal form so that she might know the devotion to His Sacred Heart. He granted this grace to the daughters of the Visitation because their rule is sweet, suitable for all, although it demands much of the interior spirit. He gave them a certain delight so that they would love and spread this devotion. Now that this devotion is accepted, He wishes an order that will be destined to adore

³¹ Memoire of Dec. 6, 1816.

³² Memoire of Dec. 6, 1816.

His Heart, that will retrace the four ages of His life" (1801 or 1802). For the execution of these plans, Fr. Coudrin was introduced into the Association of the Sacred Hearts at Poitiers where he found the first members of the Society. It was there that he consecrated himself to the Heart of Jesus, as Mother Henriette was also to do. It was under the sign of this Divine Heart that the two Founders, guided by His illumination, accomplished their first works.

Less clear is the part of the Heart of Mary in the foundation of the Institute; at least the testimonies, of which there are only a few of that time, do not permit us to see the part of Mary with the same evidence as for the Heart of Jesus. Nevertheless we can find some traces. We know, for example, that the cult, not simply of the Sacred Heart but of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary was already in vogue at that time, not only in France but also in other countries. An emblem of the Sacred Hearts was carried as a "safeguard" against the dangers of the revolution. The addresses sent to the Holy Father at the end of the retreats made by Father Coudrin at the Irish Seminary in Paris, one immediately before his priestly ordination and the other soon after, are completely penetrated with sentiments of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. The preacher of the retreat, Father Cormaux, who ended his life on the gallows, had an ardent devotion for these two well-beloved Hearts and he spoke of them with much ardor. He was condemned to death and executed: the revolutionary tribunal revealed that he carried on his person a medal of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. From the very beginning of the foundation, the attention of Father Coudrin was drawn not only to the Heart of Jesus, but also to the Heart of Mary. This can be affirmed with all the more certitude since the impressions produced on the soul of the one to be ordained and the new priest are the most profound.

According to the personal notes of Mother Henriette, the influence of the Heart of Mary in the foundation of the Institute went far beyond these external graces. According to her it was precisely the Blessed Virgin who wished the foundation which then became a necessity for the Heart of Jesus also. Mother Gabriel de la Barre, a contemporary of the time of the foundation, wrote about this in her Memoires about the Congregation: "At the beginning of Advent, 1800, she (Mother Henriette) asked permission of our Reverend Father to increase her nightly vigils and to prolong them more than ordinary; he consented to this; but only for a certain number of days, wishing to know what were the designs of God for this soul and at the same time avoid going beyond the common order and a reasonable moderation. One of these nights on which it was given to her to remain before the Blessed Sacrament, she saw the Blessed Virgin who made herself our special protector before her Son, to whom she prayed for us, who declared that she had chosen us for her dear children and she concerned herself with our affairs."

This vision was followed by a series of others during the same night and on the following days. Here is how she expresses herself on this subject as written by her in one of the letters for our Founder: "It is not only the Blessed Virgin who wants our Order, but it seems to have become a necessity for the heart of God, His mercy for us is so great. It is impossible for me to explain myself for I wish to say nothing in comparison with what I have seen and heard on this subject." And Mother de la Barre continues: "Our Lord promised her that after a time we would be approved by the Pope that the Blessed Virgin would bring him to do it. She objected to Him that we were hardly anything and that there was an establishment that was much more imposing in rivalry with us and which had Monsignor de St. Malo for protector. Then Our Lord answered her: the protection of my Mother is worth more than that of the Bishop of St. Malo." A little further on we read: "The Blessed Virgin dictated to our Reverend Mother all the points of our rule. She guided and directed her in all her steps with the tender care that a mother has for her daughter."

Then Mother de la Barre speaks to us of a little book in which the Blessed Virgin had written the names of the professed and which she showed to Mother Henriette to console her.

Mother Henriette herself wrote in a letter of 1800: "Our Lord reminded me that he had looked with mercy on us... that his Mother wished our affair, that it had then become her own..."

In connection with the phrase written by Mother Henriette saying that the Blessed Virgin would make the Holy Father give his approbation to the institute, it is not without interest to point out that the Bull of approbation "Pastor Aeternus" of 1817 contains the subscription: "at Rome, at St. Mary Major's, *Romae apud Sanctam Mariam Majorem*." This precious document then was signed at the greatest church of Mary at Rome where the Holy father, Pius VI was at that time.

We mention these visions of Mother Foundress without wishing to prejudice the judgment of Holy Mother Church in regard to their supernatural character. It is possible on this subject to respect the opinion of Father Coudrin who certainly did not lack a measured judgment conformable to prudent counsel in this matter. For a long time he tested Mother Henriette and held himself very reserved. Finally he was convinced that these extraordinary graces had been accorded to Mother Foundress. This does not mean that she always rendered exactly in human words that which she saw interiorly. It is equally possible that there was a certain con-penetration between the natural and the supernatural, that some opinions of the natural order infiltrated themselves in the remembrance of the events which were basically of supernatural character. In any event, it is difficult to translate into human words interior events, especially when they are extraordinary.

As to the Mother Foundress, it is certain in any event that she was convinced that the Blessed Virgin had taken a special part in the Foundation of the Institute. Formulated in this general form we can share the opinion of the Mother Foundress which was equally that of Father Founder, even if it is thought that a certain reserve is necessary in regard to the details of these communications.

It is not surprising that the Sacred Hearts would have a special interest in the foundation of our Institute - a society that would be entirely consecrated to them, as an imitation in the service of their model, the mystery of love of their hearts in the work of salvation, a society whose members would only live for them and for the execution of their work of salvation.

B. THE CONSTITUTION OF THE CONGREGATION

1. The foundation of the Rule: the Rule of Saint Benedict.

The Bull sub Plumbo "Pastor Aeternus" as well as the "Constitution, Statutes and Rules" explicitly state that the Rule of Saint Benedict is the foundation of our Rule.³³

For our Founders then Saint Benedict was simply "our Blessed Father Saint Benedict."³⁴

For us, that which is most important is to examine the interesting points that this fact presents. That is why it is necessary to consider the character of the rule of Saint Benedict which we find in our Congregation with the required modifications.

In the Preliminary Chapter of our Rule we can already see two essential points in relation to this subject. Article VIII formulates the principle that the Rule of Saint Benedict is the foundation of our Rule, then we read: "the Brothers live a common life in the regular practices under the obedience of the Superior General of the whole Congregation and of the particular Superiors..." (Rule of the Brothers). In article IX it is stated: "The Sisters... live a common life in the regular practices under the obedience of the Superior General of the whole Congregation of

³³ Cf. Circular letter of Founder, April 14, 1817 - See "Etudes Picpuciennes" I, p. 114-126.

³⁴ Preliminary Chap., art. VIII.

the Superior General of the Sisters, and of the Superior of each particular house." With only a small variation which does not change the sense, the Rule of the Sisters says exactly the same thing.

These two points: The common life under the obedience of the respective Superiors, is part of the foundation of the Rule of Saint Benedict. They must then be interpreted according to the spirit of this rule.

It follows that the Common Life must be well established in our Institute, as it is required by Saint Benedict for his monasteries. He wished that the brothers would have everything in common insofar as possible: common dwelling (in contrast to what was had in the solitary life), daily exercises in common, common usage of necessary things.

It can be that certain precepts of our Rule and of our schedule do not always correspond with our personal tastes because they accentuate the common life. But they are in conformity with the spirit of the Benedictine Rule. In regard to holy poverty, for example, we are permitted by reason of present conditions, to have personal property but we cannot receive its revenues. For the rest, the Rule declares: "The professed will have nothing for their own. Everything will be held in common in such a manner that for the things they require, they will not have exclusive use."³⁵ For the same reason the houses, in regard to the goods they possess, have "only the usage and the fruits for necessary things. The domain pertains to the Institute and to the body of the Institute respecting the right which each brother conserves over his own property."³⁶ The same preoccupation for the common life is seen in the following prescription: "Recreations are a common exercise from which the brothers need permission to excuse themselves."³⁷

And if the Brothers who are not priests, as well as the Sisters, do not have private rooms, that is without doubt, a sacrifice that the Rule or the schedule demands of them in the spirit of article 5 of Chapter 22 of the Rule of Saint Benedict where we read: "If it is possible, all should sleep in the same place. But if their number does not permit this, they will take their rest in groups of 10 or 20 together with the older brothers to watch over them."

In conformity with the spirit of the same Benedictine Rule, our Founders, in accordance with the General Chapter, determined the position of the highest authority of the Congregation: The Superior General of the whole Congregation and the Superior General of the Sisters will be named for life with such extensive powers that remind one of a monarchical rather than a democratic regime. In this we can see a point of contact with the place of the Abbot or Abbess in the Benedictine monasteries. There were not then circumstances of time or reasons of opportunity that inspired these articles. Rather they are the application of the general principle: the Benedictine Rule is the foundation of ours.

But our Blessed Father Saint Benedict was not content with juridically regulating the common life and exterior things, placing them under a stable authority. He returned always to the spirit which ought to animate this Life and which is none other than the Spirit of Charity. We all know how our rule underlines this point. That is why it severely forbids particular friendships as well as certain scornful gestures or mocking smiles that "mortify much more than a word spoken in haste."³⁸ When our Founders insistently (instantly) recommend to us fraternal charity, they well know that they could point to the Rule of Saint Benedict. We can see the proof of this in the Circular Letter of Father Founder accompanying the publication of the Rule in 1826, where he speaks at length of the Rule of Saint Benedict. "It is necessary, continues Saint

³⁵ Rule of the Brothers, art. 275; Rule of the Sisters, Chap. VII, 11.

³⁶ Rule of the Brothers, art. 285; Rule of the Sisters, Chap. II, ter, art. 3.

³⁷ Rule of the Brothers, art. 301; Rule of the Sisters, Chap. VIII, art. 9.

³⁸ Rule of the Brothers, art. 299, 300; Rule of the Sisters, Chap. VIII, art. 8.

Benedict whose expressions we love to borrow, it is necessary that the Religious exercise this zeal by a very ardent charity, that is to say that they will grant to one another the signs of honor and respect; that they will very patiently support the weaknesses of their neighbor; that no one will only seek what he believes is useful for himself, but will seek rather that which is advantageous for his brother; that they will render to each other the duties of mutual charity by a movement of pure love of God; that they will fear the Lord; that they will love their Superior with a humble and sincere affection and that they will prefer nothing to Jesus Christ."³⁹

According to the Benedictine ideal, the religious Community thus forms a true spiritual family where all live in common as the children of a natural family, as brothers and sisters who Love one another. In the Abbot they will see their spiritual father, in the Abbess, their spiritual mother. They will, in time, form only one heart and one soul.

It is then truly in conformity with the spirit of the Benedictine Rule that we love and cultivate in our Congregation especially the Family Spirit which our Founders have left us as a precious heritage. And since our houses are not independent (*sui juris*), as are the Benedictine Abbeys, it is the whole Congregation which forms only one family.

It is not difficult to see that all this is very suitable to an Institute dedicated to the Sacred Hearts, where all ought to be inspired by a spirit of Charity, where the members are called the "Children of the Sacred Hearts." We can then consider ourselves from two titles to be "the children of only one family," the first is the spirit of the Benedictine Rule, foundation of our own, but the second is the most important: it is based on the relationship which binds us to the Sacred Hearts whom Father Euthyme called "our true parents according to the spirit and in the order of grace."⁴⁰ That is why "the true child of the Sacred Hearts is a child of the family."⁴¹

We can equally point to the example of Saint Benedict for the duality of branches of our Institute. Saint Benedict duplicated the order of Benedictine Monks with an order of Benedictine Nuns, placed under the government of his sister, Saint Scholastica and animated with the same religious ideal. He thus opened the way in the West for the realization of the principle of unity-duality in the religious state, such as is perfectly applied in our Institute.

The contemplative element in our Congregation equally recalls the Benedictine ideal. In the rule of Saint Benedict, it is around the office in choir that the contemplative life centers itself. Whence its name of "Opus Dei," the "work of God" par excellence. With us perpetual adoration is first. It represents an adaptation of the Benedictine Opus Dei according to the special character of our Institute. It is then our "*Opus Sacrorum Cordium*," "Work of the Sacred Hearts" par excellence.

At the time of the discussions in Rome in view of approbation (1814-1816), we had the choice of accepting the choir obligation and becoming an Order or retaining the adoration and becoming a Congregation. Our Founders chose this latter part, in a manner that the adoration takes the place of the office for us. That is as Father Coudrin wrote to Father Hilarion at Rome, December 29, 1814: "Could we not content ourselves with our small office along with our breviary? Night and Day Adoration will supply for all," that is to say, it will replace the other longer vocal prayers.

Our task of the formation and education of youth also has a foundation in the Rule of Saint Benedict in Chapter 59 where there is question of receiving children as oblates for the purpose of instructing and raising them.

³⁹ Circular Letter of T.R.P. Coudrin, Feb. 1 i, 1826.

⁴⁰ Circular Letter of T.R.P.E. Rouchouze, Jan. 6, 1869.

⁴¹ Letter of November 28, 1866, No. 4. - Circular of T.R.P. Euthyme of April. 12, 1867.

As far as the foreign missions, we can equally refer ourselves to the history of the Benedictine order which has a great part in the conversion to the faith of a large part of Europe.

Finally we can add that our practices of Christian mortification are imbued with the same spirit of sane moderation that is found in the Rule of Saint Benedict, where the accent is placed especially on interior renouncement.

From this it can be seen that all the works connected with the activity of the reproduction of the four ages of Our Lord are based on the rule and practice of the Order of Saint Benedict: education, perpetual adoration (in place of the Divine Office), preaching, Christian mortification.

Just as the life of the monks, according to the Rule of Saint Benedict, is centered on the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ, whom they must prefer to all (Chapter LXXI), so our venerable Founders established this Christocentric ideal for their Congregation. They have even brought it a greater intimacy by the concentration of our entire life around the Heart of Jesus, while they have also enriched it by associating with it the devotion to the Heart of Mary.

These reflections sufficiently demonstrate that Our Founders were truly inspired by the Benedictine Rule in the foundation of our Institute. Thus, it was not an empty declaration they made in their petition to the Holy Father on October 25, 1814, when they said: "It (the Congregation)... adopts the Rule of Saint Benedict, but with the proper Constitutions of the Institute." The Bull *Sub Plumbo* of 1817 solemnly sanctioned this choice by the following words: "The Brothers and Sisters of the said Congregation... lead a common life under the Rule of Saint Benedict." From this, the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars drew a concrete conclusion upon which we ought to reflect. The Congregation wrote to our third Superior General, Reverend Father Euthyme Rouchouze: "*Ut in its quae in Constitutionibus desunt, observetur a sociis sancti Benedicti Regula, quam ipsi pro fitentur.*"⁴² Which is translated: "For those things which are lacking in the Constitutions, the Religious will observe the Rule of Saint Benedict, which they follow." This decision of the highest ecclesiastical authority retains its authority even today, at least as a line of conduct. The relation between our Constitutions and the Rule of Saint Benedict is determined by our Father Founder in a letter to Father Hilarion of October 6, 1814, where he speaks of the "Rule of Saint Benedict, with the Constitutions adapted to our particular functions of teaching, the missions, etc...." The Rule of Saint Benedict then determines the general lines which our religious life ought to follow, the Constitutions specify them.

For this reason, it would be logical to print before our Constitutions the Rule of Saint Benedict, or at least those chapters recommended by Our Founder for us to read, which he did with insistence in his circular Letter of February 11, 1826. It was thus in former editions of the Rule. It was by inadvertence that this was omitted for the edition of the Rule in 1908. The omission was renewed at the time of the printing of the Rule in 1928, and this perhaps explains why we no longer are so vividly conscious of all that the Rule of Saint Benedict means to us. Nevertheless, if we wish to conserve the spirit of our Founders, we must not let indifference overcome us in this matter.

It could be asked why the two Founders chose the Rule of Saint Benedict as the foundation for our own and not some other. It seems to us that the reason for their choice was above all the spirit which penetrates the Rule of Saint Benedict. The calm and peace which it inspires; the wise measure that it distinguishes; the just mean which it holds between a too great indulgence and an exaggerated rigor; its unity around a center and its extension to details; the fidelity to the precepts which it recommends, but in a spirit of charity which excludes formalism; all these things would have made a deep impression on our Founders. It was perfectly appropriate to the work they wished to found. A small incident in the life of Saint Benedict

⁴² Letter November 28, 1866, No. 4. – Circular.

serves to illustrate this spirit which we wish to emphasize. One day, the Saint met a hermit who had chained himself to the wall of his cave in order to render impossible a return to a life of sin in the world. Saint Benedict gently rebuked him saying: "If you are a servant of God, then it is not a chain of iron which ought to hold you, but the chain of Christ;"⁴³ he wished to say the love of Christ. Is this not the spirit of Our Founders, the spirit of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts?

