

**CONGREGATION OF THE SACRED HEARTS
OF JESUS AND MARY
AND OF PERPETUAL ADORATION
OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT
OF THE ALTAR**



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SECULAR BRANCH

Formation Manual
Sacred Hearts Secular Branch, Inc.

Sacred Heart Secular Branch

Formation Manual

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Congregation Website	http://www.sscpicpus.com/
	SS.CC. History, Secular Branch, Documents, Articles, etc.
US Province	http://www.ssc.org/
USA West Delegation	http://users.cpl.net/~ssccwest/

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Vision

*Sisters and brothers before God, three (3) branches, one family
United in the same Charism, united in the same mission in a single
congregation to recreate and develop a new
dynamic model of community in different ministries.*

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this work is to acquaint, inform, teach and provide some basic materials on belonging to the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. The hunger of people to belong to an approved religious community since Vatican Council II has intensified and grown and many are called as lay people to join, belong or attach themselves to an approved Congregation or Order. This has been a reality from way back in history. Many religious Orders and Congregations began from devout people who came together under a founder or foundress who had a vision and developed a charism. Although "secular institutes" have existed in the Church since the 1500's they were only finally recognized by the Holy *See* in 1947. The official code of canon law also endorses and recognizes such approval and has designated Canons 710-730 to deal with the functioning of such organizations.

The Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary was founded in the year 1800 A.D. and approved by the Holy See in the papal bull *Sub Plumbo (Pastor Aeternus)* in 1817 by Pope Pius VII. This Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar had co-founders in Father Pierre Coudrin, known as the Good Father (Bone Pere) and Henriette Aymer de la Chevalerie known as the Good Mother (Bone Mere).

The foundation (Congregation) designated by the initials SS.CC (Sacre Couer, Sacre Couer) had an active lay community at the beginning. The present affiliation of belonging to the SS.CC can be traced back to these historical beginnings.

There are many and varied ways to belong to the SS.CC and each degree of belonging has its responsibilities and obligations attached to it, depending on the personal commitment.

There are brothers and sisters who profess vows and live a committed religious life. These brothers and sisters would undergo formation and then they make public profession and commitment to the SS.CC. This process sanctioned by the lawful canonical authority within the Order makes them official members of the Congregation. These commitments are life commitments and the professed are called religious of the Sacred Hearts.

Then there is the Secular Branch of the Congregation which comprises lay people in good standing in their faith who enter into a formation program and make continuous renewed commitments. There is a similar way of belonging to the Congregation which is entitled "The Association of the Sacred Hearts." The associate is an integral part, as are the Secular Branch members of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, in origin, purpose and spirit. It is an extension to the people living in the world and also a response to Vatican II's emphasis on the lay person.

The Congregation, with its professed members, its Secular Branch members and its Associates form a single spiritual family. In this sense all of them are called to live the "charism" of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

The title of member applies strictly and canonically to the professed Religious only while the Secular Branch and Associates affiliation does not qualify as members. The Code of Canon Law in Canon 327 can be translated and applied as follows:

"The lay members of the Christian faithful are to esteem greatly the association established for the spiritual purpose of growth and especially those which propose to animate the temporal order with the Christian Spirit. Basically, the SS.CC charism is an essential condition for belonging to the SS.CC.

CHARISM

The word charism as it applies here has two applications that are necessary for a good grasp and working ability in living out a charism. The Catholic Encyclopedia describes charism: Charismata (also Charisma) Our English word "charism" is from the Greek charisma(ta), which refers to a "free gift." The term has both a non-technical and a technical sense to it. At a non-technical level charismata refers to spiritual gifts in general (Romans 1:11;5:15 ff.;11:29; 1 Cor12: 1), eternal life (Romans 6:23) or answers to prayers (2 Cor 1:11). Charismata are special gifts which, as service directed to the Lord, manifest the work of God through the Holy Spirit — all for the common good of the body of believers, the Church. This "work of God" includes a myriad of behaviors and especially a knowledge of God, as the following four lists make clear: (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Cor 12:8-10: 12:28; 12:29-30). The gifts always point to the giver; their authentic use in the Church is a fulfillment of God's work initiated in the Old Testament (e.g., prophetic discernment: 1 Kgs 22:28; gifts of the Spirit for the messianic age: Is 11:2; change of heart: Ez 36: 26ff.).

The charism of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar is described in the Constitutions as "The Consecration to the Sacred Hearts is the foundation of our Institute" B.P. (Bone Pere)

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

Our consecration calls us to live the dynamism of saving Love and fills us with zeal for our mission. Father Juan Vincente Gonzales, SS.CC in his booklet "We have believed in Love" describes the charism as follows:

In the charism, there appears the Spirit-induced sensitivity of faith to the signs of the times, to the will of God manifested in events. The events can change but the charism keeps that sensitivity alive and brings forth fruits of service to the Church and the world.

The Principal Elements of Our Charism

The charism given by God to the Founder became the charism of the community, creating a "communion" (Koinonia) of faith, church-consciousness and an attitude of service. This "communion" has, in our case, certain elements or attitudes which constitute the Congregation as an apostolic and missionary community, bound by its very consecration to the service of both God and people. So as to simplify things, we have reduced these elements to three. We consider them inseparable insofar as they make up the richness of a single unique gift by God and a single unique option by those who receive the gift.

These elements are not a mold which would, as it were, package life. They involve rather a common perspective for reading the Gospel as "Good News" for humankind, and for achieving a communion which will allow us to act in a communitarian manner in the service of the Church. They form a perspective which helps to integrate all of community and personal life toward evangelical fullness. The three elements are: *A) One in Zeal for God's Activity in the World, B) One in the Attitude of "Servant, "Like the Hearts of Jesus and Mary C) One in Perpetual Adoration.*

A. One in Zeal for God's Activity in the World

The community is gathered by God in the midst of the darkness of this world, to surrender itself by the radical consecration of religious life to serve his activity in the world, an activity which is visible to the eyes of faith.

God's activity shines as a light in the darkness. It is that activity which the Wisdom, Love and Omnipotence of God are accomplishing in the human history in which we live, and which reaches to the heart of every person. It is the preparation of the Kingdom and its hidden anticipation. Those alone recognize it who know the secret. It cannot be confused with any human machinations or any earthly enterprise or organization.

The community, knowing itself to be called, remains a thirst for the Word of God and attentive to the signs of his will, and concerned for unity with both the universal and local Church. It does not rely on human power or on money. It does not use even that power which comes from service for its own interests, other than to increase its capacity to serve. It does not put its trust in appearances, in fame or renown, in worldly prestige, but in the satisfaction of being an instrument of the profound and silent activity of the "hidden God." Even though it uses all the means at its disposal to "announce the Gospel everywhere" and to preach from the rooftops, it is never in order to proclaim itself.

Assembled in the midst of the tensions of our times, it is very sensitive to the ravages of sin in the world and in persons. It is pained by the dehumanization of human life and society caused by egotism and by all the so-called "social sins" which it motivates. It suffers in the poor, in the sick, in so many people who are alone and abandoned in the midst of a heartless world, so full of violence, hatred, indifference and apathy.

It knows that the Gospel is destined above all for the poor. It is concerned with the real-life person, just as he or she is, more than with abstractions which conceal or betray the individual. It wants to be an accomplice of the Good Samaritan and to open an inn for every wounded human being it encounters on its journey.

The community senses itself to be united by an ardent zeal for God's activity, for his Kingdom, and it has no fear of its enemies because it knows that they have been already vanquished. "Have confidence, I have overcome the world" (Jn 16:33).

An option for God's activity is an option for humanity as envisioned by God. It is not an evasion of what is of interest to human existence but rather a new meaning for life and therefore for all of its activities. This service of people is an assurance for the community that its love for its brothers and sisters is a reality and therefore that its love for God is not a romantic dream but one which has been made to "pass from death to life" (1 Jn 3:4)

This vision of reality makes the community feel the urgency of a radical and definitive commitment to the Kingdom of God and to God's activity. The three vows which are taken, poverty, chastity, and obedience, are an option of zeal, and of courageous and wholehearted zeal ("plein de courage"). It looks at Jesus and Mary united in God's activity and wants to "live and die" in their service.

B. One in the Attitude of "Servant," Like the Hearts of Jesus and Mary

God's activity, in its deepest reality, is, for the community, what Ezekiel proclaims: "I shall pour clean water over you and you shall be cleansed; I shall cleanse you of all your defilement and all your idols. I shall give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I shall remove the heart of stone from your bodies and give you a heart of flesh instead. I shall... make you keep my laws and sincerely respect my observances" (Ez. 36:25-28).

This "new heart" is the Heart of the New Man, Jesus Christ, the Heart of the Servant of Yahweh. No one has understood this heart more profoundly than his Mother and no one has achieved a more perfect communion with him. Like Mary, we too have remained looking "on him whom they have pierced" (Jn. 19:37).

Like Jesus and Mary, the community wants to be of "one heart and soul," making its own as fully as possible the "sentiments of Christ Jesus" and his "new commandment," so that being "perfect in unity" it may succeed in convincing the world that the Father has sent his Son to adopt all (Jn 17:23).

The community experiences the great love which God has for it precisely in the vocation and election which he has given to it or, if you like, in its "charism," and in the help by which he has shown himself to be with the

community throughout its history (its exodus), in his patience with its frailties, and in the happiness he grants to it from being in his service."

God's activity is vast and the communion broad and open. For this reason, the Congregation esteems and welcomes diverse vocations and activities within its embrace, various personal charisms, provided they are open to working together complementarily in communitarian service to the Kingdom. The community respects and esteems diversity and loves God's activity in each member. In the community all help each other to be useful to the Church. Making the four stages of Christ present in the world, the community wants to manifest the whole Heart of Christ through its communitarian witness.

The five stages of Spirituality of the SS.CC.

Fr. Marie Joseph Coudrin who founded the Congregation with Sr. Henriette Aymer de la Chevalarie pointed to the four stages in the life of Jesus. These four stages were (1) The Early Life or Infancy; (2) The hidden life; (3) The Apostolic Life; (4) The Crucified Life.

1. The early life which would be mostly the Annunciation through the Christmas story etc. It points to humility and lowliness, simplicity etc.
2. The hidden life which points to the time from the finding in the temple, age 12, till the first miracle at Cana. The virtues stressed in this time span would be obedience, humility and a sense of family.
3. The apostolic life which is the time of His public life. This time is devoted to learning and knowing Jesus Christ and His gospel. The virtues here would be faith, hope and charity. This stage would be essential to our faith.
4. The crucified life which includes the passion and death of Jesus. The virtues here would be love, "no greater love has anyone than to lay down his life". The virtue of obedience runs throughout all four stages – Jesus submits to the Father.

Perhaps there is also a fifth stage and that would be "The Resurrected Life". By His resurrection, we have become a new creation 2 Lk 5,7. In the teachings of Vatican Council II (Lumen Gentium) we are called the people of God living in the power of the resurrection.

The awareness of being small, without human power and poor, does not trouble the community but consoles it. Hear as words spoken to yourself what the Lord has said: "Do not be afraid, my little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the Kingdom" (Lk 12:32). Or the words of St. Paul: "To me, the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ" (Eph 3:8).

These riches are found, for the community, in the Heart of the Servant who has revealed them, and in the Heart of Mary who has welcomed them. They comprise its secret and its treasure, in exchange for which it is prepared to sell all it possesses. The contents are beyond counting.

It is thus its purpose to create in people a "new heart," the heart of a child, so that Jesus might be "the first of many brothers and sisters" (Rom 8:29), and the love of God may be communicated and shared with joy and invincible hope (Rom 8:35-39).

This "love of a child" is no romantic sentiment but communion in the self-surrender of the Servant, who "loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal 2:20), and participation in the love "poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us" (Rom 5:5).

As a consequence, there is a sharing with the Servant in his acceptance of providential suffering and in carrying our cross every day in order to follow Jesus (Lk 9:23).

The cross is the pain of the arduous duty, the suffering of the historical tensions which oppress us, the adversities and frailties of our neighbors, the sorrows and afflictions which affect us in life, the renunciation which penance for sin demands from us; all lived in communion with the Servant.

The community knows that in this "obedience even to the Cross" (Phil 2:8) there lies the most hidden secret of the Servant, which can free it most effectively from the danger of secularizing the Gospel and assure a true following of Jesus.

We must carry the Cross daily not only "because we cannot be pampered members of a head crowned with thorns" (St. Bernard), but also because we must enter into His Activity and "do our share on behalf of his body (which is the Church) in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions" (Col 1:24).

Because of all of these, our religious profession together with being "consecrated to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary", their activity which is the activity of God is also a "sacrifice", a paschal experience of death and resurrection (the former Miserere/Te Deum of the ceremony with the funeral pall). For the same reason, to "live and die" in the service of the Sacred Hearts is to live and die in the service of God and His people. The joy of this experience strengthens us to proclaim the Good News of the "Sacred Hearts" to all. "We have put our faith in God's love" (1 Jn 4:16).

What might be helpful in understanding the "Charism" in our time are two different movements of recent history. One is that the charism, a gift of the Holy Spirit was given to the founder in the middle of the French Revolution, which was a period of violence, hatred and anti-religion. When hatred and violence raged the charism brought peace and love. God restored love through that charism.

Secondly, the Second Vatican Council emphasized the Sacrament of Baptism as an on-going source of Christian life and love in the soul of the individual believer. It admits us to the kingdom of God and the family of Christ. Baptism is not static or relativistic. It lives on and unites us to Jesus and our salvation. How does it do that? Simply by how we live our lives. There is always a 'fervor' to our baptism and it is expressed in our spirituality. We can be a people that live our lives with a particular expression or fervor to our baptism as Secular Branch members in the charism of the Sacred Hearts — to contemplate, live and proclaim, the love in the heart of Jesus as modeled by Mary.

C. One in Perpetual Adoration

Communion in God's activity in the world to the point of entering into the secret of the servant led the community to a communion in perpetual adoration. The adoration in turn nourished and contributed to the day to day building up of this unity.

Adoration as lived by the community of the founders encompassed two complementary aspects which is well to consider separately for better understanding. First, there is adoration as a cultic exercise of the community, carried out by the members succeeding each other, day and night, before the tabernacle in the name of the community. In the second place, it is the interior attitude of every member of the Congregation, not only when at the prie-dieu (meaning kneeler), but in their whole life, especially when they serve the Church and their brothers and sisters in the apostolate, making themselves instruments of God's Activity.

This same spiritual content is expressed in the sources of the Congregation, as was frequently done in the 19th Century Church, in the language of sacrifice. For example, it is said that "one must offer oneself as a victim" in religious profession or adoration, that profession constitutes us in "the condition of victims," etc.

Changing Times

Some of the words used such as "victim," "surrender," etc. sound and seem too harsh or out of order. Nowadays, these expressions usually evoke aversion, masochism or smack of cowardly hypocrisy. This distorts and betrays the attitude of humble, sincere and generous adherence to God's will as found in Jesus Crucified, which the Congregation seeks to live and which is the profound purpose of the Founder.

Having this genuine sensibility in mind, the Rule of Life prefers to use the terminology "Servant of Yahweh" which expresses the same thing without provoking the distortions mentioned above (cf. 76-80).

Then on the 100th anniversary of the founder (Fr. Pierre Coudrin, SS.CC.) the charism shows a remarkable development and unfolds in specific expressions the spirituality of the SS.CC. Congregation:

"Consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary is the foundation of our Institute" (Fr. Coudrin, December 6, 1816). This consecration gives a special dimension to our particular vocation in the Church. It highlights our Faith in God's personal, tender, unconditional love for us and in His good guidance of our lives: "The 'Good God' gives us His grace, His blessing; He sustains and guides us during our life. He accomplishes His work in us and through us. From Him comes health and sickness, joy and sorrow, success and trials: (C. de Sp. 10, no. 98). This constant sense of being loved, experienced by Fr. Coudrin is expressed by our consecration to the Heart of Christ, source and symbol of that faithful love. Our awareness of His love permeates our lives and all our attitudes. Mary, through her faith, her silence and her full-hearted self-giving is a model for us, as we seek to enter the sentiments of the Heart of Jesus. She is our companion along the way.

The life of Christ ("the **four** stages") as a source and inspiration in both of our lives and for determining the mission and the ministries of the Congregation, the awareness that no one can exhaust the richness and fullness of Christ allows for a real diversity in unity (cf. **R. L.** 6 and 32-53)

The zeal to proclaim the good news of His love, especially to the poor, as we "put on the mind and the heart" of Jesus the Servant, "the love of Christ urges us on". From that love flows our warm concern for persons, especially for the weak and the oppressed. This spirit seems most appropriate today as a response to a world which is becoming more and more depersonalized and dehumanized. This zeal, flowing from His love, frees us to respond to the needs of the Church and of the world. As in the case of the Founders themselves, these needs demand on our part availability, mobility, flexibility- a missionary spirit that knows no bounds. "This spirit orients us especially towards service to the poorest of Christ's brothers" (G. Ch. Doc, p. 10c).

It is important to see this development of the charism and how the charism, needs to be adapted to the signs of the times and that the charism also is a sign of contradiction, just like the Gospel while a founder's charism may not live forever, it may survive him /her in the members until the Spirit sees fit to remove it or more possibly when people stop or cease to live it.

A well known spiritual author reflects on charism and suggests that all member have it (the charism), in the early stages before they join "It may be brought to conscious awareness by contact with other members who share the same charism. It would appear that not all members live the charism to the same degree but it is in those who live it more vibrantly that it regenerates itself more effectively.

GOOD FATHER



Father Pierre Coudrin

The Good Father, Founder, Father Pierre Coudrin was born on March 1, 1768 in Coussay Les-Bois. His father was Abraham Francois Coudrin 1731-1820 and his mother was Marie Rion. He is one of eight children four of whom died early. His family was quite religious. His uncle in particular, Francois Rion was ordained a priest and cared for the young Pierre especially when Pierre's father lost a court case and the family became impoverished. His road to the priesthood was fought with difficulties and obstacles but he was ordained a priest on March 4, 1792 in the Irish College, Paris by Bishop Bonal.

The register of ordinations 1791-1792 for the diocese of Paris, preserved in the archdiocesan archives, informs us that on March 4, 1792 with the permission of Archbishop de Juigne, by virtue of Pius VI's indult granted on May 4, 1791 to French bishops, Bishop de Bonal will confer the Holy Priesthood upon Peter Coudrin, the Deacon from Poitiers.

It is very necessary to have a good understanding of the events of the time and the state of the French way of life. In fact, there was a revolution in full swing. In 1789, the old ways or the "ancient regime" was toppled. The reign of terror was unleashed upon Paris and many were guillotined (executed). The Church was civilly constituted. In other words, the Church as it had existed ceased to be and it was now, governed, controlled and operated by the government of France. The King and Queen had been executed and it was the Revolutionary government that was the legitimate ruler of France. The clergy were bound and ordered to swear an oath of allegiance to the French government and were forbidden to be loyal or faithful to Rome. If they were found faithful to Rome, they were hunted down and executed. It was into this world that the newly ordained Father Pierre Coudrin stepped. In fact, commensurate with his ordination was his condemnation as an outlaw and an enemy of the State. There was a price on his head.

Two main events now fashioned the life of the new priest. Pierre Coudrin was a priest on the run. He had to constantly be moving for fear of being caught and executed. Because of this he earned the name or pseudonym of La Marche-a-Terre which is translated "The March Hare."

The police arrived one night while Father Coudrin was administering the Last Sacraments to a dying man. The next bed was empty: the corpse of a vagabond, known by no name other than "Marche-a-Terre," had just been removed. Holding his breath, Father Coudrin replaces the deceased under the pall. The police bypassed him, and "Marche-a-Terre" is thus born. The name stayed with him. In his investigation of 1837, Father Hilarion remarks that Father Coudrin is still called "Marche-a-Terre" not only in Poitiers, but in several locales of Poitiers and Touraine where he went to "exercise the sacred duties of his ministry at the risk of his life."

The next two significant events in his life were life changing and indeed would be viewed as instrumental in facilitating the foundation of the new Congregation. Because the Marche-a-Terre or March Hare was a man on the run, he secluded himself in a granary called La "Motte D'Usseau, in Chatellerault. He would spend most of his time there in prayer and descend from the loft to the downstairs to offer Mass and carry particles of the host back up to his very cramped quarters for adoration. On one such occasion, Father Coudrin describes his life changing and foundational vision.

"There it was that one day, when I had returned to the attic, having said Mass already, that I knelt down beside the corporal in which I believed the Blessed Sacrament always remained. I saw then what we are now. I thought that we were united as one; that we were forming a group of missionaries who should spread the gospel everywhere. While I was thinking about this society of missionaries, I also had a vision of a society of women, but not of a community like the one which exists at present, because I had never seen any nuns. I said to myself: we shall not have money nor an income and we will be devoured by lice. Also, as far as I can remember, I cannot say it definitely for fear, it may not be true, there will be a society of devout women who will look after us while we do the missionary work." (H.L. No.62)

The other experience that really inspired him to follow this vision and promote it was the St. Caprasias experience.

While reading his office one day, Father Coudrin read the story of St Caprasius who was a bishop and like Father Coudrin was in hiding.

This saint was a bishop in the first century who fled his city because of persecution. He sought refuge in a hill overlooking the city and from there he could see what was happening down below. One day he saw a 20-year-old girl preferring to be burnt at the stake rather than deny her faith. The Bishop convicted of his own cowardice was forced to proclaim his faith before the entire city. He was immediately martyred.

Father Coudrin was probably moved by this reading and there and then decided to leave and challenge death. He said: "When I left Momaen I prostrated myself at the foot of an oak tree not far from the house and there I offered my life... However, I had a kind of presentiment that I would be spared." This presentiment was to remain with the Good Father during the rest of his life. When he left his hiding place he journeyed to Poitiers where he hoped to establish contact with the priests of the resistance.

He was convinced that the schism would last for some years. In spite of the dangers involved the young priest threw himself into apostolic activity, saying Mass, hearing Confessions, giving spiritual direction and visiting the sick and dying.

The next influence in the early priesthood of Father Coudrin was the "Cor Unum" organization. The Cor Unum is best described as a secret Congregation whose members were recruited from among the seminarians living apart from the seminary such as Peter Coudrin

This Society, also established in many other dioceses, required of its members "a docile character, a judicious and constant mind, and a truly indisputable Catholicism" exempt from all "spirit of novelty," i.e., in the XVIII century of Jansenism, Gallicanism, and this tendency toward rationalistic deism, whose aims were nothing less than the gratification of treating Our Lord Jesus Christ and His Church with contemptible silence or blasphemy, for the purpose of concluding in a cold and dry manner of reasoning, by the god of philosophers, replacing the living God in a natural religion that chills souls. The Cor Unum taught them to return love for love to God, Who having created us without blemish, sent His Only-Begotten-Son to redeem us after our fall, and to make us live as the Holy Spirit's adopted sons. The members were taught an inviolable attachment to the Pope and submission to the bishops who never in the name of false theology, questioned the judgments of the Sovereign Pontiff.

This Cor Unum society was a branch of the older society of the Assembly and we read about its influence in the early life of the Congregation. Instead of Assembly the initials Aa are used. The following is an excerpt from a letter written in July 18, 1837.

"Here are the three great works for which the Aa is responsible: Foreign Missions, the Missions of France, and the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary of which Father Coudrin (from the Aa of Poitiers) is the Superior General."

Father Coudrin's association with the Cor Unum movement also prepared him for his pastoral ministry and chaplaincy to a group of four ladies who formed the Association in Poitiers in 1792. The leader was a woman named Suzanne Geoffroy. This Association could be described as the cradle that nourished the seedlings of the new Congregation of the Sacred Hearts.

This association wished to obtain, through prayer before the hidden God in the tabernacle, divine mercy and grace. Added to these prayers were tasks for the good of souls and the Church, e.g., the instruction of youth deprived of their pastors, assistance of the sick in their bodily and spiritual needs, and support of priests and religious. Their name was the "Association of the Sacred Heart of Jesus."

As time went on, they began to expand and to take on a more structured form. Distinction was made between "resident" and "non-resident" (intern and extern) members. The interns lived in a kind of religious community, but without vows. Externs were those who continued to live with their families but took part in the adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, and also in the monthly retreats of the interns. A council of six priests provided spiritual care and guidance to the Association. On April 22, 1794, Father Coudrin entered into a more intimate contact with this Association which he had known for some time. He accepted the responsibility of providing the necessary services on Sundays and holydays. Characteristic of him was the condition he imposed: "Anyone who wishes to assist at the Mass must be admitted. If not, I am going to stand in the doorway saying my breviary and admit them myself." Father Coudrin became a member of the council and soon exercised a definite influence upon the development of the Association. In many respects it corresponded to his piety and the spirit which he had acquired during his student years as a member of the society Cor Unum. He may also have seen in the Association of the Sacred Heart the beginning of the process of realizing that purpose which he had cultivated ever since the mysterious vision at La Motte d'Usseau. The Association soon came to the logical realization of perpetual adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament which was inspired, developed and instituted by Madame Suzanne Geoffroy. She writes as follows: "While kneeling before Our Lord one day when notification of very rigorous house-to-house investigation had been announced, a thought came to mind that if I placed two adorers at His feet, nothing would happen to us. I was very impulsive in those days and did things without deliberation or counsel; no sooner had a thought arisen that it was put into action. Thus, I placed a chair at each side of the altar; I occupied one, while one of our religious took the other. This was the beginning of Perpetual Adoration which is still being practiced in the Picpus Congregation today. When Father Coudrin saw this, he asked about it; I told him of the idea I had, adding that we would discontinue its practice if he so judged. He gave his complete approval, so we continued. The women from the exterior took on day adoration and we carried on throughout the night." This adoration was performed by the interns during the night and by both interns and externs during the day. An exemplary fervor for prayer and reparation animated the members, but at the same time their external activities, mentioned before, were not neglected.

GOOD MOTHER



Henriette Aymer de la Chevalarie

This Association of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is intimately linked with Henriette Aymer de la Chevalarie, who became the Foundress of the Congregation and was known as the Good Mother. Her life and the events of her life parallel the life of Father Coudrin in many ways. She was born a year before Father Coudrin in 1767.

Henriette Aymer de la Chevalarie was born August 11, 1767 at St. Georges-de-Noisne in Poitiers. She was the daughter of Louis Aymer de la Chevalarie a career soldier and her mother Marie Louise De Vesaneag. She had two siblings, two brothers, Louis and Dominique. Her family was well connected to the nobility of France. Her family moved to Poitiers and when she was ten years old her father died. This had a profound impact upon her. It is similar in a way to the setback of Father Coudrin when his family became impoverished.

Her ambitious mother introduced her attractive, talented and vivacious daughter into the circles of the so-called higher society. The young lady enjoyed the numerous convivial festivities as they were organized in accordance with the social position of the family before the year 1789.

The French Revolution changed everything for her. The family de la Chevalerie was by tradition and conviction sincerely Catholic and faithful to the Church. Persecuted priests found a warm welcome in the Chevalerie home. They were denounced, and on October 22, 1793, their house was constantly searched by the gendarmes. One time a priest was discovered and along with him the two ladies, mother and daughter, were thrown into prison.

The sojourn in the prison became for Henriette a time of conscious reflection and divine grace. A life of terror and fear ruled the lives of people in general and of individuals as well. In addition, the probability and even the certainty of execution with many of their fellow-prisoners, all this aroused in the soul of Henriette a deep fear and consternation. Up to that time, she had not indulged in a bad life. She was not guilty of any serious sin against the Commandments of God. But her life had been rather superficial. All this gave way, from then on, to deep and serious reflection.

In prison, Henriette occupied herself with the little daughter of the prison guard. She sang songs for her and played with her. The child soon became very much attached to her great friend. Grateful for such attention, the prison guard repeatedly removed the names of the ladies de la Chevalerie from the list of those condemned to be executed. Then at the death of Robespierre, though the terror of the Revolution did not end completely,

at least there were no more mass executions. Finally, at the end of 1794, after twelve months of prison life, mother and daughter regained their freedom.

While still in prison, Henriette had used the opportunity to make a general confession to a priest who had found a way to penetrate into the prison. After her return to freedom, she led a very retired life. The entire time left after her household chores and care for her mother was now devoted to fervent adoration before the tabernacle wherever she found a hidden place of prayer.

One day, Henriette assisted at a Mass and sermon preached by Father Coudrin. She was so impressed by his words that she resolved to take him for her confessor and spiritual director.

After some time in spiritual direction Father Coudrin introduced Henriette to the Association and she was admitted as an extern. The extern in the Association was not living in the Community but did participate in Community prayers and events.

The "Association of the Sacred Heart" was a group of fervent persons who had an aim to live piously and to provide for persecuted priests a refuge where they could exercise their priestly ministry; Henriette felt herself drawn ever more strongly to this and also Eucharistic Adoration. Before long, a group of young women, wishing to lead a religious life gathered around her. This first "nucleus" was called "Les Solitaires."

Henriette began to emerge as a leader in the Solitaires. Under the guidance of Father Coudrin, Henriette now entered into the spirit of the Association of the Sacred Heart of Jesus as well as the intentions of Father Coudrin for the founding of a Congregation. Together with him she deliberated, planned and prayed.

In the spring of 1797, Henriette was asked by Father Coudrin to find a suitable house and for persons fit for the new foundation. Henriette, who in the meantime had been accepted into the group of interns, found within this group like-minded members, ready for the religious life. They joined ranks, devoted themselves to a life of prayer, reparation and perpetual silence in a very austere life. The other members called them "the recluses." Their spiritual direction and formation were in the hands of Father Coudrin. The council of priests and Mlle Geoffroy gave their approval when the "recluses" requested the favor that Henriette be their superior.

From that moment on a group was formed within the group. This fact would necessarily lead to tensions and possible competition. For example, there were two superiors with differing viewpoints; there was a council of six priests; there were some members who were leaning in the direction of the religious state, while others had no such idea.

Everybody was of good will. All wished to save the unity of the Association and prevent a rupture. In spite of this, the situation became intolerable. Just at this time Henriette was able to find a suitable house. On June 23, 1797, feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, the sale of a house and garden in the Rue des Hautes-Treilles was concluded. In the beginning of September 1797 a small procession went at night through the streets of Poitiers towards the Rue des Hautes-Treilles. At its head walked Father Coudrin with the Blessed Sacrament, followed by Henriette and her five companions. During that night, at the Grand-Maison, as this house was called, the perpetual adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament began—and up to the present time it has never been interrupted. The Grand-Maison became the cradle and a venerable shrine of the Congregation. When Father Coudrin, in the company of Henriette and Mlle Irene de Viart, saw the house, he could not hide his astonishment. "Now this is completely as I saw it!" he exclaimed. The vision he had witnessed in La Motte d'Usseau had become a reality. The fledgling organization was becoming more and more specific in the expression of a charism devoted to the Sacred Heart. While other orders, congregations and diocesan clergy were outlawed and suppressed, The Sacred Heart Association under the dual guidance of Father Coudrin and Henriette Aymer de la Chevalarie was growing. In 1800, the female branch met and received diocesan approval. One year later, the male branch received diocesan approval and on Christmas 1800,

both Founder and Foundress took their vows. 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."

"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 24^h 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 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." Father Marie Joseph" (26)

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

Soon thereafter, the young Congregation spread its wings with the growth and development of new houses and foundations.

From 1802-1809 new foundations were made in Mende (1802); Cahors (1803); Paris (1804); Laval (1804); Picpus(1805); and Sees (1806), where a Major Seminary was established.

By 1806 there were 23 professed members in the male branch — 12 priests and 11 lay brothers and there were 58 sisters. Four brothers died by this time and twenty-one sisters.

One good reason for this is the charism that the young Congregation lived and promoted. The charism of the Congregation was the love in the heart of Jesus. It was truly a prophetic charism since it stood in contrast with the French Revolution, The Reign of Terror and the Age of Reason. All of these movements dismissed faith but the love of the Sacred Heart as lived and experienced by the early members of the Congregation spoke volumes to the world and brought hope to the Church. In the 1800's, the Congregation of the SS.CC was the crook of the Holy Spirit in the Church.

EARLY DEVELOPMENT

Road to Papal Approbation

In 1814 Father Hilarion journeyed to Rome seeking Papal approbation. On the 4th of August and November 27th he had audiences with Pius VII. In 1816 the Good Father sent a copy of the Constitutions to Rome and on the 24th of May Father Hilarion presented the Sacred Congregation with a copy of the Constitutions in Latin. On the 20th of December 1816 the Sacred Congregation of Religious approved the Congregation and Papal approval was given in January 1817. On November 17th, 1817 the Papal Bull, *Pastor Aeternus*, was promulgated thus giving approval to the Congregation.

The Congregation continued to grow. In January 1819 there were 57 professed brothers and there were approximately 186 sisters.

It is interesting to note the development of the different states, organizations and spiritual groups to which the Founders belonged and participated in, before finally emerging as the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts. These stages include, the Assembly which was nationwide (France), the Assembly of the Sacred Heart, the Solitaires, Recluses, the Zealots and finally the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts which in turn became the Picpus Fathers because they lived in Rue de Picpus in Paris. The word "zealot" was the preferred word but this term was rejected because Zealots of the love of the Sacred Hearts, reduced to its proper and natural meaning, would say: persons who had participated in the Revolution and would be regarded as terror motivated.

"Some Cardinals, their Eminences, the Cardinals Mattei, Duguani, de Morozzo, and another whose name remains unknown, were equally opposed to the word 'zealot' and also made objections. This unanimity was doubtless an evident sign that Rome was not in favor of the proposed title."

But the Good Father, informed of the objections which the Holy See made, resolved to attempt a lost effort in order to save a title so dear to his heart. It is true that on October 6, 1814, he wrote to Father Hilarion in Rome: "Try to get an approbation under the title of Adorers if you cannot get one for Zealots..." (S.B.P., II, p. 136).

However, the word zealot does capture the principal aim of the institute. It is very important to understand and grasp the central focus and the essential aim of the new congregations. Much confusion, apathy and misunderstanding would ensue unless the aim of the new Congregation is properly understood. To that purpose the word charism — a unique giftedness would anchor a thorough comprehension of the aim of the new Congregation. This whole idea is best expressed in the life of the Good Father at a time when he was seeking the approbation of the Holy See for the new Congregation.

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

"The same thing can be said in considering our Institute in itself and also relative to the members which compose it. What we need is a name which will daily remind our brothers of their duties and their obligations; which will recall to them at each moment that they should sacrifice themselves through holy zeal for the Lord. Their title should ever keep before their minds that they will fail in their most essential duties the moment that they desire to live for themselves alone, without working for the salvation of their brothers.

The title should remind them that they ought not to enter into the silence of the cloister except to gain new strength with which to combat the enemies of religion, and finally, that their vocation is wholly one of zeal, and that a zeal which is burning.

"The title of Zealots is often employed in books of piety. We have a little office of the Sacred Heart of Mary, published a half-century ago in France, in which the Heart of Mary is honored under the title of bountiful Zealot of souls: 'Zealot alme cordium.'"

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

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

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

At the time of this approbation there were approximately 57 professed brothers and about 186 professed sisters. The lay people continued their prayers, adoration and support of the new Congregation. France at this time was under the aegis, domination of Napoleon. Napoleon forced the Church to go underground. The Sisters sought vocations from the women laity who prayed and supported them.

The Sisters, from the beginning, found vocations in the already adult group of the "Exterior Association," whose members shared the community's spiritual ideals and adoration during the day, and were present in shifts at the house. Thence there came many vocations of mature persons, called to consecrate themselves to God, who due to the suppression of religious congregations, had not found the means to do so, on account of the circumstances of which we are well aware.

The brothers on the other hand had a more difficult time since Napoleon had basically outlawed the Church. The brothers therefore, had to work under secrecy to generate vocations.

Thus it is clear that while the canonical congregation was growing, the Exterior Association continued its prayerful support and also saw itself as belonging to the newly approved Congregation.

Thus, not only was the Congregation approved and growing but its Constitutions, charism, aim, and Foundation were established. Also, the Congregation at this time was comprised of both male and female Religious and had an Association of lay people in support. This is verified in the following:

Historically, it is clear that the original association as it was conceived by our Founders, was not simply 'another work' of the Congregation, but rather (with all the force that the term signifies) it was to be an "extension of the Congregation".

Letter of Fr. Jean Baptiste Proust, SS.CC. to Fr. Ignacio de la Cruz Banos, SS.CC. (28.04.1953)

So as the new Congregation is being formed there are many concerns and issues to be clarified and defined e.g. aim, desire of the Founders, etc.

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

The interpretation of the results of the Preliminary Chapter may be confusing since they seem to focus more on the **four** stages than anything else. However, if we consider the principal aim of the Congregation then we see the four stages as a means to attain the principal aim of the Congregation.

If, after having gone through all the documents which treat of the end of the Institute, we wish to sum up all that they contain, we should say that the special end and aim of our Institute is: the consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and the practice and propagation of true devotion to these Sacred Hearts. The basis and the characteristic note of the Congregation is the devotion to the Sacred Hearts. Its whole life is summed up in the new rule motto which is its own: "Sacris Cordibus Jesu et Mariae honor et Gloria" (to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, honor and Glory). The imitation of the four stages of the life of Jesus merely indicates the manner in which this fundamental idea may be realized as the basis of its entire existence.

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

It must be kept in mind that the Rule is not a treatise on asceticism, but a code which briefly indicates the way which leads to perfection. Then one will understand that in their Rule the Founders could not make use of the lengthy descriptions, indicating the aim of the Congregation, which they used in their petitions. Instead, they had to choose a brief formula which would recall in a few words "to the members who were to compose the new Institute, the entire extent of their obligations."

The task before the new Congregation now was enormous and the general chapters of 1819 and 1824 are descriptive of the membership in the Congregation, the unity of both branches and the formation of the spirituality of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts. What follows is a brief description of both General Chapters.

PRELIMINARY CHAPTER

General Chapter 1819

The members of the Chapter of the brothers were: 1. Father Coudrin, Founder and Superior General in office; 2. Father Hilarion Maigret, Prior of the Main Residence; 3. Father Isidore David, Master of Novices; 4. Father Philip Fezendie, General Bursar; 5. Father Hilarion Lucas, Dean of the Missioners; 6. Abraham Armand, Dean of Professor; 7. Joachim Guilnard, Counsellor chosen by the Superior General; 9. Father Felix Cummins, Counsellor chosen by the Superior General; to these were added the local superiors: 10. Father Philibert Vidon of Sees; 11. Father Regis Rouchouze of Mende; 12. Hipolite Launay, of Cahors; 13. Father Zosimo Chretien, of Le Mans; 14. Father Joachim Deletang, of Sarlat; 15. Father Antonine Bigot, of Poitiers; 16. Father Robert Gibrat, of Laval. 61

The members of the Chapter of the Sisters were: 1. Mother Aymer, Foundress and Superior General in office; 2. Sister Philippina Coudrin, Prioress; 3. Sister Alix Guyot, Mistress of Novices

The General Chapter of 1819 promulgated the following decisions:

- The Superior General of the brothers and the Mother General of the sisters are elected for life.
- The Superior General of the brothers represents the supreme authority and the highest resort for the female as well as the male branch of the Congregation.
- As the religious habit, the white habit with the scapular of the Sacred Hearts is accepted, at least in principle. Nevertheless, because of the unfavorable circumstances, the white habit will not yet be worn.
- The red mantle is to be used during the Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament.
- All members obliged to the Divine Office must use the Roman Breviary, not the one used in the French Dioceses.
- Finally, articles concerning the spiritual life and the works of the Congregation are clarified and completed.

The closure of both assemblies was carried out in one single ceremony, which Sister Gabriel, a most reliable witness has preserved for us in her Memoirs:

"The day of the closure, October 10, the feast of St Denis, the Good Father assembled his entire little family in the small chapel of Picpus, around eleven o'clock in the evening. The Good Father recalled the early days of the Congregation when there was so much fervor and so much suffering. He exhorted us to persevere, to be united, to have confidence in God who had already performed so many miracles to sustain the Work. He received the resolutions of some novices and the vows of three sisters. One of them, Sister Barbault, had finally decided to consummate her sacrifice publicly and take the religious habit. All the brothers and all the sisters then renewed their vows before the Good Father and the Good Mother. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament and the Te Deum and the Salve Regina concluded this memorable ceremony." 66

This first General Chapter really raised the spirits of the members and gave them a great sense of hope.

"We trust that the Lord will bless our good will. The foundations of the building have been laid. It is now up to you, my dear sons, to strengthen them by your faithful observance of the Rule with unshaken confidence, we expect devoutness from you, and that you will do your very best to bring your lives in accord with our religious Rule. Never forget that only your fidelity to the Rule guarantees the stability of our community. Thank with us the God of all mercies, who has granted us this assembly and has given new strength to our Congregation through the decisions of the General Chapter. This in a time that the enemies of all good are redoubling their efforts to destroy religion in our dear fatherland "

FIRST CHAPTER

GENERAL CHAPTER OF 1824

The General Chapter convened again on September 1824. This Chapter lasted only twenty days and made forty-five decisions which were grouped in nine chapters. Number forty was worded thus: "Under the title of the Constitutions, Statutes, and Rules of the Brothers of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, there will be appended:

- 1) All that which concerns the brothers in the constitutions and statutes approved by the bull of November 17, 1817;
- 2) All the rules of the Chapter of 1819;
- 3) The rules adopted by the present Chapter."

The Missions Concept

One of the key elements in the vision of Father Coudrin in Le Motte D'Usseau was that the men dressed in white going out in mission. This missionary part was integral to the life of the new Congregation and a concentrated and focus effort was put forth to attain mission territory and to send out men and women to these new mission territories. Together with the formation of the aim of the Institute, the Constitutions, the Rule and the approbation, the missions and their development formed the early Congregation. Suffice it to say that the missions were not an after thought but in fact a forethought.

On July 15, 1825, Father Coudrin had presented personally to the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith in Rome a petition requesting a missionary territory for the Community. On September 29, the Nuncio in Paris transmitted a communication from Cardinal Caprano requesting that the Congregation provide missionaries for the Sandwich Islands, now Hawaii. The Founder answered right away, accepting the request in a letter he wrote to Rome on October 6 of the same year.

Father Coudrin again writes the Community in September 7, 1826 and tells them:

"For a long time we yearned for the happy moment when we would be able to begin the important work of the foreign missions....We are happy to say, our dearly beloved brothers and sisters, and it

is a great consolation for us, that when it was necessary to assign those who were to be the first to take up this holy and painful career, our only problem was whom should we choose. This was difficult for a large number of our brothers had earnestly demanded as a signal favor, permission to consecrate themselves to a task so painful in the eyes of nature, but so meritorious in the eyes of faith. On thanking the divine Bounty we must also, our dearly beloved brothers and sisters, help by our prayers those who are going to open up this nascent mission... "

The Founder and Foundress were born just a year apart. They also died within a short span of years. However, events transpired which brought about a new spirit in the Congregation which was alien to that envisaged by both Founders. Principal among these events was the conflict in the relationship between the brothers and sisters in Picpus itself. Another conflict which caused problems was the relationship between Father Caesar Came, Superior at Cahors, and Mother Francisco Viart (2 Mother General) in Cahors which ended only with the recall of Father Caesar to Paris in 1833. As a result of these problems, Father Felix Cummins left Picpus for the U.S. in 1830 and later went home to Ireland where he died in 1832.

In October 1829, Mother Henriette suffered a heart attack, and her illness caused Father Coudrin to return to Paris frequently. Her illness coupled with the crisis in the Picpus Community eventually caused the Founder to return to Picpus permanently. On November 23rd, 1834 at 5:30 pm, the Good Mother died; at her bedside was Father Coudrin.

In the spring of 1837 the Good Father contacted a severe cold and was unable to preach during Lent. On March he sang a High Mass. As death approached, he was preoccupied with the problem of succession as neither one of the General Chapters had made any arrangements as to how a successor was to be chosen. As a matter of fact, subsequent to his death, the fathers at Picpus sent out a letter convoking the electors to the Chapter. On Easter Sunday, 1837, Father Coudrin renewed his vows for the last time, and on the 27th of March at 7:15 in the morning, having blessed his missionaries and saying the words "Valparaiso" and "Gambier" he passed to the Lord.

SPIRITUALITY

Sometimes people take the word spirituality too generally and are caught up in confusion and misunderstanding. It is necessary first of all to define spirituality before delving into the spirituality of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts.

Spirituality is simply and basically, the response of the individual by the grace of the Holy Spirit, to Christ's ongoing invitation to "repent and believe the Gospel." This personal conversion (in the Greek, metanoia) expresses itself in an ever-deepening communion of faith, hope and love with one's fellow believers in the community of the Catholic Church, and an ever more faithful witness to Christ, the values of His Gospel and the teaching of His Church in one's daily life in the world.

While the history of the Catholic Church is replete with a wide variety of "spiritualities" (Ignatian, monastic, etc.), there is in the final analysis one only and all-embracing Catholic spirituality: the rootedness of the individual both in the paschal mystery of Christ's death and resurrection and in the community of the Catholic Church brought to birth by that paschal mystery. This spirituality is common to cleric and layperson alike, to every member of the Church from the Pope to the newest of the baptized. It is a life of grace anchored in the rhythm of the liturgical year's celebration of the mystery of Christ.

The Vatican Council states:

"Family cares should not be foreign to their spirituality, nor any other temporal interest; in the words of the apostle, "Whatever you are doing, whether speaking or acting, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Col 3:17).

One cannot look at the historical foundations of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts without realizing the impact and influence of its main spirituality which is the spirituality of the devotion of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This Sacred Heart devotion is the mainstay of the spirituality of the Sacred Heart.

Having said that the spirituality of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts may be divided into Common Sources:

- a) The Life and doctrine of Our Lord Jesus Christ
- b) The Life and doctrine of the Church
- c)

THE PROPER SOURCES OF OUR SPIRITUALITY

A. ORIGINAL SOURCES:

1. The Constitutions approved by the Church and founded on the Rule of St. Benedict
2. The **Bull** "Pastor Aeternus" and the other document of the Church addressed especially to our Institute
3. The life and teachings of our Founders
4. The Ceremonial and the traditional religious life of the Institute
5. The life of our Holy Protectors
6. The revelations at Paray le Monial
7. The Spirituality of the French School
8. The Spirituality of St. John Eudes

B. FIVE KEY WORDS OF OUR SPIRITUALITY:

1. Heart of Jesus
2. Heart of Mary
3. Zeal
4. Adoration
5. Reparation

HEART OF JESUS

By its very name, the Congregation leads us to the "Heart of Jesus" together with the "Heart of Mary". The Heart of Jesus has always been the center of the life of our Congregation.

Our members are "...called like Mary to enter with Jesus, into the plan of the Father for the salvation of the world through love."(Brothers' Const. 13)

In 1791 Pierre Coudrin at 23 years of age told us, "...I threw myself into the arms of Jesus Christ and placed my heart in His heart..."

To be in the "heart" of reality, at the center and not on the periphery is to let reality touch us, to let truth make us sensitive to what is happening around us and to move us to act in the name of the gospel.

"A God with Heart." This is the deepest definition or expression of God describes the center of His being: a God who is Father and who is faithful, maternal, gratuitous and unconditional Love. The "heart" emphasizes God's love as tender and forgiving and invites us to make our own the attitudes of those "who believe in Love." (1 Jn 4:16)

The image of the Heart of Jesus focuses our gaze on the cross, on the "Transpierced side of Christ. Because "God has Heart", and the "Heart of Jesus has been transpierced", we can be full of hope if we accept the invitation of Jesus who says: "Come to me all you who labor and are burdened...learn from me for I am meek and humble of heart."

When we speak of "Heart" — from the Christian perspective, we are challenged to renew our image of God who created us in His image and likeness. We are invited to experience a transformation of our own heart and make it like God's heart, which redeems all of humanity.

HEART OF MARY

The congregation also has the Heart of Mary in its name and in its life.

The members are "called like Mary to enter into the Father's plan to save the world through love." (Bros. Const. #13) "If we think of the maternal tenderness of the Heart of Mary for all who became her children in the person of St. John, could we not feel our heart burning with zeal to honor the Virgin of virgins? (Good Father, 1816; Cahier de Spiritualite 10, #390)

A welcoming heart: United to God's initiative, the Heart of Mary is the place of welcome that makes the incarnation possible. One with God's compassionate mercy, Mary is the paradigm of welcoming of the gift of God.

A heart that surrenders: One with Heart of Jesus, who is the ultimate expression of God's nearness and passion for humanity, the Heart of Mary is the paradigm of what God can do in a person who surrenders all. Mary's heart is a place of total surrender to God's will.

A contemplative heart: The Gospels tell us that Mary "...treasured all these things and pondered them in her heart" (Lk 2:19), the center of contemplative and affective prayer.

A transpierced heart: Mary was extraordinarily conscious of the loving action of God in the world. The way of suffering gradually emerged in her life as she, herself embraced the "Do whatever He tells you" of Cana in her journey with her son that ended in the passion and the cross. Then what the old Simeon prophesied was accomplished: "...and a sword will pierce your heart too..." (Lk. 2:35)

The first disciple: In the depths of her heart Mary was formed as a disciple, the first disciple of the Lord, the one who precedes us and accompanies us in the following of her Son. Thus she becomes what every believer and the whole Church is called to be. She is the model of faith in love, her heart so in tuned with the Heart of her Son that they are "...one heart and one soul."

Heart to heart: From the Heart of God, to the Heart of Jesus, to Mary's heart to our hearts—we are called to have a heart like theirs. And our life can welcome, surrender, contemplate, and do God's will.

To speak of the "heart" then, is to say that we are called to be " a people with heart" who realize the profound meaning of the Congregation's name, " of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary".

ZEAL

"The Consecration to the Sacred Hearts...calls us to live the dynamism of saving Love and fills us with zeal for our mission." (Constitutions #2)

"When I finally left the granary...I prostrated myself at the foot of an oak tree not far from the house and surrendered my life to God. I had become a priest with the intention of suffering everything, of sacrificing myself to the Good Lord, and, if need be, of dying in His service." (Good Father, October 20, 1792)

"We need a name...which will remind our brothers at every moment that they must sacrifice themselves through zeal for the Lord; that they fail in their most essential vow the moment they want to live only for themselves rather than work for the good of their brethren; that... their vocation is to be full of zeal, and an ardent zeal that is on fire." says the Founder when he is defending, in Rome, the title of "Zealots of the Love of Sacred Hearts" as the name for the Congregation. (Good Father 1816)

Apostolic zeal is perhaps the most prominent feature in the life of the Good Father. We need to understand the real meaning of this word if we are to live it as the Good Father did.

Affectivity: The word zeal carries an emotional content. The zealous person realizes they have something very precious and risk losing it. They are willing to do everything in their power to safeguard "precious pearl".

Zeal for God and the Mission: Zeal for God and for mission is opposed to indifference and mediocrity. It is our passion — the core of who we are and what we do.

In the founders: Pierre Coudrin and Henriette Aymer were passionately committed to realizing God's dream for humanity. They used all their energies and resources to respond to God's call in the here and now of their lives.

This zeal, this passion for God and for the world, cannot exist without a strong personal experience of God working in our history, the God who takes us by the hand and loves us passionately. This zeal presupposes that God's plan is not being accomplished in our own lives or the world around us. Hence, zeal motivates us to action, to forget ourselves so that God's plan can be accomplished.

ADORATION

"In our religious apostolic life, adoration is rooted in the celebration of the Eucharist. It is a time for contemplation with the Risen Jesus, the beloved Son of the Father, who came to serve and to give His life." (Bros. Const. #53, point 2) "In adoration (a) we unite ourselves to His unceasing intercession before the Father, to His cry in solidarity with a humanity wounded by sin; (b) we are urged to commit ourselves more fully to the mission, so that 'by Him, with Him and in Him' our lives and the world —liberated from evil and sin — may give glory to the Father." (Bros. Constitutions #53, point 3)

Need to expand on the adorer as delegate of the Church continuing the prayer of Jesus that "they all may be one, Father as you are in me and I am in you, that the world may know that you sent me."

Reparative Eucharistic adoration is a prayer form valued and cultivated in the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts. As with every authentic prayer, it is a dialog with God from life and for life.

A dialog with God: In adoration, we come before God, who in Jesus, culminates an entire history of mercifully trying to free humanity from sin, injustice and violence.

From life (reparative adoration): We come to adoration with the whole of our lives—the joys and happiness of who we are; the people we encounter; the ministries we are involved in; we also bring our own brokenness and that of the world.

For life: We adore so as to be more "for life", to become ever more fully agents of God's Kingdom of justice, communion and love.

Before the Body of Christ: We come to adore so that we may be transformed into the Body of Christ working for the body of Christ—the world. Hence, to adore Jesus in the Eucharist means to contemplate God and the world so that we can surrender our lives to make God's love present and real in our lives and the world.

REPARATION

Aware of the power of evil that opposes the Father's Love and disfigures God's design for the world, we wish to identify with the attitude of Jesus and with His reparative work. Our reparation is communion with Him...makes us participate in [His] mission". (Constitutions #4)

From the contemplation of Jesus — in the Eucharist — "we are urged to commit ourselves more fully to the mission, so that 'by Him, with Him and in Him' our lives and the world -- liberated from evil and sin -- may give glory to the Father." (Brothers' Constitutions #53, point 3)

The spirit of reparation that we inherit leads us to solidarity with the suffering and powerless in order to complete what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ. (St. Paul)

We live a dialectic tension of "already" and "not yet" meaning Jesus, through his death and resurrection has saved us. Evil, sin and brokenness impede the fulfillment of his saving action. Henriette Aymer and Pierre Coudrin experienced this dialectic in the events of the French Revolution and they heard God's call repair the brokenness of their time. United with and in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, they committed themselves and their community to continue the work of Jesus who prayed "that all may be one Father as you are in me and I am in you..." This spirit of reparation drawn from the Eucharist is the source of our missionary commitment and apostolic zeal.

HISTORY

THE AIM OF THE INSITUTE

The general aim of our Institute is the Glory of God, which is found basically in love of God and love of neighbor, through the observance of the three vows of Poverty, Chastity, and Obedience for our professed brothers and sisters in a consecrated life according to our own Constitutions.

It is important to note that the aim of the Institute as such applies to both religious brothers and sisters and the living out of our Charism in good catholic living for the lay people.

The Special Aim of our Institute

- a) Formula: The service of the Sacred Hearts, by imitating the four stages of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and by propagating the Devotion to the Sacred Hearts.
- b) Explanation: The Special Aim may be considered as ultimate and as proximate:
 - 1). The Special Ultimate Aim of our Institute is the service of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, to which our Founders devoted the Institute by consecrating the Congregation to the Sacred Hearts. They established this Consecration as the foundation of the Institute and the Church officially recognized it as such.
 - 2). The Special Proximate Aim of our Institute is the imitation of the four stages of Our Lord Jesus Christ, (His infancy, His hidden Life, His evangelical life, and His crucified life) and the propagation of the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.
- c) The Relations Existing between these Aims:
 - 1). The special aim in its twofold aspect is equally ordered with the works proper to our Institute for the attainment of the general aim.
 - 2). Consecration to the service of the Sacred Hearts is the principle which specifies and inspires:
 - A. All the social Activity of the Institute as such;
 - B. All the activity of each member of the Institute, whether this is activity under Obedience and within the limits of the Constitutions or the free activity of their whole religious life by which the members tend to that perfection of their own state.

Note: Consecration to the service of the Sacred Hearts thus observed makes the Congregation a society contemplative and active in nature.

This Consecration is the key element for living the spiritual life of the person who wishes to live the spirituality of the Congregation. There are other constitutive elements as well. They are:

1. Simplicity together with kindness and humility
2. Family Spirit
3. Devotion to St. Joseph
4. Loyalty to the Holy See

A zeal for the love of the Sacred Hearts imbued with the Apostolic spirit as well as a spirit of reparation and sacrifice. This zeal must inspire all our activity, i.e.:

1. ***"To reproduce the four stages of Our Lord Jesus Christ: His infancy, His hidden life, His evangelical life, His crucified life and His Resurrected Life."***

2. *"To propagate Devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary."*

DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEARTS

1. The Object of Devotion to the Sacred Hearts:

According to the doctrine of the Church, the object of devotion to the Sacred Hearts is the loving Persons of Jesus and Mary, whose love for us is depicted under the symbol of the heart of flesh.

2. The Elements of Devotion to the Sacred Hearts:

a. Love:

Love is the first element of devotion to the Sacred Hearts. It is the primary and fundamental response of our heart to the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. In our Congregation, love is the principle and the perfection of our total Consecration both affective and effective in the service of the Sacred Hearts.

b. Imitation:

The imitation, or better still, the participation in the life to the Sacred Hearts to such a degree that we are of one mind and one will with these Sacred Hearts. This is the first effect (result) of the union of our love. For us as members of the Congregation this element consists in the imitation of the four stages of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

c. Reparation:

Reparation, in the economy of salvation, is a specific act of love and thus it pertains permanently and essentially to the Christian Religion. It is also a distinctive note of Devotion to the Sacred Hearts. The form of this act proper to the Congregation consists in immolation in union with the Sacred Hearts "in order that we might complete in our flesh that which is wanting of the Passion of Christ for His Body, which is the Church," (Col. 1,24) and in order to unite us in a special way to the interior crucifixion of the Heart of Christ. In its Eucharistic orientation, it likewise consists in reparation, which is made through perpetual Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, for the injuries perpetuated against the Sacred Hearts by the enormous crimes of sinners.

d. The Apostolate:

Love, with its twofold precept of charity; Imitation, transforming our life into the life of the Sacred Hearts; Reparation, under the aspects of both reparative adoration and immolation in union with the Sacred Hearts, all irresistibly urge us on to the Apostolate. The element of the Apostolate proper to the Congregation consists in this, that as zealots of the love of the Sacred Hearts, our zeal is animated by this love and seeks, in all our works of the Apostolate, to lead souls to the love of the Sacred Hearts.

3. The Orientation of Devotion to the Sacred Hearts:

The teaching and practice of the Church as well as the doctrine and tradition of our own Congregation recognize, in Devotion to the Sacred Hearts, the twofold orientation, Christological and Trinitarian.

4. The Union of the Sacred Hearts:

The union of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary is a distinctive characteristic of our Spirituality. From the very beginning this union was acknowledged by our Founders. Relative to this they were, with founders of other Institutes, truly precursors. The acknowledgement of this union is also found in the spiritual life both social and particular, of our Superiors General and the members of the Congregation.

Two of our Superiors General attest to that when they wrote "let us never forget that the devotion to the Sacred Hearts was the mother idea of our foundation." Father Bousquit Circular Letter, April 18, 1898 and "it is remarkable that at that period of history, our Founders thought of uniting devotions to the Heart of Mary to the devotions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus." Father Henry Systeman's Circular Letter, September, 1958.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

The pivotal elements of the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus have their origins in the apparitions of the Sacred Heart to St. Margaret Mary and also in the spirituality of St. John Eudes and St. Louie de Montfort. Firstly, it is necessary for a cursory study of the life of St. Margaret Mary.

SAINT MARGARET MARY, Virgin (A.D. 1690)



She was born in 1647 at Janots, the eastern quarter of L'Hautecour, a small town in Burgundy. Her father was a notary of some distinction, whose wife bore him seven children, of whom Margaret was the fifth. When she was about eight her father died and she was sent to school with the Poor Clares at Charolles; she was at once attracted by what she could see and understand of the life of the nuns, and they on their side were so impressed by Margaret's piety that she was allowed to make her first communion when she was nine. Two years later she was afflicted by a painful rheumatism that kept her in bed till she was fifteen, and in the course of it she was taken back to her home at L'Hautecour. Her father's house was now occupied by several other members of the family as well, and one sister and her husband had taken all domestic and business authority out of the hands of the widow Alacoque. She and Margaret were treated almost as servants, and she recovered from her sickness only to be confronted by this persecution of her mother. When she was twenty, pressure was put on her to marry, but, fortified by a vision of our Lord, she firmly refused. Not till she was twenty-two did she receive the Sacrament of Confirmation (it was then that she took the name of Mary), and thus armed she was able to withstand the final opposition of her family. Her brother Chrysostom furnished her dowry, and in June 1671 she entered the Visitation convent at Paray-le-monial.

From that time my divine Master urged me incessantly to ask for humiliations and mortifications. They came unsought when she was appointed to assist in the infirmary. The infirmarian, Sister Catherine Marest, was temperamentally very different from her assistant: active, energetic, efficient while Margaret-Mary, was quiet, slow and clumsy. During these two and half years our Lord continually made Himself sensibly present to Margaret-Mary, often crowned with thorns, and on December 27, 1673, her devotion to His passion was rewarded with the first of the revelations.

She was kneeling alone at the grille before the Blessed Sacrament exposed on the altar, and all at once she felt herself, as she says, 'invested' by the divine Presence, and heard our Lord inviting her to take the place which St. John (it was his feast) had occupied at the Last Supper. He then went on speaking, 'in so plain and effective a manner as to leave no room for doubt, such were the results that this grace produced in me, who am always afraid of deceiving myself about what I assert to take place interiorly.' He told her that the love of His heart must spread and manifest itself to men by means of her, and that He would reveal the treasures of its graces through her, His chosen instrument and the disciple of His Sacred Heart. During a period of eighteen months our Lord continued to appear to Margaret-Mary at intervals, explaining and amplifying the first revelation. He told her that His heart was to be honored under the form of a heart of flesh, represented in a way now familiar to Catholics throughout the world, and that, in consideration of the coldness and rebuffs given to Him by mankind in return for all His eagerness to do them good, she should make up for their ingratitude so far as she was able. This was to be done by frequent loving communion, especially on the first Friday of each month and by an hour's vigil every Thursday night in memory of His agony and desertion in Gethsemane practices which Catholics have made their own in the devotions of the Nine Fridays and the Holy Hour. After a long interval a final revelation was made within the octave of Corpus Christi in 1675, when our Lord said to St. Margaret-Mary, 'Behold the heart which has so much loved men that it has spared nothing, even exhausting and consuming itself in testimony of its love. Instead of gratitude I receive from most only indifference, by irreverence and sacrilege and the coldness and scorn that men have for me in the sacrament of love.' Then He asked that a feast of reparation be instituted for the Friday after the octave of Corpus Christi (now the feast of the Sacred Heart).

When she carried the matter to her superior, Mother de Saumaise, she 'mortified and humiliated her with all her might, and allowed her to do none of the things that our Lord had asked of her, treating contemptuously all that the poor sister had said.' She was seriously over-wrought by all that had happened, was taken ill, and her life was in danger. Mother de Saumaise was looking for a sign to guide her in dealing with Sister Alacoque, and said to her, "If God cures you, I shall take it as a proof that all you experience comes from Him, and I will allow you to do what Our Lord wishes in honor of His Sacred Heart.' St. Margaret-Mary prayed accordingly, she at once recovered, and Mother de Saumaise fulfilled her promise.