Another reflection of our Founders perhaps also determined the choice of the Rule of Saint Benedict as the foundation for our own. We wish to speak of the tendency toward a certain universality which they had in mind for their work. Their Congregation was supposed to continue the tradition represented by the ancient Orders and which the Revolution had interrupted. From that also came the choice of heavenly patrons, founders of different forms of religious life, among whom Saint Pacomius attracts our attention even though he is so little known: the fact is that he is at the origin of the coenobitic and monastic life. Since our Founders intended to revive the great traditions of the religious life, then the rule most appropriate for this plan was that of the great patriarch of the monastic life in the West, Saint Benedict. Thus they attached their work to the very origins of all religious life in the West. They gave to the Congregation a rule that was more favorable than others for their tendency toward the universality by reason of its equilibrium and the wise apportionment that it makes in life between work and prayer.

The importance for the Congregation of having the Rule of Saint Benedict is then much greater than a superficial glance would lead one to suspect, it is primordial. The choice of our Founders sanctioned by the Bull, "Pastor Aeternus," made it truly "Our Holy Rule." The particular precepts which are proper to us and to which as a whole we ordinarily give the name of rule are only an enlargement of it.

Thus, our Founder expressed himself with perfect exactitude when he declared: "It (the Congregation) adopts the Rule of Saint Benedict, but with some Constitutions proper to the Institute."⁴⁴

Saint Benedict is then more than a simple "patron" of our Institute. It is "our Blessed Father" that we ought to honor and hear: "*Ausculta, fili, praecepta magistr!*" "Hear, my children, the precepts of the master."⁴⁵ We could do no better than to take to heart the words of our Founder: "We oblige you to often read and meditate before God the Rule of this great Patriarch of the monks of the West. We recommend that you read chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, 19, 20, 33, 34, 54, 68, 71 and 72 of the Rule of Saint Benedict."⁴⁶

In the Rule of Saint Benedict, which begins with the idea that we ought to live the life of children of God (Prologue), we will find then the foundation of our life as children of the Sacred Hearts.

2. The structure of the Congregation.

We must return now to the ideas already mentioned, but only as to the presence of the fact. Now it is time to examine them more thoroughly and furnish an explanation for them.

In its exterior structure the Congregation appears under the typical form of duality in unity: a branch of brothers and one of sisters, who together form "the whole Congregation." This structure was sanctioned by the Bull sub Plumbo "Pastor Aeternus." It is not then for us to

⁴³ St. Gregory the Great, Lib, Dial. III, 16: P.L. XXVII, 261.

⁴⁴ Supplication to the Holy Father of October 25, 1814.

⁴⁵ Prologue of the Rule of Saint Benedict.

⁴⁶ Circular letter of February 11, 1826.

examine the arguments for or against, but simply to seek the conclusions that can be uncovered in this fact.

The principle is that the character of the two branches, as well as the mode of their union, ought to be explained according to the principles valid for formations having a typical polarity.

Polarity in nature can give us some indications even though it cannot explain everything, since the Congregation is not a simply natural formation, but a religious community. We can then begin with polarity but with the necessary distinctions.

In polarity, there is question of two centers of force which correspond to each other in a contrary sense and which form in this manner a unity of action or of life. The two centers of force are called poles. Their duality as well as their unity are essential to polarity.

From this follows first of all that the duality of branches is at the very essence of our Institute. It was so founded by our Founders in such a manner that if it would lose this structure of polarity, its essence would be modified. But in order to speak of a duality of branches in the sense of two poles, each of the branches in its own unity, must guard to a certain degree, its own life. This takes place not only with the brothers, but also with the sisters. The sisters, in effect, have beyond the constitutions and statutes common to both branches, some rules destined for them alone and they live under the government of their Superior General.

This proper life of each branch brings it about that the two branches represent two centers of force or life, of religious life, it is understood, which bears the mark of the Institute.

In the case of polarity, the two centers of force or poles correspond to one another, that is to say that there is a conformity of nature, which must also be realized for the two branches of our Institute. They must have the same rule as foundation; the Constitutions, Statutes and Rules must have the same essential traits and be inspired with the same spirit. Thus their life will be the same as regards the essentials. It is necessary then that the decisions of the General Chapters of the two branches, which treat of subjects of no matter what importance and which interest one or the other, be in harmony so that the uniformity of the whole will not be compromised. In order to bring about this condition, it is arranged that the General Chapter of the Brothers be held in such a manner that the Sisters at the time of their General Chapter, would be able to be informed of the decisions taken which might interest them also. For the same reason, the Rule of the Sisters prescribes that the decisions of their General Chapters must be submitted to the approbation of the Superior General of the whole Congregation and his Council.⁴⁷

The identity of the polar forms in regard to their essence is invested with a modal distinction in the realization of their common nature as well as in their activity. Each pole has its own character which it conserves in the union where both meet to form a unity. This is necessary otherwise the polarity would be lost since it is essentially a unity-duality and the total manifestation of the being would be defective. The two branches of the Congregation cannot then simply be identified with each other. They must realize the same essence, but each one according to its proper manner in order to thus concur, united and distinct, in the realization of the common purpose.

To attain this end the modal distinction cannot be arbitrary, but it must have a specific character. The two poles must correspond to each other in a contrary sense, so as to form in their union the total representation of the realization of the being. It is difficult to describe the oppositions of this type which only pertain to polar forms. Let us imagine that the Congregation would only be formed of a branch of Fathers and one of Brothers. There would be there a certain opposition, but it would not be polar. It is not Fathers and Brothers, but man and

⁴⁷ Rule of the Sisters, II Part, Chap. II, art. II.

woman who represent humanity in its two fundamental forms and together represent it in its totality.

It can be seen then that there is truly a polar distinction in our Institute. It is necessary for the Congregation if it intends to preserve an essential point of the character of universality which its structure bears in the manner willed by the Founders. Each branch then must be formed, live and work according to its proper character, the branch of religious men according to the character of man, that of religious women, according to the character of woman. Thus the ideal of the Congregation will find itself expressed in two fashions, which will manifest it in different manners and which will reproduce this ideal in a sort of totality.

And it is this character of totality both in the representation of the being as well as in its activity which constitutes the primordial importance of polarity. It only exist where you have two poles which in corresponding to each other form a whole, while at the same time remaining distinct even in their union, thus constituting a unity-duality. It is only in this manner that each and every species of beings, being manifested in two polar forms, is able to actuate the totality of its activity. When, on the other hand, there is question of a unilateral representation of a being, its activity necessarily takes on this same character. It is only when the being is represented in a total manner that it is able to deploy all the activity of which the species is capable. It is then the tendency toward the universality of works which inclines the duality to form a unity. In other words: it is the tendency toward the same end, the love of the total purpose. It makes of the unity-duality a "*Mysterium Caritatis*."

It is not difficult to apply these principles to the Congregation, formed of two distinct branches, each one of which represents the Institute in its own manner and operates of itself. Only the union of the two in the unity-duality forms "the Whole Congregation," and is able to realize in its totality the purpose intended by the Founders. They well knew that the branch of men, for example, would not be able to assure completely, in all its extension, the perpetual adoration as they visualized it. This idea is equally expressed in the Bull Pastor Aeternus, which after having mentioned the perpetual adoration among the ends of the Institute, explicitly states: "above all in the houses of the Sisters which are numerous." The branch of the brothers can then on this point, thus save the principle and realize the perpetuity of adoration in a certain measure. But it will do it only "according to its manner" and not in the complete measure that the Founders determined as the end of the Congregation. On the other hand, it is evident that the branch of the Sisters is not able to work for the salvation of souls by the direct apostolate in the manner required by the reproduction of the public life of Jesus. For this, a branch of brothers including priest is required. The education of youth equally requires the existence of a branch of brothers and one of sisters, otherwise only half of the youth would be reached.

If the two branches formed two separate Institutes, neither one would be able to glory in the complete realization of the ideal of the Congregation. The purpose of the Institute then is not directly assigned to each of the branches, but to the two of them considered as a unity. An assertion of the Rule of the sisters clearly proves this affirmation. Article one of the first part says in effect: "The purpose of our Institute is to retrace the four ages of Our Lord Jesus Christ." But in what follows for the reproduction of the third age of Jesus, nothing is said of the sisters, but only the activity of the brothers is mentioned (*ibidem*, art. 4). The Rule of the sisters, then understands by "Our Institute" the unity of the institution formed by the brothers and the sisters, and which has for its purpose, as the rule declares, the reproduction of the four ages of Jesus Christ.

It is evident that this unity must visibly manifest itself in an orderly manner and culminate in a supreme authority. The Superior General then is not only the Superior General of the Brothers, but of "the Whole Congregation." His relations with the branch of the sisters are treated in the second part, chapter 2 of the Rule of the Sisters. The dispositions there give

witness to a wise moderation. They guarantee the unity of the whole as well as the existence of the duality of the branches in the sphere of this unity.

Nevertheless, something else is necessary in order to conserve intact this fundamental constitution of the Congregation. The history of the Institute furnishes us with the proof of this. It cannot be forgotten, in effect, that the unity-duality is, in its essence, a mystery of love, a "*Mysterium Caritatis*." It is then basically love which must establish the harmony both exterior as well as interior between the two branches of the Congregation: love of the common purpose of the Institute which is only realized in a total manner in the unity-duality. For this end, our-Founders wishing the totality and the plenitude of the purpose which they proposed for themselves, founded a Congregation with two branches. In order not to betray their intention and in order to fully realize the program they assigned to us, it is necessary to also will the means, that is to say the unity-duality of our Congregation.

Now, this total purpose which we follow is totally concentrated and centralized in the Mystery of love of the Sacred Hearts of whom the Institute is a symbolic representation and in whose service it must live.

It is then in the last report, the love of an integral imitation and of a total service of the *Mysterium Caritatis* of the Sacred Hearts in the work of salvation which contains the secret and the guarantee of the structure of the Institute as a Congregation of two branches.

It follows that the love which we ought to have for the end of our Institute, the *Mysterium Caritatis* of the Sacred Hearts in the work of salvation, is our greatest and most sublime example (exemplary cause). It was precisely the love of an integral and total realization of the work of redemption in all its modalities, which inclined the Heart of the Savior to associate with Himself Mary, in order to bring about salvation in union with Her. Absolutely speaking, Jesus could have wrought the Redemption by Himself. But He preferred that his work would be perfect under every aspect, even in its modalities and that is why he associated Mary with Himself in a unity-duality. It is necessary to say the same of the Heart of Mary: that very Love of the accomplished perfection of the work of salvation united her to the Heart of Jesus. She knew well enough that alone she could not bring salvation to men, but she could also have said that the Redeemer alone was sufficient for this work. She did not do this because she knew the will of God, who desired that the work of salvation would be perfect under all its aspects and Who had decided that she would be united to Christ so that she could collaborate with Him-in the full realization of His salvific design. In that way, it is in order to give to the work of salvation all the plenitude willed by God that the Sacred Hearts were united in an indissoluble unity.

The example of the Sacred Hearts ought to guide the two branches of the Congregation in the love which they ought to have for its total end. Then the Brothers and Sisters will understand and love their unity-duality. They will see how perfect God, the Sacred Hearts, our Founders wished the Congregation to be. They will be convinced that they cannot separate themselves from one another and they will rejoice in everything which serves to re-enforce the unity of the two branches. They will be vigilant to conserve this union so that they will not be lacking in their example as regards the love for their common purpose. It is true that they can only imitate this example metaphorically, but nevertheless, the Sacred Hearts will always be their models, their prototypes, for the last and most sublime exemplary cause of a religious community, regarding a supernatural purpose, cannot be something profane, but a religious ideal. Concerning the love that it ought to have for its total end, the Congregation then is ordered by its very nature toward the *Mysterium Caritatis* of the Sacred Hearts as toward its ideal which it intends to imitate and serve.

So the Congregation appears here once more as an "Imitation in the service of its model."

C. FINALITY AND WORKS OF THE CONGREGATION

From the structure of the Congregation as a unity in two branches flow the directives concerning its works, which we wish now to propose.

1) The Purpose of the Congregation can only be one for the two branches. This proposition must be able to be verified in the Constitutions. It is then natural that the Preliminary Chapter of the Rule, where it treats of the End of the Institute, mentions both the brothers and the sisters, otherwise the exposition given in it would be incomplete and would imply even a contradiction, since it would be believed that everything was mentioned, while there would only be indicated the obligations of one branch alone. The contradiction would be manifest, for example, in regard to the Rule of the Sisters which puts down as a principle that the end of the Institute is the reproduction of the four ages of Our Lord; now, if it only would be concerned with the works done by the sisters, it ought to omit mention of the third age, which concerns only the brothers; in this manner there would only be three ages and not four.

It is necessary then to watch that the mention of the two branches does not disappear from the Preliminary Chapter of the Rule. If someone would be surprised at this and this could only happen to someone foreign to the Institute then he could be spoken to about the special character of the Congregation, of its unity as a body as well as the unity of its purpose, and for this he could use the bull "Pastor Aeternus" as support.

2) Each branch must, according to its nature, seek to realize the common purpose in such a manner that the works of each harmonize and complement one another.

3) An authority is necessary which will, in the final instance, judge concerning the progress of the Institute and decide for it in the sense of this unanimous collaboration. It is then essential for the Congregation to have a head for the whole. But at the same time, in order to respect the duality of the branches and in consideration of their character, the Rule provides that "no determination which concerns the sisters can be taken without having first asked the opinion of the Superior General of the Sisters".⁴⁸ Let us now examine the purpose that the Congregation seeks in its works.

Article I: The End of the Congregation

As regards the end of the Congregation, we must take into consideration the positive indications of historical documents. But it is sufficient for our purpose to give a brief resume of them, for here we are concerned with their interpretation according to the special character of the Institute. Philosophers say that activity follows being. We will then first mention the positive testimonies concerning the end of the Institute; then in their interpretation, we will take into consideration the observations already made concerning the nature of the Institute.

1. Positive Testimonies

The Holy Rule

Preliminary Chapter: Concerning the end of the Institute.

ART. I. The end of the Institute is to retrace the four ages of Our Lord Jesus Christ: His Infancy, His hidden life, His public life, and His crucified life, and to propagate the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

ART. II. In order to retrace the Infancy of Jesus Christ, the Brothers will open free schools for poor children. They will also operate colleges in which they will consider it a duty to

⁴⁸ Rule of the Sisters, 2nd part, Chap. II, art. 10.

gratuitously admit a certain number of children according to the resources each house can permit.

The Brothers, will, in particular, prepare by their attention to the functions of the ministry the young students of the sanctuary.

The Sisters will also open free schools for the poor children of their sex. They will also operate boarding schools; and they will consider it a duty to raise gratuitously a certain number of young ladies born of poor families, according to the resources each house can permit.

ART. III. All the members of the Congregation will strive to retrace the Hidden Life of Jesus Christ in repairing, by the perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, the injuries committed against the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary by the enormous crimes of sinners.

ART. IV. The Brothers will retrace the Public Life of the Savior by the preaching of the Gospel and the Missions.

ART. V. Finally, all the members of the Congregation must recall the crucified life of our Divine Savior, insofar as their strength permits, by practicing with zeal and prudence the works of: Christian mortification, especially by controlling their senses.

ART. VI. Furthermore, they have for their purpose to make every effort to propagate the true devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the most sweet Heart of Mary, according as that devotion is approved by the Holy Apostolic See.

We have given here the text of the Rule of the Brothers; the Rule of the Sisters is in agreement with this except for the modifications required for Religious women.

Ceremonial for the taking of the habit and for the profession of vows

Formula of vows of Father Coudrin: Christmas, 1800.

I, Brother Mary Joseph, make the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, following the lights of the Holy Spirit for the good of the Work, as Zealot of the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, in whose service I wish to live and die."

Actual formula of vows

"I, N... ,in accordance with the Constitutions, Statutes and Rules, approved and confirmed by the Holy Apostolic See, make (for three years or for always), into your hands, My Very Reverend Father, the vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, as a Brother of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, in Whose service I purpose to live and die, In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, Amen."