Jesus asked St. Margaret-Mary to spread the devotion to the Sacred Heart. The essential elements of this devotion are:

1. Consecration to the Sacred Heart
2. Observance of the First Friday which meant attendance at Mass and reception of Holy Communion
3. Reparation which St. Margaret-Mary insisted was a sharing in the sufferings of Jesus to atone for the indignities inflicted upon the Sacrament
4. The promises of the Sacred Heart would be a motivating factor in living and promoting the devotion of the Sacred Heart.

The promises are:

1. I will give them all the graces necessary for their state in life
2. I will establish peace in their families
3. I will console them in all their difficulties
4. I will bless all their endeavors abundantly
5. I will be their safe refuge during life and especially at the hour of death
6. I will bless every home where the image of my heart is enshrined and honored
7. Sinners will find in my heart a fountain and infinite ocean of mercy
8. The lukewarm will become fervent

9. The fervent will advance rapidly in holiness
10. I will give to priests the power of touching the hardest hearts
11. Promoters of this devotion will have their names written in my heart forever
12. My all-powerful love will grant to all who receive Communion on the First Friday of nine consecutive months, the grace of final repentance; they will not die in my displeasure, or without receiving their Sacraments. My divine heart will be their safe refuge in this last moment

Another important element in the development of the devotion of the Sacred Heart was Jesus' request for a feast in His honor. This feast was approved and sanctioned by Pope Pius IX in 1856. Margaret Mary's apparitions were four in all beginning in 1673 and ending in 1675.

The support of the Holy See for this devotion has never been lacking. The result was a better understanding of the devotion, which was finally followed by the institution of the feast of the Sacred Heart in 1765, but not yet for the whole Church; only for Poland and the convents of the Visitation Order. The feast became world-wide in 1856. After this, official support has never been lacking, as the following list shows:

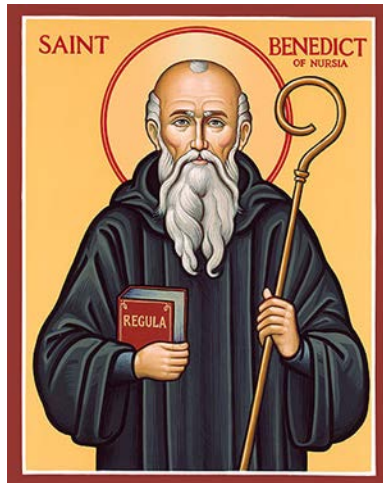
- 1899: Pope Leo XIII consecrated the human race to the Sacred Heart;
- 1920: Canonization of St. Margaret Mary;
- 1928: Encyclical 'Misericordissimus Redemptor'; 1956: Encyclical 'Haurietis Aquas'

John XXIII — I want the devotion to his heart, concealed within the sacrament of love, to be the measure of all my spiritual progress... My desire henceforth is to do all that I have been doing until now in intimate union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

In 1986, Pope John Paul II, in visiting Paray-le-Monial on his apostolic visit to central France, declared that the "essential elements of this devotion belong in some permanent fashion to the spirituality of the Church throughout its history." He also spoke of the need to find "means most appropriate to present it and put it into practice, so that the people of today, with their own mentality and sensitivity may find in it a true response to their questions and expectations."

Prior to St. Margaret Mary, the main apostle of the Sacred Heart was St. John Eudes because Pius X has credited him as being the initiator of the liturgical cult of the Sacred Heart. It was in fact John Eudes devotion to the Heart of Mary that the devotion to the Heart of Jesus... During the period of 1650-70, Eudes' devotion to the Heart of Jesus cannot be separated from his attempts to propagate the devotion to the Heart of Mary. He separates to two devotions with the publication of his book *The Devotion to the Adorable Heart of Jesus* in 1670.

ST. BENEDICT (480-587)



The political and social disorder that also accompanied the end of the Roman Empire caused many people to turn away from society. The idea of an ascetic life had developed in the East especially in Egypt with St. Anthony. Some individuals sought out the life of a hermit and began to form monastic communities. The principal moving force was between the flesh and the spirit. Many saw the end of corruption in the world and sought isolation and protection from it.

St. Benedict was born into that world in 480 A.D. He left all his education, family and friends and retreated to the wilderness Italy. There, others were attracted to him and he formed a very strict community “Benedictine Monastery”. The movement was attractive for many and grew. He then built a large monastery in Monte Casino. Benedict died in the year 587.

The Benedictine Rule became the foundation of many Religious Foundations. Other founders and foundresses saw the benefit of the disciplinary rule of St. Benedict. It is based on “*orare et laborare*” which means pray and work. The Benedictine day was divided into three eight hour periods: eight hours for sleep; eight hours for prayers; and eight hours for work.

The rule of St. Benedict afforded an orderly, saintly life which was lived in community under the authority of a superior.

The Congregation of the Sacred Hearts follows the Benedictine model. The Secular Branch of the congregation likewise within the lay vocation is guided by the two principles of prayer and work.

There are many saints preceding the foundation of the Congregation who had an influence on our founder Fr. Coudrin. Most notably, two emerge as key figures leading Fr. Coudrin to the spirituality of the Sacred Hearts. They are St. John Eudes (1601-1680) and St. Louis de Montfort.

SAINT JOHN EUDES



John Eudes (November 14, 1601 – August 19, 1680) was a French missionary, founder of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary and the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Refuge, and author of the propers for mass and Divine Office of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

John Eudes, born at Ri, Orne, was a brother of the French historian Francois Eudes de Nezeray. At age of fourteen he took a vow of chastity.

After studying with the Jesuits at Caen he joined the Oratorians on 25 March 1623. His masters and models in the spiritual life were Pierre de Berulle and the mystic Charles de Condren. He was ordained a priest on 20 December 1625 and began his priestly life with heroic labours for the victims of the plague, which was ravaging the country.

With the approbation of cardinal de Richelieu and a great number of others, Father Eudes severed his connection with the Oratory to establish the Congregation of Jesus and Mary (Eudist) for the education of priests and for missionary work. This congregation was founded at Caen on 25 March 1643, and was considered a most important and urgent work.

Father Eudes, during his long life, preached not less than 110 missions, three at Paris, one at Versailles, one at St-Germain-en-laye, and the others in different parts of Europe. Normandy was the principal theatre of his apostolic labours. In 1674 he obtained from Pope Clement X six bulls of indulgences for the Confraternities of the Sacred Heart already erected or to be erected in the seminaries.

Father Eudes dedicated the seminary chapels of Caen and Coutances to the Sacred Hearts. The feast of the Holy Heart of Mary was celebrated for the first time in 1648, and that of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in 1672, each as a double of the first with an octave.

The Mass and Office proper to these feasts were composed by Father Eudes. For this reason, Pope Leo XIII, in proclaiming his virtues heroic in 1903, gave him the title of “Author of the Liturgical Worship of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary”.

St. John Eudes taught the mystical unity of the hearts of Jesus and Mary and wrote:

“You must never separate what God has so perfectly united. So closely are Jesus and Mary bound up with each other that whoever beholds Jesus sees Mary; whoever loves Jesus, loves Mary; whoever has devotion to Jesus, has devotion to Mary.”

“The most striking characteristic of the teachings of St. John Eudes on Devotion to the Sacred Heart—as indeed his whole teaching on the spiritual life—is that Christ is always its centre. Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ—per Ipsum, cum Ipso et in Ipso—all devotion and all piety achieves its end.

Since the Sacred Heart of Jesus is God’s love symbolically (though by no means merely metaphorically, figuratively or arbitrarily) expressed, all those acts which belong to strictly divine worship (*Cultus latria*) have first place in this devotion. For, God Himself is its object.”

One of St. John’s approaches to the devotion to the Sacred Hearts was through devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

St. John believed that there were two human hearts but really only one and that was the heart of Jesus. He believed that the heart of Jesus had totally replaced the heart of Mary because of Her love for Her son and that Jesus’ heart was totally in Mary.

It is noteworthy to observe that this devotion to the Sacred Heart in fact changed the course of history. The Sacred Heart was enlisted in combat against the French Revolution, communism, and threats to family life. Pope Pius IX made it a feast of the universal church in 1856, and Leo XIII consecrated the entire world to the Sacred Heart in 1899. The devotion reached its magisterial peak in Pius XII’s 1956 encyclical *Haurietis Aquas* (“You Shall Draw Water”), which emphasized God’s passionate love for humanity.

What is even more interesting is the effect that the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts and its spirituality had on the Revolutionary world of the 18th and 19th centuries.

During the last years of his life, St. John spent much time on his treatise, “The Admirable Heart of the Most Holy Mother of God”, at which he had been working for many years and which he finished less than a month before his death. His last mission had been at Saint-Lo in 1675, where in the wintry weather he had preached in the open place nearly every day for nine weeks; from this ordeal the old man never properly recovered and his days of active work were practically ended. He died on August 19, 1680, was canonized in 1925, and in 1928 his feast was added to the general calendar of the Western Church.

ST. LOUIS DE MONTFORT



Saint Louis-Marie de Montfort (31 January 1673 – 28 April 1716) was a French Roman Catholic priest and Confessor. He was known in his time as a preacher and was made a missionary apostolic by Pope Clement XI.

As well as preaching, Montfort found time to write a number of books which went on to become classic Catholic titles and influenced several popes. Montfort is known for his particular devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the practice of consistently praying the Rosary.

Montfort is considered as one of the early Marian proponents of the field of Mariology as it is known today. His most notable work regarding Marian devotions are contained in a two-part book entitled *The Glories of Mary* along with *The Secrets of the Rosary* and the *True devotion to Mary*.

Five months after his ordination, in November 1700 he joined the Third Order of the Dominicans and asked not only to preach the rosary, but also form rosary confraternities. The same month he wrote: “I am continually asking in my prayers for a poor and small company of good priests to preach missions and retreats under the standard and protection of the Blessed Virgin”. This initial thought eventually led to the formation of the Company of Mary.

A young priest who influenced the popes.....

In June 1700, when young Louis de Montfort was ordained a priest, he was but another young and idealistic man who wanted to be the *champion of the poor*, having been inspired as a teenager to preach to the poor. But he also had a very strong devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and was prepared to risk his life for it. Centuries later, he influenced four popes (Pope Leo XIII, Pope Pius X, Pope Pius XII and Pope John Paul II), and is now being considered as a Doctor of the Church.

Pope Leo XIII and Pope Pius X both relied on de Montfort in their writings and promulgated his Marian vision. It has been said, that the Marian encyclical of Pius X, *Ad Diem Illum* was not only influenced but penetrated by the Mariology of Montfort, and, that both Leo XIII and Pius X applied the Marian analysis of Montfort to their analysis of the church as a whole.



Pope St. John Paul II

Pope John Paul II once recalled how as a young seminarian he “read and reread many times and with great spiritual profit” a work of de Montfort and that:

Then I understood that I could not exclude the Lord’s Mother from my life without neglecting the will of “God-Trinity”.

According to his Apostolic Letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, the pontiff’s personal motto “Totus tuus” was inspired by St. Louis’ doctrine on the excellence of Marian devotion and total consecration, which he quoted:

“Our time of perfection consists in being conformed, united and consecrated to Jesus Christ. Hence the most perfect of all devotions is undoubtedly that which conforms, unites and consecrates us most perfectly to Jesus Christ.

Now, since Mary is of all creatures the one most conformed to Jesus Christ, it follows that among all devotions that which most consecrates and conforms a soul to our Lord is devotion to Mary, his Holy Mother, and that the more a soul is consecrated to her the more will it be consecrated to Jesus Christ.”

The thoughts, writings, and examples of St. Louis de Montfort, an example of the French school of spirituality, were also singled out by Pope John Paul II’s encyclical *Redemptoris Mater* as a distinctive witness of Marian spirituality in the Catholic tradition. In an address to the Montfortian fathers, the pontiff also said that his reading the saint’s work *True Devotion to Mary* was a “decisive turning point” in his life.

Grignion de Montfort’s approach of “total consecration to Jesus Christ through Mary” had a strong impact on Roman Catholic Mariology both in popular piety and in the spirituality of religious institutes. As one of the classical writers of Christian spirituality, Saint Louis de Montfort is a candidate to become a Doctor of the Church. His book *True Devotion to Mary* has been considered one of the most influential Marian books.

St. Louis was a strong believer in the power of the rosary and his popular book (*The secret of the Rosary*) is approved by the Catholic Church and is an easily readable, yet multi-perspective approach to the Holy Rosary. It provides specific methods for praying the rosary with more devotion. It has been read by Catholics worldwide for over two centuries and is one of the earliest works to establish modern Mariology.

A MORE INTENSE STUDY OF THESE TWO SAINTS IS ESSENTIAL TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF FATHER COUDRIN’S SPIRITUALITY OF THE SACRED HEARTS

THE BIRTH OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE SACRED HEARTS

The Congregation was born through a direct intervention of God in the history of particular men and women, in a concrete time and place. The place: Poitiers, France. The era: the end of the XVIII and the first third of the XIX centuries. The actors: a group of Christians, young men and women, attentive to events, disconcerted by what was happening in their country, in the Church, and in the world as a result of the French Revolution. The origins of the Congregation brings us to the encounter of two historical persons - a man and a woman - whose personal lives and history were very different but whose experience of call and mission were identical. In these persons, chosen by God as his instruments for the beginning of "the Work" (as the founders called the foundation), God gave a clear indication of the unity in diversity that He desired as one of its characteristic features.

During the Revolution, the French Church witnessed the slaughtering of many of its peoples and leaders; the disappearance of its institutions, its goods, and its rights. The very existence of the Church was threatened. Though the revolutionary fervor was mitigated when it reached the provinces, the decisions of Paris were rigorously applied: Civil Constitution of the Clergy, confiscation of the Church's goods, suppression of privileges and titles, persecution of those with ties to the Church or the expatriates, etc. It was in this climate that the Congregation was born in France.

HENRIETTE AYMER was born in 1767 to a noble family in a chateau situated in Saint Georges-de-Noisne near Poitiers. She received the education expected of a woman of her class in order that she might assume the traditional place of women of her rank in French society. Church of St. Georges-deNoisne where Henriette Aymer was baptized

PIERRE (Peter) COUDRIN, son of farmers, was born in 1768 in the small village of Coussay-les-Bois located near the city of Poitiers, some 200 km. to the south of Paris, France. This class did not have easy access to higher education. But an uncle, who was a priest, took him under his tutelage, sponsored his studies and encouraged him in the priesthood.

At 17 years of age, Pierre started his study of philosophy, and Inter of theology, at the University of Poitiers. During the last two years of his education, poverty befell his family and forced him to work in order to finance his education.



The French Revolution profoundly affected the lives of these two promising young people. National and political events of that time and the following years were decisive for their lives. Pierre entered the diocesan seminary in November 1789 in order to complete his preparation for the priesthood. When, around the end of January 1791 the Lazarists who administered the seminary were expelled for not taking the oath and a team of schismatic teachers took charge. Pierre Coudrin who was already a deacon discontinued his studies and fled from there to Paris. At the height of the revolutionary disturbance he was secretly ordained a priest in 1792. He returned to his family's house, celebrated his first mass and devoted himself to the priestly ministry that was forbidden by law. In contrast to the schismatic pastor of his village he adopted a defiant attitude. He escaped the authorities who were pursuing him. The recently ordained priest of 24 years of age was sheltered in a small attic in the granary of the house of a farmer- cousin located in the area of the chateau of "La Motte d'Usseau". He spent the greatest part of his time in the solitary company of the Blessed Sacrament.

After approximately five months he was compelled as a result of prayer and a vision, to leave his hiding place to begin a clandestine ministry to the Catholics of Poitiers and its surrounding areas. The vision, that profoundly affected him during his contemplative confinement, called him to found a group of men and women to spread the Gospel everywhere. It compelled Pierre Coudrin to go against restrictions and threats of the revolutionaries with the prophetic gesture of surrendering himself to an underground apostolate.

Meanwhile Henriette Aymer and her widowed mother, appalled by the revolutionary assaults on the Church, began to harbor fugitive priests. They were discovered and imprisoned for their loyalty. During their eleven months of incarceration they feared that they would be guillotined. The Lord used this period of imposed confinement to accomplish a profound conversion in the heart of Henriette. When the two women finally received authorisation to return to their home in Poitiers, they resumed their prohibited, religious activities. Henriette became an "extern" of the clandestine Society of the Sacred Heart, a group of women and rebel priests who assembled to pray and to adore Christ in the Eucharist in the spirit of reparation. One of its more influential members was the young priest, Pierre Coudrin.

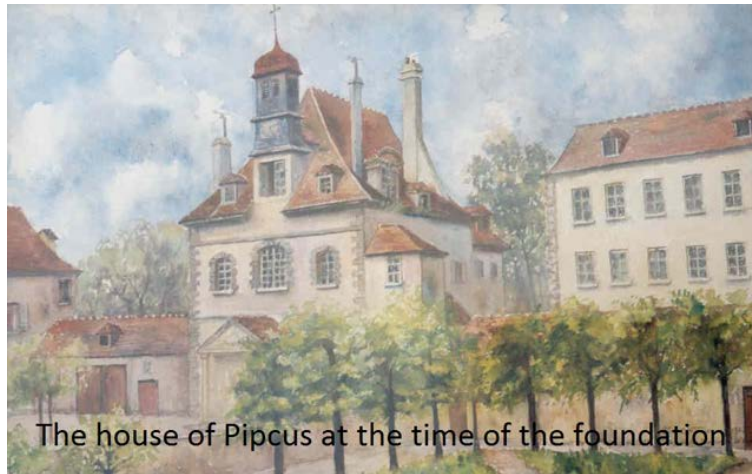


First site of the Society of the Sacred Heart on Moulin d Vent Street.

In 1794, the paths of their lives crossed. Father Coudrin became Henriette's confessor. A little later, he became the confessor of a few other members of the Association of the Sacred Heart. This small group, called "the Solitaires", desired to live as religious, a state of life prohibited by the Revolution. Pierre Coudrin saw in this a premonition of the fulfillment of his vision of the Motte d'Usseau.

With the great discretion imposed by the circumstances of the revolution and without the advantage of a model to follow, Pierre and Henriette became the "Good Father" and the "Good Mother" for a group of men and women who felt attracted to share the vision. The diocesan authorities gave their authorization in June 1800. On Christmas Eve of that same year,

just before Mass began, Brother Marie Joseph (religious name of Pierre) and Henriette consecrated their lives to the Sacred Hearts through religious vows. A few months later, the first disciples did the same. The number of men and women "Zealots" of the love of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary", as the Good Father wanted them to be called, was gradually growing.



Engraving of the "Grand Maison", the first house of the Congregation in Poitiers.

The historical circumstances, coupled with an acute sense of mission and a generous availability to the needs of the Church, soon led the community to extend beyond Poitiers: to Mende in 1802, to Cahors the following year, to Paris in 1805 and to many other places. Before the death of the Good Mother 1834 and that of the Good Father in 1837, seventeen communities were founded in France and the missions had begun outside of France.

From the beginning, the young community desired to respond to the needs of the Church in post-revolutionary France. In doing this, they felt that they were reproducing the life of Christ. They opened schools for the poor and hostels for those who could not pay. They participated in the post-revolutionary evangelization effort of the missions in France. They took charge of seminaries to nurture priestly vocations of the Congregation, of the French dioceses, and the persecuted Church in Ireland. And each new foundation was also a center of the Eucharist and reparative adoration. As a general rule, a foundation was a joint action of both branches of men and women.

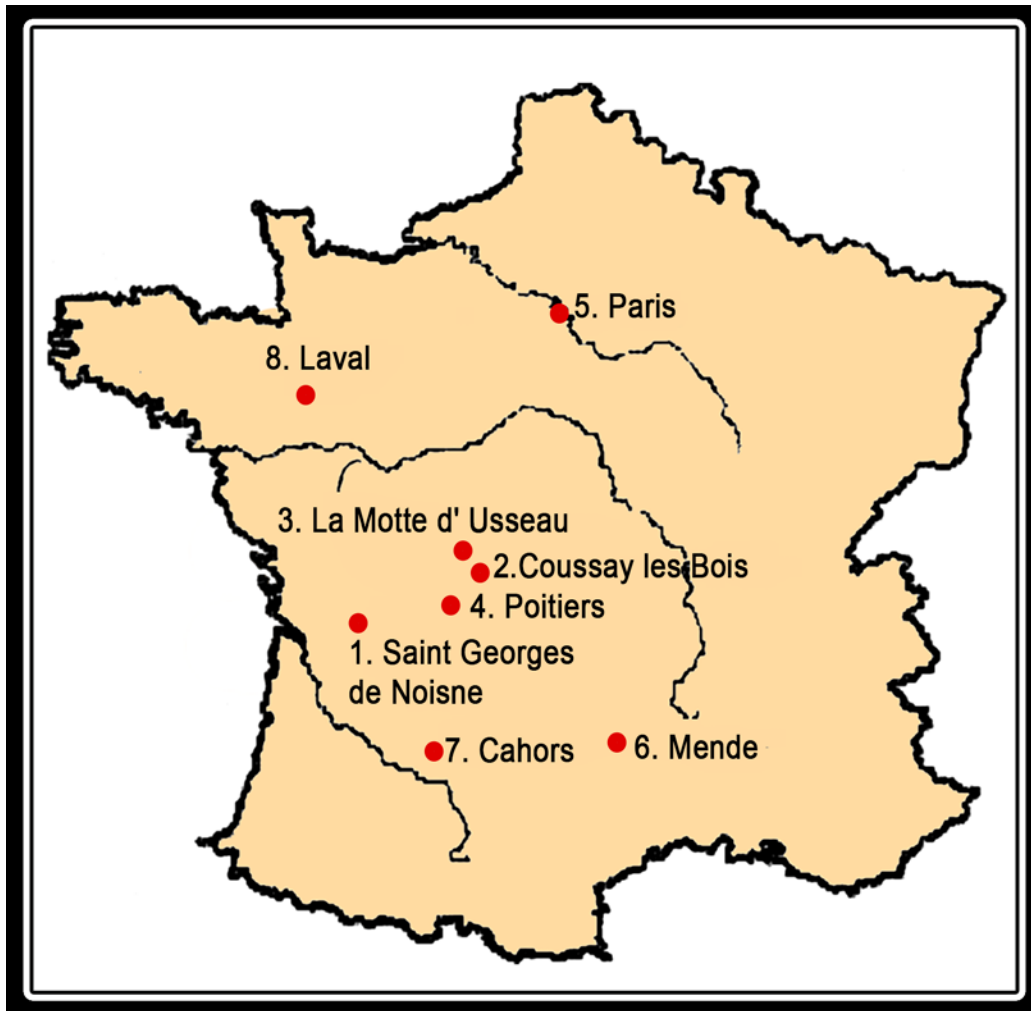
The expansion of the Congregation to distant places outside France began in 1825 with the mission to Eastern Oceania. During the life of the Founders, the Brothers were already in mission in Hawaii, Polynesia, Smyrna, Chile, and California (then Mexico), and among the indigenous tribes of Maine (USA) and New Brunswick (Canada). The Sisters soon followed them to Chile and Hawaii. The missionary response to the call of the Spirit permeates the history of the Congregation, which has given many of its best to this task. Among all of them, Father Damien de Veuster, the apostle of the lepers in Molokai, has special renown. Our collaborative mission today is fulfilled on all the continents and many distant islands of the world.



For Father Coudrin and Mother Henriette all of this was "the Work of God" and a work of the Church. From Rome, they sought the approbation of the Congregation and its Constitutions based on the Rule of Saint Benedict. This approbation was granted by a decree of 10 June 1817, and confirmed on 17 November of the same year through the Bull *Sub Plumbo Pastor Aeternus* of Pope Pius VII.

The Founders were delighted with this, seeing it as a culmination of their efforts to faithfully follow the call that he had received. The General Chapters celebrated in the life of the Founders completed the initial Constitutions and the Holy See approved them in 1825. The Congregation was approved as only one Institute with masculine and feminine branches. The first Constitutions already showed the unity desired by the Founders: "that there be but one heart and one soul" in their religious family.

MAP OF THE ORIGINS OF THE CONGREGATION



1. **Saint-Georges-de-Noisne:** Native place of the Good Mother (11-08-1767). (Bapt.15-8)
2. **Coussay-les-Bois:** Native place of the Good Father (1-3-1768).(Bapt. 1-3)
3. **La Motte d'Usseau:** Castle where the Good Father took refuge and had the vision of the foundation (1792).
4. **Poitiers:** Beautiful city, capital of the region of Poitou. Place of the origin of the Congregation. The first house of the Congregation (The Grand Maison) is there (1797).
5. **Paris:** The Mother House, on Picpus Street, was bought in 1804. There the Good Mother (23-11-1834) and the Good Father (27-3-1837) died and are buried.
6. **Mende:** Foundation in 1802.
7. **Cahors:** Foundation in 1803.
8. **Laval:** Foundation in 1804.

PAPAL BULL (Pastor Aeternus)

The papal bull entitled 'Pastor Aeternus' is the official approval by the Holy See under Pius VII of the Congregation. Its opening statement of approval states:

PIUS, Bishop, Servant of the Servants of God, for everlasting remembrance. The Eternal Pastor, who after having given his life for his sheep, invested Peter with the fullness of his power and confided to his care the feeding of his lambs and his sheep, having placed us in this high office, unworthy though we may be of such a dignity exacts of us that we should dedicate all the cares of our heart to direct the fold of the Lord in the ways of salvation. Behold why, then, we are very happy in the Lord, not only when we encounter, especially in this part of his flock so infected with venom from the pits of the abyss, zealous men of the house of God who find their delight in remaining with him whose joy was to live with the children of men, who chastise their bodies and subdue them, who give themselves vigorously and unstintingly to the study of the spotless law of God in order that they might convert souls and inspire children with wisdom, but even more when they present to us rules with the help of which they intend to lead this manner of life, when we see that these rules are proper to the standards of justice and to bringing about the performance of their duties. We are deeply impressed with the pious intentions of those who approach us, and we confirm these rules through our authority and that of the Apostolic See.

This is why, our dear sons and dearest daughters, the brothers and sisters of the new congregation established at Poitiers, soon to be known as that of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, we, having learned that this congregation was assembled and founded in the said city of Poitiers by Joseph Pierre Coudrin, a priest., during his lifetime, when the evils of hell horribly afflicted all of France, that it is composed of many of the faithful, *clerics* and secular priests as well as men and women of the laity; that now, by the grace of God, it has happily increased, and that it has establishments in the cities of Poitiers, Paris, Mende, Cahors, LeMans, and Seez, and in the city of Laval in the diocese of Mans; that there is a demand for new foundations of this institute in many parts of France, and hence there is definite hope in the Lord that his congregation will prosper and increase to greater advantage; that it has been endowed with favors and special indulgences by :Pius VI, our predecessor of glorious memory; that the sad congregation to which we ourselves have granted indulgences for thirty years, under the title and denomination of the Confraternity of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and of Mary, with St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary as special patron; that it venerates as particular protectors, St. Augustine, St. Dominic, St. Bernard and St. Pacomius; that it has four praiseworthy aims: first, free education, in the fear of the Lord, for poor children, both boys and girls, and to train the youth of the sanctuary for the august functions of the sacred ministry; second, to make reparation, by perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, day and night, especially in the houses of the sisters where its members are more numerous, for the injuries perpetrated against the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary due to the enormous crimes of sinners; third, the dedication of themselves to the preaching of the gospel and especially through holy missions; and fourth, the mortification of the flesh in humility of spirit, in as much as human weakness will allow...

PROTECTORS

One of the other Proper Sources of our Spirituality is the concept of 'holy protectors.' The holy protector is a saint, angel or holy person who is asked to pray for and intercede for the Congregations. These sources are some of the main sources of our SS.CC. spirituality and its development from the beginning. As one of our main motivations is to expand our spirituality and keep abreast of the signs of the times, it is incumbent for us to adapt and adopt our spirituality and charism to answer the challenge of the times in which we live.

The following is quoted from our Statutes, Chapter III: "Community of Apostolic Life" (modification made by General Chapter 2000): Besides the feasts of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, we celebrate the following in a special way.....

The protectors of the Congregation and their feasts are:

March 19	St. Joseph, Principal Patron of our Congregation, Solemnity
March 27	Marie Joseph Coudrin, "the Good Father", founder of the Congregation
May 10	Saint Damien de Veuster
May 15	St. Pachomius, Abbot, Protector of our Congregation, Memorial Proper feast
Friday following The Second Sunday After Pentecost	Sacred Heart of Jesus, Titular of our Congregation, Solemnity
Saturday following the Feast of the Sacred Heart	Immaculate Heart of Mary, Titular of our Congregation, Solemnity
June 16	St. John Francis Regis, Religious, Patron of the Lay Association, Memorial
July 9	Our Lady, Queen of Peace, Patroness of Missionaries, Proper feast
July 11	St. Benedict, Abbot, Secondary Patron of our Congregation and Father of our Rule, Feast
August 8	Saint Dominic, Protector of the Congregation, Memorial
August 20	Saint Bernard, Abbot, Protector of the Congregation, Memorial
August 28	Saint Augustine, Bishop, Protector of the Congregation, Memorial
September 29	St. Michael, Archangel, Patron of our Missionaries, Feast
October 1	St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, Religious, St. Theresa of the Child Jesus, Religious,
October 16	St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, Religious, Protectress of our Congregation,
October 20	St. Caprasius, Bishop and Martyr, Optional Memorial, Proper feast
November 23	Henriette Aymer de la Chevalerie, "the Good Mother", foundress of the Congregation
At Christmas	We commemorate the anniversary of our Founders' first vows

HOLY MEN AND WOMEN

Moving on to our own times, the Congregation recognizes many holy men and women who were members. Most notably would be: St. Damien de Veuster and Blessed Eustaquio Van Lieshout and Fr. Mateo Crawley-Boevey.



BLESSED EUSTAQUIO VAN LIESHOUT

Blessed Eustaquio Van Lieshout was born in 1903. He became a priest of the congregation of the SS.CC. and was ordained in 1925. He was then sent to Brazil where he was appointed pastor for the town of Agua Sujes.

After news spread of Van Lieshout's transfer to Poay by his religious superiors, the population of the town started a bloodless uprising to stop him from leaving. Nevertheless, he left in obedience to his superiors for his new parish, where he worked to oppose the widespread practice of Candoble. His blessings and cures of the sick made the little village a noted center of pilgrimage.

This, however, brought major problems to the town. Railroads were not able to furnish transportation for the great crowds; the lack of adequate housing meant that sanitary conditions were inadequate to the need. The police were no longer able to maintain order. Merchants sold bad food at high prices and thieves roamed the pilgrimage area preying on innocent victims. Van Lieshout was ordered to leave the parish to prevent these conditions from continuing. Despite this, tremendous crowds followed him everywhere. Brazilian authorities became so alarmed that they ordered him out of towns and villages. No one had anything against him, but they were afraid of the crowds and the commotion that would follow him.

The Cardinal Archbishop of Rio de Janeiro instructed Van Lieshout to leave the capital by midnight. Subsequently, a fanatical crowd blocked traffic and invaded church rectories looking for him. Somehow, he managed to find a hiding place and passed a year in peace and happiness. His final appointment was as pastor of Belo Horizonte, where he lived the last two years of his life. He was given an assistant who was able to control the crowds. No one was permitted to enter the rectory without a letter of introduction. In this fashion, Van Lieshout was able to devote his complete energy to the work of his parish. After a week of sickness caused by an insect bite, he died on August 30, 1943.

At his death, on his body was found a penitential pointed iron chain, buried so deep in his flesh that it could not be removed without tearing the flesh. Miracles are attributed to him. Although he died in 1943, during the war, his tomb is visited daily by hundreds of pilgrims. He lived an exemplary life marked by many inexplicable facts. One of his concerns was: *"I can not sleep when I think of the abandoned children of my parish."*



FATHER MATEO CRAWLEY-BOEVEY

Although he was born in Arequipa, Peru, he lived most of his life in Chile and Canada. He was founder of the Enthronement of the sacred Heart and of Night Adoration in the home. He was an indefatigable apostle of this mission through his preaching throughout the world and in his writings: *Jesus, King of Love and Holy Hours*.

MARTYRS OF SPAIN



Think of **Damien de Veuster**, who leaving home, family and country gave himself generously to the service of those abandoned on Molokai, opening possibilities for those who had lost hope and coming to identify himself with his beloved leprous patients even to the point of death. Think too of the twentieth century martyrs in Spain: **Teófilo Fernández de Legaria Goñi, Isidro Íñiguez de Ciriano Abechuco, Gonzalo Barrón Nanclares, Eladio López Ramos and Mario Ros Ezcurra**. These five men – along with many others – witnessed to their faith with their own blood in a painful situation of confusion, persecution and violence. And then there is **Blessed Eustaquio van Lieshout** who exercised his ministry of healing of body and soul among those whom he met on the way.

38TH GENERAL CHAPTER, MISSION 4

We already knew the date of the upcoming **beatification of the 20th century Martyrs in Spain: October 27, 2013**. Now we also know the place. Last month, November, the Spanish Episcopal Conference decided that the beatification would take place **in Tarragona**, which is located some 100 kilometers to the south of Barcelona.

The site chosen has a great history of Christian faith and martyrdom, like the Hispanic protomartyrs: Fructoso, Bishop of Tarragona and his two deacons Augurio and Eulogio. Soon more details about the beatification ceremony will be given. The Office for the Causes of Saints of the Spanish Episcopal Conference and the host diocese are in charge of organizing the event. For our part, a commission has been

set up in the Iberian Province that, in coordination with the Postulator General, will take responsibility for organizing the Congregation's part in this event.

The recent General Chapter proposed that "our brothers, Damien, the twentieth century martyrs and Eustaquio are an inspiration for our mission" (Mission 20). These three "icons" represent "*the testimony of many brothers who in their own time and circumstances incarnated the charism they received from the Founders*" (Mission 4). Referring to the 20th century martyrs in Spain, the Chapter said that they "witnessed to their faith with their own blood in a painful situation of confusion, persecution and violence" (ibid.).

The death of the martyrs effectively confronts us with the sinister aspects of human nature. Their stories speak to us of a vicious violence that goes to the extreme of killing defenseless people. This deadly hatred is engendered by very diverse circumstances that are difficult to analyze. What motives drive some to assassinate Christians, men and women religious, priests? We know that ideologies that exclude, the ambiguity of the Church's public commitment, the accumulated rancor, the interests of power, the fears and phobias, and many other factors played a weighty role in 20th century Spanish society in the time in which our brothers were assassinated. The same can be said of France during the revolution when the Good Father decided to risk even death if necessary, and the situation in Paris with victims of the Commune, and the colonized countries where foreign missionaries were killed, and the Muslim countries where today they exterminate Christians, in short, any situation where they kill people because of their faith. The "religious" always lives entangled in the contradictions of human existence. It cannot be otherwise.

The beatification of the martyrs is not going to dispel this ambiguity of history. It is not a judgment that separates the actors in this drama into the "good" and "bad". The joy that these martyrs provide us with is not the "victory" of some over others. No. A beatification is always a praise of God who shows the wonder of His grace in the fragility of his sons and daughters. The joy of the martyrs arises from the recognition of this "strength" of God, which is the power of charity.

God is not indifferent to the cruelty of history. His active and silent presence insures that the assassination of those who die confessing the faith and pardoning their executioners might not be another sad story condemned to powerlessness and obscurity. On the contrary, the death of those who die because they believe in Jesus proclaims the love of God, which our brothers professed and preached, is stronger than the attachment to life. Therefore martyrdom can be received as a message of hope for everyone, the victims as well as the executioners. A message of relief and of hope for the pain of an ever-suffering humanity that trudges on lacerated, yesterday as today, by unbearable scenes of hatred and cruelty. A message rooted in faith in Jesus. Because Jesus Christ, who was also a martyr, whom they also killed without justice or mercy, is the reason and fount of reconciliation for all. It is a disconcerting blessing of peace that wells up from the bowels of the most extreme violence. Only a love that forgives enemies breaks the chains of evil. Only overflowing mercy conquers death. Only God can reconcile and save His scattered children. Only God the Father can give life to those who have died.

Our martyred brothers died as believers. They fulfilled the desire, which our recent General Chapter also speaks to us about: "*Our desire, expressed in the formula of profession, is to live and die in the service of the Sacred Hearts. When the end of life draws near, what we want to do is prepare ourselves to die as believers and to make of our death an act of praise for the God who loves us. In that way, our death will be a witness to Christ, a final act of mission*" (Mission 37).

Recently a Lebanese superior general, who lives in a monastery in Iraq, told me that, for them, evangelization is martyrdom. It is not a "white" martyrdom, but a "red" martyrdom, one of blood. Because, he explained to me, each day that I set foot outside of the house I know that I could be the victim of an attack. We stay there. We do not flee from the threat. This is our way of witnessing to faith in Jesus.

“The Spanish martyrs of the Twentieth Century encourage us to be witnesses of the faith at a time when many people, including ourselves struggle to believe.” (38th General Chapter, Mission 20). This is the “white” martyrdom to which we are called. In spite of the difficulties, we have received a vocation to live as believers from day to day, making our lives a humble reference to Jesus and to his Gospel; and preparing ourselves for death by placing our trust in Him in whom we believe. But, who knows if there will not be some among us of whom the “red” martyrdom will be asked as well? Some who, like those who will shortly be beatified, will one day find themselves face to face with the horror of violence from their fellow men; in front of which they will be called to witness to the One whose *“love is better than life”* (Psalm 63:4).

We are in Advent. Christmas, which we are getting ready to celebrate, will also speak to us of violence, cruelty and martyrdom. *“Herod ... became furious. He ordered the massacre of all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity two years old and under...”* (Mt 2:16). Innocent children who were brutally assassinated give testimony to a Jesus whom they do not know. The biblical backdrop makes us see Herod as if he were a kind of Pharaoh, as an assassin of children who would have settled in the very same promise land: the height of misfortune. From the heart wrenching pain of the victims echoes the quotation from Jeremiah: *“In Ramah is heard the sound of sobbing, bitter weeping! Rachel mourns for her children, she refuses to be consoled for her children—they are no more!”* (Jer. 31:15). Don’t those same cries continue to resound in Palestine, in the Congo, in Colombia, in Iraq, in Syria, in Nigeria, and in so many other places today, right now?

But the prophet does not stop at the weeping. The text that Matthew references continues to unfold a dazzling vision of the new covenant (precisely the covenant that brings us the child who flees with his parents to Egypt): *“Thus says the LORD: Cease your cries of weeping, hold back your tears! There is compensation for your labor”* (Jer. 31:16). And a little further on it continues: *“Judah and all its cities, the farmers and those who lead the flock shall dwell there together. For I will slake the thirst of the faint; the appetite of all the weary I will satisfy.”* (Jer. 31:24-25). It is a question of the longed for reconciliation between two brothers who were enemies, of Cain (farmer) and Abel (rancher); and of the announcement of the banquet of the Kingdom, where there will be no more hunger or thirst. This banquet will be inaugurated with the broken bread and the cup shared in the Supper that this child, now an adult, will offer to us before dying – a martyr- on the cross.

Let us then dedicate our lives to the same: reconciling people, soothing parched throats, and witnessing to the love of Christ, that we constantly make memory of in his Eucharist.

Fr. Javier Álvarez-Ossorio ssc
Superior General

(14/12/2012)

HOLY WOMEN OF THE CONGREGATION

These are also some very holy women who were professed sisters of the Congregation. Most notably among those are:



Sr. Hermasie Paget, SS.CC. (1828-1890)

She was born in Sambacour, France, in a very religious family: a brother was a priest and an elder sister was an SS.CC. religious. Because she was not physically strong, the doctors prescribed a change of climate. For this reason, as a newly professed, she was destined to the new foundation of Lima. She was named superior of Lima when the *foundress, Cleonise Cormier, left*. She founded a second house in Peru and in 1881 the Superior General confided to her the task of canonical visitor to all the houses of the sisters in Latin America. In 1883 she founded a community in La Paz, Bolivia. She was concerned with associating the laity to the aims and works of the Congregation. It is generally believed that M. Hermasie had a great influence on the efforts of a French Naval Officer in saving the city of Lima during the war between Chile and Peru.



Sr. M. Maria Josefina Lamarca, SS.CC. (1849-1930)

She was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Shortly thereafter her family moved to Valparaiso, Chile where she was educated in Sacred Hearts School. Although she expressed a desire to become a religious, she was counseled to marry. After a brief marriage, she was widowed. In 1879 she entered the novitiate of Valparaiso. She made her first profession in January 1889. At that time the Superior General, Angele Chauvain, planned to found a house in Spain and chose Maria Josefina for that purpose. She went in the same year with a group of Sisters to Torrelavega, Cantabria where she *founded the first house of the congregation in Spain*. She also assisted the brothers in the *foundation of the scholasticate in El Escorial* and in the *construction of the church of Christ the King in Madrid*. She is known as the “*Mother of the Congregation in Spain*”.



Gabrielle De La Barre, SS.CC. (1771-1829)

She was born to a noble family in Poitiers, France and was imprisoned during the French Revolution. She was an intimate friend of the Good Mother, confidante of the Good Father and superior of the Grande Maison in Poitiers from 1802 until her death. Her writings, organized at the request of the Founders, are a precious source of information on our foundress and the first period of the history of the congregation.



M. Cleonisse Cormier, SS.CC. (1803-1866)

She was born in La Suze in the neighborhood of Man, France. She became a member of the Congregation in 1821 upon completion of her novitiate in Picpus. During her years in France she had regular contact with the founders and M. Françoise de Viart, and, in her memoirs, she was able to write many small details of the first period of the history of the Congregation. In 1838 she was elected to go with a group of sisters to Latin America. There she established houses in Valparaiso and Santiago, Chile and Lima, Peru. She returned to France in 1855.

Important Dates of the Congregation

08-11-1767	Birth of the Good Mother in Saint-Georges-de-Noisne (France)
03-01-1768	Birth of the Good Father in Coussay-les-Bois
03-04-1792	The Good Father is clandestinely ordained to the priesthood in Paris
09-05-1792	Vision of the Good Father in the Grannery of the Motte d'Usseau
10-22-1793	The Good Mother is imprisoned for about a year for sheltering, in her house, a priest faithful to the Pope
12-24-1800	Vows of the founders during this midnight Mass in "La Grande Maison" of Poitiers. Birth of the Congregation
01-27-1802	Vision of the Good Mother "evoking the four stages of Jesus"
1806	The Good Mother receives the statue of Our Lady of Peace
11-17-1817	With the promulgation of the Bull "Pastor Aeternus", the Holy See approves the Congregation
07-07-1827	Foundation of the Congregation in Oceania (Hawaii)
11 -23-1834	Death of the Good Mather in the Mother House of Picpus (Paris)
03-27-1837	Death of the Good Father in the Mother House of Picpus (Paris).
09-02-1838	Foundation of the Congregation in Valparaiso (Chile)
1840	Purchase of the House in Louvain (Belgium); from Belgium the Congregation spreads itself to the Low Countries (1893); Germany (1892); England (1893) and the United States (1905)
12-15-1842	Departure of the "Marie Joseph" with 14 Brothers and 10 Sisters
05-04-1859	First foundation of the Sisters in the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii)
1864	Eugene Eyraud SS.CC. initiates the evangelization of the Easter Islands
06-30-1880	First foundation of the Brothers in Spain (Miranda de Ebro)
04-21-1881	First foundation of the Sisters in Spain (Torrelavega)
04-15-1889	Father Damien dies on the island of Molokai
03-23-1903	The government of France dissolves the Congregation; it takes refuge in Belgium (Brothers)
1930	The Belgium Province accepts a mission in Congo. Death of M. Josefina Lamarca, SS.CC. founders of Spain
1936-1939	Thirteen Brothers die in the Civil War in Spain
08-30-1943	Father Eustachio Van Lieshout dies in Brazil

1955	First foundation of the Brothers in Andalusia (Seville)
1965-66	Brothers and Sisters leave for Paraguay
09-24-1975	Maria Paloma Aguirre SS.CC., 1st Spanish Superior General
10-05-1983	Maria Pia LaFont SS.CC. 2nd Spanish Superior General
07-09-1990	The Holy See approves the new Constitutions of the Congregation
06-23-1993	The Holy See approves the Statutes and the SS.CC. lay branch
09-19-1994	Election of Enrique Losada SS.CC., 1st Spanish Superior General and Jeanne Cadiou SS.CC., Superior General of the Sisters
06-04-1995	John Paul II beatifies Father Damien of Molokai in Brussels
09-2000	General Chapter of the Brothers and Sisters in Rome
12-24-2000	In the midnight mass we celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts.
10-11-2009	Canonization of Blessed Damien
May 10	Feast day of Saint Damien

MARY

In the title of the Congregation, Mary, the mother of Jesus occupies a very important place. She is entitled the Sacred Heart of Mary. This title of "Sacred Heart of Mary" is an unusual title but is justified from many sources. The following sources are helpful in understanding the title Sacred Heart of Mary. According to St. Augustine, the flesh of Mary, follows that Jesus' Heart is the heart of Mary. I can say, secondly, that the spiritual heart of Jesus is also the heart of Mary by reason of an intimate union of spirit and will. If it was said of the early Christians that they had only one heart and one soul, with how much more reason is this true of the only Son of Mary and His Holy Mother... Thirdly, I can say that the Divine heart of Jesus, which is the Holy Spirit, is the heart of Mary, since if this Divine Spirit has been given by *God* to all true Christians in accord with the promise which he made by the mouth of the prophet Ezekiel (36:25), how would it not be much more true of the Queen and Mother of all Christians?

Father I. M. Hilarion Lucas, SS.CC. wrote in 1814 that the young Congregation placed itself under the protection of the "Divine Heart of Jesus and the Sacred Heart of Mary." The Good Father Founder wrote in a circular letter April 14, 1817, "Remember dear brothers and sisters that after the adorable Heart of Jesus, we should honor the Sacred Heart of Mary," Finally in a memoir to the Holy See, September 29, 1824, the Good Father requested the privilege of celebrating as proper feasts that Sacred Heart of Mary on the first Saturday of September the Office of Mary's Conception on every permissible Saturday, or the Proper Office of the Heart of Jesus.

Mary, the office of the Seven Sorrows of Mary on their respective days, as found in the Roman Breviary; also that the feasts of the Presentation and the Purification be celebrated with an Octave.

The Congregation has a special devotion to Mary under the title of Mary, Queen of Peace. There is a special miraculous story attributed to the statue of Mary, Queen of Peace. Originally, the statue was requested by Jean de Joyeuse as a gift for his bride Francoise de Voisine in 1513. It was passed on to Henri a younger son. Henri became a Capuchin friar and gave the statue to the Capuchin Order. In 1051, devotion to Mary under the title of Queen of Peace spread throughout France and there were many miraculous cures and healings attributed to the intercession of this devotion. In fact, Louis XIV, King of France was healed and the Queen Mother ordered a painting of this statue which now hangs in the National Museum of France. The French Revolution of 1789 forced the Capuchin to flee Paris and the statue ended up in the possession of one Mme. Coipel. She died in 1800 and Mme. de Luynes then gave the statue to Father Coudrin who gave the statue to the Good Mother. She installed the statue in the Picpus Chapel where it has remained to the present day.

Some of the first missionaries to Hawaii received a copy of this statue from the Founder. Also, there is a special novena dedicated to Our Lady Queen of Peace which begins on May 30 and end on the feast of Our Lady Queen of Peace on June 8. The Holy Father, Pope John Paul II had a great devotion to Our Lady Queen of Peace. In March 1983, he addressed the people in El Salvador “I entrust to Our Lady, Queen of Peace, the title by which you invoke her in this land. She is the Mother of all, the example of a commitment to God's will and to the history of her people. I ask her to help you in your ministry of reconciliation, in your mission of evangelization, to be with your commitment authentic disciples of Christ. Amen.”

When he addressed the audience in Rome on December 8, 1994, he used similar words “Mary, Queen of Peace, is close to the women of our day because of her motherhood, her example of openness to other's needs, and her witness of suffering. Mary lived with a deep sense of responsibility the plan which God willed to carry out in her for the salvation of all humanity.”

MARY, OUR LADY OF PEACE



Our Lady of Peace, Mother of Peace, Queen of Peace or Our Lady Queen of Peace is a title of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Roman Catholic Church. She is represented in art holding a dove and an olive branch, symbols of peace. Her official memorial feast is celebrated on January 24 each year in Hawaii and some churches in the United States. Elsewhere, the memorial feast is celebrated on July 9.

Our Lady of Peace is the patroness of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary religious order, founded by Peter Coudrin in Paris during the French Revolution. When the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary established the Catholic Church in Hawaii, they consecrated the Hawaiian Islands under the protection of Our Lady of Peace. They erected the first Roman Catholic church in Hawaii to her. Today, the Cathedral of Our Lady of Peace in Honolulu is the oldest Roman cathedral in use in the United States.

There are three famous statues of Our Lady of Peace located in Paris and Honolulu. The original is a wooden carving located at a convent of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary in France. A larger replica in bronze was hoisted above the altar and sanctuary at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Peace. A third stands outside on a pedestal.

The original statue of Our Lady of Peace was ceremonially crowned on July 9, 1906 by the Archbishop of Paris in the name of Pope Saint Pius X. Every July 9 since then, the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary have celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Peace. During the troubled years of World War I, Pope Benedict XV added Our Lady of Peace to the Litany of Loreto, a sacred prayer in liturgy.

THEOLOGY

For a full understanding of the theology of Mary and the Church's teaching on Mary, it is explained in the Vatican II document *Lumen Gentium*, Chapter Eight. The main and principal focus of this chapter is the unique participation of Mary in the economy of salvation. The Old Testament and also the tradition of the church manifest the part that Mary, the mother of the Savior had in the divine plan of salvation.

Mary most perfectly sums up in herself the longing of humankind for salvation which only comes from God. The Vatican II document stresses the primary of Mary's humility and poverty in spirit. That primary is equally the primary of hope and expectation that was generated by her participation in the work of our Salvation and Redemption.

The Vatican II document put it this way: "The Father of mercies willed that the Incarnation should be preceded by assent on the part of the predestined mother, so that just as a woman had a share in bringing about death, so also a woman should contribute to life. This is pre-eminently true of the Mother of Jesus, who gave to the world the Life that renews all things".

When it comes to Mary then she is the model for us to lead us to Jesus. St. Louis de Montefort had a motto, "Ad Jesum, per Mariam", "To Jesus through Mary." So the Vatican II document (*Lumen Gentium*) echoes the same sentiment: "Thus the Blessed Virgin advanced in her pilgrimage of faith, and faithfully persevered in her union with her Son unto the cross, where she stood, in keeping with the divine plan, endured with her only begotten Son the intensity of his suffering, associated herself with his sacrifice in her mother's heart, and lovingly consented to the immolation of this victim which was born of her".

The late Holy Father, John Paul II had an inspiring devotion to Mary much like that envisaged by our Founders and so necessary and essential for the proper exercise of our vocation as brothers, sisters, lay branch associates of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Just see the titles about Mary that he addressed in different expressions: Gate of Heaven, Handmaid of the Lord, Mary Immaculate, Mediatrix of all Graces, Mirror of Perfection, Queen of Peace, Queen of all Saints, etc. Finally, perhaps Mary's place in our lives is best understood from his Encyclical *Redemptoris Mater*.

"For every Christian, for every human being, Mary is the one who first 'believed,' and precisely with her faith as Spouse and Mother she wishes to act upon all those who entrust themselves to her as her children. And it is well-known that the more her children persevere and progress in this attitude, the nearer Mary leads them to the 'unsearchable riches of Christ' (Ephesians 3:8). " Redemptoris Mater.

ADORATION

Adoration has been an integral element of the vocation/call of the Sacred Hearts Congregation. It is included in the full title; The Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. The adoration is unique in that the Blessed Sacrament is not necessarily exposed but remains in the tabernacle. From the beginning adoration was instrumental as the prayer form that fostered and nurtured the seedling institution (Congregation). The Founder, himself made adoration daily while he was in hiding in La Motte d'Usseau. It was at adoration that the original vision of the Congregation was given to him. Also, Mlle. Geoffroy, one of the members of the Association recommends adoration as a prayer form for the young prayer group or the lay people known as the "Association." Father Coudrin endorsed this and so adoration begun. Mlle. Geoffroy was one of the original members even before the Good Mother arrived on the scene. During the intense persecutions the members of the Congregation made adoration of the Blessed Sacrament even under the most difficult circumstances. The Good Father expressed the necessary dispositions for adoration.

"Always and everywhere let us be adorers in spirit and in truth: lambs by the purity of our souls; victims by the saintly disposition of our hearts."

There are four elements to adoration:

- a) **Worship** is the creature's response to the Creator. It is simply expressed in "Come let us worship and bow down... We worship you Lord; Holy, Holy, Holy. In this phrase we look upon the transcendence of God. A God is almighty, beyond, awesome, etc.
- b) **Thanksgiving** comes naturally. "Give thanks to the Lord" or simply I thank you Lord. It goes from a transcendent God who is beyond to a God — a Jesus who is near us.
- c) **Reparation**: means simply that as St. Paul says that we make up what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ His body the Church. There is nothing lacking in the sufferings of Jesus but there is a great lack in His Body, the Church. It is God's will in Jesus that all would be saved. God has poured out on all mankind through Jesus salvation, grace and favor or blessings. While some receive this and prosper, some do not. In fact, some reject it altogether. It is the task and challenge of the one in adoration to make reparation for this or to repair or breach the gap.
- d) The final element is **petition**. Petition simply asks Jesus. It is based on the Gospel Command of "ask and you shall receive." The Good Father wrote to Sister Justine Charret about adoration:

"The adorer is a representative, delegated by the Church for adoration, praise, thanksgiving, reparation. The adorer should adore with Jesus Christ and through Jesus Christ. He first makes reparation for his own sins and for all the sins which are being committed throughout the world. He seeks the conversion of sinners and the propagation of the faith. He prays for the Church suffering. Moreover, he should completely abandon himself to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The devotion, born on Calvary, came forth from the very Heart of Jesus pierced on the cross after his death. It remains open every moment of our lives as a place of refuge; a place of pardon for our faults, of consolation in our suffering, of encouragement in our weaknesses; an asylum of peace in our anxieties and fears and our hope at the hour of death.

The Heart of Mary was pierced. Through her Heart, we go to the Heart of Jesus, which was opened rather than pierced. In the Sacred Heart of Jesus we find our repose. His Sacred Heart is the source of living waters whence the soul extracts its delights, quenches its

thirst, receive its strength, is overwhelmed with grace. Through the Heart of Mary, the soul, to supply for its own insufficiency, offers to God the sentiments of adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Our adoration is not just a prayer form but a prayer and exercise that places our lives and times before the Lord. It is a union of where we live, move and have our being and where we meet Jesus on a daily basis.

Our adoration cannot be just any kind of adoration, since our prayer must necessarily be characterized by:

A What we believe:

- God as we SS.CC's contemplate Him
- The love of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary
- The Eucharist

B What we experience:

- The situation in the world
- Our apostolic tasks
- The difficulties in our mission
- Our personal and communal journey of life and faith

EUCCHARIST

What is the Eucharist? Vatican II describes Eucharist as follows:

"At the Last Supper, on the night he was betrayed, our Savior instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of his Body and Blood. This he did in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross throughout the ages until he should come again, and so to entrust to his beloved Spouse, the Church, a memorial of his death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a Paschal banquet; in which Christ is consumed, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us."

The foundation of the Eucharist is cited in three of the Gospels: Matthew 26: 26-28, Mark 14: 22-24, Luke 22: 17-20. The oldest description of the foundation of the Eucharist is found in St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians 1 Cor. 11:23-25.

The Eucharist is the unbloody sacrifice of Calvary made present once again as an expiatory offering or sacrifice of Jesus, Son of God to the Father. Jesus is the Priest and the Victim. He, Jesus is the one offering and the offered. The Eucharist unites us with God and allows the divine life to flow into us. All calls, vocations, and charisms find life in the Eucharist. Vatican II sums it up: Lumen Gentium 1327

The Eucharist is the sum and summary of our faith: Our way of thinking is attuned to the Eucharist, and the Eucharist in turn confirms our way of thinking "

There have been books and articles written about the Eucharist. Pope John Paul II wrote an encyclical on the Eucharist. In that encyclical John Paul II speaks about the different ways in which we can increase our devotion to the Eucharist. We can cultivate in our hearts a constant desire for the sacrament of the Eucharist. This is known as 'spiritual communion.' We should always demonstrate the utmost respect and reverence when receiving the Eucharist. We need to participate in the celebration of Eucharist with an intense interest. We can carry the Eucharist in our hearts when we leave the Church. Observe the proper rules and preparing for Eucharist by fasting.

One of the principal ways that we can increase our devotion to the Eucharist and the one that is intrinsic, integral to our charism is adoration. The pope says that "adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is a priceless treasure and a well spring of grace." It prolongs and increases the fruits of our communion. In the instruction on the Eucharist entitled we read: "*Catechesis on the Eucharist should seek to form in the faithful the awareness that the celebration of the Eucharist is truly the center of the entire Christian life for the Holy Eucharist contains all the spiritual treasury of the Church, that is Christ Himself.*"

The spirituality and charism of the Congregation is intimately connected and bound to the celebration of the Eucharist, not only by the adoration as already mentioned but because the Sacred Heart and the Eucharist are related from many different and similar perspectives. In the documents about our beginning 'adoration' is often called adoration of the Sacred Heart in the Blessed Sacrament which is the Eucharist reposed. The Founders profession said that they would be a "perpetual adorer of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Father Coudrin warns us that the adorer must give "above all else the complete gift of self to the Heart of Jesus."

In a 1983 essay by Jean-Yves Kerrien, SS.CC he basically tells how our spirituality and the Eucharist complement each other:

To put it a bit more clearly, I believe that our Founders were saying: The Eucharist is a gift of the Sacred Heart — the gift par excellence, after the gift of the Holy Spirit. In the Eucharist, the Sacred Heart gives us Himself, in order to enable us to give ourselves to Him. Giving Himself He waits for us to give ourselves: especially the complete gift of self to the Heart of Jesus, not to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, for we are children of the Sacred Hearts. We are not to be ashamed of our name, but we are to bear it with a humble nobility.

There is a statement in our spirituality that often appears which needs clarification. It reads, "Consecration to the Sacred Hearts is the foundation of our Institute." The word consecration comes from two Latin words which are 'con' meaning with or for and 'sacrare' meaning to make holy. In its simplest form then consecration means to make holy the Sacred Hearts. However, consecration to the Sacred Hearts has a deeper and more profound meaning for us. It is not a passive act of reverence but an active, vibrant awareness and motivation within us inspired by the Holy Spirit on a daily basis, renewed by the associations of past experiences and realized in a special grace filled way by our commitment/call/vocation in the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. This consecration needs to be the inspiration and motivation for all who are devoted to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. So convinced was the Founder of this consecration that he chose the word "zealot" or "zealatrix" to more properly capture the word consecration in the members of the Institute:

Souls are invited to unite themselves to the Heart of Jesus. They are represented under the different sentiments which the Heart of Jesus should produce. You find there, the loving soul, the compassionate soul, the ardent soul and especially the "zealous" soul. This title is in no way strange to pious souls.

I would add one final consideration. Consecration to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary is the foundation of our institute. We are trying hard to keep in the very name of our religious society, a reminder of this consecration. It is under the title of "Zealots" that we have been able to support with joy over twenty years of persecution and anxiety. It was our consolation, our delight, and I may say, our strength and support. Why, then, must we be forced to abandon in the time of calm, a name which was our consolation during the storm?

SS.CC. — UNFOLDING OF THE CHARISM

There are far too many individual members who have exemplified the charism. In fact, all members to a great extent have born witness to the charism. How often people will comment that you SS.CC have something different or you bring love to situations." A brief look at the lives and times of some of our more illustrious members will be helpful in discovering how the charism of the SS.CC unfolded in their lives.



Saint Damien de Veuster: 1840-1889

Damien was born Joseph de Veuster in January of 1840. He was the second youngest child of Jan Frans de Veuster and Joanna Catherina Wouters. There were four of his family who entered religious life. Damien entered the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts in 1859. His brother had preceded him into the same Congregation and was assigned to Hawaii. When his brother fell ill and was unable to go Damien volunteered, although he was not yet ordained a priest. Damien arrived in Honolulu after a six month sea journey in March, 1804. He was ordained a priest in May, 1824.

In May of 1874, Damien and a few other priests volunteered to go to the leper colony in Molokai for three months at a time. As events unfolded it was Damien who spent the rest of his short life in Molokai. His early life in Molokai was extremely difficult. Damien slept under a pandanus tree. The stench of leprosy and decaying flesh were a constant reminder of the sufferings of his less fortunate brothers and sisters and the call of the SS.CC to contemplate, live and proclaim the love in the heart of Jesus as modeled by Mary. Damien not only had the surroundings to fulfill that but also the heart to accomplish it. Since he was practically alone, he did all the things that needed to be done: he built houses and hospitals, took care of the patients both for their spiritual and physical needs, and made coffins and dug graves for the hundreds who died during his stay there. Statistics tell us that there were 800 patients when he arrived. In the next 16 years, 2,274 more arrived with 2,300 deaths during that time which meant that there were about 1,000 sufferers at any given time.

Father Damien also built several churches, both in Kaulapapa and top-side Molokai indicating that he had to climb the 2,000 foot pali often. A few times priests helped him out, but they did not stay very long. Damien contracted leprosy in 1884 but continued his work until a few days before he died on April 15, 1889.

The personal testimony of Damien witness to the love of the Sacred Hearts his life and how effective that love had become Damien's words are so beautiful.

*"Without the presence of our divine master in my small chapel,
I would never be able to sustain my life united to that of the
"lepers" of Molokai. "*

How sweet it is to die a child of the Sacred Hearts. He wrote to his brother:

"I am the happiest missionary in the world" He had transferred the colony into a place of hope, even joy. His simple musical band lifted their spirits even at funerals. He had shown them that God loved each one of them and his presence, as Jesus' during his life on earth, was proof of God's love. Damien was a great example of someone who was in the chosen word of the Founder a 'zealot'. Despite his arduous daily burden of work e.g. building, burying and constructing an aqueduct, he still had time for his private prayer and adoration. Recently, an SS.CC member tried to follow Damien's daily schedule and had to give up after three days. Damien spent his life doing it. From such a perspective the spirit or charism of the Congregation and the four stages of the life of Jesus especially the hidden and apostolic and crucified lives of Jesus were truly exemplified and lived by Damien. In his zeal for God's activity in his beloved lepers he brought them to his adoration. From there he was submissive and obedient to God's Will. His adoration was not just a ritual but something real, a love for the Father in Jesus.

The world got to know about this heroic man and gifts started to come in from all over the world, including from some Protestant friends in England. When the colony was moved from Kalawao to Kaulapapa, his grave and his church were deserted. His remains were brought back in triumph to Belgium in 1936. He rests now in the crypt of the church where he first entered religious life.