Prayers for the taking of the habit and the Profession of Vows

"...deign to bless and sanctify this vestment.. so that your servant who will be invested with it, will also merit to be invested with You, and will apply himself for all his days to honor and glorify Your Sacred. Heart as well as the Holy Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Your Mother."⁴⁹

"Bring it about, that by Your grace, he will persevere in his consecration to the Sacred Heart of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, and to the Holy Heart of Mary..."⁵⁰

⁴⁹ ..benedicere et sanctificare digneris ut famulus tuus, qui hoc indutus fuerit vestimento, te quoque induere mereatur, tuumque Cor sacratissimum necnon et sanctissimum Cor beatissimae virginis Mariae genetricis tuae semper honorare et colere studeat (Blessing of the cassock or white robe),

"... so that he will perfectly attach himself to You, to the Sacred Heart of Our Lord Jesus Christ, to the Holy Heart of the Blessed Virgin Mary."⁵¹

"...so that your servant...will merit to become conformable to the sweet Hearts of Jesus and Mary."⁵²

"Deign to bless and sanctify your servant, consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Our Lord Jesus Christ and to the Holy Heart of Mary..."⁵³

"That he may be a perpetual adorer of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, that he will strive without ceasing to honor the Holy Heart of Mary..."⁵⁴

The graces of state that are demanded then are a complete dedication to the love for the Sacred Hearts, conformity with Them, and ardor for Their cult.

The Religious of the Sacred Hearts

"Now what is the aim of our own Congregation; the mission it has to perform; the task upon which it should spend all its efforts and zeal?"

"We shall answer these questions by the very words contained in a Circular Letter of our late Superior General, the Very Reverend Father Marcellin Bousquet, dated January 6, 1892, in which he says: 'A Religious of the Sacred Hearts is destined to practice and propagate the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and to make reparation for the outrages which these Divine Hearts receive unceasingly from the enormous crimes of sinners.'" To practice and propagate the devotion to the Sacred Hearts is therefore the aim of our Institute, its mission, and its very reason for being.

Truly, the first Article of the Preliminary Chapter of our Constitutions seems to set another principle aim: namely, "to retrace the four periods in the Life of Our Lord Jesus Christ: His Childhood, His Hidden Life, His Apostolic Life and His Crucified Life; and to propagate the true devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary." (Constitutions, Art. I.)

To understand better the first part of this Article we must refer to the title of our Holy Rule itself, and remember that those whose duties it prescribes are the 'Children of the Sacred Hearts.' The imitation of the four phases assigned as a principle aim to the Religious of the Sacred Hearts is precisely the general way for practicing devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus by reproducing His interior dispositions in each of these principle phases of His life. Moreover, the obligation to propagate the devotion to the Sacred Hearts necessarily imposes upon them the obligation of practicing it. Our Holy Rule could not assign a principle end and the practice of one devotion to the Sacred Hearts and the propagation of another. This interpretation is not arbitrary; it is officially accepted and agrees perfectly with the other dispositions of the Rule."⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Praesta ut, te largiente, Sacratissimo Cordi Dornini nostri Jesu Christi Fili tui et Sanctissimo Cordi Beatissimae Virginis Mariae devotus maneat (Prayers before the resolutions).

⁵¹ ...ut tibi et sacratissimo Cordi Domini nostri Jesu Christi sanctissimoque Cordi beatissimae Virginis Mariae indesinenter acihaereat (Blessing of the cord).

⁵² Sacratissimo Cordi Domini Nostri Jesu Christi et Sanctissimo Cordi Mariae consecratos benedicere et sanctificare digneris.

⁵³ Sit sacratissimo Cordi Dornini Nos tri Jesu Christi adorator perpetuus; sanctissimum Cor Mariae semper honorare studeat. (Prayers after the Te Deum).

⁵⁴ ...ut...dulgissimis Cordibus Jesu et Mariae conformis fieri... mereatur (Blessing of the scapular).

⁵⁵ The Religious of the Sacred Hearts, R.P. Marie-Bernard Garric, (English Trans. of Reverend Philemon Lefever, SS. CC.) Pp. 63-64.

Supplementary positive facts

The third Superior General of the Congregation, Very Reverend Father Euthyme Rouchouze, placed principally in the limelight the spirit of reparation and of being a victim in the Congregation. As a matter of fact, the general and traditional opinion considers the spirit of the Congregation to be above all, a spirit of reparation and sacrifice.

On the other hand, the family spirit, sign of the common Life in the Institute, has always been regarded and practiced as the spirit of the Congregation.

Finally, insistence has always been placed on the fact that the mark of simplicity penetrates the whole life of the Institute, conformable to the words of Father Founder: "The first virtue which we recommend to you is simplicity."⁵⁶

2. Reflections on the preceding facts

The observations we shall make from the citations quoted will prove that these two points pertain, in one manner or another, to the end of the Institute. These two points are: the Reproduction of the four ages and the Cult of the Sacred Hearts.

There is also the question of the mutual relations between these two elements: are they subordinated, coordinated, or totally or partially identical? Do they implicitly or explicitly indicate the total purpose of the Institute?

We cannot doubt that the Holy Rule certainly intends to give the complete end of the Institute and the Church has approved the Rule with the end so determined. It is precisely the Rule which gives these two points upon which all are in accord: reproduction of the four ages and devotion to the Sacred Hearts. But it mentions these two objectives one after the other. In the explanation which it gives after having given details about the first of them, it continues by saying in Article 6: "Moreover, their aim is to make every possible effort to spread true devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, as approved by the Holy Apostolic See." It would seem at first glance that there are two independent ends.

Is this really so: Is there not a connection between them? Can it be that the Congregation follows two different ends, of which one has nothing to do with the other? This is very improbable, for according to circumstances, the Founders sometimes mention one point, other times the other, without it being apparent that the point mentioned is any more than a part of the end of the Institute. They give the impression of believing they have sufficiently designated the end of the Congregation in citing only one or the other of these two points. It can then be concluded that, in their eyes, one objective was so bound to the other that for them the reproduction of the four ages comprised the devotion to the Sacred Hearts. It is necessary then to see in this a certain compenetration between the reproduction of the four ages and the devotion to the Sacred Hearts.

In the course of time this has already presented difficulties. Thus, an attempt was made to sum up the ends of the Congregation in a brief formula that would cover everything. So Father Euthyme Rouchouze wished to concentrate the purpose of the Institute in the idea of reparation and the state of victim. He speaks of "the end of our Institute, which is reparation, especially by adoration, as the aid of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary."⁵⁷

Another attempt has already been mentioned, that which consists in indicating our purpose by the formula: "to practice and spread the devotion to the Sacred Hearts,"⁵⁸ which has already

⁵⁶ Circular Letter of April 14, 1817, communicating the news of the approbation of the Congregation.

⁵⁷ Circular Letter of October 28, 1863.

⁵⁸ The Religious of the Sacred Hearts, (English Translation), p. 62, 63.

acquired certain rights by being cited. It is semi-official and merits our respect without wishing to say that an ulterior examination is excluded. In any case, it is a practical and suitable formula. But it remains to be seen if it is complete so as to embrace the end of the Congregation in its entirety. A similar question can be equally asked about the formula advocated by Father Euthyrne Rouchouze.

This one can, with justice, call back to the Founders when it underlines the spirit of reparation, of sacrifice, of victim. But it can be asked if he wished to encompass all in this idea or only place in special relief a part of our ideal. His writings reveal that he understood reparation as an immolation: the life of sacrifice and of victim for the injuries committed against God and the Sacred Hearts. Here is found the contemplative element of the purpose of the Institute. But it is difficult to see in it our activity of reproducing the first or third stage in the life of Jesus. It is necessary then to understand the word "reparation" in its etymological sense of to make things new, of restoration, and see in it the reparation of the injuries committed against the Sacred Hearts as well as the restoration of the work of the Salvation of men in collaboration with the Sacred Hearts. In this case, the end expressed as a "reparation in the aid of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts" might not be perhaps, the happiest of expressions. Moreover, we do not believe that Father Euthyme Rouchouze wished, in his Circular Letters, to give a complete definitive formula to indicate the end of the Congregation. His intention was to bring out an idea he believed to be fundamental: reparation. That is why he did not always make the distinction between the end and the spirit of the Congregation; which is something necessary when one desires to determine the end, because the end has a constitutive and objective character while the spirit is, by its nature, ascetic.

On the contrary, the formula: "to practice and spread the devotion to the Sacred Hearts" fulfills this condition. It was composed with the intention of defining the end of the Institute and has, furthermore, a semi-official character. But, it is possible to bring out a difficulty that could be made. This comes from the word "devotion" which is easily understood in the sense of a "practice of piety" and which is ordinarily employed in this sense. But does this not restrict the end of the Institute, allowing one to think that the Congregation is only founded in order to practice and spread a "devotion," no matter how important? Is this truly the complete end of the Institute, in the manner that it was only founded for the practice and propagation of a certain form of divine cult? Does not the reproduction of the four ages of Our Lord, which surely is part of the religious end of the Congregation, say more than the practice and propagation of a certain devotion?

The author of the "Religious of the Sacred Hearts" also takes note that this objection could easily be made. He answers it by saying "that the imitation of the four ages... can only be a general manner of practicing the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus by reproducing His interior dispositions of the four ages or principle phases of His life" (*ibidem*). We do not know where the author found this interpretation. In any case, the Rule has a different interpretation. There the imitation of the four ages is not interpreted as an imitation of the interior dispositions of Jesus, but rather the reproduction of the earthly life of Jesus by education, perpetual adoration, preaching of the faith, and Christian mortification. It is evident that we also must possess the interior dispositions that correspond to these activities, but this is a matter of asceticism. The objection then remains intact. The weakness of the formula: "the practice and propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts" as a means of designating the end of the Congregation is that the reproduction of the four ages is not sufficiently expressed in it.

It would be at least necessary to understand the word "devotion" in the etymological sense of the Latin word "devotio," that is to say, rather as signifying dedication or promptitude of the soul to serve the Sacred Hearts, to "dedicate" oneself to their service. This would already broaden

the signification of the idea. It seems to us then that the least that could be said is that this formula needs a careful interpretation in order to avoid misunderstanding.

If it were possible to find a formula that would not have the inconvenience of being subject to misunderstanding and which would include the total end of the Institute, without descending into details, in short, a formula that would be clear, complete and concise, such a find would render a great service to all. We could then, in a few words indicate to persons not familiar with the Congregation, what is the end that it seeks to attain without the risk of being incomplete.

3. Attempt to synthesize the End of the Institute.

It is necessary to keep in mind in mind our explanations concerning the intentions which guided our Founders at the time of the foundation of the Congregation given in the former part of our work where we treated of the formula of vows. This is necessary in order to take note of the relation and the coherence which exists between the reproduction of the four ages of Our Lord and the devotion to the Sacred Hearts which we must practice and spread. Here is a brief summary.

The scourge of the Revolution and the religious situation which ruled at that time in France revealed to the Founders the necessities of their time. It was necessary to act at once, in every manner possible, for if the religious needs of men were great, the obligation of making amends to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary for the crimes committed against them was even greater. Their love was not appreciated; their salvific intentions were thwarted. Our Founders, then saw the spiritual necessities of their time in the light of the unacknowledged designs of the love of the Sacred Hearts.

We hold here, believe me, the key which will open for us the secret of the internal coherence between apostolate and reparation, activity and contemplation, as well as the intimate compenetration between the imitation of the four ages of Our Lord and the cult of the Sacred Hearts in our Institute. Spiritual misery is not only an evil for men who love their souls for all eternity, but it is also an evil which attacks the aspirations of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, in the sense that their work of salvation does not bear fruit in so many souls. It can be understood then that in order to remedy such a situation it is necessary to have in view both the Sacred Hearts and men and not to forget that souls are often responsible for their miserable state; this is something that includes a lack of recognition of the love of the Sacred Hearts.

The misery of men, insofar as it comes from their sins, calls for the application of a double remedy: work for the salvation of souls and repair the injury made to God and to the Sacred Hearts by sins. The same conclusion imposes itself if the situation is considered in its relation to the Sacred Hearts. Insofar as there is question of injuries, of indifference, of ingratitude of men toward God and the Sacred Hearts, the tendency toward reparation is felt. But insofar as it is an attack against the work of the Sacred Hearts, there will be the tendency to make amends by the activities of the apostolate. We once more then find the apostolate and reparation associated; two remedies opposed to an evil which touch God and men; in such manner, these two ideas of apostolate and reparation are correlative from the time of the fall of man in the earthly Paradise. That is why these two aspects of the same work of salvation were equally united in the life of the Savior. Thus the Congregation already imitates the life of Jesus according to its essential content by its works of the apostolate associated to reparation. The life of Jesus and that of the Institute correspond to one another, then. That of the Congregation is in a transposed sense, the reproduction of that of Jesus. And in the four forms of its activity, the Congregation corresponds to the four phases of the Life of Jesus, to his four ages.

But, we must not forget that the first impulse given to our Founder to found a Congregation dates from his vision at Motte d'Usseau. Thus, to limit the designs of Father Coudrin to the needs of the epoch of the Revolution would be too great a restriction of views and consequently, of our ideal. We must, rather, keep this vision in mind. It seems that the Father Founder already had the intuition at that time that the Congregation would also work in the foreign missions. In any case, we possess explicit testimonies declaring that the Good Father predicted with clarity to his children the future apostolate that the Institute would exercise in the foreign missions (1801 and 1803)⁵⁹. Thus the ranges of the activities of the Congregation are extended. The Founder did not only see the spiritual necessities of France in his time, but the religious needs of the whole world; he thought of those immense territories where neither God nor the Sacred Hearts were known, loved, or glorified. By this fact, the horizon of the ends of the Institute are also extended, in the manner that from the very beginning was manifested this tendency toward a certain universality which renders its purpose proportionate to the universality of the purpose of the life of Jesus.

This universality appears in the purpose that Jesus sought after in His life by the fact that He not only thought of the salvation of men but also of the honor and glory of God, His Heavenly Father. And as regards men, He thought of them all, both sinners and just, He thought of their regeneration to the Life of grace and their progressive sanctification. As regards God, He did not only think of reparation for sins, but also of rendering to Him all honor and glory and to bring men to do the same.

This is the model that our Congregation intends to imitate. With it, the universality appears in the fact that it wishes to work in Christian countries as well as the missions, by the apostolate in the strict as well as the broad sense, and in the fact that it does not apply itself only to reparation toward the Sacred Hearts, but to the cult in all its extension, especially by the love to which it wishes to give itself and win over all men.

There exists, then a parallel between the life of the Savior and that of the Congregation, as appears from an examination of the works with this difference, that our life is not only orientated toward God and men, but toward God and men "in the Sacred Hearts." We do not ignore, in effect, that in the new economy of salvation, all the relations between God and men come together "in Jesus Christ," who has associated with Himself, Mary, or in other words, in the Sacred Hearts. Objectively speaking, no one can come to God except by them. The fact that the Congregation explicitly recognizes this role of the Sacred Hearts, by attaching itself directly to them, reveals a profound understanding of the divine plan of salvation. On the other hand, we recognize that the Sacred Hearts, while being our Mediators, merit to be the object of a special cult both on our part and on that of all men. Whence it comes that we must live for God and the salvation of souls by practicing and propagating the cult of the Sacred Hearts.

By distinguishing the generic and specific orientation of the life of our Institute, we come to the conclusion that there is a certain correspondence, in regard to the generic orientation between the Life of the divine Savior and the life of the Congregation; the one and the other are in the service of God and souls. But we place between these two extremes - God and men - the Sacred Hearts, in whom we see concentrated the relations that are knit between them. We also wish, as Jesus, to glorify God, but we do it especially in and by the Sacred Hearts, who are at the same time, the immediate object of our veneration and the way by which we can worthily glorify God. We desire, as Jesus, to work for the salvation of men, but this also we do especially by seeking to lead them to the Sacred Hearts by spreading their cult.

This comparison between the life of the Institute and that of the Savior shows us in what manner it is necessary to understand the reproduction of the four ages in the Congregation. It

⁵⁹ Etudes Picpuciennes, 1948, N. 1, p. 76, 77.

suffices to make a distinction between life and the end of this life in order to understand this. The life of the Institute in education, perpetual adoration, preaching of the faith, and Christian mortification corresponds to the life of Jesus considered in its visible course, that is to say that it is an imitation of the four ages of Jesus. This visible course of the life of Jesus and the Life of the Congregation could strictly speaking be designated as the end, as the Rule does, but thus is determined rather the end in the concrete sense, that is to say, in the concrete form in which our end, in the strict sense, finds its realization. The end, in the strict and formal sense, which we wish to attain by the reproduction of the four ages is the glory of the Sacred Hearts (and by them, the glory of God) and the application of their Redemption to men in order to obtain salvation for them. This end corresponds to the purpose of the life of the Savior: the glory of God by the salvation of men.

The reproduction of the four ages, then is in relation to the cult of the Sacred Hearts and the work of the salvation of men as the life is in relation to the purpose of life. It is not necessary then to ask, "What has the reproduction of the four ages to do with the cult of the Sacred Hearts?" This question poses the problem in an incomplete manner, and consequently the answer will also be inadequate. It is, rather, necessary to include, in effect, in the complete and true purpose of the life of the Institute the cult of the Sacred Hearts as well as their work of salvation. And only then is it possible to say that to this total end corresponds the reproduction of the four ages as the life to the purpose of life.

But it is still possible to ask why the reproduction of the four ages is given to us as the form of the concrete realization of the formal end assigned to our Institute. It is necessary to answer: Because our end conforms itself to the end of the life of the Savior, we wish to realize it in a like manner, that is to say, by the reproduction of the Life of Jesus. In effect, for the Institute, there is question of the execution of a work of salvation which extends itself in two directions to attain the glory of God (of the Sacred Hearts) and the salvation of men. In order to designate the life of our Institute so conceived, there is certainly no more sublime model than that of the life of the Savior. It is, then, because of the parallelism which exists between our end and that of Jesus that the Congregation intends to conform its life to that of the Savior, that is to say, the Congregation intends to retrace His four ages.

It follows that our religious obligations extend in two directions, because they refer to the Sacred Hearts (and in them to God) as well as to men, but even in this, they do not tend toward two diverse ends, but to one unique and total end. A comparison with the virtue of charity will show this to us. There is, in effect, only one virtue of charity, even though it has for its object not only God, but also men, since we see and love God in our neighbor. It is the same with regard to the purpose of our religious life, by the condition of considering all in the light of the love of the Sacred Hearts, even our work for the salvation of men. This is something that is not difficult since it is true that the salvation of men and their sanctification are the object of the intentions that Jesus and Mary have closest to heart, and which they constantly strive to realize. In thus considering our apostolate as a service of the Sacred Hearts and the accomplishment of their redemptive desires, we will love them even in souls.

In this manner, our end has only one total object which prevents the dispersion of forces, an object which concentrates, sums up and brings to a culmination all in one unique ideal: to serve the Sacred Hearts, their persons and their work of Redemption. We serve the persons of Jesus and Mary by the practice and spread of the devotion to their venerable Hearts. We serve them in their redemptive work by the collaboration in the salvation of humanity and the establishment of their kingdom of love. All our activities are the service of this same total ideal.

To sum up in a few words the end thus formulated as something complete and entire, which leaves aside details, while at the same time being understandable for someone not familiar with the Institute, it is possible to say:

The End of the Congregation is the Devotion (dedication) to the Sacred Hearts and the Application of their redemptive work to men.

or rather:

The End of the Institute is to serve the Sacred Hearts and their work of salvation.

or again:

The End of the Institute is the Devotion (dedication) to the Sacred Hearts and the Propagation of their Reign among men.

In these different formulas, the relations between the cult of the Sacred Hearts and our apostolate are marked by the insertion of the word "their" (Redemptive work, salvation, Reign).

It is true that the idea of the reproduction of the four ages is not explicitly mentioned in the formulas that we have given. But is this necessary in the case of a concise formula destined for the instruction of persons not familiar with the Institute. Moreover, the material content of the four ages, the four types of work which are found under the four headings (education, perpetual adoration, preaching of the faith, Christian mortification) are implicitly contained in the formula. The distinction mentioned above between the life of the Institute and the end, in the strict sense, of this life, justifies our manner of acting. In effect, here there is only question of determining this end, in the strict sense, and not of describing the life (the different activities) of the Congregation.

If, despite these considerations, someone would wish to have a formula with the explicit mention of the four ages, it would be possible to say, for example:

The End of the Institute is to serve the Sacred Hearts and their work of salvation by the works corresponding to the life of Our Lord (education, perpetual adoration, preaching of the faith, mortification.)

It would be possible to even give a shorter formula with greater unity in order to express our purpose. The end of the Institute consists, in effect, in the service of the Sacred Hearts, service both of their persons and of their work of salvation, that is to say of their *Mysterium Caritatis*. In the sense explained in our work, this expression indicates the union and the collaboration of the Sacred Hearts in the work of the salvation of men. It would be possible, then to simply say: The end of the Institute is to serve the Sacred Hearts in their Mystery of Love.

The devotion to the Sacred Hearts and the collaboration in the salvation of humanity is also included in this. And since the Congregation does this under the form of a unity-duality, with a purpose in conformity with that of the Sacred Hearts, we have a new proof that it is in reality an "Imitation in the service of its model."

Article II: Means for the realization of the End.

In order to realize its end which is to serve the persons of the Sacred Hearts and their work of salvation, the Congregation performs different activities which can be grouped under four headings: instruction and education, perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, works of the Apostolate, practice of Christian mortification. Here we have activities and exercises which, if materially considered, are also accomplished by other Congregations and Orders. They only become our special works by the stamp we imprint upon them.

1. The special stamp of the Works of the Institute.

Our works must be conformable to the character of our Congregation and bear its imprint. To take note of this character is part of our duty of state and is a consequence of our religious profession; we have taken upon ourselves this obligation in regard to the Congregation and its ideal. It is not sufficient then to content oneself with performing these works in the Christian spirit, in general, because we are not simply Christians but also religious, and Religious of the Sacred Hearts. This is something that must appear in our activities.

The special stamp that the Congregation imprints on its works is determined by its model, its end, and its proper spirit.

1) The model which we must imitate in our works is the historic life of the Savior following the four phases that can be distinguished in it: infancy, hidden life, public life and crucified life. The four categories of activities to which the Congregation devotes itself correspond to these four ages of Jesus. Their ensemble reflects the whole life of Our Lord. Despite the diversity of its works, the Institute thus possesses a unique program of work: "the reproduction of the four ages of Jesus."

It could be objected that the Holy Rule says that we have something more besides the reproduction of the four ages of Jesus, that is to say the duty of propagating the devotion to the Sacred Hearts (article VI of the Preliminary Chapter). It could then be said that the reproduction of the four ages does not embrace all our works, since it does not include the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts.

In order to resolve this difficulty, it is necessary to call to mind the distinction that we have made between the end and the works which are ordered to the end. The propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts is part of the end of the Institute in the strict sense. But the concrete works, as such, which reproduce the four ages of Jesus are in a true sense the means which serve this end. Here could equally be included all the works which contribute to the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts, be they works of word or pen. They enter into the group of "Works of the Apostolate" and align themselves with the "reproduction of the public life of Jesus" either in the strict or the broad sense. Our calling to mind of this distinction between the strict end of the Institute and the work ordered to this end enables us to say, then that our works are comprised in the reproduction of the four ages of Jesus, which has the advantage of unifying the program of the Institute.

On this subject we have the opinion of our Founder, expressed in a Letter of April 14, 1817, in the following words: "From the very beginning of this new-born Institute, I conceived the project of forming a Congregation destined to spread the faith, to propagate the devotion of the Divine Heart of Jesus and the Sacred Heart of Mary, to repair, by perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, the outrages committed against the Divine Majesty, and finally to guide children in piety and to prepare for the functions of the holy ministry the young students of the sanctuary.

"In order to more easily recall to the members who will compose this new Institute the full extent of their obligations, the four ages of our Divine Savior can be proposed to them as model: His Infancy, His Hidden Life, His Public Life and His Crucified Life."

The four ages of Jesus then are the model given to us as the summary of our obligations, among which the Father Founder also placed our activity for the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts.

2) The end of our works is, as has been said, the service of the Sacred Hearts, the service both of their persons and their redemptive work: of their persons by the practice and propagation of their devotion; of their redemptive work by the dedication to the salvation of men in the extension of their reign.

This orientation toward the Sacred Hearts is a characteristic of our Institute, an orientation which exercises its influence not only in the manner in which we must perform our hour of adoration, but also the manner in which we perform our other labors in teaching, instructing, the ministry, the missions. In this also it is necessary not to forget that our vocation is to be "Zealots of the love of the Sacred Hearts" and not only to be good professors, educators, priests and missionaries.

Let us take note that the Sacred Hearts, the Heart of Jesus and the Heart of Mary both together constitute the end of our activity. It is evident that they are this according to their proper character and their nature: The Heart of Jesus as absolute term, the Heart of Mary as relative term. We can have works destined to glorify the Heart of Jesus or the Heart of Mary in particular. It is possible that we unite them in our thoughts in a more or less explicit manner or even only implicitly. But it remains true that we must be the Zealots of the Sacred Hearts and that a work which unites them to one another bears the, special imprint of our Institute.

This last condition is verified in the External Association of the Sacred Hearts. This already suffices to assure it a place of honor among the works of the Congregation beside the fact that by its very character it is meant to be an external prolongation of the Institute.

In proposing the Hearts of Jesus and Mary as the final cause of our works, we do not wish to absolutely exclude any other finality. That which the Sacred Hearts are tells us this already. In effect, Mary is the way which leads to Jesus. She is the perfect Mediatrix before Jesus, to whom has been confided the task of making us His perfect servants. She can be, then qualified as direct term who, nevertheless, remains the means towards a more elevated term. The situation for Christ is very special. He is both one and the other, direct term and last end: "the Way, the Truth and the Life," because He is Man and God at the same time. Insofar as He is the Son of God become man, He is for us a point of departure from whence we may rise to a Trinitarian orientation. These distinctions being made, the Sacred Hearts are the way and the end together, and form the point of contact in all the relations between God and ourselves.

It is clear, then that the orientation of our activities toward the Sacred Hearts does not bring about any lessening or weakening of our religious life, but rather a centralization of the greatest efficiency. This orientation can be given to any work and thus creates a favorable climate for the perfect development of children of God and children of the Sacred Hearts.

3) The formal cause of our activities, that is to say, the spirit which is proper to them, results from what we have already said. If our different tasks constitute the service of the Sacred Hearts, it follows that our works must be conformable to their spirit and breathe forth the spirit of Love. This spirit will take on, not exclusively but by preference, the form of reparative love, as a counterbalance to the offenses which constantly weigh down the Sacred Hearts. The more that our works are moulded by the Love of the Sacred Hearts and awaken in us a sincere love, full of comprehension and compassion, so much the more will they correspond to the special spirit of the Institute.

Let us not examine our works in themselves, how they are "our works," that is to say, impregnated with the characteristics which we have described. They are all summed up in the general idea: "Reproduction of the four ages of Our Lord, in the service and in the spirit of the Sacred Hearts."

2. Reproduction of the Four Ages of Our Lord in the Service and in the Spirit of the Sacred Hearts.

When our Founders began to speak of a "Reproduction of the four ages of Our Lord," they could have been referring to a then current manner of considering the imitation of Christ. In the "French School" of spirituality according to Cardinal de Berulle, of Father de Condren and of M. Oiler, there was mention of retracing the "states" or certain "ages" of Jesus. It was

desired to thus designate the imitation of the interior dispositions of Jesus in the different mysteries of his earthly life. It was the interior rather than the exterior life of Jesus which was considered. The imitation to which a person applied himself had, thus the character of an ascetical practice of the interior life.

Our Founders certainly did not wish to exclude this sense of an imitation of Our Savior by the subjective dispositions of the members of the Institute. On the contrary, they even recommended it when they spoke of the obligation we have of penetrating to the interior of the Heart of Jesus.⁶⁰

But the expression: "Reproduction of the four ages of Our Lord," as used by our Founders and the Rule to designate the purpose of the Institute, has another sense. There is question of an imitation on the part of the Congregation, as such, which would be accomplished by the external works which correspond to the four ages. Here, then, we are not directly concerned with the question of the personal sanctification of the Religious who make up the Congregation; each religious considered individually is not held to accomplish this imitation in all its forms. Neither education or works of the ministry are of obligation for each member in particular. It is necessary to say the same for the perpetuity of the Adoration; it is the Congregation which is charged to bring this about. Certainly, these ends of the Institute are not without relation to the individual sanctification of each Religious, but directly there is only question here of determining the concrete works to which the Congregation must devote itself. It is for this reason that the model is the life of Jesus considered in its visible and concrete course and not simply in the interior dispositions which animate it. Our "imitation of the four ages of Our Lord" is not, then identical with that which we ordinarily understand by the "Imitation of Christ."

It follows from this that in the determination of the purpose of the Institute as "Reproduction of the four ages of Our Lord," there is question of a characteristic particularity of our Institute. This is the concrete life of Jesus that the Congregation has before its eyes in its works, which it intends to reproduce by its concrete activities.

For the rest, it must not be forgotten that in the reproduction of the four ages, practice preceded theory. The works already existed, at least in outline, before there was mention of retracing the four ages. It seems that the illuminations of Mother Foundress had here a special influence. It can be understood, moreover, that the need was felt of having an idea which would apply to all the works of the Institute. It was thus that the realization came about that the works to which the new Congregation applied itself had many resemblances with that which occurred in the earthly life of Jesus. This thought was attractive, the more so since the general end that was envisioned showed a certain conformity with that of the Life of Jesus. So the end of the life and the life itself of the Institute can find their model in the life of Christ. Furthermore, without wishing to say that the two Founders thought explicitly of this, we may add that by the force of things, Mary had to enter the picture close to her divine Son. In effect, there was not simply a question of an imitation of interior dispositions, but of the concrete, visible, historic life of Jesus. But how could this life be imagined without Mary, especially for the years of his infancy and hidden Life? Despite this, it is right to speak only of the life of Jesus and not of that of Mary and Jesus, for the life of Mary began before the earthly Life of Our Lord, and continued after His, while it is evident that we only speak of the life of Jesus from the crib to the cross, hence we speak of the Life of Jesus which was, nevertheless, lived in intimate union with Mary.

There should be nothing surprising in the fact that the idea of the reproduction of the four ages was dear to the Founders. The Congregation had, thus, an ideal which in its finality and realization, imitated the same divine model to whom the Religious of the Sacred Hearts ought to equally conform by their own dispositions in their interior life. Unity, thus, between the interior

⁶⁰ Letter of Mere Henriette, February 3, 1802, - Circular of Father Coudrin, April 14, 1817.

life of the Religious and the exterior life of the Institute in its activity. It suffices for us to add a precision, pointing out that we lead this life not only in the service of God in general, but in the service of the Sacred Hearts, and thus in the service of God.

This insertion of the Sacred Hearts in our reproduction of the life of Christ has nothing arbitrary about it, as we have already said. It is necessary not to forget that the earthly life of the Savior had relation to the acquisition of redemptive graces and after a fashion, to the glory of God, while the reproduction of this life by us is accomplished in the order of application of salvation. It is necessary, then, for us to bring in here the Chief Mediator and she who is His "aide" in the work of salvation and this not only insofar as they are Mediators, but also as persons who have right to our veneration. The orientation of the reproduction of the four ages of Jesus, not only toward God in general, but also toward the Sacred Hearts and in them toward God, is based upon the distinction which exists between the acquisition of salvation in the historical life of Jesus and the application of Redemption which takes place in the actual order where our reproduction of the Life of Jesus is accomplished.

It is also necessary to explain precisely that which constitutes the comparison between the Life of Jesus and our imitation of this life. This is the question of the point of comparison in its proper sense.

This point of comparison rests first of all in the general character of the Life of Jesus and our imitation as a life in the service of the work of salvation (acquisition or application).

This point of comparison is also found in the conformity with the specific character of the work of salvation. In the life of Jesus as well as in the imitation carried out by the Congregation, salvation is obtained for men at the same time that glory is rendered to God, and respectively to the Sacred Hearts and in them to God, especially by reparation. On one side as on the other, a double orientation of the work of salvation toward God and toward men can be noted.

The comparison can also be made from the point of view of efficient cause: on one side, Christ in union with Mary, on the other, the branch of Brothers in union with that of the Sisters.

In addition to this conformity in relation to the principle traits of the life of Jesus, on one side, and the life of the Institute, on the other, it is also necessary to consider the division into four ages.

From the historical point of view, it is interesting to see that the two Founders never placed in question the adoption of the idea of the four ages, except for a moment of incertitude concerning the work attached to the hidden Life of Jesus, as can be seen in the note written by the Founder in 1804 or 1805⁶¹ This could indicate that they themselves did not invent this division, but that they borrowed it from someone, either that the expression already existed or that the Mother Foundress received a vague intuition of it in her illuminations. In any case, in order to avoid arbitrary interpretations, we will be content to point out in each of the four ages the characteristic note of the scene which is offered to us without entering into detail.