Pope Paul VI declared him Venerable on July 9, 1977. On June 4, 1995, Pope John Paul II declared him Blessed Damien then canonized by Pope John Paul II on October 11, 2009 and his feast is set for May 10, the day he entered Molokai. On July 22, 1995, the relic of his right hand was re-interred in his former grave in Molokai after a triumphant tour of all the islands.



Father Mateo-Crawley-Boevey, SS.CC.

While Damien lived and stayed in Hawaii and gave his life for the lepers and lived the SS.CC charism, Mateo traveled the world in his ministry of the enthronement. Father Mateo-Crawley Boevey was born in Peru in 1875. He as Edward Maxim was one of eleven children. He entered the Congregation in 1891 and was ordained priest in 1898. In his early priesthood, Father Mateo was quite active in social reform. Then a life changing event happened that gave him a whole new ministry and a world vocation. Father Henry Septerman's sixth circular letter describes the event.

It is evident that he had received a special mission from the Sacred Heart at Paray-le-Monial at the time of his first pilgrimage in the month of August 1907. Four Sovereign Pontiffs, Pius X, Benedict XV, Pius XI and Pius XII, recognized and proclaimed this mission and along with them, all the Catholic Hierarchy. Heaven itself confirmed it by the wondrous fruits of sanctity which ripened the word of this apostle with a heart of fire. In addition to numerous and reverberating conversions in the perverted spheres, how many pious souls discovered, or recovered true sanctity from contact with Father Mateo.

This event happened in 1907 when he visited the shrine of the Sacred Heart in Paray-le-Monial, France. It was here that the whole devotion to the Sacred Heart had a powerful growth in the apparitions of the Sacred Heart to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque in 1673. Father Mateo had been quite ill and was not in the best of health. However, at Paray he was captivated by the love of the Sacred Heart and his vocation as a Sacred Hearts priest was touched and renewed. He wished to stay in the little chapel all night but was prevented from doing so because they locked the chapel at midnight. Here it was that the whole vision of the Enthronement came to him. He saw homes enthroned to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. He saw the enthronement as a bonding, blessing and benefit for the family to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It was extremely exciting for Mateo and he traveled to Rome to receive the blessing and approval of Pope Pius XI.

Mateo's love of the Sacred Heart and this new ministry caused him to make this love and devotion to the Sacred Heart a world wide mission through the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the home.

For thirty eight years of his life, Mateo traveled world wide preaching the love of the Sacred Heart. This was not an easy task and there were setbacks. He wrote his Superior General in October 1945, "My heart has been sounded by the misunderstanding concerning the Heart of Jesus."

It was also Father Mateo who conceived the whole idea of "adoration in the home." Pius XII called this night watch in the home a "truly tender act of piety and charity toward the Heart of Jesus Christ, a tenderness which required the heart of an apostle, like that of Father Mateo." Father Mateo was truly a great instrument of the love of the Sacred Hearts. Father Henry Septermans, the Superior General in June 1960, writes, "let us thank the Sacred Hearts for having willed to choose their apostle from among the ranks of our beloved Institute.

Father Mateo died in Valparaiso in April 1959 but some of the statements he made in his lifetime attest to an active, zealous love of the Sacred Hearts, in Paray-le-Monial in 1917, Father Mateo said:

In spiritual testament drawn up at Paray-le-Monial, in August 1917, he confides to us, with touching expressions, his profound attachment to his Institute: "Son of the Sacred Hearts, I vow my unconditional adherence to the beloved Congregation that received me with kindness in her bosom and to which I owe all that I have received since my first years: the Catholic education, my First Communion, religious profession and the priesthood. With the formal declaration of my entire submission to the Superior General, I place in his hands the very sincere testimony of my immense gratitude toward the Institute. And in the person of our Very Reverend Father, I humbly ask pardon of all my faults that might have grieved my Superior and by which I may have humiliated or scandalized my brothers. If they are numerous, I trust the charity by which they are forgiven and forgotten will be greater still..." At the end of his life, Father Mateo had to have his leg amputated because of diabetes. With resignation he accepts this tough and difficult situation. "I offer all for the glory of the Sacred Hearts and for the good of the Congregation — I accept, not only with resignation, but with joy."

There are many other great examples of the vocation/call of the Sacred Hearts as it was lived and proclaimed. There are the martyrs of the commune who were martyred in 1871. They were bludgeoned and shot to death. These were ordinary individuals who suffered martyrdom because of their faith and their membership in the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts. They were Father Ladislaus Radique, Father Marcellin Rouchouze (brother of the then Superior General) Father Trezal Tardieu and Father Polycarp Tuffier. They are great examples for us of the ordinary everyday life that faithfully served and lived lead to a holy life and witness to others. They fell in May 1871. There were many other martyrs as well. The Sumatra Martyrs who died in prison concentration camps in 1944 - 1945. There were ten victims in all.

Recently, another Sacred Hearts priest was beatified in Bello Horizonte in Brazil in June 2006 Father Eustaquio Van Lieshout was born in Holland in 1890. He was ordained priest in 1919 and served in Bello Horizonte, Brazil, He died in 1943. He was known as a healer and brought the peace, compassion, and healing of the Sacred Hearts to many. The following quote from his biography captures this spirit of the sacred Hearts in his life.

The Servant of God is a tool of conversions, of spiritual enrichment, and of the strengthening of the faith: His evangelical work, profound spirituality, his complete confidence in the presence of God, who gives him encouragement and new strengths, and inspires him and grants him special gifts, making his ministry always more effective. Extraordinary events, like healing, foment this reputation as a saint. He begins the construction of a large church.



Saint John Francis Regis
Jesuit Missionary (1597-1640)

Saint John Francis Regis was born at Fontcouverte in Languedoc, in January 1597, of a noble Catholic family. From his tenderest years he showed evidence of uncommon sanctity by his innocence of life, modesty, and love of prayer; when he was five years old he fainted when he heard his mother speak of the terrible misfortune of being eternally damned. After being educated by the Jesuits, when he was nineteen years old he decided, with the approbation of his confessor, to enter the Society of Jesus at Toulouse. There he was viewed as a model of every virtue, and was called *the Angel of the College*. He was sent in 1628 to

study theology in Toulouse, and ordained a priest in 1630. His first ministry in Toulouse was for the victims of the plague. His superiors feared to expose his youth to the contagion, but he pleaded successfully to be allowed to do so, and God spared His servant for future labors. He was sent to visit his family for a time, and began in Fontcouverte to occupy himself first of all with the poor. The numerous conversions effected there made his Superiors decide to assign their young Saint to the mission lands of France. He began his apostolic work in Montpellier, and spent himself in preaching to the unlettered people of Languedoc and Auvergne; in these regions where heresy had made serious inroads, he made many converts among the Huguenots. He established an association of women to procure aid for prisoners, and founded numerous confraternities of the Blessed Sacrament.

The winters he spent in the missions of the mountainous districts, where the people were seen to travel long miles on foot through the snows and across ice, to hear the servant of God and make their confessions. Many of them accompanied him on his journeys from one place to another, leaving all things to hear him. Some fragments of his torn cloak, which a charitable lady repaired for him one day, cured her two sick children. The reputation of the sanctity of the missionary spread everywhere in the mountains. During the summer he preached in Le Puy, which soon changed its aspect by his catechisms. Up to five thousand listeners crowded in to hear him at the church of the Benedictines of Saint-Pierre-le-Moustiers. He visited hospitals and prisons, preached and instructed, and assisted all who in any way stood in need of his services.

In November of 1637 the Saint set out for his second mission at Marthes in the mountains. His road lay across valleys filled with snow and over frozen and precipitous peaks. In climbing one of the highest, a bush to which he was clinging gave way, and he broke his leg in the fall; nonetheless, with the help of his companion and a staff, he managed to continue his journey for the remaining six miles. Then, instead of seeing a surgeon, he insisted on being taken straight to the confessional. After several hours, the parish priest found him still seated, and when his leg was finally examined the fracture was found to be miraculously healed.

Saint John Francis was so inflamed with the love of God that he seemed to breathe, think, and speak of Him alone. He offered up the Holy Sacrifice with such attention and fervor that those who attended it could not but experience with him something of the fire consuming him. After twelve years of unceasing labor, having taken a wrong turn on a strange road, and having remained for the night in a cabin open to the wind, he contracted a severe pleurisy and rendered his pure and innocent soul to his Creator at the age of forty-four. He was mourned, invoked for assistance and then venerated as a miracle-working Saint; his place of sepulcher at Louvesc in the mountains is still the site of fervent pilgrimages. He was canonized by Pope Clement XII in 1737.

The Curé of Ars obtained a famous miracle with a medal of our Saint. The orphanage of Ars had no more grain for bread, and the harvest had been so scanty the people could not be asked for any more aid. The Curé of Ars put a medal of Saint John Francis behind the door of the empty storeroom, and the next day they could scarcely open that door, so full had the room become overnight.

St. Francis Regis, the great "father of the poor" has affected the lives of many pilgrims, contemplatives, saints and apostles ... most notably St. Phillipine Duchesne, St. Jean Vianney and Mother Therese Couderc. This is also an icon of Jesuit friendship, showing St. Regis with Brother Bideau, making their way to a mission in the wintry mountains of France.

Reflection: When Saint John Francis was struck in the face by a sinner he was reproving, he replied, "If you only knew me, you would give me much more than that." His gentleness converted the man. How much might we do if we would forget our own wants to remember those of others, and put our trust in God?

SECULAR BRANCH (North America-Pacific)

Secular Branch Vision

Brothers and sisters before God, three branches, one family, united in the same Charism and same Mission in a single Congregation to recreate and develop a new dynamic model of community in different ministries.

Secular Branch Mission

In the spirit of the Founders, the Secular Branch of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary is a community of laity committed to living, sharing and expressing the SS.CC. charism in modern times.

As members we live the spirituality of the Sacred Hearts especially through adoration, reparation and solidarity with the poor.

In collaboration with the other branches, we express and minister the common mission with zeal.

Common Symbol (adopted from French SB)



The six sides represent where the Congregation is located: Africa, Asia, Europe, Pacific, North America and South America. The twig represents the 3 Branches of the Congregation: Brothers, Sisters and Secular Branch. The hearts represent the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

Secular Branch pins were created and given to candidates upon their first year commitment as a Secular Branch member.

Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and Perpetual Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar

Secular Branch

The secular branch is committed to supporting and promoting the charism of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts, which is the love in the Sacred Heart of Jesus as modeled by Mary. The secular branch is the lay branch of this congregation and they receive their formation from the religious brothers and sisters. The secular branch member continues to pursue his/her vocation in life but pursues a Sacred Hearts spirituality and devotion. They commit themselves to live the mission initially for one year and subsequently for three year renewals.

The Charism of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts is the consecration to the Sacred Hearts, which is the foundation of the institute. It is truly a gift from God, and a call to live, contemplate and proclaim to the world God's love which was made flesh in Jesus. Mary has been associated in a similar way with the mystery of God made man and with His saving work. This is what is expressed in the union of the Heart of Jesus and the Heart of Mary.

From the beginning, lay people were intimately involved with the foundation of the Congregation. The lay people were a support community who prayed and supported the fledgling foundation. They called themselves "zealots" because of the zeal that they had for the love of the Sacred Hearts. The full name of the Congregation is the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. Eucharistic adoration is a fundamental part of the Sacred Hearts spirituality. The Congregation was founded during the French Revolution and adoration had to be done in secret at the risk of imprisonment or even death by guillotine.

History of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts

The Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar was founded by Pierre Coudrin and Henriette Aymer de la Chevalarie in Poitiers, France on Christmas Eve, 1800.

Born in 1768, Pierre Coudrin attended the University of Poitiers. By the time Coudrin was ordained in 1792, the French government decreed that all religious orders be suppressed and all seminaries closed, forcing religious to minister in secret. Coudrin went into hiding for six months. During this time he had a vision in which he saw the Congregation he found-men and women working in education, reparation and renewal in light of the Gospel.

Henriette Aymer was born in France in the late 18th century. She and her mother had been imprisoned and sentenced to death for harboring fugitive priests during the time of the French Revolution, but were released. Henriette Aymer and Father Joseph Coudrin become co-founders of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and Perpetual Adoration, a Religious Congregation of men and women ministering together.

Today, through the missionary zeal of its members, the Brothers and Sisters of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary are present in forty countries.

Mission

TO CONTEMPLATE, LIVE AND PROCLAIM GOD'S SAVING LOVE

Charism

LOVE IN THE HEART OF JESUS AS MODELED BY MARY

Ways of Living the Charism:

(Taken from Pacific Province publication 2004)

1. Consecration to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

God's unconditional love for his people is demonstrated in the life, suffering and resurrection of Jesus. Mary is an example of the acceptance of God's will, she too participates in the redemptive mission of her Son.

2. Eucharist and Adoration

The Eucharist is the source and summit of our life and mission. It impels us to assume a ministry of intercession and reminds us of the urgency to work for the transformation of the world.

3. Reparation

Our reparation is communion with Jesus whose work is to do the Father's will and whose work is to reunite by his blood the dispersed children of God.

4. Compassion and Zeal

Our Charism is person centered, our ministry is focused on helping people who experience their God-given dignity as human beings. The action is summed up in the response to the Good Samaritan who "sees" the suffering, who is sensitive to the suffering and who stays with the suffering..

5. Community

We live our vocation and mission in community. Simplicity and the family spirit are the characteristics of our relationships.

6. Collaboration

Our religious family has one charism, one mission and one spirituality. The Brothers and Sisters assume together the responsibility of maintaining and strengthening this unity.

7. Trust in Divine Providence

The depth to which Jesus trusted His God was irresistibly attractive. Jesus trusted that God would never abandon Him.

HISTORY OF THE SECULAR BRANCH

THE FIRST DOCUMENT ON THE EXTERIOR ASSOCIATION

The first document is a note from the Good Mother to the Good Father on Feb. 3, 1802:

“We will always have a large Society, under another form, which will be a type of a 'Third Order'. It is different from that of the Visitation Order. There is one received to belong to the Society of the Sacred Heart but not to be united with the Order, while in our case, they will unite with us. They shall renew their resolutions each year”.

In another form. They are not religious. They are laity, but they are also true children of the Sacred Hearts and are at their service.

Always. The Congregation will not recognize itself without the Association, which is an integral part of it, and its extension into the world.

A type of a Third Order. Men and women meet together not only for prayer but also to live a 'more Christian' life.

United to us. In the Visitation Order, the associates form a confraternity of which the religious are only patrons, but in our case the associates form part of our family together with the Brothers and Sisters.

THOUGHTS OF THE FOUNDERS

Barely installed in Mende with Mons. De Chabot, the Good Father asked the Good Mother to come and install herself there with her daughters. This is what he writes on June 18, 1802:

We have many persons for the exterior and for the great stream (that is what he call the Association, but probably difficult for the rest, (meaning, for the novitiate) because they speak the language of the place (Languedoc) » (6-18-1802).

And a few days later (6-22-1802):

“I believe we'll be well received here, the people are good and honest people are appreciated ... It definitely won't be difficult to have at least 50 associates if we wish”.

It can be made known to everyone, as it was to the Good Father, that it is most natural for the Associates to form part of a foundation that is comprised of Brothers, Sisters, and Associates. Regarding the center of Poitiers, the cradle of the External Association., there is only this note written on 4-29-03 by Henriette to Gabriel, superior of the house:

⁵Nos Fondateurs et la A.E., Anales N° 2, 1956, Serie F, volumen I. pp. 56-67. ⁶JVG, o.c., p.57

“Don't forget to tell them that they need to have an assembly on the feast of St. Francis Regis”.

Fr. Coudrin adds in a post-scriptum:

“You will solemnize his feast with a sermon on his life and miracles and tell them a word about what we are on his tomb”.

Besides having the same message, these notes can reveal two other conclusions: that the founders both thought that the monthly assemblies would be part of the new organization of external association; that St. Francis Regis is already, if not patron, at least one of their protectors.

IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

- Decree of December 12, 1814

In 1814, Fr. Hilarion goes to Rome, as the theologian of the bishop of San Malo, a representative of King Luis XVIII, before the 'Quirinal'. Taking advantage of these contacts, he asks the Pope to bestow indulgences on the Congregation that he presents as a confraternity. The Pope grants the request:

“And to all the faithful who spend at least, half an hour of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament and recite the Salve Regina and are or will be admitted to the communion of prayer with the Congregation”.

Several observations can be made:

1. This is the first time that a text coming from the Holy See makes express mention of the Associates: *turn omnes qui, qualibet die, saltem per semi horam adorabunt Sanctissimum Altaris Sacramentum et recitabunt orationem cujus initium Save Regina et per specialem orationem communionem huicce congregationi sociantur vel sociabuntur.*
2. This decree being the first according to its date is also one of the most important. The others only complement, affirm, explain and perpetuate the blessing, since it was only granted for thirty years, define the Association and the conditions that must be completed to gain the indulgences.
3. Some erroneously confuse this decree with a document establishing the Association. It can be read in certain books that the External Association "was canonically erected by the Bull of Pius VII on Dec. 8, 1814". This is an error. The External Association was approved at the same time as the Congregation by the Decree of Jan. 10, 1817 and confirmed by the Bull of Nov. 17, 1817.
4. This decree gives a double meaning to the Exterior Association. It affirms its foundation above all, *on a special communion of prayer.* One has to take this phrase in both an active and passive sense: it is not only a participation in our prayers and merits, but more so a participation in our life as children of the Sacred Hearts which can be summarized as a consecration to their service.
5. This is why the decree gives another meaning to the External Association: *those who each day for half an hour, adore the Blessed Sacrament and recite the Salve Regina.* These two acts of piety are the practical expression of the consecration to the Sacred Hearts, the equivalent to what is stated in the Rules of the Brothers and Sisters: "Perpetual adoration is one of the principal works of our Congregation and one of the principal exercises which aims to consecrate.
6. Very soon these conditions seemed too difficult for the faithful who were still living in the world. The decree of 1825 introduced a milder version.

In a letter, dated Oct. 25, 1814 to Fr. Hilarion who was in Rome, the GF tells him that in gratitude for all that Fr. Fontana (general of the Barnabitas who put him in contact with the Holy See) has done to help us, let him know that he will have the benefit of the prayers of 900 people: "All our desires rest with you and on Fr. Fontana's extreme charity and benevolence, whom ask you to go to with anything that is still missing in order to obtain our approbation. He will have as reward the good wishes and the prayers of 900 people who are directly and indirectly in the Congregation".

If we take from these 900 people the 22 professed Brothers and the 100 professed Sisters and their novices, there are left about 700 people. Since there are 7 houses, then we can guess that there are about 100 associates for each house, because it is clear that this number does not include students who study with us.

For an Association that had such a difficult beginning, more or less condemned to camouflage, this was a great success.

PROPAGANDA MADE BY THE GOOD MOTHER

Desiring *"to spread the devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary throughout all of France, and accomplishing in this way one of the principal obligations of our Institute"*, Mother Henriette, being authorized by the Good Father, resolved to print and distribute everywhere, an invitation to pious souls, encouraging them to unite themselves with our Sisters in: *"Repairing the insults made to the Divine Majesty by the maliciousness of men."*

There were printed 3000 copies of this small pamphlet and she took in her pillow case the medallion of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, the traditional one of the Congregation as we used on our scapulars. Our Sisters distributed signs to all our houses (for the first time). (of Memorias, 249, p. 127-128; completed by 213-215).

This propaganda was made in November of 1816. The indications of the printing are:

Paris. Adrien Le Clerc. Imprimeur de N. S. P. the Pope, at the Augustins, 35

TEACHINGS OF THE DOCUMENT

1. The External Association is a means of spreading the Christian devotion of the Sacred Heart.
2. It has the same spirit as that of the Congregation: the spirit of a redemptive love, that of which adoration is the main exercise.
3. Precious was the distinction that was made between those who could form part of the Association and those who earned indulgences, for these latter the conditions were stricter. Being a member of the Association was more important than to earn indulgences and it was also easier.

("The 'Guards' (Sisters) have obtained from St. Peter's successor, by the same indult of Dec. 18, 1814, various indulgences in favor of all those faithful who are received into the communion of prayer of their Congregation, observing the following conditions:

 - A. To make, every day, half an hour of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. It doesn't matter when.
 - B. To recite, also each day, the Salve Regina' and the ejaculation: 'Vivat Cor Jesu Sacratissimum per infinita saecula saeculorum Amen'").
4. This is an indispensable question not only for the validity of inscribing the names into the register as also of being part of the Association to earn the indulgences.
5. The external association is not a monopoly of the Brothers, but rather it is equally the duty of all the houses of the Sisters.
6. We intend to surpass the limits of our houses and to call the priests so that the External Association becomes a parochial movement as well as a congregational one.
7. There already exists a sketch of a central organization: the obligation of sending the list of associated members to the Mother House.
8. We want to establish bonds of friendship with the associates; invite them to be interested in the Cemetery of Picpus; the miraculous virgin, Our Lady of Peace.

In the correspondence of the Good Mother in 1816 and 1817 there are abundant references to the shipment of these forms that were to be distributed everywhere.

We see on the other hand, the Good Father, in his Journal of Dec. 27, 1816 to the Sacred Congregation of bishops and priests, requesting the approval of the Congregation, as he says: "*Lately our Sisters, as guards, have invited all Christians to unite themselves in prayer with them in order to appease God's anger and to solicit His mercy on the Church and the State. It is not strange that we have not been able to unite our name to those of our Sisters in the printing that has been distributed on this occasion. The many occupations of the zealators (Brothers) have not permitted us, as of today, to establish perpetual adoration ... We have confidence that soon we will also be able to add the perpetual adoration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to our apostolic works.*". (Dec. 27, 1816)

Some months before the Fr. Coudrin defined, in a Journal, the true zealator:

"We need a name that will remind our religious., that they will miss their most essential vote at the moment that they want to live for themselves only and not to work for the salvation of their brothers: that they shouldn't return to the silence of the cloister except to get renewed strength to fight with greater ardor ... that their vocation, in the end, is being zeal and a zeal that is on fire". (12-6-1816).

THE APROBATION

The Congregation was approved *by* His Holiness Pius VII on January 10, 1817, and confirmed *by* the Bull "Pastor Aeternus" of November 17, 1817, in all that is included in the Preliminary Chapter and the 107 articles (58 in the Constitutions and 49 in the Statutes).

This primitive Rule was common to Sisters and Brothers and contained 1 chapter, out of the 9 which had 4 articles out of the total 107, dedicated to the Exterior Association. This indicates according to the thinking of our Founders its place in the SSCC Family.

Text of 1817: 2nd part

V: Of the Exterior Association

46. The Superiors of all the houses of the Congregation can admit into a special communion of prayer those faithful who living in the world wish to lead a more Christian life.
47. The men who are to be admitted into this special communion of prayer, shall form an Association which will have a periodical Assembly in the house of the Brothers of the place in which they live.
48. The women will have also their assemblies in the houses of the Sisters.
49. The General Chapter of 1819 will regulate the necessary conditions to form part of the Association; but in any case, there will be no obligation under the pain of sin, not even venial. It will be understood that those who do not observe the rule of the Association, after having been advised 3 times, that they have renounced the Association and will not be considered as members of the same.

This Rule must have been completed by the following General Chapters. The Exterior Association was in the midst of "important questions" to be regulated.

GENERAL CHAPTER OF 1819

In 1819 the time was not appropriate to determine a Rule because the Congregation had to elaborate the Constitutions and the General Chapter aimed to do that work.

GENERAL CHAPTER OF 1824

In the Chapter of 1824, which updated the Rule for the Brothers and Sisters, the articles about the External Association are specified in two points:

"One of the main goals of the Institute is the propagation of the true devotion to the Sacred Hearts. Just as it is approved by the Holy Apostolic See, it stands that in order to propagate this devotion to a greater extent and with greater facility:

- *The local Superiors of all the houses of the Congregation can admit to the special communion of prayer those faithful ones who, living in the world, wish to live a more Christian life. (Art. 46 of the text of 1817).*
- *The Exterior Association, in all the places in which it is established, will have as Patron Saint John Francis Regis.*

GENERAL CHAPTER OF 1838

The *Assembly merely* repeated what was said in the General Chapter of 1824.

GENERAL CHAPTER OF 1843

Mons. Bonamie, general superior, in spite of the difficult circumstances for those within the Congregation, believed that the moment had come to make the Rule for the Exterior Association. He formed a commission that carried out the work and presented it to the Chapter that approved it.

Fr. Ignacio Banos recounts the work that was carried out. This Regulation begins by establishing the nature of the Association appropriating the articles of the Rule; later he adds:

- The External Association will be erected then, as much as possible, in all the places in which there are houses of the Congregation.
- For its government, the Association will have a Superior and a Council. The superior of the house will always be the Superior of the Exterior Association.

When the Association is made up of fifteen members, without counting the students of seminaries, of schools or of other educational facilities, neither people that live in far away places or people whose occupations or other reasons don't allow them to regularly attend the meetings each month nor the general assemblies, they will name by majority vote, a council made up of five members, that is: a president, two assistants, a treasurer and a secretary.

Therefore, every year there will be at least one general assembly to which all the members of the Association will attend, insofar as possible and also, every month meetings to which the Associates are asked to be present as much as possible. These assemblies and meetings will always end invoking the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

The Ceremonial for the reception of the associates is very significant.

On the day an associate is received, there will be a mass said to which all the associates are invited. After mass, the person to be received, will kneel at the foot of the altar, having a candle in the hand and she/he will make an act of consecration in these terms: "I take the resolution of honoring, every day of my life, the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary; of encouraging others to honor them, as much as I can; of repairing by the practice of good works, the insults that they receive from sinners and of observing to the letter the rule of this pious Association to which I will have the happiness of belonging. In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

Another happy initiative is the imposition of the small scapular of the Sacred Hearts which previously would have been blessed by the priest.

The duties of the Associates will be derived from their union with the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts.

The Associates will remember that they should not be satisfied with only external practices but, above all, benefit from God's blessings by the practice of Christian virtues. They will not forget that their goal is to spread the true devotion to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and to retrace the four stages of Our Lord Jesus Christ's life: his childhood, his hidden life, his evangelical life, and his crucified life

They will reproduce Jesus Christ's hidden life by avoiding dangerous amusements and by frequently visiting Our Lord Jesus Christ in the august Sacrament of our altars, especially on Sundays and feast days.

They will reproduce Our Lord Jesus Christ's evangelical life by listening with respect and assiduity to the Word of God and making an effort, as much as possible, to instruct the ignorant and to encourage sinners to return to virtue.

They will reproduce Our Lord Jesus Christ's life by practicing, according to their state, the works of Christian mortification, by visiting the poor, the sick persons and the prisoners, encouraging them, consoling them and offering them, in the measure of their possibilities, the help that they might need.

The Association will have three main feasts: the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, that of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and that of Saint John Francis Regis.

This Rule must be submitted to the Holy See for its approval. The general superior says in his circular of December 20, 1843:

“La devotion aux SS.CC. de Jesus et de Marie, Roma 1956, p. 148-150.

Our General Chapter has limited itself to organize the Exterior Association of our Congregation by means of a Rule and of practices of piety that will be subjected to the approval of the Holy See so that indulgences already granted might be earned, by means of less difficult practices, for the faithful who form part of this Association.

Unfortunately this presentation to the Holy Father never took place. It's necessary to admit that the critical circumstances that the Congregation endured at the time did not allow it.

GENERAL CHAPTER OF 1948

The General Chapter of 1848 was delayed until 1850 because of the political events that were shaking society. This Chapter met without having a Chapter for the Sisters at the same time. They only wrote two documents: a Declaration directed to the Pope and a Circular to all the Brothers, both documents reflecting the difficulties that the Congregation was facing, which showed the need for revision of the Rule.

PERSONAL INITIATIVES (1862-1957)

After the intent of having a Rule for the Association failed in the Chapter of 1843, there appeared a series of personal initiatives, such as:

- 1862, in Paris, the Rule of the Rev. Fr. Euthyme Rouchouze which has no connection with the work of 1843.
- 1855, in Lovaina, the rule of Fr. Tardieu mentioning the 4 ages. It was reedited in 1879 by Fr. Rapsaet.
- 1858, in Valparaiso (Chile), the Statutes of Fr. Desmarais, edited in 1877, and handled again at Miranda of Ebro (Spain) in 1881
- 1872, Fr. Perdereau, named General Director, launches the "Annals of the SS.CC." destined for all Brothers, Sisters, and Associates, all as members of the one and the same family. He writes: "*we need to open our files to the auxiliary troops of the Exterior Association*". A new impulse was given, spreading throughout France and intensified in Latin America.

Fr. Jacques Bund deserves a special mention for his authority as canonist. In 1898 he presented to the General Chapter a magnificent work on the Exterior Association. The Capitular Assembly, very enthused, decided to publish it under the title of "*Manual of the Association of the SS.CC. and of Adoration*". This Manual was reedited various times, and was completed in 1924 with a doctrinal section taken from "The Religious of the SS.CC."

Toward some OFFICIAL STATUTES, valid for all

After the war of 1914 - 1918, the Congregation lived a period of great expansion. The creation of new Provinces and the reorganization of those already existing, was enough to absorb all the strength. On the other hand this expansion even touched the ENTHRONEMENT. Its astonishing diffusion ripped open the circle that was restricting its movement until then.

But little by little, one began to be aware of the demands of chapter XII of the Rule. It was planned to launch again the Exterior Association, since the Enthronement and the Association should not be at odds with one another, but supporting one another.

But there came about a serious problem. If it continued that each Province and each country could draw up its own Statutes, wouldn't there be a risk of favoring some completely diverse and arbitrary tendencies? On the other hand, the mentality of the faithful, their conditions of life and spiritual needs had changed. It was necessary, then, to adapt the Statutes for greater effectiveness.

These were the topics of discussion and the motions entertained during the Chapters of 1933, 1938, 1947.

Fr. Ignacio Bailos was then the one in charge of preparing this project. This was the situation when Fr. John Baptist Proust was named General Director in 1949. He began to work with ardor, and on February 2 1950 published "The General Statutes and the Ceremonial of the Exterior Association" with the approval of the Rev. Father John d'Elbee who promulgated them "ad experimentum" for 4 years, before submitting them to the General Chapter and presenting them to the Holy See for their definitive approval:

A sample was sent to each house in June 1951.

The Chapter of 1953 charged a commission with the responsibility of examining these new Statutes, a true Summary of the Exterior Association. Considering them more appropriate as a guide for Directors rather than for the laity, the Commission asked for an abbreviated edition for the laity, one that adhered to the essential and was practical and easy to read.

In 1955 this "Extract of Statutes" was worked on over and over again, after consulting with the Directors and the Superiors of both Brothers and Sisters. They wanted this to be a work of the whole Institute, desiring to offer to the Associates a clear redaction, a sure doctrine, and some easy, firm, suggested directives.

The document was presented to the Holy See in March 1957. The Ceremonial was approved October 10, 1957 and the Statutes June 7, 1958. This was the final goal of more than 10 years of efforts that could be celebrated with joy in the Chapter of 1958.