The reproduction of the four ages is accomplished by the works which correspond to actual times. By means of them, the life of the Congregation offers a scene similar to that of the earthly life of Jesus and is composed of four types of works. From their ensemble results an image of the visible course of the life of the Savior. In orienting this life toward the Sacred Hearts, toward the service of their persons and of their redemptive work, we accomplish our entire religious purpose. By education, we work for the salvation of youth and we can, at the same time, spread the devotion to the Sacred Hearts. By the perpetual adoration, we honor the Sacred Hearts and we pray for the spread of their reign, for the fruitfulness of our apostolic works in our own country as well as in the missions. By the preaching of the faith, we work to

⁶¹ Writings of Father Coudrin, Vol. I, No. 216, p. 202. (edition Rome).

save souls and win them to the love of the Sacred Hearts. By the practice of Christian mortification, we can repair for the crimes of sinners and bring down in abundance graces for humanity by our sacrifices.

The reproduction of the four ages then can be an idea binding together all our works in the accomplishment of the total purpose of the Institute, always on the condition that we have in view the service of the Sacred Hearts and the extension of their reign.

Let us now consider in detail the four scenes of the reproduction of the four ages of Jesus by the Congregation.

First scene: The Infancy of Jesus retraced by Education and Teaching.

THE MODEL

The first part of Our Lord's Life places the Infant Jesus before our eyes and we can see His visible development and growth in view of His future mission, thanks to the tender attention of His Holy Mother.

This scene instructs us on the necessities of the child and so informs us of our duty of instructing him in preparation for life and of preparing him to follow the vocation to which he is destined by God. A good education and a solid instruction will enable him to face life.

At the same time, the Savior is here for us, in relation to interior dispositions as an example of the spirit of infancy, He who already had the maturity of a man from the first moment of his conception.

And "because the humanity of Christ is the instrument of His divinity, everything that Christ did or suffered is the instrumental cause, in virtue of His divinity, for the salvation of men."⁶² By the mystery of His infancy, the Savior had, then already sanctified in principle the infancy of mankind in general, as well as the efforts of those who would concern themselves with the education of youth.

THE REPRODUCTION OF THE INFANCY

The first age of Jesus is reflected, metaphorically traced, in the Institute's activity in regard to the youth it educates.

In place of the Savior in person, it is the members of His Mystical Body, children and young people with whom we are occupied. By the efforts of the Brothers and Sisters charged with their education, instruction, natural and supernatural, religious and cultural formation, these children and young people are raised and armed for life.

The spirit of faith will make us avoid any show of preference, of making any distinction between the rich and the poor, between those who are attractive and those who are not. All those confided to our care are children of God.

Christian hope will lead us to seek the aid of God by the power of His grace which we will implore by prayer and sacrifice. This hope will give us the necessary strength to persevere in our efforts when they are not immediately crowned with success.

Our love must be guided by supernatural motives in order to avoid sentiments of sympathy or antipathy. "He who knows how to form the soul of a young person," says St. John Chrysostom, "I will place him above painters, sculptors and the like."⁶³

⁶² (62) S. Th. III, q. 48, art. 6.

⁶³ Horn. 60, on Matt. XVIII

The thought that the infancy of Jesus is retraced in our establishments of instruction and education should stimulate us to envision our duty supernaturally, to see in our pupils the Child Jesus and to employ every effort to form members of the Mystical Body of Christ, true Christians.

This duty takes on a sublime character when the Rule declares in Article II: "The Brothers, in particular, prepare the young students of the sanctuary for the functions of the sacred ministry." There is question, in this case, of truly contributing to the formation of "another Christ."

The program traced by the Rule concerning the different types of schools and establishments of education is very large. The fact that the Congregation is composed of a branch of Brothers and a branch of Sisters renders its realization possible. Their collaboration is necessary in order that the Institute may accomplish its role of educator of youth in all its extension. The text of the Rule of the Brothers states it clearly.

For the Brothers, the Rule provides for free schools for poor children; "colleges in which they will consider it a duty to gratuitously admit a certain number of children, according to the resources each house can permit."

For the Sisters, the Rule provides for free schools for poor children, for boarding schools where they will gratuitously raise a certain number of young girls born of families of poor circumstances, according as their resources permit. Then there are Juniorates for their own recruits and the Novitiate.

A part of the students of both the Brothers and the Sisters will live in and a part will be day pupils.

This enumeration denotes a tendency toward a certain universality in our works of education and instruction. They all form an important contribution to the duty we have of working to apply the redemptive graces that have been acquired for us by the Sacred Hearts.

He who has influence over youth is the master of the future.

In order to be complete, it is necessary for us to say a few words about the interior positions which correspond to this reproduction of the Infancy of Jesus.

Let us mention first of all simplicity, of which Father Coudrin spoke in these terms in his circular of April 14, 1.817: "The first virtue that we recommend to you in order to imitate Our Lord is simplicity, because that is the first virtue which this Divine Savior practiced Himself." This virtue so delighted the Heart of Jesus that He did not hesitate to say: "If you do not become as little children, you will not enter into the kingdom of heaven."⁶⁴

With simplicity, it is above all humility that Our Lord teaches us by His Infancy. Without humility, simplicity is impossible for adults.

From the connection of these two virtues, united to the confidence of the child, there results that state of soul which corresponds so well to the Infancy of Jesus and which is especially suited to the child of the Sacred Heart: that of spiritual Infancy.

IN THE SERVICE OF THE SACRED HEARTS

Our activity in the field of education and instruction of youth will only be a distinctive work of the Institute in the measure that it bears the characteristic mark of service of the Sacred Hearts. In effect, if all the works of the Congregation are oriented toward the Sacred Hearts, this must, without doubt, be verified in the very important work of the education of youth. If not, how can we continue to say that we are realizing our purpose and observing the Rule which prescribes that we do all within our power to spread the true devotion to the Sacred Hearts?

⁶⁴ Matt. XVIII, 3.

Our activity in favor of children and young people is then in the service of the Sacred Hearts:

- In the service of their persons: that is to say that the motive of our actions will be their love, and that we must strive to inflame their young hearts with love for the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Most Sweet Heart of Mary;
- In the service of their work of salvation: by our collaboration in the application of the redemptive graces, having in view the good of souls, the giving of a supernatural education, the progress of Christian culture and by placing in relief the character of Christianity, which is to be a religion of love, born of the love of the Sacred Hearts.

Thus, the Congregation will prove itself to be the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts. It will reveal itself as an imitation in the service of its ideal, which is for it, the Sacred Hearts, and work with ardor for their very great love, beginning with the children: "Let the little children come to me...for of such is the kingdom of God."⁶⁵

Second scene: The Hidden Life of Jesus retraced by the Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar

THE MODEL

The second phase of the life of Jesus comprises the years that he passed with Mary and Joseph in the obscurity and solitude of the house at Nazareth. As regards external appearances, the Savior and His Holy Mother were there despoiled of all their glory and they concealed the splendor of their dignity and their virtue. They hid themselves from the eyes of men in the most humble surroundings.

This despoilment, which led the God-Man to appear in the "condition of a slave" and the Mother of God as the "handmaid of the Lord"⁶⁶ during all these years, imprints upon the hidden life of Nazareth the stamp of an uninterrupted adoration. Adoration, in effect, means recognition of God as Supreme Being and Absolute Master before whom the creature is nothing, a poor slave without any rights. This is precisely the significance of the total despoilment of Nazareth willed by Jesus and Mary, for it is the recognition of the sovereignty of God by the voluntary humiliation and humble state of servitude according to the will of God.

But the entire life of Jesus tends to the acquisition of salvation for men and the Redemption is, above all, a work of reparation. That is why the total annihilation of the hidden life of Nazareth also has a reparative sense and represents by this an uninterrupted reparative adoration.

Jesus and Mary with Him, appear to us then in the hidden life of Nazareth, in a permanent state of sacrifice and victim, although without the effusion of blood, while waiting for the sanguinary act of sacrifice on the cross.

THE REPRODUCTION OF THE HIDDEN LIFE

The Institute retraces this hidden life of Nazareth, lived by Jesus in the exterior company of Mary and especially in an interior union of soul with her, by the exercise of Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar before the tabernacle, as is stated in Article III of the Preliminary Chapter.

The interpretation given to the hidden Life of Jesus in the preceding lines show us that our exercise of perpetual adoration is a real reproduction of this life, according to its formal and interior content even though not according to its external and material content. By reason of the hidden character of this life of the adorer, there even exists an exterior resemblance. It consists in the ordinary manner of making adoration in our Institute; not before the Blessed Sacrament

⁶⁵ Mark X, 14.

⁶⁶ Philip. II, 7 - Luke I, 38.

continuously exposed, in the glory of triumph as is done by the Servants of the Eucharist; but in the more veiled form of the adoration of Our Lord hidden in the tabernacle. The Institute does not intend to reproduce the ovation of Palm Sunday, but the hidden life of Nazareth by the exercise of perpetual adoration.

The object of our adoration comprises a determination which must be pointed out and which distinguishes it from the object of the adoration of Jesus in His hidden life. Our Adoration, in effect, is not addressed simply to God, considered in Himself, but to the Savior in the Holy Eucharist. We live in the era of the Christian economy of salvation, in which it is necessary to take into account the fact of the Incarnation. In order to satisfy our duty of adoration, it is necessary to equally consider the Incarnate God and adore Him in His most holy humanity. Our adoration then is addressed directly to Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man (a Christocentric sense). But because He possesses the Divine Nature in common with the Father and Holy Spirit, God is thus equally adored in the unity of His divine nature (Theocentric sense). Furthermore, he who honors the Son, also implicitly honors the Father. In this manner, Christ becomes for us the way of adoring "by Him, with Him and in Him" the Father and with Him the Holy Spirit (Trinitary sense). This development of the object of our adoration in the trinitary sense certainly cannot be excluded. On the contrary, this is an enrichment which gives to our adoration a further perfection, making it lead to the mystery of mysteries, the Most Holy Trinity. But it cannot be said that it is a specific duty of the Congregation to explicitly view this trinitary sense; this is something we have in common with all Christians. Directly and explicitly, our vocation is the adoration of Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. The Institute maintains the Christocentric sense in which is included the Theocentric sense, as is seen by the end of our adoration insofar as it comprises the reparation of offenses committed against the Sacred Hearts and the Divine Majesty.

This concept of adoration is the result of positive reasons⁶⁷, but it also comes from the special character of this exercise in our Institute, where it does not have the person of Jesus, in general, for its object, but Jesus Christ in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, that is to say Jesus in His sacramental presence. This presence is proper to His person. By virtue of circumincession of the three Divine Persons, it is true, the Father and the Holy Spirit are equally present in the Eucharist, but they are not there by the same title as the Son. The Son has become man and it is as such that is to say as God-Man, that He is present in the Sacrament of the Eucharist under the appearance of bread.

This double precision regarding the object of our perpetual adoration (Jesus Christ under the appearance of bread) does not signify any depreciation. The Trinitary orientation as we have shown, is not excluded. On the contrary, its merit is recognized and favored, even though that purpose is not directly and explicitly followed by the Congregation as such. The Institute allows complete freedom on this point for the internal dispositions of each adorer, who must have a certain freedom in the interior life, even in the accomplishment of this duty. The Congregation only desires that God be adored as the God of Love, and this is that supreme manifestation which is as the center and summary of all the proofs of His love. This is the reason why we adore Him in the Holy Eucharist, where He has "loved us to the end,"⁶⁸ in that brilliant center where is found concentrated all the love placed by God in the works of Creation, Incarnation and Redemption, in that memorial of all the love of God for us. It is there, also, that God is more humanly present to us, and where we can be more intimately united. Our love here finds a point of entry that opens the way to every sort of contemplation of the Divine Being and makes possible adoration of the God of love in a manner that permits us to give to our prayer a Christocentric, theocentric and trinitary sense. It is unnecessary to point out that this is the Eucharistic form of Perpetual Adoration that is best suited to our Institute as Congregation of the Sacred Hearts in view of the relations that exist between the cult of the Sacred Hearts and the Eucharist.

⁶⁷ Etudes Picpuciennes, 1950, No. 2.

⁶⁸ John XIII, 1

It remains for us to say a few words about the reparative character of our adoration. It is in perfect harmony with the reparative character of the hidden life of Jesus at Nazareth, who made of His existence in that humble abode an uninterrupted reparative adoration. The fact that we place our reparation in relation to the Holy Eucharist contains a profound meaning. It is here where the love of God is most concentrated that the ingratitude and the misunderstanding of men are the most painful. Reparation then has a special place here. Let us further note that in this manner we imitate the Eucharistic state of immolation of the Savior. Despite the relation with the sacrifice of the Cross which always exists for Jesus in this sacramental state where our perpetual adoration considers Him, there is here no effusion of blood for Him as there was none during His hidden life at Nazareth.

It is clear that the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament cannot be uninterrupted, at least externally, for each Religious of the Congregation considered separately. But the intimate dispositions of the adorer must perdure, and the hour of adoration ought to continue and find its prolongation in life by means of a continual disposition of soul conformable to the dispositions at the time of this exercise. This requires, above all, the prompt and total submission to the holy will of God by the acceptance, without reserve, of the difficulties and the crosses of Life that occur each day, in a spirit of sacrifice and reparation. We are thus led to practice the spirit of sacrifice and victimhood. In this manner, even the individual Religious will realize the words of the Ceremonial at the time of profession: "that they may be perpetual adorers" and persevere in "this state of victim even to the smallest details of life."⁶⁹ This is truly the reproduction of the state of victim of Jesus, in His hidden life at Nazareth.

With this state are associated the ideas of the presence of God, of the love of obscurity, of interior recollection, and of silence which the Rule underlines. For all of this, we know how the Mother Foundress, the "Solitary," was for us a model, and how well this is in conformity with the Rule of Saint Benedict. This disposition will always make our life more conformable to that of Jesus in His hidden life at Nazareth.

IN THE SERVICE OF THE SACRED HEARTS

Our entire life must be in the service of the Sacred Hearts: this obligation applies above all for our perpetual adoration. This exercise is directly ordered to the service of their cult, insofar as it is the official and principle act of the practice of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts, according to the views of the Founders. This is the constant tradition of our Institute, a tradition based on the Rule which takes care to specify the finality of our perpetual adoration: the reparation of the "injuries done to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary by the enormous crimes of sinners," according to the expression of Article III of the Preliminary Chapter.

The Sacred Heart of Jesus is then the direct object of our devotion, the object of our adoration in the strict sense of the word. Here we associate the Immaculate Heart of Mary in a manner to be described. For the Mother of Jesus there can be, evidently, no question of adoration, but of a cult of "hyperdulia."

It is not sufficient then, to here contemplate the Heart of Jesus in His role of Mediator in order to render by Him our homage to the Divine Majesty. Our adoration is not made by the assistance of the Holy Mass, where the mediation of Jesus has first place, but before the tabernacle, where our attention bears directly upon the person of Jesus Himself in His Eucharistic presence. The theological distinctions which are made in relation to the Blessed Sacrament: the real presence, the act of sacrifice (Holy Mass) and sacramental communion in which Jesus becomes the food of the soul, all these serve as a basis for our point of view and justify it. The Heart of Jesus in itself then is first of all for us the object of divine cult. But Jesus remains in His Eucharistic presence in His permanent state of sacramental victim, placed there by the consecration. He associates then to the cult of His person as

⁶⁹ Circular Letter of T.R.P. Euthyme Rouchouze of October 28, 1863

such, His contemplation as Mediator, the role, thanks to which, men can worthily glorify God by the offering of His homages and infinitely precious merits.

This union of two aspects of the devotion to the Heart of Jesus - considered on one hand as object of cult, and on the other as mediator perfecting our cult of God - this union explains the initial hesitations concerning the manner of expressing the finality of our perpetual adoration. Reparation for the injuries done to the "Divine Majesty" was mentioned as well as for "the crimes against the Sacred Hearts." The text of the Bull Pastor Aeternus, for example, indicates as purpose of the perpetual adoration the reparation of the injuries done to the Sacred Hearts, while the text of the Rule, to complete what was here inserted, speaks of the reparation of the offenses which weigh down the Divine Majesty. These variations do not imply contradiction, for the injuries to the Heart of Jesus are, in fact, equally offenses against the Divine Majesty, because of the unity of the Person of the Savior. But finally the formula "Reparation of the injuries done to the Sacred Hearts" was chosen, and was definitively inserted in the text of the Rule. It expresses the purpose of our adoration in a more specific manner that is more conformable to the character of our Institute. It is necessary to hold to it because it is official.