On this solid foundation, the time had come to spread the Association to the laity who had become aware of their apostolic responsibility. *"This is the desire of the Church in giving its approbation, the desire of the Congregation from its origin, the desire of the Sacred Hearts. May this be, then, the desire of each one"!*

The hour had come to light the flame again, because this long period of hashing out the details had not been favorable for its progress, as neither was the succession of 3 General Directors (the PP. Proust, Bocquet and Lavanant) within a few years; nor the opposition to the establishment of the Exterior Association, especially in Europe. Some of this difficulty was related to the devaluation of the cult to the Sacred Heart... and to this Pius XII responded with his encyclical, "Haurietis aquas"

These objections didn't exist in other parts of the world. There are concrete examples:

VATICAN II COUNCIL (1962 - 1965)

In the light of what the Council said on the apostolate of the Laity, Fr. Henri Systemans in June 1967 directed a letter to the Associates in France, gathered by Fr. Luc Berra to celebrate the 150 anniversary of the approval of the Congregation and its Exterior Association. This was an exciting letter on their ecclesial mission in the orbit of the Congregation.

But however, in the Chapter of 1970 those "allergies" arise again to confront the Association, considered by some as obsolete, as not adapted to the needs of the Church and the world, etc... draining setbacks for those who continued their work in faith in Colombia, Peru, Togo, Dahomey.

On the other hand, there came about some very worthwhile experience such as "the lay community of youth".

Proposals were made in view of being an inspiration in this new path traced by Fr. Systemans, of taking a step on this new way that is offered by the Rule of Life and just approved by the Chapter, of taking advantage of the experience of the base communities for those places that need to be evangelized. There even came about the idea of secular institutes for laity who wish to go even further. In a word: to create something new.

1968 SPECIAL GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE SISTERS

Decree "Presence in the Word and Evangelization"

"The exterior association in which the Congregation allows the laity to find in our spirituality of reparative love, the manner to grow in perfection in their Christian living, it becomes a form of presence in the world.

The associates are part of our family and they can participate in our adoration and in our apostolate.

They take with them to their daily lives, the testimony of charity, that they nurture in their love for the Sacred Hearts.

The exterior association is, more than ever, of these times, and it needs to be re-evaluated and renewed to be able to offer the laity the effective means to work in their own sanctification as well as that of others.

The Provincial Chapters will establish the regulations".

NEW STATUTES

In the postconciliar time, the Congregation, as the whole Church, lived a profound change: a new opening to the world, a renewed sense of mission. The Chapters of 1982 (Brothers) and 1983 (Sisters) accentuated the change with printed orientations.

During this period, the luck of the Exterior Association varies a lot according to location. In countries like France, it seems practically to disappear amid all sorts of movements that sprout and spread. On the contrary, in other places, the collaboration of the laity with some committed Brothers and Sisters, especially in connection with the poor, raises in the laity the desire to participate more fully in our mission and spirituality.

In 1983, Rev. Patrick Bradley begins to alert our attention to this issue. And in 1985 he believes that the moment had arrived to study the Statutes "aiming to update the Statutes of the Association, so that the Association becomes a vital branch of the Congregation".

In this sense the Chapter of 1988 marks an important date.

According to its recommendation, a wide survey about the types of lay SS.CC., communities that exist, was distributed to all provinces and regions. Responses came from 22 Provinces and Regions. Also responding were 4 communities of laity, as well as the Associations in Togo, Benin, Ghana and Nigeria (Fr. Larkin accompanied these flourishing groups for a long time).

These groups offer a lot of variety. We can perceive that most of these associations are limited to a type of adoration, extended in some cases as a family apostolate or more typically as a parish endeavor. In these last years, the social aspect has acquired more importance, and some recently formed groups seem to be in search for an experience that allows them to live the Charism of the Congregation while remaining to be Lay.

Following this, on March 5 1990 the two General Governments sent all the Major Communities a 'work document' and a questionnaire. These presented some criteria, in the hope of arriving at some commonalities which can help us to recognize the SECULAR BRANCH in the future (Cf. Art. 9 of Chapter I in the Constitutions)

There is no intent to funnel the existing groups, to give them new orientations, nor to unify them.

After much discussion and reflection, under the responsibility of Fr. Louis Hermans and Sister Helene Wood, new Statutes were elaborated. The Superiors General presented these to the Holy See on Mar. 24, 1993. They were approved on June 29^h of the same year.

"All this opens up real possibilities for the future. If we can count on having a really active and dynamic SECULAR BRANCH in our different apostolate, a marvelous multiplication of apostolic energy will be unleashed for the service of the Mission of the Congregation". (P. Pat Bradley)

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE SS.CC. EXTERIOR ASSOCIATION

Rosa Maria Ferreiro, SS.CC.

“We will always have a grand Society, under another form, which will be a kind of “Third Order”.

Henriette Aymer 3/02/1802

ORIGINS

We all know well that our Congregation germinated within the Association of the Sacred Heart in Poitiers, founded in 1792 by Miss Suzanne Geoffroy. The knowledge of this Association or 'Society of the Sacred Heart' can help us to better understand our own Congregation of the Sacred Hearts.

When the Good Father leaves the Motte granary in September 1792, he goes into Poitiers to exercise his ministry there. We've come to know, from some documents (the blessing of a marriage by Coudrin, Catholic priest, in the house of Miss Gaufreau in 1793, on Regratterie Street,)² that in 1793 he came into contact with this Association which helps priests who continue their ministry in disguise, and by 1794 he was totally involved with it.

On the other hand the Good Mother, after her experience of being incarcerated for 11 months in the jail of 'Les Hospitaliers' (from Oct 22, 1793 to Sept. 11, 1794), looked for a place where she could dedicate herself to prayer and she begins to be spiritually directed by Fr. Coudrin in November of that year, and it was he who supported her request to be received into the Association (on the street of Moulin a Vent 14) as an extern in 1795.

Initially, the Association of the Sacred Heart was a spontaneous movement of youth (adults) to defend and oppose the prosecuting government. It was soon organized into a wide movement that aimed to shelter priests, to help them in their ministry and to supply all that they might need. It was through this apostolate that the laity reached its grandeur.

Consecrated to the Sacred Heart, these generous souls understood the necessity to not only oppose the persecution by their actions but above all to repair the hideous crimes by perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Little by little there is born in some the desire to consecrate their lives to this silent adoration, and to found a religious institute that would insure it. They are the youth who take the initiative to meet. The youth will continue to be the main element, although there are among their members 'a great diversity of ages, of professions, of material means'.

In Fact, the Society is composed of an "Office of Reception" and an "Office of Charity", each one having 8 associates: 4 women and 4 youth, and then another was added, an "Office of Formation" with 12 members. All the tasks were distributed according to aptitude and to necessity, in order to accommodate the greatest number of persons in need in the different sectors of the city.

Each one of these offices was presided by one or more Associated Priests and by the Superior of the Society.

The Associated Priests formed themselves a group with their own rules. They elected a Dean and a Council, and were responsible for the total direction of the Society. The role and influence of Fr. Coudrin were greater, especially in what concerned spiritual direction.

In the house in which they lived as community, without vows, the 'interns' were truly "the center, the home, the backbone" of the whole group. They would be the ones responsible to organize the masses which took place there secretly and to secure the continuity of adoration, to plan the monthly assemblies and direct the work of the offices. In them one would find the spiritual animation that might not be present elsewhere.

One can just imagine the bonds of communion that existed among the members so they could make these commitments during such turbulent times. Animated by the same spirit, embracing the same mission of reparative

prayer and apostolic activities, they also enjoyed as part of their rule, the support of a strong union, and were very present to one another in their daily prayers. Each one had the duty to pray for each other, especially for the priests and for the deceased of the association, besides helping one another, visiting the sick, etc. In short, they formed a very full community in charity (and in secret).

Faced with such an example of living, of which the Founders were part, we can understand the significance that the simple sentence in the Constitutions had for the Founders, "to accept into the special communion of prayer those men and women who wish to live a more Christian life."

But this was not easy and things got more complicated when a small group 'the Solitaires', organized themselves around Henriette Aymer, with a certain lifestyle that they adopted and the necessity for a special director, that being Fr. Coudrin.

On March 25, 1797, the Association moves to St. Peter's Place (very near to the cathedral). It seems to be at this time that Peter and Henriette converse about the idea of a foundation. They begin by looking for a house independent of the association with the intent of providing a Religious home for the small nucleus of Solitaires.

On August 25 the Solitaires make resolutions and vest the woolen habit under their secular clothing.

In the early days of September 1797, the persecution broke out again and Henriette's mother left the city to take refuge in the country. Henriette took advantage of this moment to unite herself, as intern, to the Solitaires.

In the first days of September, probably on the 4th, the Solitaires moved to the house of HautesTreilles, bought with Henriette's inheritance, and a few days later, the whole Association moved in, keeping a separate section for the Solitaires in order to maintain independence.

In August 1798, Henriette is named superior, while Miss Geoffroy heads the externs only.

Desiring independence and wishing to be constituted as religious life, Fr. Coudrin and Henriette request the Vicars of the Diocese for recognition of their community. They receive an affirmative answer on June 17, 1800.

During Advent of 1800, Fr. Coudrin begins to listen to the communications of Henriette, on what the Congregation should be, communications that will be numerous and she writes them down for him (*Notes of the Good Mother*).

At Christmas of 1800 the Founders pronounce their vows and on February 2, 1801 Isidoro David, Hilarion Lucas, Grabiél de la Barre, Magdalena Chevalier and Gertrudis Godet also pronounce theirs.

The situation at the heart of the Society of the Sacred Heart, became unbearable. The successive appointments of Henriette as superior of the Solitaires, superior of the interns, and finally Superior General of the Society, did not achieve unity, in fact it had the opposite effect. In those difficult periods, at times one saw only conflicts of influence. But it was really a question of something much more profound, different aspirations and vocations.

Finally, on February 10, 1801 in the General Assembly, the Priests of the Council, except for Fr. Perrin, and two thirds of the Associates left. The remaining minority accepted the reasonable conditions proposed by Henriette, and in the following days the Diocesan superiors were made aware of all the happenings, and were asked to give the 'small group' who had remained, the same privileges that were enjoyed before the separation. This was granted on April 20, 1801.

The EXTERIOR ASSOCIATION OF THE SACRED HEARTS was born and recognized as an integral part of the new religious Congregation at the moment it acquired its autonomy. This painful rupture foreshadows the difficult beginnings of the Exterior Association and it partially explains the shortage of documents about this time. It is necessary to add, remembering the experience that they had just lived, that, without a doubt, the Founders had a certain distrust regarding the associates, a fear that they might mix again in matters that pertained only to the community, risking to mix everything up. But, mainly, there was reason to fear the imperial police, so violent and hostile toward the reconstruction of Religious Orders.

On April 30 Henriette's mother dies and in May the Brothers settle in the house of this lady, which was right in front of the house of the Sisters.

After the war there were topics of discussions and the motions entertained during the Chapters of 1933, 1938 and 1947.

GENERAL CHAPTER 1953

The Chapter of 1953 charged a commission with the responsibility of examining these new Statutes (work of Fr. I. Banos), a true Summary of the Exterior Association.

The document was presented to Holy See in March 1957. The Ceremonial was approved October 10, 1957 and the Statutes June 7, 1958.

NEW STATUTES

In the postconciliar time the Congregation, as the whole Church, lived a profound change: a new opening to the world, a renewed sense of mission. The Chapters of 1982 (Brothers) and 1983 (Sisters) accentuated the change with printed orientations.

During this period, the luck of the Exterior Association varies a lot according to location. In countries like France, it seems practically to disappear amid all sorts of movements that sprout and spread. On the contrary, in other places, the collaboration of the laity with some committed Brothers and Sisters, especially in connection with the poor, raises in the laity the desire to participate more fully in our mission and spirituality.

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SECULAR BRANCH STATUTES APPROVED 1993

After much discussion and reflection, under the responsibility of Fr. Louis Hermans and Sister Helene Wood, new Statutes were elaborated. The Superiors General presented these to the Holy See on March 24, 1993. They were approved on June 29th of the same year.

"All this opens up real possibilities for the future. If we can count on having a really active and dynamic SECULAR BRANCH in our different apostolate, a marvelous multiplication of apostolic energy will be unleashed for the service of the Mission of the Congregation". (P. Bradley)

CONGREGAZIONE DEI SACRI CUORI

Casa Generalizia

Rome, Feast of All Saints 1993

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

As our new Constitutions state, "since its origin the Congregation has had a secular branch" (art. 9).

In the early days of the congregation this branch took the form of "an association of the faithful, which by reasons its origin, its purpose, and its spirit, constitutes an integral part of the congregation, as its extension. It was approved by the Holy Apostolic See at the same time as the congregation, and it was canonically erected by a Decree dated January 10th 1817 and it was confirmed on November 17th of the same year 1817 the Bull "Pastor Aeternus" of Pope Pius VII".¹

Historically, it is clear that the original association as was conceived by our Founders, was not simply 'another work of the congregation, but rather (with all the force that the sister signifies) it was to be an "extension of the congregation".²

This is also the meaning of these new Statutes of the Secular Branch approved by the Holy See on June 29, 1993. It is true that despite the original intention of our Founders, in the course of the years, the role of lay people in the mission of the congregation became limited in many places to the ministry of adoration, but in recent years there is a new awareness of the full role the laity are called to play in the life and mission of the congregation.

We regard this re-discovery of the role of the laity in the congregation as a movement of the Spirit and as part of a growing awareness in the whole Church with regard to the responsibility of the lay faithful to play their full part in its mission of evangelization. This awareness was given a strong impulse by the Synod of 1987. In fact, the Post-Synodal document "Christifideles Laici" insists on the irreplaceable role of the lay faithful in proclaiming the 'good news'. We are very happy that the 'breath of the Spirit' has also been very much felt in the Congregation in these years, with a growing awareness of the need for all of us to really collaborate with the laity.³

According to our Constitutions the members of the Secular Branch "commit themselves to live the mission and the spirit of the Congregation" (art. 9). Those who are called to membership are co-responsible with the Religious Brothers and Sisters for that mission "as it is expressed in the first Chapter of Constitutions'. They are called to join with the Brothers and Sisters as equal partners in a relationship of mutual trusted respect. This is absolutely, essential. The full identity of the SS.CC. vocation will only be seen in communion with each one. Someone once described communion as an exchange of gifts is not threatening, but enriching.

We are conscious of the fact that there are lay people in various parts of the congregation who wish to share the richness and the support of our charism in a real communion. During our visits we have met many people who consider themselves members of our SS.CC. family and who express their joy of discovering the richness of a lived SS.CC. spirituality that made them enthusiastic in

receiving and giving new life. They value more and more, to join with us in mission - and often they express the wish to have some structure of 'belonging' in or to be in closer union with us. They *seek a* structure which will enable them to live our SS.CC. vocation and mission, which would be in accordance with a renewed understanding of our dignity and the vocation of lay persons today. We believe on these newly approved Statutes respond to that expressed joy of discovering the richness of a lived SS.CC. spirituality. These Statutes were drawn up after a serious study of the history of the Secular Branch, and after much consultation, not only with the Brothers and Sisters, but also with many lay persons and communities who feel called to our life. They are a response to the prayers and to the desires of many.

Now that we have new guidelines, approved by the Holy See, we have a unique opportunity to put our confidence in the laity in a very significant way. We invite all our Brothers and Sisters to reflect on how they might do so. "In the church's openness to ministries and in a continuous orderly communal growth, religious are able to discover new forms of active participation, involving the christian community in their "initiatives and works" thus multiplying the evangelizing power of our congregation. It is time to do all that is possible so that the lay faithful who feel called to share our charism might be able to realize to the full the rich potential of their vocation.

Sincerely in the Sacred Hearts,

Maria Pia Lafont SS.CC.

Superior General

Patrick Bradley SS.CC.

Superior General

¹ *Statutes of the Exterior Association 1958 no 1, 1*

² *Letter of Fr. Jean Baptiste Proust SS.CC. to Fr. Ignacio de la Cruz Banos SS.CC. (28.04.1953)*

³ *Cfr. Patrick Bradley SS. CC., Our SS. CC. Vocation and Mission, Chapter XXI, Rome 1992*

⁴ *Statutes of the Secular Branch 1993, n° 3*

⁵ *Religious and Human Promotion*

IDENTITY OF THE SS.CC. SECULAR BRANCH

Rosa Maria Ferreiro, SS.CC.

In the Church there is a communion of charisms. The Holy Spirit unceasingly inspires new movements, signs of the permanent presence of the Holy Spirit renewing the Church.

One of these movements is that of the laity searching in religious Congregations inspiration to live their Christian life as laity.

This movement makes us aware that a charism is a gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church. Therefore, it is not limited only to religious life. A charism can inspire both religious and lay consecration. The General Chapters of 2000 (Sisters and Brothers) have affirmed this.

God gave the SS.CC. Charism to the Church through Pierre Coudrin and Henriette Aymer who received it first as a personal grace and passed it on to the religious life to be lived in the Congregation.

Miguel Diaz, SS.CC. says and I quote: "To be loved and protected by God, to be in the hands of a God of Love, and to transform the world through Love is the mystical experience and the mission of the Congregation. Experiencing God's loving protection and united with Jesus in the Eucharist, our Founders went out into the world."

Historically, it is known that what the Good Father and the Good Mother founded was a Congregation of religious, men and women, who make vows and live in community. This was expressed in the documents they presented to the ecclesiastical authorities when they requested the approbation of the Congregation. This is still how the Congregation is identified in Chapter 1, Article 1 of the present Constitutions (Brothers and Sisters).

Moreover, our Founders were aware that a charism is not limited to religious life, but is to be extended beyond. However, it was difficult for them to express this charism clearly as they were inspired because of the teaching of the Church in their day. They wanted the laity to participate in this gift, this charism and to make it present in places where lay people lived and worked and where religious could not be present.

As we saw yesterday, our Founders wanted to associate to the Congregation of religious men and women, lay people who live in the world (Art. 9 Constitutions).

Personally, I find the expression used by the General Chapters of 2000 very appropriate: "The Congregation extends itself like a family of religious (men and women) and the laity."

If we live the SS.CC. charism it is clear that religious men and women and the laity can live their different vocations inspired by the charism building together the SS.CC. family.

If, on the other hand, we live only according to our different vocations in the following of Christ as religious and as laity--there would be an important difference among us and others in the way we live. Religious enter to form part of the Congregation, according to Canon Law, through the profession of vows and community life while the lay people living in the world associate themselves to the Congregation to participate in its mission in the manner and place that are proper to them (Canon Law, Canon 303).

Therefore, religious and laity are an integral part of the Congregation but not in the same manner.

This different way of belonging to the Congregation does not imply discrimination but simply the recognition and autonomy of the different vocations on one hand and on the other the invitation to collaboration in service to the common SS.CC. Mission.

Throughout the 200 years that our Congregation has existed, the branches of the Sisters and Brothers have grown, have been strengthened, and have always lived the religious life. This has not happened with the Exterior Association, the associated laity, or the Secular Branch as it has been called since 1993. There have been great changes in the way of understanding the Exterior Association.

Therefore, the General Chapters of 2000 asked the Congregation to continue the process of clarifying what is meant by the secular branch, SS .CC. Laity or other names given to affirm that the secular branch has its own identity.

At the same time, the General Chapters of 2000 were aware of the diversity of situations existing among the groups of SS.CC. laity and considered this as a richness when this diversity is of a cultural nature, but when the differences become more involved, the Chapters were concerned and requested the general governments to be responsible to look for solutions. (See Chapter Decisions 2000).

You are at this seminar to listen to the experiences and concerns of the ESIC provinces about the Secular Branch so that lay men and women can live their Christian vocation according to the SS.CC. Charism and participate in the mission of the Congregation, it is necessary to clarify the similarities and differences between the religious and lay vocation.

The chapters were extremely careful to clarify that the laity are not to make up for or replace the religious but to live their Christian vocation in the SS.CC. way.

In the same way, recently in a letter sent by the General Governments to the Congregation in October 1998, they wrote:

"What is therefore the specific characteristic of the vocation and mission of a member of the Secular Branch?"

Speaking about the vocation and mission, we are not alluding only to a particular time or concrete action in one's own life. To be a member of the Secular Branch means to attempt to have one's entire lay life modeled by the SS.CC. Charism. Entire life means in all circumstances, in friendships, in the family, in one's profession, when we are shopping or when we are driving a car.

In our whole life we want the love of Jesus and Mary to be present among all the people we meet in a definite place and time. Our SS.CC. charism must be visible in the acceptance of people, in the type of relationship we establish with them, in the way we confront each situation as persons with our own gifts and limitations, when we feel well or when we do not feel well. All our life and that of all those who are associated to the Congregation must be molded by the SS.CC. charism and by the mission to contemplate, live, and announce to the world the Love of God incarnated in Jesus.

"All our life: Using this expression, we are not referring to a specific time. We want to say, for always. We are referring to everything without exception. In fact, what appears more important is that the vocation in the Secular Branch is seen as something that affects the entire person, that affects life in all dimensions. Less important is the time element. Therefore, the Statutes speak about temporary and not perpetual commitments."

We can conclude by saying that what characterizes an SS.CC. lay person is the inspiration that animates his or her life--the SS.CC. charism and not the tasks that they fulfill during some hours of the day, in a month or a year.

The SS.CC. lay vocation and the SS.CC. religious vocation each has its own values and therefore its own advantages to reach out to people and to make them feel the Love of God manifested in Jesus.

If we do not complement one another through these two vocations, there will be sections of our society to whom we will not be able to announce the richness and prophetic force of our SS.CC. charism.

In this way, the General Chapters of 2000 asked the laity to live the experiences of the SS.CC. mission as lay people and through these experiences to clarify, develop and promote their specific manner of living the common mission in collaboration with the entire Congregation.

Personal Reflection:

1. What are my convictions concerning the Secular Branch of the Congregation?
2. What are my concerns, my doubts?

Group Work

After your personal reflection, try to write a profile of the SS. CC. lay person that expresses his or her identity.

A STUDY OF THE IDENTITY AND SPECIFIC STATUS OF LAY PERSONS IN OUR CONGREGATION

Julio Garcia, SSSC.

1. The vocation of lay persons identifies them as members of the People of God, the Church, side by side with the other Christian vocations (Priests, Brothers, and Sisters).
2. Although much remains to be reflected upon and clarified regarding the exceptional present day increase in the desire of numerous lay Christians to participate in the spiritual richness of the consecrated life, it must be said that such a participation is a privileged way of fulfilling their lay Christian vocation as lay persons.
3. It is beneficial to recall the teachings of Vatican II, important ecclesiastical documents such as *Christifideles Laici* and *Vita Consecrata*, post-council theology, the pastoral practice of the Church, and to note as well the direction in which our Congregation is going.
4. There are different ways the laity can participate in the richness of the consecrated life, not only from the point of view of collaboration but, more radically, with regard to the Institute's community life and in particular dedication to contemplation or the apostolate (*Vita Consecrata*, No, 56).
5. The institutionalized relationships of laity and religious institutes need to be more fully studied. Therefore, the orientations and reflections of the General Chapters 2000 in the document on the Secular Branch are very opportune. This document recognizes the movement of the Spirit in the growing interest of lay persons to commit themselves to living the Mission and spirit of our Congregation. It also recognizes in this movement the strengthening of the important role of the laity in the Church, based on their baptismal consecration. Moreover, this document affirms that, as religious men and women, we want to assume together the mission of our Congregation as established in Chapter I of our Constitutions. The Congregation perceives itself as a family of religious men and women as well as lay persons bonded in its own charism in-interdependence for our common Mission.
6. For this reason we need to clarify what the Secular Branch means, and to do this in humble discernment, planning wisely and following the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
7. We are aware of the growing desire of lay persons to be aided by a religious institute and to participate in both its spiritual patrimony and apostolic ministry. Their desire has its origin in the universal call to sanctity. Members of the laity wish to grow in the grace of their baptism (*Lumen Gentium*. 42, and *Christifideles Laici* 10 and 16). The help given them does not presume superiority. On the part of the religious institute it involves, rather, their participation in solidarity, though in a different way, in the one same charism of imitating our Lord Jesus Christ.
8. It is very important to keep this origin in focus and to use it wisely in discerning the authentic desire of those seeking this participation.
9. The desire for participation is really a call from God, a vocation directed by God. Discernment must be based on this double foundation (a call from God and a response by lay Christians) for the good of those expressing this desire and of the welcoming institute as well.
10. Lay persons need to convert themselves as a personal option of life in a global orientation of all of their lives in answer to the felt call. Their request for solidarity must not be based on liking a certain style of life or on having a spiritual and apostolic similarity. It must be based on a personal option of life as an answer to a call.

11. Different levels of joining a religious institute are possible and all can be profitable, but it is important that we do not mix or confuse them. Expectations and demands must be clearly discerned, and so must the situation in which lay persons find themselves before they arrive at a personal option of life involving full participation.

1. Lay persons must pass from being merely attracted to our way of life. They should acquire the maturity of a personal identification, beginning with a firm commitment to a personal option of life leading to a concrete way of being Christians. The final state would be to participate fully in the spiritual richness of the consecrated life though keeping the characteristics of their lay state.
2. The starting point of the lay and the religious is the same: the baptismal grace and God's call to live it as fully as possible. Persons move gradually to an option for life, and it is not easy to determine when they have arrived at the point of personal identification. Spiritual vocational discernment is necessary, and there should be common agreement between the "candidates" who wish to share their Christian identity and the welcoming institute itself.
3. Such a personal option for life is recognized by candidates as a gift of grace from God; it demands totality of commitment as an option without limitations.
4. This direction or option of life embraces the double dimension of the Christian vocation: the person's own sanctification and the proclamation of the Good News, always according to the charism. The adhesion of lay persons to an institute of religious life assumes the whole charismatic reality of this option. It cannot be partial.
5. Given the human and social nature of human beings, and the human tendency to lessen commitment, it is important to look for different ways of belonging. The normal situation will be to form appropriate structures in order to assure a clear and fruitful relationship among the institute or religious life and lay persons who wish to participate in its charism and apostolate. Our Congregation has always offered the laity some forms of organized participation in its spirituality, charism, and mission, but at present the structures for this relationship are being created and evaluated.
6. The words "identity" and "specific status" need to be seriously reflected upon.

IDENTITY

1. Who are the lay persons in our congregation? What is their precise description? They are Christians who build their identity in reference to and by participation in the SS.CC. charism, spirituality, and mission.
2. The First Chapter of our Constitution is an attractive proposal of a Christian way of life. If baptized persons begin to identify with the spirit of this document, their lives will acquire a certain determined form that becomes "second nature" to them. The General Statutes of the Secular Branch contain the portrait description to be used when the charism, spirituality, and mission of our Congregation are "re-read" in the light of the First Chapter especially Articles 1-3.
3. Lay persons do not give up their identity when they enter into a relationship with religious institutes, but they gradually unite and integrate what they receive from the institute. In our case, this involves participation in the SS.CC. charism, spirituality, and mission. As baptized lay persons, they journey with the Congregation in response to a vocation that they receive as laity.
4. Key words on our charism (Sacred Hearts, faith in the personal love of God, zeal, contemplate-live-proclaim the redeeming love of God, reparation, Eucharist, adoration, family spirit, etc.) should not be taken lightly. These concepts should be lived as a vocation. Secular Branch members should communicate with one another reflecting on this from their status as baptized lay persons.
5. Today there is a strong desire "to drink in common fountains from different states of life leading to an initial intuition or shared charism". New ecclesial movements have values, but some have aspects that can cause reservations in persons who hear about them.
6. Each of these ecclesial movements has a fundamental intuition which focuses on the development of all other points of view. On this basis, persons can plan to discover their own identity and charism to be lived in the dynamic reality inherent in each vocational call (lay, religious, priesthood) by the baptized believers. It comes from within and gives an identity and profile.
7. Those who have an SS.CC. identity or an identity as religious can find in the above reflection a way of seeing things in a different way and overcoming much resistance to an SS.CC. lay movement.
8. The SS.CC. charism must not be seen as an exclusive patrimony but as something that can be vitally incarnated in the different states of life, each one articulating it with autonomy as well as interdependence.
9. Some aspects can be distinctly laid, involving a shared vision and Christian commitment which looks for inspiration in the SS.CC. charism, spirituality, and mission. This calls for harmony with the Sacred Hearts Congregation. It also requires living the SS.CC. charism by Secular Branch members in their everyday lives.

SPECIFIC STATUS (DESCRIPTION)

1. In trying to find something "specific," we should look first for what is common, and only then for what is different. The emphasis should be on similarities, and on what persons are rather than on how they are different.
2. It has been said that only if we do not have "sufficient identity" do we question what is different and see "other identities" as threats to our own. This may be the biggest obstacle to acceptance of a strong SS.CC. lay life in some parts of the Congregation and by some SS.CC. religious. However, news of commitment ceremonies in different Provinces is a source of joy for the Congregation as a whole.
3. Various explanations of the General Statutes of the Secular Branch are available, such as we find in the letter sent by the General Government ("The Mission Unites Us and Identifies Us") written by Manfred Kollig and Lourdes Fernandez some years ago. These explanations shed light on the difference between the SS.CC. Brothers and Sisters and the laity of the Secular Branch, as well as on the difference between the SS.CC. Secular Branch and other types of bonds with the Congregation or some of its ministries, especially important is the statement that to be a member of the Secular Branch means having the intention of living all one's lay life modeled by the Sacred Hearts charism in all of one's life wherever it may be: in one's family, one's profession, one's social life, etc.
4. It would be wise to recall what is said in numbers 54, 55, and 56 of Vita consecrata about lay persons joining a religious institute by participating in its charism, spirituality, and mission.
5. In SS.CC. religious men and women, the SS.CC. charismatic identity is embodied and involves the profession of religious vows as a total form of life, following Jesus in answer to their call or vocation. Their lives, as consecrated religious, becomes colored by their participation in the SS.CC.
6. Charism, spirituality, and mission. Note Article 13 of our Constitutions which states: that we live the consecration inherent in many religious profession as our consecration to the Sacred Hearts. They are not just simply religious; they are Sacred Hearts religious. They do not simply belong to the Congregation they live its charism, incarnating its spirituality in a form of life called the religious or consecrated life.
7. What differentiates the Secular Branch members from others who share the Sacred Hearts charism, spirituality, and mission? Their specific status is not to be found in what is common to them all. It is rather to be found in the condition of their lives in which, as Secular Branch members, the SS,CC. charism is embodied in its globability.
8. The SS.CC. Secular Branch is a link that exists not only in doing or even in living a spirituality. It is, rather, a joint effort that binds in a communitarian dimension. It may be related to other groups such as the youth or adult groups in a parish. It can be said that the reference to the charism, spirituality, and mission of the Congregation has a more institutional and decisive character in the Secular Branch.

SECULAR BRANCH STATUTES DECREE

The Secular Branch of the religious Institute of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar is an association of Christ's faithful, whose members share in the charism and in the mission of the institute, according to their own vocation.

The Superiors General of both male and female Branches of the same religious institute have presented the statutes of the above mentioned Secular Branch to the Apostolic See for approval.

The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated life and Societies of Apostolic Life, after careful examination of the Statutes, taking into consideration the favorable vote of the General Governments of both male and female Branches of the religious institute concerned, by virtue of this present Decree approves and confirms the said text, as redacted in the English language, a copy of which is on file in the Archives of this Congregation.

May the members of the Secular Branch, animated by the same spirit of the Brothers and Sisters of the religious Institute of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, direct their lives and their particular mission in the world, according to their Statutes, and so strive for the perfection of their state. Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given in Rome, June 29, 1993, Feast of Saints Peter and Paul.