Thus, our perpetual adoration appears as a permanent exercise of cult rendered to the Sacred Hearts on behalf of the Institute. This obligation then must be fulfilled according to these principles. The exercise of adoration is for us the most characteristic act of the practice of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts and "one of the principle duties of our Congregation."⁷⁰ It bears, above all, a reparative character, as is evident from Article III of the Preliminary Chapter. The red mantle of adoration is the symbol of it.

During our adorations, we must then above all else and in first place honor the Heart of Jesus, especially by the reparation of the injuries made to His most Loving Heart. The marvel of the real presence leads us here directly, in the sense that the Eucharistic permanence of Jesus resumes all the proofs of His love for us. Nothing would be more natural than to see all men gather around the Tabernacle in order to respond to that love. But on the contrary He is here left alone, men remain indifferent, not paying any attention to His divine advances. Men even dare to deny His presence, they ridicule and injure Him like the greatest enemy of the human race. New offenses are the answer to all His declarations of love, to all His divine benefits. It is understandable that an Institute dedicated to the love of this adorable Heart would want to offer it a compensation for such great ingratitude. Day and night the Congregation deputizes its representatives to make amends to the King of love, to adore, to thank, and to love Him, to make reparation to Him not only for each one's own sins, but for those of all men who offend Him and do not love Him as they ought. It is the role of the consoling angel of Gethsemane that is thus assumed. Remembering also that the greatest desire of Christ is to see His redemptive work bear fruit, we pray here for the intentions of the Institute, both great and small, for those of Holy Mother the Church, for ourselves and for the whole world. Above all, we never forget the works of our missionaries who are counting on us. Hence, we pray for all and for all intentions: Thy Kingdom come, the Kingdom of your Heart.

But the Congregation cannot forget that it is not only a Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, but it is one of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Hence, in the acts of homage rendered to the Heart of Jesus, it is necessary to allow the Heart of Mary to participate according to her nature. Let us remember that the fruit of the great benefits of the Incarnation and Redemption is, as it were, concentrated in the Holy Eucharist, and this is something that is, after God and Christ, also due to the Heart of Mary. How could it be forgotten that the Mother of God, Co-redemptrix and Mediatrix of all graces, has a part in these mysteries! The ingratitude of men does not leave her tender heart indifferent, which despite everything, still continues to beat with love for them. Thus the Congregation wishes us to associate with Jesus the Mediatrix par excellence. The remembrance of this role of Mother already contains an act of homage, a compensation for her neglected motherly heart.

⁷⁰ Rule of the Brothers , art. 340; of the Sisters, part II, Chap. IX, art. I

There is no doubt that we must give this place of Mediatrix to Mary in our adoration. On this point, we have the explicit testimony of our Father Founder. A supplication addressed to the Capitular Vicar of Poitiers in order to ask permission to celebrate the feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, on the first Saturday of the year, with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament is supported in the following manner: "As it is by her divine heart (of Mary) that we adore the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar..."⁷¹ To adore the Heart of Jesus by the Heart of Mary means to say: to be united to Mary at the beginning of the hour of adoration, to enrich our poor homage by uniting it to that of Mary, to offer this homage to the Savior by Mary, to offer Him the sentiments of her maternal heart, to present to Him her love as a reparation, etc... As Mary forgets herself in order to think only of Jesus, this manner of doing things procures a true joy and a true satisfaction for her motherly heart. To please a mother and increase her joy, it is sufficient to praise her child in her presence.

However, the disinterest of her Maternal Heart must not cause us to forget her dignity as Mother of God and the offenses of which she is the butt. We also have toward her an obligation of reparation, whose accomplishment is best achieved during our adoration. The terms of the Rule prescribe, furthermore, that we offer her our tribute of reparation by perpetual adoration. In a secondary and subordinated manner, we should willingly use this occasion fruitfully to think sometimes of her, render her our homage and praise for the things God has bestowed upon her. The Heart of Jesus rejoices to see His mother honored. The Church also gives us an example in this regard. According to the liturgical rules, at Benediction, after the hymn to the Blessed Sacrament, a hymn in honor of the Blessed Virgin can be sung, followed by the *Tantum Ergo*. The Church is not afraid that this hymn to the Blessed Virgin will detract the attention of the faithful, which ought to be centered on the Blessed Sacrament at the time of solemn exposition. We are acting in the spirit of the Liturgy, then if we do the same. Nevertheless, it is only in a subordinated manner that we address our prayers directly to Mary, as object of cult, during our adoration. We must remain in intimate union with the Savior, whom we wish to honor in all, including the homage rendered to His Holy Mother. In this manner, our adoration preserves its Christocentric character.

This last characteristic precisely reminds us not to stop at the contemplation of the Sacred Hearts as the object of our cult. In effect, they are not exclusively the terminus of our acts of homage, but also constitute the great mediating principle which aids us for a more perfect glorification of God, considered in the unity of nature as in the trinity of Their Persons. Our personal acts of homage, even the most pure and fervent, are really only weak stutterings. But they can attain the highest possible value, thanks to the mediation of Christ, which is of infinite value. It is necessary to know how to use this treasure, if we wish to give full value to our adoration.

We have already spoken of Mary's role as Mediatrix in regard to Christ. Let us consider, again, the action of Christ as Mediator, as His Eucharistic state of sacramental victim invites us to do. Christ is the eternal High-Priest, as well as the divine Lamb who dwells among us in the sacrament of the Altar. He wishes to unite our poor acts of homage and our weak acts of reparation to His own. His infinitely precious merits are at our disposition; they may serve us to render to God all honor and glory "by Him, with Him and in Him," and worthily make reparation for the offenses committed against the Divine Majesty!

There is no need to fear that we will thus falsify the character of our adoration as regards service of the Sacred Hearts. The devotion to these venerable Hearts, rightly understood, includes the two manners of considering Christ, both as object of our cult and as Mediator. The Savior is honored, His desires are satisfied, and His Heart is gladdened not only when He is honored in Himself, but equally when His role of Mediator is recognized. His love of God, His heavenly Father, is not inferior to His love for us. He is truly served, then when His mediation is used to honor God more perfectly. It is evident that in this way, we equally glorify Him as God.

⁷¹ Supplication of January 1, 1801.

Our prayer of "Parce Domine, parce populo tuo" thus changes its tonality when it is united to the prayer of Mary and in her to that of Christ. We are not alone, then when we pray, but it is definitely Christ who prays in us. Could our adoration be more completely placed "in the service of the Sacred Hearts?" It enables us to consider Jesus and Mary both in their venerable persons as well as in their role of mediators and constitutes a response to their love for us as well as to their Love for God. It is evident that according to circumstances, each one's interior dispositions, and the inspiration of grace, at one time, one part, at another time, another part of this vast program will occupy our attention during the course of our adoration. When the voice of grace makes itself heard, it is necessary to pay attention, hear and follow it. There is no question of doing our adoration according to a rigid and tight schema. But it is necessary to explain the sense of the adoration according to the character of the Institute and note the directives which result from such consideration. There is no doubt that the Congregation is within its rights when it gives us certain directives. Our perpetual adoration is not an act of private devotion, but a duty fulfilled in the name of the Institute; each adorer then represents the Congregation. He is its mandatary before the Tabernacle, where he fulfills a mission in the name of the entire body of the Institute, a mission that has been recognized and approved by the Church. Our adoration then bears an official character and must be done according to the directives of the Institute. This increases its importance, and allows us to see what scope it can have for the glory of God, for the good of the Church and the entire world. Everything that is great is prepared in the shadows and obscurity. It was even so in the hidden life of Nazareth; it is also true for us in the reproduction of this hidden life by the perpetual adoration carried out before the Tabernacle.

Third Scene: The Public Life of Jesus retraced by Preaching and the Missions.

THE MODEL

The third period of the life of Jesus shows us the Savior in his public activity, during which he reveals Himself as the promised Messiah who announces the Gospel and founds the kingdom of God under the form of a visible Church. He himself sums up his mission by applying to himself the words of the prophet, "the Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me; to bring good news to the poor he has sent me, to proclaim to the captives release, and sight to the blind; to set at liberty the oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."⁷² The Holy Mother of Jesus hardly appears publicly during these years of the apostolic life. Her role is mostly that of a collaborator who remains at the side, in obscurity, but whose intimate invisible influence is no less efficacious. Her intervention at the marriage feast of Cana, which is like the proclamation of a program, demonstrates this. Mary seconds the mission of her Son by her prayers, by her sacrifices, by that which constitutes for her separation from Him. She holds an intimate part in the public life of Jesus with all the love of her Heart burning with charity.

The character which covers this period needs no special explanation. Without difficulty then we can take up the consideration of the reproduction of this period by the Institute.

THE REPRODUCTION OF THE EVANGELICAL LIFE

Article IV of the Preliminary Chapter says: "The Brothers retrace the evangelical life of the Savior by the preaching of the Gospel and the Missions."

Since the branch of the Brothers is an Institute of Clerics, it is evident that we must here add the other forms of priestly activity, and hence all the forms of the ministry.

There is, nevertheless, a reason for the special mention of the preaching of the Gospel and the Missions. On one hand, the resemblance of the activity of the Institute with the character of the

⁷² Luke IV, 18; see Is. LXI, 1.

public Life of Jesus is more clearly indicated in this manner. On the other hand, it is thus shown that the Institute assigns a special importance to these two forms of priestly activity.

It is necessary to indicate, furthermore, that "Missions" is to be understood as the popular Missions in dioceses and parishes. The foreign missions are included in the title "preaching of the Gospel."

In regard to the importance of the reproduction of the evangelical life of Our Lord as well as to the place which it occupies in the realization of our purpose, it suffices to re-read that which we have said above, where there was question of the "Apostolate of Reparation". It is easy to be convinced of its importance by reading the declarations of the two Founders in their joint supplication (1801 or 1802) addressed to the sovereign Pontiff himself: "The Zealots and Zeatatrices of the Love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary" desire "to embrace the whole world, if it is possible, with holy love by the extension of the devotion to the divine Hearts of Jesus and Mary." These words are so remarkable because they are contained in a supplication addressed to the Holy Father and signed by both the Good Father and the Good Mother. The supplication then treats of the Institute as such and regards both the Brothers as well as the Sisters.

It is true that the Rule does not mention a participation of the Sisters in the reproduction of the public life of Jesus. Likewise Holy Scripture is silent about the participation of Mary in the public life of Jesus. The Institute, Imitation of the Mystery of the love of the Sacred Hearts, corresponds with its model then on this point as well.

But the silence of Holy Scripture on the participation of Mary in the public life of Jesus ought not to be interpreted in a negative sense, for Mary remains interiorly united to Jesus in the realization of the redemptive work. Likewise, the silence of our Holy Rule about the subject of the participation of the Sisters in the reproduction of the public Life of Jesus does not signify that they must have no part in it. The Rule only affirms that the public activity is a specific characteristic of the branch of the Brothers. Since the Sisters are not called to practice the apostolate under this form, their participation remains more obscure.

How could the Sisters be the "Zealatrices of the Love of the Sacred Hearts," if they do not have any interest in the propagation and development of the reign of the love of the Sacred Hearts, and if the salvation of souls, so dear to the Sacred Hearts, as the work of redemption indicates, is something indifferent to them? By their prayer, their sacrifices, and above all, by the exercise of perpetual adoration, they will be the true collaborators of the Brothers in the apostolic labors, even though they are withdrawn from the world and are unknown. Thus, they will exercise a true apostolate for souls, an apostolate that perfectly corresponds to their character.

A ready field is opened to their apostolic zeal in the "spiritual works of mercy," as well as by their activity in the domain of training and education, which gives them splendid opportunities to exercise such zeal.

In this, manner then a more hidden apostolate of the Sisters is united, to the public apostolate of the Brothers. Even in the reproduction of the public life of Jesus, the Congregation exhibits an imitation of the Sacred Hearts. In its own way, the Institute collaborates with the Sacred Hearts in the propagation of the Kingdom of God, under two harmoniously united forms, just as is done by the Sacred Hearts.

More than an outline of the activity of the Institute in the foreign missions would be beyond the scope of this work. This is the place where, above all the Congregation has been entirely dedicated, from the time that the number of its religious permitted it, and without ceasing since then.

This was an ardent vow of the Venerable Father Founder, a vow whose accomplishment filled his heart with joy and which still occupied his spirit in the moments immediately preceding his death. There is nothing strange in this if we recall that the first idea for the foundation of an order, at the time of the vision of Motte d'Usseau, had for its object the Congregation in its apostolate to the foreign missions. Furthermore, his zeal for the love of the Sacred Hearts made him feel that a

ministry exercised only in his own country was too limited. Thus, some consider the Congregation as an exclusively missionary society, which is not exact, for our program is much more extensive. Nevertheless, it is necessary to recognize that we have always considered the foreign missions as a post of honor, and this is rightly so. The missions have demanded great sacrifices of us, and they will continue to do so. But the Sacred Hearts have blessed our labor. They have given us holy missionaries, such as Father Damien who is one of the glories of the Congregation. Before his death as a martyr of charity, he said that he considered himself to be happy to die a child of the Sacred Hearts.

IN THE SERVICE OF THE SACRED HEARTS

The Brothers and Sisters "have for purpose to do all that they can to propagate the true devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, according as this devotion is approved by the Holy Apostolic See," as is set forth in Article VI of the Preliminary Chapter. It is clear then that it is, above all, by the reproduction of the public life of Jesus by the apostolate in public and in private that this end is to be realized.

Consequently, all our works of the apostolate are marked by the solicitude of stimulating and inflaming souls with a holy love by promoting among them the knowledge, honor and love of the Sacred Hearts. Thus, it is necessary for us, according to the special exercise of the Institute, to lead souls to the Tabernacle so that they may render love for love to the Sacred Hearts.

This relationship between the Apostolate and the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts is essential to the Congregation. Thus, the Father Founder, a propos of the title of "Zealot," did not hesitate to write: "The title of Zealots presents, furthermore, great advantages relative to the end which we desire to attain, that of the sanctification of souls by the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary."⁷³ We must then consider ourselves in the service of the Sacred Hearts in our apostolate and in the, entire ministry. We have obliged ourselves to the service of their persons and to the service of their work of sanctification. We serve their persons by propagating their devotion, by using the occasions furnished us by our works of the apostolate as well as by our priestly ministry to propagate the cult of the Sacred Hearts and to inflame men with their love. It goes without saying that we must make every effort to bring out the character of Christianity as being a religion of Love. We will collaborate, in a manner of speaking, with the Sacred Hearts for the realization of their great desire of saving souls, of assuring their salvation and of sanctifying them more and more. Thus the Kingdom of God will each day be better known and more firmly established, manifesting itself as the Kingdom of the love of the Sacred Hearts.

By this placing ourselves in the service of the Sacred Hearts and their work of salvation, we will prepare the way for them, and we will aid them in bringing a torrent of graces into the hearts of men, which will bring them the love of the Sacred Hearts. We will thus become as instruments in their hands for the diffusion of grace. There is no service which can be more agreeable to them nor any consolation more efficacious than that which consists in preventing the loss of souls, in making reparation for the damages caused by sin, and in establishing the Kingdom of love in souls.

If the Brothers and Sisters so work for the salvation of souls and for the propagation of the Kingdom of love of the Sacred Hearts, each in their own manner and with all their power, then the Sacred Hearts will recognize them as their banner. It will appear to their eyes as an imitation of their Hearts consecrated to the service of their mystery of Love in the work of the salvation of souls. We will thus be that which we ought to always and everywhere be: Zealots and Zealtrices of the love of the Sacred Hearts.

⁷³ (73) Memoire of December 6, 1816, to the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars.

Fourth scene: The Crucified Life of the Savior retraced by the Exercise of Mortification.

THE MODEL

The last period of the Savior's life shows Him to us in His sorrowful Passion to which the Heart of the Mother of sorrows is attached by her immense compassion. This phase commences with the agony of the Heart of Jesus in the garden of Olives (interior passion) and ends on the cross (external and interior passion). After the Savior's death, His Heart was opened by the soldier's lance so that He might shed the last drop of His precious blood. During the passion, the Heart of Mary was united to that of her beloved Son. At the end of this sorrowful drama, Mary, standing at the foot of the cross, was visibly close to Jesus, uniting herself to the offering of His life, which allowed her to become Co-redemptrix with the Redeemer.

Calvary is the summit of the entire Life of sacrifice and renouncement lived by Christ in union with His mother. The terrifying picture of the sanguinary Passion was always before their spirit and made their life a way of the Cross where the roses were never without thorns.

THE REPRODUCTION OF THE CRUCIFIED LIFE

The fifth Article of the Preliminary Chapter states as follows: "Finally, all the members of the Congregation ought to strive, insofar as they can, to reproduce in themselves the crucified life of our Divine Savior by practicing with zeal and prudence the works of Christian mortification, especially by restraining their senses."

In order to clarify this Article of the Rule, it is useful to consider a note of Mother Foundress where she says: "He (Jesus) wills that the Rule be somewhat austere, so as to imitate the crucified life; but He especially wills that one enter the interior crucifixion of His Heart."⁷⁴

The imitation of the crucified life is then conformable to that of its model, for the Passion of Jesus was both interior and exterior.

Simply putting the restraining of the senses in first place does not mean that the Rule wishes to say that the exterior mortifications are more important than interior renouncements. Rather, the Rule conforms itself to the special character of this period of the life of Jesus, during which the Passion takes on a sanguinary form visible to everyone's eyes, which is different from what takes place during the other periods. Furthermore, it is necessary to say that the "restraint of the senses" is not absolutely synonymous with external austerities. Before God, the latter only has the value conferred on them by the internal dispositions, for it is the spirit that vivifies. This spirit is a spirit of sacrifice. It leads us to restrain our senses by being content with that which is modest, in place of flattering them.

Another reflection is necessary here. The special mention of the restraint of the senses draws our attention to the many occasions during our life when we can make small sacrifices: mortification of the curiosity of the eyes and ears which are always seeking new impressions and sensations to the great detriment of the recollection which is the spirit of the interior life; mortification of the sense of taste, touch, and smell, in whose usage a certain sensuality insensibly glides in. Such mortifications and renouncements met in daily life are completely in line with the simplicity which is proposed to us as being especially conformable to our life of children of the Sacred Hearts. It is evident that the external exercises of penance, in the strict sense, are not excluded. But it is necessary to practice these with prudence and discretion. This explains why permission of the Superior is necessary to be able to practice them, at least as long as they are not prescribed by one's confessor.⁷⁵ For the rest, it is sufficient to refer to the, Chapter of the Rule which treats "of Fasts and Mortifications."

⁷⁴ Letter of February 3, 1802.

⁷⁵ Rule of the Brothers, art. 371; of the Sisters, Chap. XIV, art. 2.

Nevertheless, it is still necessary to note that this duty of Christian mortification must be fulfilled "with zeal." Which means to say not to be satisfied with any occasional sacrifice, which would perhaps even be inevitable. On the contrary, these practices of mortification should be dear to us. Zeal, being an effect of love, it follows that we must love a life of mortification and renouncement.

The purpose of the exercise of mortification is also, without doubt, our personal sanctification: this is the subjective end which we have in common with all Christians and which is especially called for by all those who enter religion.

But the exercise of Christian mortification figures among the works proper to the Institute which constitute the reproduction of the four ages of Our Lord and permit, us to realize the special end of the Congregation. This goes to prove that, with us, even Christian mortification ought to tend to that end, namely: the service of the Sacred Hearts and of their work of salvation. The practice of Christian mortification is not then for us exclusively a personal, private affair that regards only our own sanctification, but a duty of our religious life which thus permits us to attain the end of the Institute.

However, since we cannot speak of this special purpose of our Christian mortifications without bringing in the Sacred Hearts, the preceding generalities will suffice for now, for we will treat below, the mortification in the service of the Sacred Hearts.

What we have already said proves that the Congregation continues and in a certain sense, reproduces the crucified life of Christ, our Head; as members of His Mystical, Body, we thus complete the passion of Christ. The relation of our imitation with its model is here especially intimate because of our union in the Mystical Christ. This imitation, it is true, is considered in the case as in a metaphorical sense, but it exhibits quite a great resemblance with the example of Christ, so as to permit us to speak of a relatively complete reproduction of the crucified life of Jesus. In effect, this reproduction embraces both interior and exterior mortification and thus corresponds both to the interior as well as the exterior Passion of Christ. It is practiced both by the Brothers and the Sisters, not only for their personal sanctification and the greater glory of God, but also in order to cooperate in the salvation of souls. Thus, the Institute is truly an imitation in the service of its model, the Sacred Hearts, by the practice of Christian mortification.

The reproduction of the crucified life is then a duty of the Institute, and, not only the affair of the religious considered individually. It is not necessary to be astonished by the fact that the cross has marked the entire way traveled by the Congregation. At one time these were external persecutions, at another time they were interior trials; when it was not one province that was being tried, then it was, another; here or there, in one manner or 'another, the Institute has always appeared carrying its cross. Father Founder had predicted: "My children" will always be children of the cross, in order that they may be perfect children of the Heart of our good Master." This is their assimilation to their sublime model, whose crucified life is thus retraced in the Congregation, considered as such and taken in its entirety.

IN THE SERVICE OF THE SACRED HEARTS

Since the Congregation is in the service of the Sacred Hearts in all its life and activities, it is equally so in the reproduction of the crucified life of Jesus. It is not our purpose to speak here of Christian mortification as an ascetical practice for our personal sanctification. We wish, rather, to consider it as a duty of the Institute that is fulfilled, it is true, by the individual religious, but done so in view of the end sought by the Congregation, considered as a whole.

In this perspective, Christian mortification in the application of the graces of salvation, has a role to fulfill which corresponds to that of the crucified life of the Savior for the Redemption.

In His sorrowful Passion, the Savior exercised an activity of mediator between God who had been offended, and humanity, which had to be reconciled with Him; it was His duty to bring about the reconciliation of humanity with God and thus accomplish the Redemption of the human race. This act of mediation is unique and has a universal extent to the sins of men of all times. It does not have to be repeated for its value is infinite and it is thus superabundant for all time.

This act of mediation of Christ only acquires its efficacy for individual souls by the application of the fruits of the sorrowful Passion, a work in which God wills that men take part. This collaboration does not only consist in a prompt response to the grace of God, but also by the union of our tribute of reparation to the reparation of Christ. We ought to make sacrifices then, and make reparation for ourselves. But by reason of the communication of spiritual goods that takes place in the Mystical Body of Christ, reparation done by one can profit another, in the sense that, depending on the merits of Christ, we can obtain graces for our neighbor.

It is to this sublime vocation that the souls called victim souls are devoted. Their sufferings are, in a manner of speaking, a prolongation of the Passion of Christ continued in the members of His Mystical Body. This expiation, which is an expiation for the sins of an epoch, bears more on the application of redemptive graces and not on their acquisition. This is the realization of the words of the apostle, St. Paul: "what is lacking of the sufferings of Christ I fill up in my flesh for his body, which is the Church."⁷⁶

That is the purpose of our reproduction of the crucified life of Christ, seen as on the duties of the Congregation: it ought to exercise a role of mediator, in the service of the work of mediation of the Sacred Hearts. The Congregation ought to be a society of victim souls, who are such by their life of sacrifice and renouncement. It thus places at the disposition of the Sacred Hearts this contribution to their redemptive passion which is to be used for men, either for themselves or for others, so that the sacrifice of the cross may be applied and the salvation of souls may be accomplished.

The Institute is, then, called to a true redemptive vocation in the reproduction of the crucified life. Thus, a veritable collaboration with the Sacred Hearts in the application of the Redemption is demanded of it, for "without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness (of sins)"⁷⁷ This is true even today.

It is difficult to imagine a more efficacious manner of consoling the afflicted Hearts of Jesus and Mary than this apostolate of suffering. We aid them, in a certain manner, to disarm the arm of God and to prevent the loss of souls. This is the mission of mediators that they have confided to us, their children, in the reproduction of the crucified life. Here as well, we follow in the footsteps of the Sacred Hearts. We imitate their example, insofar as we are a society realizing a unity-duality like they themselves form. Thus, the Institute is in the service of their mystery of Love in the work of salvation as an "Imitation in the service of its model."

⁷⁶ Col. I, 24.

⁷⁷ Hebr. IX, 22.

Chapter IV

THE MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE SACRED HEARTS

Up until now there has been question of the Congregation as a Congregation. In order to be complete, we must say something about its members, in order to bring out how the character of the Institute gives precision to their vocation as Religious and how they are bound to one another and to the Sacred Hearts by very special relations.

1. The Character of Profession in the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts.

On the day of our profession, a very special relationship is formed between us and the Congregation, the Sacred Hearts and God.

a) Between the professed and the Congregation, a sort of canonical contract is established. This is because the religious state is a form of life recognized by the Church, of which the Congregation represents a concrete realization.

This contract consists in the mutual transmission and acceptance of rights and obligations, both on the part of the professed as well as on the part of the Institute, who bind themselves one to another.

The professed binds himself to live in the Institute and live according to its spirit by observing the Rule, Constitutions and Statutes. He receives in exchange all the rights, titles and privileges of the members of the institute.

This contract grants to the Institute certain rights and certain titles in regard to the Religious, which rights and titles are confirmed by a special vow of obedience to competent authorities. On the other hand, the Institute accepts certain obligations in regard to the professed member. It will take care of him as a member of the Congregation, according to the Rule and Statutes and the prescriptions of Canon Law. The nature of the society and the sense of the profession give a religious character to this bilateral contract.

b) At the same time, a special relationship is established between God and the professed member, by reason of the religious vows. These vows are a promise made to God to live in the practice of the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience, according to the Rules and Statutes of the Congregation.

This new and particular relationship between the professed member and God is marked by the virtue of religion, the principal one among the moral virtues (coming after the three theological virtues of faith, hope and charity), which is attached to the cardinal virtue of justice. A vow, in effect, is an act of religion and its accomplishment is a practice of this virtue. The stable life in the observance of the vows of religion represents then a state of life in the practice of the virtue of religion, a form of life to which the ordinary faithful are not bound. The taking of vows thus obliges the Religious to practice the virtue of religion in an eminent manner.

The profession of vows is made "into the hands" of the Superior delegated by the Church. Thus, it is God who confirms them by the intermediary of the Church, admitting the professed member to the special practice of the virtue of religion, that is to say, to His special service. The object of the virtue of religion is, in effect, the direct service of God and His cult. Thus the designation of "Religious" is explained, it is a word derived from "religion" or cult of God.

This consecration to the special service of God, as all religious activity, enters into the accomplishment of the first and greatest commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength, and with thy whole mind, and thy neighbor as thyself."⁷⁸ It is done, thus, in the service of the love of God and of neighbor, and so for the profit of the tendency toward Christian perfection, which essentially consists in Love. The religious state is thus, the state of perfection which is extended in the sense of a special obligation for the religious to tend to the perfection of love.

Religious profession is then an objective consecration, the separation from the group of the simple faithful and the attachment to the society of persons who are officially consecrated in a special manner to God. Thanks to this official character, recognized by the Church, the professed member is considered by God as a "person consecrated to God."

This is the reason why the Church has written in her Law: "Everyone must hold the religious state in honor" (Can. 487). This quality of a person consecrated to God is confirmed by the extension of the privileges of Clerics to the Religious. "Sanctus Domino": these words are engraved on the forehead of every religious man and woman. This does not mean that those marked in this manner are already holy by their subjective and interior dispositions. But objectively they are holy, in the sense of "consecrated," just as a church is holy by its consecration and the liturgical vestments by their blessing.

Religious then ought to consider themselves as especially delegated by the Church for the cult of God. This special delegation is true, above all, for the religious of solemn vows, because the relationship between God and the professed member is stronger in this case. Nevertheless, this special delegation is equally present for the professed of simple vows, even though the relationship is for him less strong.

c) At the same time, all Religious are, by a special title, which is joined to the baptismal character, "consecrated to Christ," for all our supernatural relations with God, in the new economy of salvation, are concentrated in Christ.

This consecration of the religious souls to Christ is expressed by the designation of "*Sponsa Christi*." This draws one to think of the liturgy with its solemn consecration of virgins, which is one of the most beautiful, most tender, and most intimate of sacramentals. Ordinarily when we speak of "brides of Christ" we think of Religious women, but this should not lead us astray. In the strict sense (for in the wide sense it can be extended to every baptized person) the expression "bride of Christ" designates a soul vowed to God in the state of perfect continence, and the sex of the person does not matter. That is why St. John, the beloved apostle is likewise called "virgin," virgin, because he guarded virginal chastity for his whole life.

It is to be remembered that the ideal of purity incarnated in Mary ought to have a preponderant influence on these consecrated souls. Is not the Virgin Mother of God called the "Virgin of Virgins" and "Most Holy Virgin"! The Virgin Mother of God, who was united to Christ in the most sublime manner and was totally consecrated to Him, heads the procession and marches in the first rank of the legion of virgin souls consecrated to God. Without doubt, she represents, for us especially, even much more. And it is necessary for us to mention this point of view in regard to profession.

d) In the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts, a special relationship is established by the profession of vows between the professed members and the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Each religious institution has its own character. The consecration to God that is here brought about by the profession must be marked by it. Now, our Institute is especially consecrated to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. It is necessary to conclude that all the members of the

⁷⁸ Luke X, 27.

Congregation are, by a special title, "consecrated to the love of the Sacred Hearts," for they, as members, take part of the character of the whole body. We are then especially consecrated, not only to Christ, or even to Christ and to Mary, but to the love of their Hearts, distinct but united.

The medallion which we wear on our breasts is then the expression of an objective reality, invisible to our eyes, but engraved upon our hearts: "Consecrated to the Sacred Hearts." The crown of thorns encircling the united Hearts joins to this imprint a precision that we have wished to explain in this work: "Consecrated to the mystery of the love of the Sacred Hearts."

2. Children of the Sacred Hearts.

A pious tradition that dates from the time of our Founders and which is particularly dear to our heart would have us consider ourselves as the "Children of the Sacred Hearts."

Is this a title without foundation, a simple metaphor signifying our dedication to the Sacred Hearts, or is it rather an expression of an objective reality?

In order to answer this question, let us consider the different types of "filiation" that could come into question here.

A. DIVINE FILIATION OF THE LIFE OF GRACE.

By Baptism, which gives us the life of grace and brings us to participate in an accidental manner under the form of a quality in the divine nature, we are born anew, reborn to the supernatural life. We are then, in a true sense, the Children of God in the order of grace. The name of Father is here suitable to God as such, for He Himself creates sanctifying grace and makes us partakers of His divine nature.

But let us remember that this grace is the fruit of the Redemption. The most sacred humanity of Jesus Christ, hypostatically united to the Divinity, is the instrument of the communication of this grace thus acquired. This rebirth to the life of grace, could then be attributed to Jesus Christ, considered as Mediator. It is true that we are not accustomed to speak of Our Lord as our Father, because in speaking of a father, the principal cause who actively communicates life is rather intended. And in our case this is God as such. Nevertheless, the reasons given above show that Christ could equally be considered as our Father in the economy of salvation, even though this is meant in a larger sense, that is to say, as mediating cause or intermediary. Perhaps, then, it would be prudent not to speak of Christ as our Father without some restriction, but this does not mean that it should be concluded that such a denomination would be true in only a figurative sense.

If a certain reserve is imposed for the employment of the name of Father in connection with Christ, on the contrary, there is no hesitation in speaking of a spiritual maternity of the most Blessed Virgin Mary. By reason of her divine maternity and her collaboration both in the acquisition and the distribution of redemptive graces, Mary can rightly be called our Mother in the order of grace, our spiritual Mother. When a mother is spoken of, a purely active cause of birth is never thought of, but rather a receptive and cooperating cause is meant. Therefore, in this there is no question of God, but rather of the Holy Virgin Mary. On the other hand, in relation to the spiritual maternity of Mary, Catholic tradition is uniform, constant and universal.

By reason of different titles, then we can consider Jesus and Mary as "our Parents" in the order of grace, because of the part they had in the acquisition and application of divine graces. Truly, they have acquired this supernatural life for all humanity by the work of Redemption. Thus, they have founded, as it were, a new humanity, the new family of the children of God who owe this life to them. Jesus and Mary can then rightly be called "the new first parents" of the

new, regenerated humanity. The titles of "new Adam" and "new Eve" given to Jesus and Mary already imply this signification.

It is evident that this supernatural filiation does not distinguish us from other Christians. Its foundation is the Life of grace and nothing else, which is verified for each and every one "reborn of water and the Spirit," for all those who are thus "born of God."⁷⁹

B. SUPERNATURAL FILIATION IN THE RELIGIOUS LIFE.

When we call ourselves the "Children of the Sacred Hearts," there is in this, no doubt, the intention of including the relations established between the religious, on one hand, and Jesus and Mary on the other hand, by the fact that they have obtained for us the life of grace. In effect, it is legitimate to view Jesus and Mary in the unity which allows us to designate them by the title of "Sacred Hearts," for we owe the gift of this life of grace to the love of their Hearts.