E. Card. Martinez
Prefect

Jesus Torres C.M.F.
Undersecretary

STATUTES

Chapter I

NATURE AND PURPOSE

1. The commitment of the laity to the Secular Branch of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts is rooted in baptism and confirmation.
2. As lay persons, they share in the mission of the Congregation according to their own vocation: to live and spread the Gospel and build a more just world, realizing the Kingdom of God in the Church and the world of today.
3. Members of the Secular Branch share in the mission of the Congregation as it is expressed in the first Chapter of the Constitutions, which is common to the two Branches of Brothers and Sisters:
 - a. to contemplate, live and proclaim to the world God's love incarnate in Jesus (Const. art. 2);
 - b. to make our own the attitudes, options and tasks that led Jesus to the point of having His Heart transpierced on the cross (Const. art. 3);
 - c. to identify with the attitude of Jesus and with His reparative work; to be in solidarity with the men and women who are victims of injustice, hatred and sin in the world; to collaborate with all those who, led by the Spirit, work to build a world of justice and love, sign of the kingdom (Const. art. 4);
 - d. to assume a ministry of intercession through eucharistic celebration and contemplative adoration (Const. art. 5);
 - e. to engage in evangelizing action; to make the Kingdom of God present by the transformation of the human heart and by endeavoring to be agents of communion in the world; to exercise our apostolic service where we are sent to bring and receive the Good News (Const. art. 6);
 - f. to live our vocation and mission in community characterized by simplicity and the family spirit (Const. art. 7);
 - g. to maintain and strengthen unity, while each Branch has its own juridical autonomous personality, legislation, structures of government and formation, community life and temporal patrimony (Const. art. 8).
4. The mission of the members has to be realized in the milieu that is proper to the laity, but the choices will always be the result of a process of discernment and prioritizing in the light of the "mission" of the Congregation.
5. The Members of the SS.CC Secular Branch feel called to transform the social reality in which they are present, from the perspective of a prophetic and evangelical option and in solidarity with the poorest.

Chapter II

PROGRAM OF LIFE OF THE MEMBERS

The members of the Secular Branch of the congregation will deepen their Christian life, incarnating in a special way the Charism of the Congregation as is mentioned above, especially on the following levels:

A. Prayer Life

1. Personal and common prayer are an essential dimension of the life of faith of the members of the Secular Branch.
2. Common prayer life can be expressed in various ways in accordance with SS.CC. spirituality. In particular it is expressed through the Eucharist which is a source of communion and inspiration for the members and for their common objectives.
3. In the spirit of our charism they will give special attention to reparative adoration and to the deepening of their personal relationship with God:

B. Communal Life

1. The SS.CC. lay communities meet on a regular basis to share some form of community life whatever its structure, but it needs a certain constancy to give it stability.
2. Communion can be expressed in various ways. e.g. through weekly meetings and exchanges; some days per month together with an existing SS.CC. religious community or through regular meetings with other lay members.
3. The diversity of history, culture or tradition of an SS.CC. lay community is a richness for living and sharing the charism with other SS.CC. lay communities, expressing various aspects of the same charism and encouraging creativity and international solidarity.

C. Apostolic Life

1. The apostolate of a member of the SS.CC. Secular Branch has to be lived as a part of his/her project of life, not only as a marginal or temporary activity; his/her profession or daily work has to be lived in a vocation of committed service for the cause of the Kingdom. It should also be a liberating apostolate, with its concern for the whole person in all his/her dimensions.
2. Members of the SS.CC. Secular Branch share in the apostolic dimension of the congregation by actively participating in the ministry of the congregation as members of an

SS.CC. lay community or in a personal commitment. It can be a common project, a participation in the pastoral or social ministry of the congregation or in other works according to the mission of the congregation.

3. Apostolic service, both on the personal and community level, must be lived as 'being sent in mission' in the name of the congregation. (Const. of the Sisters, art. 57) Ministerial activity is the fruit of community discernment and community decisions. (Const. of the Brothers, art. 41.2).
4. Our spirit of reparation urges us to ensure that our apostolate has an ecumenical dimension. We recognize the spiritual values of all peoples and of every person (Const. of the Brothers, art. 42.3). Commitment to justice and peace, which includes the integrity of creation, is particularly in line with the vocation, (Const. of the Sisters, art. 59) as is our commitment to those who suffer violence, rejection or discrimination of any kind.
5. Availability to the needs and demands of the local church discerned in the light of the Spirit, and the capacity to adapt to circumstances and events are characteristics inherited from our Founders. (Const. art. 6).
6. The members of the SS.CC. lay community exercise the apostolate according to the guidelines of the local church, always as a mission of the SS.CC. lay community. The apostolate should be evaluated regularly.

D. Internal and International Solidarity

1. Solidarity has to become a lifestyle on various levels. Solidarity among the members of the SS.CC. lay community itself, i.e. caring for one another, sharing their lives, their goods, their joys and sorrows. This solidarity may have financial consequences. These consequences will be regulated by each sector and specified in the Provincial Statutes.
2. Solidarity with the SS.CC. Brothers and Sisters, who share with them the same mission. This includes some form of communication, some concrete connection between the Branches.
3. The members of the SS.CC. lay community have to be conscious of the international dimensions of the church and of the congregation, to avoid being fixed on their own small community.
4. This international solidarity will be shown in an active way: meetings, correspondence, exchange of news, an openness to justice and peace movements, missions etc.
5. Communication shall be such that it assures co-responsibility and facilitates collaboration in mission.

Chapter III

ORGANIZATION*A. Structure*

1. The Secular Branch of the Congregation is divided into 'sectors' of which the territory can coincide with a (religious) SS.CC. (Vice-)Province, Region, or can cover more provinces or regions.
2. A sector of the SS.CC. Secular Branch is composed of one or more SS.CC. lay communities, recognized, by the major or regional superior or his /her delegate.
3. Each SS.CC. lay community will normally be composed of at least five members, and elects among its members a lay coordinator /animator.
4. Each SS.CC. lay community will be accompanied by an SS.CC. religious community or a designated brother or sister, and will establish its own life and work plan in accordance with the common plan of life and mission of the congregation as is established in these statutes: (chapters I & 2)
5. Each SS.CC. lay community will present an adequate. structure for approval by the respective' Provincial Authority, including a procedure for the acceptance of candidates and the renewal of their commitment. The structure shall also make provision for the adequate formation of the members.
6. The structure will also include the necessary dispositions with regard to:
 - a) the ownership and management of material goods including finances
 - b) work contracts, insurances, also for those sent in mission 'ad extra'; arrangements for the resolution of conflicts, including instances of appeal.
7. Each SS.CC. lay community will ensure regular communication with other lay communities and with the SS.CC. religious communities of its sector.

B. Admission of Members

1. The members of the SS.CC. Secular Branch are admitted, in accordance with the structure (refer to A no.5) after a time of preparation and formation and on the proposal of the other members of the lay community.
2. Each sector of the SS.CC. Secular Branch has to elaborate a formula for the commitment of the members to their SS.CC. mission and a ceremony for their acceptance, after which they are inscribed in a special register of the Secular Branch of the Congregation.

3. The commitment into the mission and the engagement of the members of the SS.CC. lay community is one year for the first commitment. This is followed by a commitment for period of three years, which is renewable indefinitely.

C. Formation

1. Always keeping in mind the lay nature of their vocation members of the SS.CC. Secular Branch need a formation in their own faith, a faith rooted in scripture and in their actual situation. They need to deepen their own role in the church and the world of today. If the lay community cannot provide an adequate formation program, the province should make provision for such a program (refer to A no. 5).
2. Personal requirements are:
 - a) personal equilibrium and affective maturity
 - b) experience of God
 - c) love of our charism and mission
 - d) ability to collaborate and to serve.

3. Program:

The program of formation can be spread out as an on going formation over several years and should include:

- a) a study of the Scriptures, the teaching of the church and other studies to deepen their christian faith
- b) a study of contemporary SS.CC. spirituality and of the history of the congregation
- c) spiritual accompaniment: formation of lay leaders who might take responsibility for the spiritual animation of the members
- d) the formation of leaders
- e) the preparation for missions extra 'ad in special cases
- f) the formation for pastoral activities in collaboration with the Brothers and Sisters
- g) the study of a broad range of issues: social, political, ecological etc.

Rome, June 29, 1993 - Feast of Saints Peter and Paul.

APPROVAL

THE APROBATION

The Congregation was approved *by* His Holiness Pius VII on January 10, 1817, and confirmed *by* the Bull "Pastor Aeternus" of November 17, 1817, in all that is included in the Preliminary Chapter and the 107 articles (58 in the Constitutions and 49 in the Statutes).

This primitive Rule was common to Sisters and Brothers and contained 1 chapter, out of the 9 which had, 4 articles out of the total 107, dedicated to the Exterior Association. This indicates, according to the thinking of our Founders, its place in the SS.CC. Family.

Text of 1817: 2nd part

Cap. V: Of the Exterior Association

1. The Superiors of all the houses of the Congregation can admit into a special communion of prayer those faithful who, living in the world, wish to lead a more Christian life.
2. The men who are to be admitted into this special communion of prayer, shall form as Association which will have a periodical Assembly in the house of the Brothers of the place in which they live.
3. The women will have also their assemblies in the houses of the Sisters.
4. The General Chapter of 1819 will regulate the necessary conditions to form part of the Association; but in any case, there will be no obligation under the pain of sin, not even venial. It will be understood that those who do not observe the rule of the Association, after having been advised 3 times, that they have renounced the Association and will not be considered as members of the same.

This Rule must have been completed by the following General Chapters. The Exterior Association was in the midst of "important questions" to be regulated.

SECULAR BRANCH DECISIONS AND DOCUMENTS

The Secular Branch

(Original version in French)

(General Chapter of 2006)

The General Chapters congratulate the members of the Secular Branch and the Sisters and Brothers who accompany them along the road traveled for the work accomplished, especially at the time of the seminars. They encourage them to stay with the reflection and use all the material that is available to enliven the SS.CC. charism in today's world and in a way that is appropriate to them.

They support the declaration made at the Chapters in the year 2000, *"The General Chapters ask all the Brothers and Sisters to continue reflecting on the vocation and the consecration of the laity to the Sacred Hearts,"* ... and, *"considering the Congregation as the SS. CC. family, to support and foster the development of the Secular Branch as outlined in article 9 of the Constitutions and articles 23-32 of the Secular Branch Statutes, acknowledging cultural differences which exist in the Congregation."* ... And, *"that the members of the Secular Branch live experiences of the SS.CC. mission, and, from this view point, clarify, develop and promote their specific ways of living the common mission in close collaboration with those who accompany them and in communion with the whole Congregation."*

Recommendations

• To the General Governments

That, in communion with the SS.CC. Laity, they continue the reflection on the place of the Secular Branch in the heart of our Congregation, and on the nature of commitment of the Laity, called to live with us our SS.CC. charism, but in a way other than the religious life.

• To the Major Communities and Regions

1. That they invite the members of the Secular Branch to significant Congregational events (assemblies, religious professions, feasts of the Congregation) and that SS.CC. Brothers and Sisters respond to invitations from the Secular Branch.
2. That they study the possibility of inviting some representatives of the Secular Branch to their Chapter.
3. That they delegate one or more of their members to accompany the members of the Secular Branch of their sector. These mentors should serve as a privileged link between the three branches of the congregation, and with other sectors of the Secular Branch, notably for information, formation and sharing in the life and the mission of the congregation.
4. That they study and implement the results and the fruits of the different seminars on formation of SS.CC. Laity.
5. That the Brothers and Sisters delegated and made available to accompany members of the Secular Branch be attentive to the quality of relations with the other branches of the congregation, (cf. Secular Branch Statutes 4,17,18-22, 33-35), notably for the formation of members and an evaluation of their engagement in the mission. These Brothers and Sisters are responsible for giving a regular account to their major community.

• On the organization of the sectors of the Secular Branch

1. That procedures of acceptance and celebration of the commitment of candidates be specified in the rule or the structure of each Secular Branch sector (cf. Secular Branch Statutes 27 and 28), notably to determine who is to accept the candidates and who is to accept the commitment at the celebration. The rule should also anticipate the procedure for designating the lay coordinator of the sector and the duration of his or her mandate.
2. That in each sector of the Secular Branch a mixed committee be created composed of a Brother and a Sister delegated by their major community or region and the lay coordinator of the sector accompanied by another lay member of the sector. This committee will be responsible for setting in motion the procedures for admission of candidates and the celebrations of commitment in the Secular Branch. The committee will also be responsible for keeping, for each sector a register of those making commitment. As far as possible, each sector of the Secular Branch will take steps with the civil authorities of their countries to be recognized with their own rules and statutes, taking into account Arts. 3. g. and 28 of the Secular Branch Statutes. Each Major Community and Region should attend to this (cf. Secular Branch Statutes 24 and 27).

Elements for a Profile of a Secular Branch Member

Annex I

A. Some Historical Points

1. Our Congregation of SS.CC. brothers and sisters had its origins in a group of laity.
2. Throughout its history, the Congregation had a group of laity called the 'Exterior Association'. This Association underwent many changes in its history in the church and the congregation.
3. At the end of the 19th century, the association grew significantly in our congregation. Since the 20th century, schools, universities and parishes provided new means of relating to the congregation.
4. The Second Vatican Council, recognizing the important place of the laity in the church, opened for us a new way of understanding the Secular Branch.

B. Laity in the SS.CC Family

Different kinds of groups co-exist within the SS.CC. Family:

1. Laity who are family or friends of persons in the congregation or in their works.
2. Laity who work with the congregation, and who have a professional relationship with it.
3. Laity who live their faith nourished by elements of our SS.CC. spirituality and who participate in certain practices such as adoration.
4. Laity who feel called to respond to a call from the Lord, and who commit themselves to follow Him by lives lived according to the evangelical way proposed by our Founders.

C. Profile of Secular Branch Members

The Secular Branch member is a lay Christian who, desirous of living his/her baptism as a response to a personal call coming from the Spirit, chooses to live the Gospel according to the charism of our Founders. They commit themselves personally and publicly to the SS.CC. family.

Entering into a deepening process of their faith according to the SS.CC. spirituality they experience being loved by a merciful God and try to live the attitudes and sentiments of Jesus. On this journey of ongoing formation they:

1. Experience the Eucharist and reparative Adoration as a source that dynamites their whole Christian life and as an integral part of our mission in the Church, (cf. Art. 1 to 5 SB Statutes).
2. Share and nourish their faith in a Secular Branch community and are related to at least one community of Brothers or Sisters of the congregation.
3. Are attentive to the reality of the world, especially the cry of those dear to the redemptive Heart of Christ. For this they work zealously to make His love present in their families, in politics, in finances, in science, and in their leisure times, etc. They promote community life in areas of lay life; and they participate, if possible, in missionary activities.

FORMATION

Annex II

Guidelines for the formation of Secular Branch Candidates

Objective : To prepare candidates to commit themselves as laity, in the Sacred Hearts Family.

Part 1: Laity in the church and for the world

- Vatican II sources: Lumen Gentium, Gaudium et Spes, Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity Document of Paul VI: Evangelium Nuntiandi
- Documents of John-Paul II: Christifideles Laici, Vita Consecrata, especially numbers 54 - 56.

Part 2 : Within the history of a missionary family

- Recent biographies of the Founders: the Good Father and the Good Mother -Juan Vicente G.: Father Coudrin and the Primitive Community Cor Rademaker: Called to Serve.
- History of the Secular Branch: Article by MaVda Carlier, presented by Rosa Ferreiro.

Part 3 : Living the Gospel

Fundamental Attitudes:

1. In order to put what has been talked about into practice, the animators **must go beyond the information stage**. It is not about acquiring new knowledge, but of allowing people to be challenged by the Word of Love and to go forward with the others on the road to conversion.
2. **A climate of prayer and sharing** is necessary during formation. Times of personal prayer and reflection are essential.
3. During the time of formation before the first commitment the candidate should develop **his/her personal plan** with the aid of the mentor.
4. Those who are responsible for organizing and animating this formation and those who enter into the process, need to continually remember that the Holy Spirit is the principal protagonist. It is, therefore, essential for each candidate to live the different stages in a personal way, and for the animators of formation meetings to fulfill this task in an atmosphere of prayer and openness to the Spirit who is working for us "to create a new heart" resembling the pierced Heart of Christ.
 - **To develop a personal relationship with God**

The formation offered to the candidate for commitment to the Secular Branch is a way of life which results from and draws its own dynamism from belief in the unconditional love of God the Father revealed in the pierced Heart of his well beloved Son, the Lord Jesus from whom nothing can be separated. Mary, the Mother of Jesus goes before us and walks with us on the journey. As a consequence, the content of Christian Faith will benefit if it is presented to the candidate with reference to the spirituality of the Heart of Christ.

This road leads the candidate to the desert with Moses beside the "burning bush" (Ex. 3: 1'15), so that he/she will find the tender and merciful face of God there fully revealed in Jesus Christ, near to those who suffer and are waiting to be free.

Fundamentally, everything that is put forward in this process of formation aims to develop better "the contemplative stance" of the candidate so that (s)he will learn to realize the marvels of God's love, especially as adored and celebrated in the Eucharist, and to be attentive and present to the "joy and hope, the grief and anguish of people today". (Vatican II - Gaudium et Spes, No. 1) to whom (s)he is sent in the breath of the Spirit.

- **In communion with others**

Formation is to accompany, support and strengthen the response each baptized person tries to give to this Love of the Father. Jesus "in whom we find all" (Good Father) is the way of the response: "no one comes to the Father except through him" (Jn.)

It cannot be narrowed down to an intellectual understanding of the Scriptures or the Christian Mystery. It is a continual call "to get up and walk" with their brothers and sisters on a road to conversion. It is about placing oneself in the school of Christ who was humble and gentle of Heart" in order to make our own his attitudes, choices and works. (cfr. Const. No. 3)

Formation is a help, an accompaniment offered to each candidate to respond to their personal vocation. Because of this, it is not a journey one makes alone, but has a strong community dimension. We are called, within the "SS.CC_ Evangelic Family" to help each other to live and proclaim the Gospel, in the same way today as Pierre Coudrin and Henriette Aymer.

In this period of formation, this mutual help happens during teaching, sharing and reflecting on life, community activities, and an initiation into personal spiritual direction. It requires the collaboration and support and even the cooperation of different people and different means.

- **In view of the Mission**

Formation is to lead the candidate to participating as fully as possible in the mission of the Congregation which is "to contemplate, live and proclaim the Love of God made flesh in Jesus" with "Zeal" (Const. No. 3). It needs to enable the person to be open and to respond with all the members of the SS.CC. Family to a specific call, "to enter with Jesus and with Mary into the plan of the Father's Love which is to save the world through Love." (Const. Bros. No. 13), but as a lay person.

- **Commitment and commissioning**

The final stage of formation is the commitment and commissioning ceremony. When each candidate has completed the initial stage of formation, then the local community presents that candidate to the Secular Branch coordinator for the commitment ceremony. The commitment formula is the following: (see appendix)

SUGGESTED SS.CC. SECULAR BRANCH COMMISSIONING RITES

(as part of a mass for 1st year candidates and recommitting members)

Prelude:

The candidates process with the priest at the processional accompanied by their community leader.

The order of the mass is followed, after the Gospel reading just before the homily, we will have the

Rite of Commissioning:

MC: Please be seated

The candidates and renewing members are called forth from the assembly into which they have been baptized and from which their community flow. The provincial/mentor/presider will seek the consent of the assembly before the commissioning proceeds.

PRESIDER: Members and candidates for what do you ask?

Candidates' Response: We ask for the grace to offer ourselves to the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary as members of the Secular Branch of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar.

MC (Calling of Candidates: N.B. Call all the first timers first followed by those renewing per community). As each name is called and while walking to the altar, members and candidates please Respond: *Here I am Lord*

Presentation of the Candidates by the respective community leaders or sector coordinator:

MC: *We would like to present to you the candidate(s) who wish to make their one year commitment (names of candidates and community represented)/three year commitment (names of candidates and community represented). The Secular Branch Sector Coordinator and Community Leaders have journeyed with these candidates and can attest to the workings of the Holy Spirit in each of their lives. We feel that each one is well disposed and ready for a renewed and deeper commitment, offering their lives to God as members of the secular Branch of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.*

Election by the Mentor/Provincial/Presider:

PRESIDER: *We rely on the help of the Lord God and Savior Jesus Christ, and we choose these, our brothers and sisters for the Secular Branch of the religious institute of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar which is an association of Christ's Faithful, whose members share in the charism and in the mission of the institute, according to their own vocation.*

Assembly response: *Thanks be to God.* (all show consent with applause)

Homily: - (Fr. Mike Barry or officiating priest)

Examination of the Candidates:

PRESIDER: *Do you promise to commit yourselves to live the mission and the spirit of the Congregation and to join the Brothers and Sisters as equal partners in a relationship of mutual trust and respect ?*

Candidates' Response: *I do, with the grace of God.*

Promise of Obedience:

Candidates' Response: *I do, with the grace of God.*

PRESIDER: *Do you promise to:*

1. *live and spread the Gospel and build a more just world, realizing the Kingdom of God in the Church and world of today? Response:*
2. *to contemplate, live and proclaim to the world God's Love incarnate in Jesus (Const. art. 2)? Response:*
3. *to make our own the attitudes, options and tasks that led Jesus to the point of having His Heart*

transpierced on the cross (Const. art 3)? Response:

4. *to identify with the attitude of Jesus and with His reparative work; to be in solidarity with men and women who are victims of injustice, hatred, and sin in the world of justice and love, sign of the Kingdom (Const. art 4)? Response:*
5. *to assume a ministry of intercession through Eucharistic celebration and contemplative adoration (Const. art. 5)? Response:*
6. *to engage in evangelizing action; to make the Kingdom of God present by the transformation of the human heart and by endeavoring to be agents of communion in the world; to exercise our apostolic service where we are sent to bring and receive the Good News (Const. art. 6)? Response:*
7. *to live our vocation and mission in community characterized by simplicity and family spirit (Const. art. 7)? Response:*
8. *to maintain and strengthen unity, while each branch has its own juridical autonomous personality, legislation, structures of government and formation, community life and temporal patrimony (Const. art. 8)? Response:*

MC: Please kneel. *Let us pray for the candidates who prostrate themselves in a biblical gesture of humility*

Invitation to Prayer

MC: Candidates (Prostate those who can):

ASSIGNED READER:

Read : Isaiah 61:1-3 *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly, to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and release to the prisoners, to announce a year of favor from the Lord and a day of vindication by our God, to comfort all who mourn; to place on those all who mourn in Zion a diadem instead of ashes; to give them oil of gladness in place of mourning, a glorious mantle instead of a listless spirit.....The Word of God.....*

CHOIR: Sing/recite the litany of the saints

MC: *The assembly may be seated, candidates please stand.*

PRESIDER: leading candidates on: Prayers of Commitment:

I, (state your name), in the presence of those here gathered, commit myself (for 1 or 3 years) to live my baptism in the church, as a member of the Secular Branch of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual Adoration of the most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, in conformity with the Statutes approved by the Holy Apostolic See . I promise to contemplate, live and announce the Love of God incarnate in the Heart of Jesus, like Mary, living as a Gospel in the world today. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

MC: *Family members or sponsors of candidates (for USA-West), please stand and give your blessings:*

Affirmation of Family Members or Sponsors:

We give our wholehearted blessings and support to (name of candidate) in his/her commitment to the Secular Branch of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.

Consecration Prayer of the Secular Branch Members (kneel)

All:

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, to You we offer ourselves today as Members of the Secular Branch. Accept our offering to the reign of Your Love, of all that we are, all our hopes, dreams, and all the concrete details of our human lives.

We want to live an authentic life in Communion with the SS.CC. family, in imitation of our Founders and St. Damien, being in touch with the handiwork of God in all creation. We commit to a life of Reparative love

especially in Adoration, and intercessory prayer.

O Immaculate Heart of Mary, help us to live our unconditional Yes just as you lived your call to discipleship. In venerating and loving you, we thank God the Father for our common gift of following Jesus.

You St. Joseph, chaste spouse of Mary and foster father of Jesus, teach us to trust God's providential care and intercede for us that after having imitated you in our pilgrimage on earth, we may have the happiness of dying as you did, in the arms of Jesus and Mary. Amen.

Investiture with Secular Branch Pin

MC: *New Branch Members please proceed to sign the Log Book.*

Laying on of Hands and Kiss of Peace:

MC: *We invite the (Provincial/mentor/presider/community leaders/all SB members) to please say a quick blessing and welcome kiss of peace (all proceed in quick and orderly manner) (Assembly may remain standing)*

MC: *Assembly, please be seated*

Secular Branch Prayer (All Secular Branch Members please kneel):

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, you so inspired our founders that our Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary emerged as a ministry of love and mercy to the world. That Congregation from the beginning envisioned a group of lay people living and proclaiming the same Charism. We have inherited that Charism and the challenge to bring your Sacred Heart to the world. We are consecrated in that love and are planning our programs for the future. As you have graciously blessed our past so now bless our future and inspire us with your Holy Spirit to develop our plan always in Honor and Glory of the Sacred Hearts. Amen

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Recessional Song: Salve Regina (all stand)

Salve Regina, mater misericordiae:

vita, dulcedo, et spes nostra, salve.

Ad te clamamus exules filii Evae

Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes in hac lacrimarum valle.

Eia, ergo, advocate nostra, illos tuos misericordes oculos ad nos converte.

Et Iesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis post hoc exilium ostende.

O Clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria.

Amen

PRAYERS OF SECULAR BRANCH

SECULAR BRANCH PRAYER (by Fr. Mike Barry/North America-Pacific)

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus
 you so inspired our founders
 that our Congregation of the
 Sacred Hearts emerged as a
 ministry of love and mercy to
 the world. That Congregation
 from the beginning envisioned
 a group of lay people living
 and proclaiming the same
 Charism. We have inherited
 the Charism and the challenge
 to bring your Sacred Heart to
 the world. We are
 consecrated in that love and
 are planning our programs for
 the future. As you have
 graciously blessed our past so
 now bless our future and
 inspire us with your Holy
 Spirit to develop our plan
 always in Honor and Glory of the
 Sacred Hearts.

Amen.

or

Prayer of the Secular Branch (Anonymous)

Lord Jesus Christ,

You have a heart like ours.

You see our suffering, You know our concerns.

You know also our burning desire for life, happiness, joy and salvation.

In our word and ministry, You give us all we need to live:

To the poor You give bread,

To the grief-stricken, joy,

To the lonely, a home,

To the abandoned, help and comfort,

To the discouraged, hope and confidence,

To the despairing, strength and courage,

To the sick, a loving consoling presence,

To the dying, communion with God forever.

Give us a heart as big as Yours

so that all those whom we meet might feel understood, welcomed and loved.

Let us be Your mouth,

To speak words of goodness and reconciliation;

HOW TO BECOME A MEMBER **(in North America-Pacific)**

Requirements:

- Candidate Application Form and Requirements
- Recommendation by Priest, Religious, or SB Member
- After completion of initial Formation courses over 2 years eligibility for 1 year commitment
- Approval by SS.CC. SB Religious Mentor, Sector Coordinator or Provincial

References: Secular Branch Statutes 1993; General Chapter 2006 Annex 3 and North America-Pacific Secular Branch Handbook 2008

Screening of Candidates

1. At a minimum, the application form asks for the following information:
 - a. Name, Address, Contact phone # and email address
 - b. Name of Catholic parish church registered with
 - c. Parish ministries
 - d. Affiliation with any other congregations

The candidates are to make the following commitments:

- Attend the monthly formation sessions
- Commit to spend a minimum of one hour adoration per week before the Blessed Sacrament
- Pray daily the Secular Branch Prayer Book (specific to USA-West)
- Attend at least one retreat per year for discernment
- Participate and support Secular Branch activities
- Participate and support the Annual Sacred Heart Conference held on the weekend of the Feast of the Sacred Heart. It begins on the Friday evening of the Feast of the Sacred Heart and continues on Saturday, the Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (specific to USA-West)
- To participate in an annual fundraiser sponsored by the Secular Branch, this provides operating funds for the administrative and ministerial needs of the Secular Branch (specific to USA West)

2. The candidate must meet the following requirements:
 - a. Mature lay Catholic (18 years or older)
 - b. Baptized and confirmed
 - c. Willingness to learn the spirituality of the Sacred Hearts SS.CC.
 - d. Willingness to participate in an SS.CC. ministry
 - e. Sound mind

Initial Formation (Initial formation will include a series of courses and a spiritual retreat each year)

1. The candidate will meet with the SB Leader to do individual planning for apostolic life as a lay person.
2. The plan will cover a two year formation period before the first commitment.

Acceptance of the Candidate to be commissioned as First Year Members

1. After a period of discernment the candidate will be interviewed by at least one of these individuals (Secular Branch Leader, SS.CC. Religious Mentor or SS.CC. Provincial).
2. If it is determined that the individual is not ready for commitment, the candidate may appeal to the SB Religious Mentor.

3. The approved candidate will submit a letter of petition to the Provincial for final acceptance. The letter of petition at a minimum will include a brief summary of the candidate, how they will live out the SS.CC. charism and the reason for wanting to become a Secular Branch Member.

SUGGESTED FORMATION MEETINGS

At a minimum a Secular Branch monthly meeting may include:

- Community adoration in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament (exposed or unexposed), and if not available to be at a church or chapel will have community prayer;
- Incorporate the Secular Branch prayer of North America-Pacific and another SB prayers (i.e., SB Prayer Book-USA West, Pacific Province Book, etc.);
- Formation teaching with topic (s) from the SB formation listing; to include discussion and reflection;
- Fellowship (i.e. refreshment, etc);
- Business (i.e., retreats, mission projects, fundraiser, etc.); and
- Documentation of attendance and group agreements (minutes of the meeting), etc.

Monthly meetings are organized in the format determined by each respective sectors/communities.

Meeting group norms (or ground rules are established by each respective sectors/communities).

FORMATION MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS

1. ***WHAT IS SECULAR BRANCH*** (refer to 'Nature & Purpose', page 91)
2. ***LIFE OF FOUNDERS*** (refer to the 'History of the Congregation', page 15)
3. ***CHARISM OF SS.CC.*** (refer to 'Devotion', page 32 and 'Charism', page 61)
4. ***SPIRITUAL LIFE OF SB MEMBER*** (refer to page 26)
5. ***MISSION TO DO THE CHARISM*** (refer to 'Aim of the Institute', page 31)
6. ***THE CHURCH***

It is strange that the word church or ecclesia is not used in any of the 27 books of the New Testament. St. Paul viewed church in terms of his own conversion which was a call and challenge to teach and preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to establish communities to do that. The Acts of the Apostles uses the word assembly (church) for the whole gathering of the faithful. This is more universal. The Evangelists used the words of Jesus which were, "the Kingdom of God is upon you". The featured elements for membership in this kingdom were repentance, belief in Jesus Christ as God and savior, baptism and belonging to the Christian Community.

The church, as we know it, is always struggling to become its own self realization. Ongoing spiritual renewal directs what the church is called to be and become. The church today is a direct result of the discussions and documents of Vatican Council II.

There were four general sessions : In sessions one and two, the church became aware of itself as a community; session three, the church became aware of itself as a community called to be in the very heart of the world; session four, the church saw itself as a community in the heart of the world but called to serve.

Thus, the principal developments of Vatican Council II stressed the church as the people of God – a community linked to humanity.

7. CATECHISM

The council on the hierarchy, place the people of God ahead of the hierarchy.

The hierarchy is there to serve and govern. The hierarchy is part of the teaching authority of the church which is expressed in the Ordinary and extra Ordinary Magisterium.

The Ordinary Magisterium consists of the Bishop, Priests and lay people who teach in unity with the successor of Peter, the Pope. The key here is that they are not on their own. Their teaching must be in unison with catholic doctrine and the Pope.