But there is no doubt that we wish to signify by this title of supernatural nobility even something more, precisely that which is special for us as Religious of the Sacred Hearts, for we consider this title as something proper to the members of our Institute.

Our third Superior General, Very Reverend Father Euthyme Rouchouze, wrote on this subject in one of his Circulars: "By virtue of our profession, are we not the children of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary? We have the single honor and the ineffable happiness of bearing this title; we glory in it every day, and we have reason to do so. From that time, are not these divine Hearts our true parents according to the spirit and in the order of grace, since on that beautiful day of our consecration to their service did they not give birth to us into a life wholly supernatural and divine?"⁸⁰

It can be clearly seen that it is on our quality of child in relation to the Sacred Hearts by our profession that Father Euthyme bases his argument for attributing to these venerable Hearts the title of "true parents." It is said of profession that the Sacred Hearts at that time "gave birth to us into a life wholly supernatural and divine." Manifestly, then there is question here of a metaphorical expression which is, nevertheless, founded on a reality which justifies it.

This reality is the new life to which we are "born" by our profession, which causes us to exist in a new state of life. That is our religious life as members of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts. The nature and the origin of this life which comes to us from the Sacred Hearts establishes our special relationship of filiation in their regard.

According to its nature, our religious life is made up of very intimate relations with the Sacred Hearts, it is a life entirely dedicated to their Love. We are thus called upon to attain an ever increasing resemblance to them, interiorly, by the imitation of their virtues and the dispositions of their Hearts, exteriorly, by the reproduction of their life which was dedicated to the salvation of humanity and by the participation in the works of salvation.

In regard to the origin of this life, it can be said that it comes to us from the Sacred Hearts. In effect, the Sacred Hearts are not only its exemplary cause, and this life is not only a participation in their life of love and of reparation in the service of their Redemptive work, but our vocation to this life also comes from the choice they have deigned to make of us.

Thus, the Sacred Hearts are united to us at our profession by means of a special choice and call. They give us a religious life which resembles their own life, and which makes of us participants in the service of the work of salvation. In this sense, the Sacred Hearts "gave birth to us into a life wholly supernatural and divine" on the day of our consecration to their service.

⁷⁹ John III, 5 and I,

⁸⁰ Circular Letter of January 6, 1869.

By this "birth" we are in a special manner the "Children of the Sacred Hearts." They are our "true parents according to the spirit and in the order of grace."

The title of "Children of the Sacred Hearts" has then a true though metaphoric sense, by the very fact of our religious profession. But this manner of considering our vocation of children of the Sacred Hearts is too restricted, it does not permit us to fully discover the profound total sense of this expression. In effect, is it possible for us to separate our profession from our baptismal character? It is not possible to be a Religious without being a Christian, for a Religious is only a Christian who has chosen the state of perfection. We must, then, consider that the realities of our profession are based on the baptismal character and see their relationship. Our vocation to the religious state in a Congregation that is entirely dedicated to the love of the Sacred Hearts, reveals to us that right from the beginning the Sacred Hearts have chosen us to be, among their children in the sense of the baptized, insofar as Religious, the "children of their Hearts" in a very special sense, that is to say, "their children of predilection," by the fact of a special consecration to the love of their Hearts. This consecration has brought about our adoption as beloved children of their Hearts.

Seen in this light the supernatural filiation flowing from our religious profession is not a new form of our divine adoption, but is an exterior determination of our quality of being children of God, which we received at baptism: our supernatural life is henceforth, in effect, the life of a Religious of the Sacred Hearts with the interior and exterior modalities which that implies. Essentially, this life is the life of a child of God which is given at baptism, hence, it is a true life of supernatural childhood by grace. But, a further determination of the moral order is here added, which comes both from us and from the Sacred Hearts. The life of grace is considered, insofar as religious life bearing the particular imprint of the love of the Sacred Hearts, not only in the general sense as is had for baptismal grace, but in the sense of a special grace received by our vocation. So, we truly are, in a special sense that is proper to us, the "Children of the Sacred Hearts."

This thought opens to us a perspective which should fill our heart with joy and gratitude: The Congregation is a Family of children of the Sacred Hearts, who are our parents. It is easy to understand that they will then bring us to participate in the effusion of their love, which they will communicate to us in the largest measure possible. Introduced into the intimacy of their soul, into the sanctuary of their Heart, we can hear it beating, learn to know their interior dispositions, make their desires our own. By our profession, we are then called to an intimate sharing of life with the Sacred Hearts.

Each of the two branches of the Institute participates in its own manner in the life and the destiny of the Sacred Hearts. And since each one lives this life of children of the Sacred Hearts in its own manner, the members of the two branches of the Congregation are brothers and sisters according to the spirit, and all together they are the children of the Sacred Hearts.

A series of conclusions flows from this union of family, from this relationship with the Sacred Hearts. In order to avoid useless repetitions, we will content ourselves with some short remarks.

Our family spirit is a direct consequence of this family union which exists between the Sacred Hearts and ourselves. This spirit should characterize the social life of the members, the community life. Thus, the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary will recognize them as their children and strangers will be edified and will say, full of wonderment: "See how they love one another!" Discord and disagreement between the children of the family of the Sacred Hearts practically signifies that they have renounced their quality of being the beloved children of Jesus and Mary. It follows that a certain simplicity should be the dominant note in the mutual relations of the members of the Congregation as well as in the contacts between Superiors and subjects, as is had in a family: "Cor unum et anima una." Mutual fraternity, candid frankness toward authority,

paternal sentiments in the Superiors which are developed in this family spirit: "*Ecce quam bonum et quam jucundum habitare in unum.*"

On the other hand, our quality of children of the Sacred Hearts will make itself felt in all our relations with them. The foundation of these relations cannot be the severe rigor of justice but the sweet mercy of love. We must believe in this love, even when the reason for certain dispositions or certain measures escapes us. We must confide ourselves to their love with that confidence proper to a child. But above all, we must respond to the love of their Hearts for us, and be interested in all that concerns them. Their joys will be our joys, their sorrows will be ours. We must sympathize with their afflictions collaborate with their works, as children who live with their parents, attentive to their preoccupations in order to aid them insofar as is possible. The term of Children of the Sacred Hearts means zeal for their love.

This is what is meant by our title of "Children of the Sacred Hearts," which is our most excellent title, the one which expresses the beauty and grandeur of our vocation. It is the measure of the love of predilection of the Sacred Hearts. It is because they cherish us in a particular manner that they have led us into a Congregation that is entirely their own and which they have formed according to their Hearts, in order that we will live only for their Love and their service in an institution that is an "imitation of the service of its model."

It will not be temerarious then to apply to ourselves the words of St. John, adapting them to our case: "Behold what manner of Love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and that we are in reality."⁸¹

⁸¹ I John III, 1.

SYNTHESIS

Having come to the end of our consideration, it remains only for us to draw some conclusions concerning the sense, the mission and the place of the Institute in the universal plan of God.

1. Sense and Mission of the Congregation.

In his work, an artist expresses an idea that he has in his mind and to which idea the work corresponds in a more or less perfect manner. When this idea is discovered, it is possible to know what the artist wishes that his work should represent to the eyes of those who view it. We are thus enabled to know the sense and purpose solidified in a masterpiece.

This internal purpose indicates the fundamental mission that the statue or painting is called upon to fulfill according to the intentions of the artist. This is the destiny that the artist has confided to his work.

In regard to the end and internal sense of the vocation of our Institute, we have come to the conclusion, by means of our considerations, that our Congregation, as every work of God, must reveal a divine perfection.

The nature of the work explains to us more clearly and in greater detail the perfection with which it is concerned, for God reveals himself differently in the thunderstorm and in the blossoming of Spring. Basing ourselves on the nature of our Congregation, we have concluded that our vocation must, in the final analysis, reveal God as the God of Love.

We have specified this proposition by saying that we have considered the internal end of the Institute as being meant to reveal the God of Love, not only in Himself, but in His principle external manifestation. The Congregation must be a manifestation of the Mystery of the Love of the Sacred Hearts in the Work of Salvation (*Mysterium Caritatis*).

This is its internal sense, its objective vocation: to be a sign, an objective indicator calling to mind this mystery of love by its very nature, by its simple existence, insofar as the Institute has such works and such a structure. Here we have its Static or Ontological mission.

However, as a society of free men, endowed with free will, the Congregation must also subjectively conform to this objective vocation. It must then act and work according to the vocation it has received. This is its dynamic or active mission.

Statically, the Congregation corresponds to the internal sense given to it when it symbolizes the Mystery of Love of the Sacred Hearts in the work of salvation, that is to say, by being a symbolic sign which reflects this by its very structure and by its works. This is the reason why its form is such that by its Constitution and its activities it represents a Symbolic Imitation of the Mystery of Love of the Sacred Hearts in the "Work of Salvation.

Actively, the Congregation lives according to the internal sense given to it when it shows this Mystery of Charity in its works when it is dedicated to them. This is the reason why all its activity is in the Service of the Mystery of Love of the Sacred Hearts in the Work of Salvation.

Having thus shown that the character of our Congregation is to be an "Imitation in the service of its model," that is to say of the Mystery of Love of the Sacred Hearts in the work of Salvation, we have opened the way to a more profound knowledge of its internal nature.

The end of the manifestation of the divine perfection in the external works of God is His external glory. When we apply this truth to the special purpose of the Congregation, we come to

the conclusion that the end of the Congregation is, in the last analysis, to Glorify God as the God of Love.

Its immediate and more specific purpose is the Glorification of the Mystery of Love of the Sacred Hearts in the Work of Salvation.

Our conclusions on the study of the character of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts can then be summed up as follows:

In the Divine Plan
the character and mission
of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts
are
to be both by its nature and by its works

A GLORIFICATION OF THE MYSTERIUM CARITATIS OF THE SACRED
HEARTS IN THE WORK OF SALVATION,
and that:

1) By its nature (statically): by a symbolic resemblance of its constitution and its works with the characteristics (<i>Mysterium Caritatis</i>) and the life of the Sacred Hearts in the acquisition of salvation (in the four ages);	2) By its works (dynamically): by its activity, in the work of education, adoration, preaching, mortification, in the service of the <i>Mysterium Caritatis</i> of the Sacred Hearts in the application of salvation (works corresponding to the four ages).
--	--

2. Place of the Congregation in the Universal Divine Plan.

The God of Love, who has created everything, not only willed that man come forth from His creating hands by Love, but He also willed that man be united to Him by means of love and return to Him by this means. From the very beginning then it is a mystery of love which hovers over Creation uniting the creature with his Creator.

This plan of love, which extended to all humanity, was troubled and disturbed by the fall of our first parents. But God knew how to repair it in a most excellent manner. Jesus, the Son of God, sent by the Father became for us a new Adam: Mary, representing humanity to be redeemed, a new Eve. An indissoluble bond unites Jesus and Mary in one unique *Mysterium Caritatis*, in the service of the work of salvation.

By the Redemption, the new Covenant of love between the appeased God and redeemed humanity was concluded in their Hearts. Thus, the *Mysterium Caritatis*, which is summed up in them, has taken in their Hearts, a point of departure for a mystical extension to all humanity: the elect form the Church-Spouse, who with Mary, are mystically united to Jesus, their divine Spouse, in the unity of the Mystical Body. Such is the universal *Mysterium Caritatis*, that is to say "Catholic": Christ and the Church with Mary, Spouses mystically united as the Body with the Head: the whole Christ, *Christus totus*.

Since the time of the Ascension for Jesus and the Assumption for Mary, the Savior and His Mother are no longer visible to us. Their *Mysterium Caritatis* is now a mystery of glory. But they remain at the center of the New Covenant of love sealed between God and men. From the height of heaven, they continue to work in the hearts of men to bring each one to participate in the *Mysterium Caritatis* thus extended to all men and become Catholic, universal, for all human beings can be received and sanctified in the womb of their Mother, the Church, the Spouse of Christ.

At the time chosen by God, the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar sprang forth from the bosom of the Church, appearing as an "Imitation in the service of its model." It has for its purpose to place in relief once again the *Mysterium Caritatis* of Jesus and Mary in its profound significance concerning the whole work of salvation: to underline its character of Love, insofar as it is the mystery of love of the Sacred Hearts; to be, finally, at its service.

The time of the foundation, of this Congregation came at the moment when a new poisonous current commenced to spread through the Catholic countries. It was thought possible to realize one's destiny without recourse to the *Mysterium Caritatis* of Jesus and Mary in the Redemptive work. A new era of earthly salvation, totally opposed to the divine liberation of humanity was even proclaimed: this was the instauration of the kingdom of evil. Then God and the Sacred Hearts judged it opportune to place in a special light this fundamental and central mystery of the whole new economy of Christian salvation. In view of the needs of the time, they wanted, above all, to accentuate the character of love which characterizes this economy.

Such an initiative could only take place within the Church, the guardian of the whole economy of salvation. All that pertains to the essence of the Mystery of Jesus and Mary in the realization of the Redemptive work must be found within the Church. The collaboration of the Savior and His Mother in this salvific work would be represented in a reproduction of the whole life of Jesus in its four ages, by the cooperation of a branch of men and one of women. Thus constituted as an imitation, the Institute would be in the service of the *Mysterium Caritatis* of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary in the application of the Redemptive graces, and it would collaborate in the final triumph of glory.

Everything must be concentrated in the love which must be emphasized. The *Mysterium Caritatis* of Jesus and Mary must then be proposed as a mystery of love of the Sacred Hearts seen in relation to the mystery of the Holy Eucharist as the most perfect actual expression of their love. Here is where the origin of perpetual adoration as a principal exercise of the cult of the Sacred Hearts must be sought, as well as the required efforts to spread this devotion, by revealing its relationship with the Eucharist. In this manner was revealed the concentration of the *Mysterium Caritatis* of the Sacred Hearts is the mystery of the Church, that is to say, in the Eucharist, as well as making it possible to define the position of the Congregation within the Church.

This concentration of the ideal of the Congregation in love, the Sacred Hearts, the Blessed Sacrament, requires by its nature that a special place be given to reparation. Reparation is, in effect, inseparably bound to the Mystery of Love of the Sacred Hearts, for their Redemptive work is a work of reparation and their Hearts are always misunderstood and offended. This is what justifies the character of our adoration, considered as an exercise of reparation to the Sacred Hearts and in them to God. The same is true for the practice of penance and reparation in general, which is for us a duty.

Such a profound and fruitful program could only be achieved by a Congregation comprising a branch of men and one of women, an Institute whose structure and activity would be a "reproduction of its model placed at its service."

The Congregation of the Sacred Hearts realizes all of these conditions. In the fulfillment of its mission in relation to the *Mysterium Caritatis* of the Sacred Hearts, at the same time it also serves, according to its place and manner, the mystical and more extensive *Mysterium Caritatis* of the Church with Christ, its Spouse. The universal mission of the Church, in effect, is to bring as many men as possible to a participation in this mystery of love, so that in it may be realized the last mystery of love of the Creator with His creature.

Thus the whole divine plan is revealed: God, the Creator, center of everything, binds to Himself all creatures as by lines of concentric force. A natural mystery of love binds all rational creatures to their Creator. God elevates this mystery to the supernatural order and in the fullness of time, He binds to Himself regenerated humanity in Christ and in Mary by constituting the Church. The origin, apogee and central point of this mystery of Love are in the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. While creating man and woman, God already saw the realization of this mystery by which the return of creatures to God would be brought about.

The *Mysterium Caritatis* of the Sacred Hearts is then the center of this whole plan. But by means of it the mystery of mysteries, the mystery of the Holy Trinity, enters into creation. This is the mystery of the intimate Life of God who is revealed in His exterior works as the God of love, who in this quality, draws to Himself once again all creation in the mystery of Love of the Sacred Hearts, the central mystery of our Institute.

In this mystery of love of the Sacred Hearts, the God of love inclines himself toward us. By the same way, man elevates himself once again in the Church toward God.

This is the only way of salvation by which creation rejoins and finds once again its God, who then will be also subjectively known by His creatures as being He whom He never ceased to be: the God who is all in all.

He who wishes to find this God of love must be able to love sincerely and generously, he must have a heart capable of singing always, now and in eternity, in union with the Sacred Hearts:

**GOD IS LOVE
DEUS CARITAS EST**