The Extraordinary Magisterium is when the Pope speaks infallibly. There are at least those conditions for that: One is that the Pope must declare that he is speaking infallibly even using the word infallible. He must speak from the Chair of St. Peter and it must be in accord with the teaching of the church.

There is also the Supreme Magisterium and that is when the Body of Bishops together with Peter's successor declare a doctrine/teaching. This usually happens at the end of an Ecumenical Council.

What is important is that the faithful are called to be united with the teaching Magisterium of the church. Should they disagree, they can not teach against the teaching of the Magisterium or lead others against that teaching. This applies to the ordinary and extraordinary teachings and documents of the church.

8. EUCHARIST

The Eucharist is a liturgical event, a sacramental meal in which the church members celebrate and proclaim Jesus' sacrificial life, death and resurrection. The Eucharist is a liturgical event which the church assembled in the unity of the Holy Spirit and acting through with and in God's Son Jesus Christ offers all honor to God the almighty Father. It is a sacramental meal in which the simple elements of bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus Christ, to be shared in faith by the participants.

The Eucharist is a memorial of Jesus' entire life but most especially of its culmination in His passion-resurrection. It is also a celebration, a solemn act of praise and thanksgiving for the signs and wonders God has effected for us throughout the ages, but above all in the mission of His Son, Jesus Christ. Finally, it is a proclamation of the Lord's self offering and death on our behalf until he comes in the fullness of time. The word itself comes from the Greek "eucharistein" to give thanks. It is used in the earliest of Christian documents to designate the liturgical meal.

It is found in many New Testament writings e.g. 1 b and 11,24 MK 8,6 MT 13,36 and in John 6 which is the Eucharistic Chapter. There is also another use of the equivalent of Eucharist in the New testament which is the breaking of bread in Acts 2,42. This designates a threefold meaning namely, sharing, worship and a community dedicated to the Eucharist.

St. Ignatius of Antioch who was martyred spoke of the Eucharist as the one bread uniting all the local churches. He went on to say that the Eucharist was the medicine for immortality, an antidote against death, that we might live forever in Jesus Christ.

St. Augustine speaking about the Eucharist said “In the Eucharist, the sacrifice of Christ is the sacrifice of every Christian who join with Christ in offering themselves even as he offers Himself for us. In the Eucharist we have been made Christ’s body and by His mercy we are what we receive”.

St. Thomas Aquinas on the 13th century focused mainly on the Blessed Eucharist as a sacrament. He saw the Eucharist as a sign which affects what it signifies and in which the Lord is present in a unique way. For St. Thomas, the Eucharist is the summit of the spiritual life and the end to which all of the other sacraments are acclaimed.

The Council of Trent was the Catholic church’s answer to the Reformation. The Council laid heavy emphasis on the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist and maintained that presence was present as long as the species of bread and wine were there. The Council also stressed the objective value of the Eucharistic sacrifice, which makes present in an unbloody manner the sacrifice Christ offered on the cross in a bloody manner.

The Second Vatican Council continued and reemphasized the teachings of Trent and all that had gone on in the Traditions of the church. Its most memorable statement is “the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the church is directed: at the same time it is the fountain from which all her power flows” (art 10 on Sacred Liturgy)

Eucharistic Devotion

The Eucharist has also a whole other development which developed from faith and devotion to the Eucharist. This devotion found expression in Processions of the Blessed Sacrament. Most of these devotions began around the 13th and 16th centuries. Oddly enough one of the first practices was individual visits to the Blessed Sacrament, this was followed by Benediction and ultimately adoration.

Fr. Marie Joseph Coudrin’s life was essentially changed and transformed by the Eucharist and the Blessed Sacrament. He was in hiding in L’Matte d’Ussaeu near Poitiers. There was a price on his head because he was faithful and loyal to the Pope. He would not join in the nationalization of the clergy. He hid in the granary by day and would come down to the main floor in the early morning to celebrate Eucharist. He would then take a fragment of the Eucharist back up to his secret hiding place and adore it the next day. It was during one of these adoration sessions that he received the “vision of the new order which was missionaries in white going out to far distant lands”. This vision convinced him to come out of hiding, take the risk and begin what later became the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and the Perpetual Adoration of the most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament was a key element. The Blessed Sacrament was led in procession under cover of darkness in the early hours of the morning in 1798 or into the first community house in Poitiers. Adoration (perpetual) was the standard and support of the SS.CC. fledgling community.

There are four key elements to adoration.....

HOW TO SPEND ADORATION TIME

*Adoration is a special prayer time before the Blessed Sacrament. For most people, there is confusion of “what should I do?” Adoration is divided into four essential parts. The four parts are **Worship, Thanksgiving, Reparation** and **Petition**.*

Worship: *This is a time to worship the Lord. The phrase “I worship You” or “I adore You” or similar prayers should be said. The main focus is of creative worshipping of the creator. Focus on the Lord and not yourself. Scripture describes this type of worship. Witness the worship of the Magi (Mt 2:1) or the Shepherds (Luke 2:20) or Mary (Luke 1:46) or Zacharias (Zac 14:17). The following Psalms are prayers of worship:*

- **Psa 5:8** – But I can enter your house because of your great love. I can worship in your holy temple because of my reverence for you, Lord.
- **Psa 63:4** – For your love is better than life, my lips offer you worship!
- **Psa 95:6** – Enter, let us bow down in worship: let us kneel before the Lord who made us.

Thanksgiving: *This is a time ‘to give thanks.’ “I thank you Lord.” Or similar expressions. Again, the focus is the Lord, our God. You may have your own litany of thanksgiving such as: “I thank you Lord for ……” You may use the following prayers or psalm:*

- **Psa 69:31** – That I may praise God’s name in song and glorify it with thanksgiving.
- **Psa 116:17** – I will offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving and call on the name of the Lord.
- **Psa 100:4** – Enter the temple gates with praise; its courts with thanksgiving. Give thanks to God, bless His name.

Reparation: *This is the most difficult because the focus is shifting from the Lord to you. Both of you are working together in this facet. It is not yet petition. Be careful that you do not make this time one of petition. At this stage you are praying to the Lord to make possible situations that you will use later in petition. Reparation and intercession are interchangeable in this state. You need to fill your heart with the love of Jesus and pray, “Lord in your power, love, redemption, you bring before you (specific situation) and I pray in the power of Jesus.”*

e.g.: This lady was praying for her son who had fallen into serious sin. The Father answered her prayer and said, “Your son does not even recognize me.” “Yes.” The mother responded, “but your son has saved him and let that salvation be granted to my son in your son’s name.” This is reparation/intercession. The best prayers of reparation are: “My Lord and my God” or “Jesus……” or “Father, if it is possible let this chalice pass me by, but not my will but your will be done.” Or say the following Psalms:

- **Psa 31:15** – But I trust in you, Lord: I say. “You are my God.”
- **Psa 51:12** – A clean heart create for me, God: renew in my a steadfast spirit.
- **Psa 119:123** – My eyes long to see your salvation and the justice of your promise.

Petition: *This is a prayer of asking based on Jesus' own words: "Ask the father anything in my name." The time for petition should always be preceded by the other three stages. Prayers of petition include: "That I may see," "If you will do so you can make us clean" or "If you will heal my little daughter who is sick." Or say the following Psalms:*

- **Psa 106:5** – That I may see the prosperity of your chosen, rejoice in the joy of your people, and glory with your heritage.
- **Psa 51:12** – A clean heart create for me, God: renew in me a steadfast spirit.
- **Psa 119-123** – My eyes long to see your salvation and the justice of your promise.

9. HISTORY OF THE SS.CC. SECULAR BRANCH

The story of the Secular Branch can be traced back to the beginning of the Congregation, the founders and the foundation.

There was a group of lay people who were attracted to the founder and his spirituality. These people formed an association around him and even in 1798 accompanied him and the Blessed Sacrament into one of the first houses of the Congregation. These people did adoration and maintained a community of prayers in adoration. Most of these people lived in their own homes.

As time passed, the Congregation formed into a community of men and women. The lay people continued to support the emerging Congregation but their status changes. It changed from being closely involved, is now becoming associates. This term 'associates' was attributed to the lay people's involvement for many years even centuries. Then in the mid twentieth century the term Secular Branch became an even closer association with the SS.CC. Congregation. In the past, this was a response to Vatican Council II which stressed the role of the laity in the church. The Statutes of the Secular Branch were approved by the Holy See in 1993 and the Secular Branch was firmly established. While the associates continued to exist, the Secular Branch became a greater challenge for living the charism of the congregation.

DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH AMERICA-PACIFIC SECULAR BRANCH

In January 1997 the respective Provincials held Secular Branch Formulators Meeting at Palos Verdes, California to:

- Formulate a plan based on the Constitutions, Chapter I, applicable to the respective groups;
- Develop and articulate/formulate general guidelines of initial formation of the secular Branch
- Develop a common structure on the ESIC Level that promotes and implements the Secular Branch; and
- Share/listen to efforts made in other areas of the Congregation

Some of the recommendations made by the work groups included:

- To begin initially by developing an associates program for current desires by the laity to enter a secular branch in the future;
- For General Councilors to furnish a history of lay development in the SS.CC. beginning with the Exterior Branch Statutes; and

- Clarification from the General Government regarding: Secular Branch – the words “branch,”#3g “each branch”
 - Is the Secular Branch its own person
 - If it has its own juridical personality, then is it autonomous
 - In what sense are the members of the Secular Branch members of the Congregation?

In February 1999 a follow-up Secular Branch Meeting was held in Palos Verdes, Ca

Representatives shared what had emerged in each area since the 1997 Secular Branch Formulators Meeting.

Religious Mentors Fr. Richard Lifrak and Sr. Dolores Marie Pavao of USA-Esat reported on having 13 Secular Branch Members who made one-year commitments and 15 new candidates. Theodora and James Gomes were present and they shared personal stories about becoming SB members.

Fr. Michael Barry of USA-West reported that efforts were made to begin Secular Branch in California, however over a period of months attendance shrank from 300 to 7 regulars. Fr. Pat Crawley suggested that their parishes would be a good focal point and that this topic be looked at seriously during their Provincial Chapter. Raquel Cano was invited to participate in the meeting because of her desire to learn more about the SS.CC. spirituality.

By invitation, Guy Saumure of Quebec reported that secular Branch had 3 members at the time. He requested to be affiliated with the English communities on North America, but the Quebec community was part of the Province of France. Since 1997 Quebec Sector has been part of the North America-Pacific Conference with permission until 2013.

The Pacific Province report was given by Associates Lay Coordinator, Aileen Kupihea (with support from Sr. Anne Marie Tamanaha, director of Associates), and it focused on the associates roles and responsibilities, formation, etc. The critical question asks was “At what point is a member of the Association ready to move to the deeper commitment in the Secular Branch?”

The conference participants reached consensus on these points:

1. Using the USA-East model, all sectors will have the same formation. This does not exclude some flexibility.
2. A high level of communication is desired. A core group will meet annually
3. A common symbol will be selected for the Secular Branch
4. Coordinator job description
5. Sector Contacts with Internet capability: A. Kupihea – Hawaii/Pacific, R. Cano – USA-West, G. Saumure – Quebec, Sr. D.M. Pavao – USA-East for Teodora Gomes

Aileen Kupihea was elected coordinator of the Core Group and Guy Saumure accepted to be assistant. The Core Group included: A. Kupihea, G. Saumure, R. Cano, Teodora & James Gomes.

From 1999 – to the present an annual SB National Leadership Conference has occurred in different locations for the purpose of developing policies, procedures, vision, mission, structure, response to General Government directives, etc.

At present (2014) these are the respective sectors and communities in North America-Pacific in the order that they were developed:

US (East) sector (Massachusetts)

- Fairhaven Community
- Wareham Community

Hawaii/Pacific Sector

- Oahu Community
- Kauai Community
- Molokai Community

USA West Sector (California)

- Chino Hills Community
- San Dimas/La Verne Community
- Corona Community
- Oak Hills Community
- Sun City Community
- San Jose Community

USA West Sector (Idaho)

- Twin Falls Community

In the USA, the Secular Branch was supported and endorsed by the US Provincials in 1994. Formation of communities of the Secular Branch quickly took place. In California, the St. Paul the Apostle Community of Chino Hills emerged quickly followed by the San Dimas Community. Simultaneously with those communities the Fairhaven Community of the Secular Branch was formed and likewise the Hawaiian Community of the Secular Branch emerged. While all this was being formed and emerging, the Canadian group joined with the others and formed the North American Pacific Secular Branch Conference.

At present these are communities of the Secular Branch throughout the world and in the different Provinces where the SS.CC. Congregation ministers, e.g. Spain, Argentina and Brazil:

Each community has a community leader and a spiritual mentor (a professed brother or sister). Communities are members of a Sector and each sector belongs to the Secular Branch Conference under the leadership of a national coordinator.

10. STATUTES (refer to ‘Statutes’, page 91)

11. REQUIREMENTS/COMMISSIONING (refer to ‘Sources of Spirituality’, page 94)

12. LIFE OF SAINTS (refer to ‘Protectors’, page 47 & SSCC ‘Personalities’, page 48)

13. MISSIONS OF THE CONGREGATION

Practices of the Congregation

As can well be understood from the early history of the foundation, the emerging Congregation of the SS.CC. lived and survived under almost impossible conditions. The French Revolution was in full swing. The old system (ancient regime) had collapsed. The church of Rome was viewed as an enemy of France. France had its own church and clergy. Priests were forced to take an oath to be faithful and loyal to the government of France and to denounce Rome. The atmosphere or milieu was captured in

the phase Fraternite, Egalite and Liberite. The result was civil war, strife and the guillotine. It was in the midst of this that Fr. Coudrin founded a Congregation based on the love of the hearts of Jesus and Mary. From the beginning the spirituality was centered on the hearts of Jesus and Mary and the devotion surrounding both hearts. This devotion was fostered by the three saints already mentioned. They are St. Margaret Mary, St. Louis de Montfort and St. John Eudes.

The main elements of the devotion should spring from the attitudes:

- *A true love of Jesus and His Sacred Heart, the source of His excessive mercy, help, graces and blessings.*
- *Special respect for, and veneration of, the Blessed Sacrament.*
- *A desire to make Reparation for the neglect, indifference and ingratitude of the majority that results in Jesus Christ being left alone, abandoned and forgotten on our altars, never visited to offer consolation for such neglect, though He has given us the miracle of His Divine Presence in the Blessed Sacrament as a supreme gift to us in His desire to be always with us.*

Adoration was central to the spirituality of the Congregation.

Enthronement

Another key work of the Congregation is the Enthronement of the home to the Sacred Heart founded by Fr. Mateo SS.CC. He had a profound experience when he visited the apparition chapel of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and St. Margaret Mary at Paray d'Moniel. By the Enthronement you make a covenant with God – a special covenant of hearts. You recognize the need for a spiritual presence in your home. The Enthronement means that you acknowledge the need for God in your home. The Enthronement is a simple ceremony of placing a blessed image of the Sacred Heart in a place of honor in your home and then following the spirituality of the Enthronement which include:

- *I acknowledge Jesus as Lord of my life and of my home.*
- *I have an image (picture or statue) placed in a place of respect and honor in my home. (This can not be a bedroom.)*
- *I say the Act of Consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus at least once a month, preferably first Friday.*
- *Be sacramentalized which means receive the sacraments on a regular basis.*
- *Begin to see the differences in your home and thank the Lord. Also when tough situations occur in your family, then go to that special place of honor in your home and present them to Jesus.*
- *Make the Sacred Heart of Jesus better known and loved. Share what God is doing in your life.*
- *Celebrate First Fridays. That is by attending mass and receive Holy Communion.*

The Enthronement of necessity establishes a covenant in your heart and home between you and the Sacred Heart of Jesus. So devotion to the Sacred Heart will nurture this holy covenant

14. BIBLE STUDY

The Bible is known in our time as Sacred Scripture. The central role scripture is part of Christianity's heritage from Judaism. Scripture is "the word of God". This term word of God explains God's words to us as if God Himself is speaking to us. Unlike the English word which has to do with speech and language, the Hebrew word "Tabar" means both speech and event. This goes as a better insight into the power of the "word of God". Examples of this would be Genesis where God's word created. One, however has to distinguish between the word of God and the word of man. This has specific reference to the authors of the

Bible. There is a human author and a divine author. It is God's word but it comes to us through the human author who used many constructs of the time it expresses God's word. A good example of this is the creation story. God's word is simple and true and that is God made the world. The story is expressed in a six day event as if God went to work like everyone else.

Pope Pius XII said that the best sense and meaning of Sacred Scripture was the literal and that is the reading and understanding of the passage.

The Bible or Sacred Scripture has seventy two books which we divided into the Old and New Testaments, 27 in the New Testament.

*The Old testament is divided into three types of books, namely, **historical, prophetic, and wisdom.***

*The **historical** books deal with the unfolding stories of God dealing with His people—salvation history. This would include the first five books (Pentateuch) Genesis, etc. the books of Kings, chronicles.*

*The **prophetic** books speak not so much about the future as they do about the forthcoming. There are 10 prophetic books in all which include 4 major prophets, Jonah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel. There are 12 minor prophets.*

*The **wisdom** literature is comprised of books to guide our lives-good and proper living e.g. Books of Proverbs, the Psalms, the Book of Wisdom.*

The New Testament is the life of Christ as we read it in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Then the Epistles of Paul, Peter, James and John describe the teachings of Christ and the emerging communities of the Church. The Acts of the Apostles which would be quite distinct describes the emerging and developing church after the ascension. The Book of Revelation caters more to the present church at the time it was being martyred and persecuted. There is little which has to do with future predictions, other than to tell us that these martyred are blessed with Jesus for all eternity.

15. OPTIONAL FORMATION TEACHINGS

Rules of St. Ignatius

Rules for Discerning the Spirits (In the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola) Based on the book by Rev. Fr. Ludovic-Marie Barrielle, CP.CR.V. and the teachings of Fr. Michael Barry, SS.CC.

David was tested by Goliath, by Saul, by Bathsheba, by Nathan and others. Likewise, we are tested and must do battle our entire lives. In these battles of lives, we are defending our souls from attacks of the enemy, the devil.

St. Paul in the last chapter of Ephesians advises us "Put you on the armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the deceits of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against rulers of the world of this darkness, but against the spirits of wickedness in the high places. Therefore, unto you take the armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and stand in all things perfect." Therefore, it is important in our daily struggles that we discern the spirits who are trying to influence our decisions and actions. St. Ignatius of Loyola laid out a series of rules that were given to him by the Blessed Virgin Mary to aid us in our discernment. Not all of the influences are from the devil, some are from God and we must discern between them. Sometimes God

acts directly, but at other times through angels, someone's good example, a teacher, etc. Likewise, the devil also may act alone, through another bad spirit, bad example, bad advice, etc.

We are only responsible for those acts that come directly from our intellect or will. For example, bad thoughts in and of themselves are not a sin, but when we invite those thoughts in to stay with us, offer them a comfortable seat, perhaps a cold drink, ...we entertain them. At that point, we engage our will. We have consented. "God's grace is sufficient for thee: for power is made perfect in infirmity." In those moments of temptation whatever they may be, when we pray for God's grace, we obtain merit.

It is, therefore, extremely important that we discern these spiritual influence in our lives (is this of God or the devil?). We must beware before we act so that good can be embraced and evil rejected. By way if example, Fr. Barry told of a man who received a deep conversion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. He decided to preach it to the world and to increase devotion to her. You might say, "Ah, this can only be good." But, his preaching began to take him away from his family so much and began to interfere with his work. Eventually, he lost both his family and his job. Was this of God?

Father reminded us of Eve in the garden. She was told that she would be great if she ate of the apple, that she would become god-like. How could this be bad?

St. Bernard said, "Nobody becomes suddenly bad." Usually, it is a gradual process, a wearing away or erosion. How do we know that an idea, an insight, a motivation comes from God or the devil. That is where St. Ignatius' rules come in to help us discern the spirits.

First Rule: 314 *In persons who go from mortal sin to mortal sin, the enemy is commonly used to propose to them apparent pleasures, making them imagine sensual delights and pleasures in order to hold them more and make them grow in their vices and sins. In these persons the good spirit uses the opposite method, pricking them and biting their consciences through the process of reason.*

The devil lures with pleasures of the senses plunging the sinner deeper representing the sin as the greatest source of happiness. He reassures the sinner (Everyone is doing it) and offers lots of rationale. One's conscience is the opposite. The good spirit stirs one's conscience to avoid complacency and shows the true consequences to sin. A nice glass of wine appeals to our senses. The devil would assure us that if we drank a few bottles the pleasure would be even greater while our conscience or the good angels would show us that to drink in excess would impair us endangering others and ourselves.

Second Rule: 315 *In the persons who are going on intensely cleansing their sins and rising from good to better in the service of God our Lord, it is the method contrary to that in the first Rule, for them it is the way of the evil spirit to bite, sadden and put obstacles, disquieting with false reasons, that one may not go on; and it is proper to the good to give courage and strength, consolations, tears, inspirations and quiet, easing and putting away all obstacles, that one may go on in well doing.*

There are six characteristics of the evil spirits:

1. Sadness: we can discern evil under the guise of good by the overwhelming sadness that comes over us.
2. Regret: "All conditional propositions that disturb one's soul comes from the devil." (St. Louis Lallamant) The example given by Rev. Barrielle, CP. CR. V., "behold the seminarian who ponders within himself whether or not he has a vocation. These thoughts, in themselves, come from the devil. The good angel would tell him clearly why he does not have a vocation."
3. Impediments: The evil spirits make it appear too difficult to live a virtuous life.
4. Disturbance: "All trouble comes from the devil" (St. John Berchmans) including moody temperaments and vivid emotions.

5. Fallacious Reasoning: One example cited was "they can choose their own religion when they grow up."
6. Discouragement: "I am a sinner. I cannot possibly do it." While the good angel promotes courage and strength, consoles and inspires, moves to tears, all in a spirit of peace.

Third Rule: 316 Of Spiritual Consolation. *I call it consolation when some interior movement in the soul is caused, through which the soul comes to be inflamed with love of its Creator and Lord; and when it can in consequence love no created thing on the face of the earth in itself, but in the Creator of them all. Likewise, when it sheds tears that move to love of its Lord, whether out of sorrow for one's sins, or for the passion of Christ our Lord, or because of other things directly connected with His service and praise. Finally, I call consolation every increase of hope, faith and charity, and all interior joy which calls and attracts to heavenly things and to the salvation of one's soul, quieting it and giving it peace in its Creator and Lord.*

Consolations do not indicate a state of holiness or spiritual progress nor do the times of spiritual dryness indicate a state of diminishing holiness. Do not be discouraged because you are faced with temptations.

Fourth Rule: 317 Of Spiritual Desolation. *I call desolation all the contrary of the third rule, such as darkness of the soul, disturbance in it, movement to things low and earthly, the unquiet of different agitations and temptations, moving to want of confidence, without hope, without love, when one finds oneself all lazy, tepid, sad and as if separated from his Creator and Lord Because as consolation is contrary to desolation, in the same way thoughts which come from consolation are contrary to the thoughts which come from desolation.*

Instead of being a time of falling back, these times of trial can be a true source of grace to us where we are able to make the most progress in holiness. As Archangel Raphael said to Tobias, "Because you were agreeable to God, it is necessary that you be tried by temptation." In the letter of St. James, "Blessed is he that endureth temptation; for when he hath been tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which God hath promised to them that love him." As St. Peter advised, "Brethren, be sober and watch because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion goeth about seeking whom he may devour. Whom resist ye, strong in the faith.

It is important that we are not deceived by desolation. We must suffer in order to reach holiness. As Saint Frances de Sales said, "Seek not the consolation of God, but the God of consolation." In our temptations, we are made strong by the grace of our God seeking His grace through prayer and faith.

Fifth Rule: 318 *In a period of distress we are not to alter anything, but should remain firm and unyielding in our resolutions and the purpose of mind in which we found ourselves on the day preceding such distress, or in the purpose in which we found ourselves in the preceding consolation. For, in times of comfort, it is the good angel that guides us by his counsel, whereas in distress it is the evil spirit; but the latter's counsel will never bring us to a right decision.*

During desolation, we must not make changes, because it is during that time that the devil is active and it would be very easy to act on the impulse of the devil. You will most likely do as he desires usually because of the false consolations he offers. It is always God who acts during true consolations. The desire to do evil is always a sign of the devil at work while you experience desolation. Remember the six signs spoken of earlier.

Sixth Rule: 319 *Though in principle we should not alter previous resolutions in periods of distress, it is of great value to strive in a sense opposed to the distress; for instance, in prayer, meditation, close examination, and by making an effort to practice some appropriate penance.*

Here St. Ignatius is not telling us to remain passive. He counseled his roommate once on how to rid the temptation. He said as soon as you are tempted, multiply the acts of the opposite virtue: gluttony — fast;

anger — keep quiet; hate — pray for your enemy; pride — humble yourself; sensuality — penance. By doing these things, the more you are tempted, the closer you will move toward God.

Counterattacks:

1. Prayer
2. Meditation
3. Fervent examination of Conscience (Often the evil spirit will lead us to believe that we have sinned when, in fact, we have not. If there is a fault, we will find pardon in God and confidence.)
4. A little Penance (some small penance will drive the devil away.)

Remember, at the sign of temptation, pray. Invoke Mary, the "terror of demons," St. Joseph, St. Michael. Believe in prayer. Prayer places the power of God in your hands. "Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it will be opened to you."

Prayer is vital. It is a common practice of the evil spirit to lure people from prayer. No more meditations, spiritual readings, rosaries, examinations of conscience, adoration before the Blessed Sacrament...thus leaving these souls tepid for the fall. St. Alphonsus encourages us to ask God daily for the grace to pray every day. In our world today, there are so many distractions that take us away from prayer leaving us more vulnerable. Too often, we choose the distraction over the prayer.

Seventh Rule: 320 *When in distress, a man should reflect that God is testing him by leaving him to his own resources in his struggle against the different assaults and temptations of the enemy; he can succeed with the help of God, which is always there, even though he is not clearly aware of it. God has indeed withdrawn any great warmth of feeling, intensity of love and extraordinary grace, but He has left grace enough for the man's eternal salvation.*

Eighth Rule: 321 *In this state he should also strive to abide in patience, which is the antidote to the trials that beset him. He should also reflect that he will soon be comforted, and should put forth all his efforts against this distress, as described in the sixth rule.*

To have patience is to suffer and wait, but patience is also to have confidence and hope. Remember the sixth Rule, which is to counterattack with prayer, meditation, etc. with the hope and confidence of soon being consoled. As St. Paul tells us in 1Corinthians 10, "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which you are able: but will make also with temptation issue, that you are able to bear it."

Ninth Rule: 322 *Why does the Good God Permit Temptation? There are three principle reasons why we experience distress:*

- a) *Because we are listless, apathetic and careless in our spiritual exercises; it is on account of our own faults that our spiritual consolation is withdrawn.*
- b) *To test our worth, and to show how far we are able to advance in God's service and praise without that great reward of comforts and extraordinary favors.*
- c) *To give us clear understanding and insight, to enable us to have a deep inner conviction that, of ourselves, we are powerless to produce or sustain a flood of devout feelings, intense love, tears or any spiritual consolation, but that is all a gratuitous gift of God our Lord. We are not, that is, to build on another's foundations, getting above ourselves in pride and empty boasting, claiming as our own the devout feeling or other features of spiritual consolations.*

St. Ignatius uses the term "principle reasons" which means there could be others such as natural causes. In his discussion of the Ninth Rule, Fr. Barrielle sites lack of sleep as one such natural cause that can make us experience distress. He tells us also "lack of exercise can be the cause of scruples and troubles."

The natural causes are basically three:

1. Punishment. They may be a punishment.
2. Desolation or temptation could very well be an occasion to *practice heroic virtue*, rather than a punishment.
3. A Lesson. The trials may be given to teach us a lesson. All of the devotion, intense love, tears or any other consolation is not ours to obtain on our own merits, but rather gifts and graces from God.

Tenth Rule: 323 *In a period of consolation a man should think about his conduct in the distress that will ensure, building up his strength afresh for that experience.*

Take advantage of those good times to practice virtue and devotion preparing yourself for the trials that lie ahead.

Eleventh Rule: 324 *When experiencing consolation he should be careful to keep himself humble and modest, recalling how worthless he is in times of distress, when he is without the favor of this comfort. On the contrary, a man who is in a state of distress should reflect that he can do a great deal with the grace that is sufficient to withstand all his enemies, finding strength in his Creator and Lord.*

As St. Paul tells us, "I can do all in Him who strengthens me." We must remain humble when all is well and Fr. Barrielle advises that we ask for "more humiliations... if we do not, our treasure is in jeopardy."

Twelfth Rule: 325 *The enemy is like a woman, weak in face of opposition, but correspondingly strong when not opposed. In a quarrel with a man, it is natural for a woman to lose heart and run away when he faces up to her; on the other hand, if the man begins to be afraid and to give ground, her rage, vindictiveness and fury overflow and know no limit. In the same way, it is typical of the enemy to collapse and lose heart, his assaults turning tail, when a man who is training himself in the spiritual ways faces up to the enemy's assaults, doing the precise opposite of what is suggested. On the other hand, if the retreatant begins to feel panic and to lose heart at these assaults, there is no animal on earth so savage as is the enemy of our human nature in the ever-growing malice with which he carries out his evil plan.*

So is it with the enemy of our human nature. When he introduces into a faithful soul his lying suggestions, he is very anxious that these should be accepted and kept secret. But he is far from pleased when their victim discloses them to a good confessor or someone else versed in spiritual matters, who is acquainted with the ill-disposed designs of the tempter, who then realizes that his wicked attempt must fail, once his obvious tricks are revealed.

The importance of a "good confessor or someone well versed in spiritual matters." There have been many who are not. As St. Theresa of Avila advises, it is better to stay without a spiritual director than to have a poor one. She herself suffered much from poor confessors. This is not to say that you should hide anything from your confessor or spiritual director. It is important to reveal your temptations to him not waiting until you have succumbed to them. The devil prefers that these things be kept secret.

Fourteenth Rule: 327 *Or, again he acts like a military commander in his attempts to overcome and seize the object he has set his heart on. An officer in command of any army takes up a position, makes a reconnaissance to discover the strength and disposition of troops in a fortified post, and launches his attack at the weakest point. Similarly, the enemy of our human nature makes a tour of inspection of our virtues — theological, cardinal and moral. Where he finds us the weakest and most defective in what pertains to our eternal salvation, he attacks at that point, seeking to overthrow us.*

Since, as St. Peter tells us, the enemy wanders around us seeking out our weaknesses, we can know where he is likeliest to strike. Quite often, a person's downfall begins as a slight or insignificant thing. An excessive attachment that is not of God: eating or drinking too much, laziness, human respect or praise, etc. Or, perhaps it is an area of virtues where we are weak. You can be sure that it is in those areas where evil will take aim at us and evil will attack us.

The Lord will provide us sufficient grace for every situation. St. Catherine of Siena had continual visions of the Lord and profound mystical graces. One day Our Lord allowed the devil to torment her with wicked thoughts and sensations. She prayed to God begging Him not to abandon her protesting that she would rather die than sin. The devil tormented her, "It is useless; you will not be able to resist...besides, you have already sinned, and God abandoned you." He was relentless in his pursuit of her. When the temptation stopped and the Lord appeared to her as usual, she scolded Him telling Him that He abandoned her "during the most dreadful moment" of her life. His response was, "Catherine, I did not abandon you!" She replied, "Where were You, Lord?" "I was in your heart." "In my heart? With all the filth?" "Did you consent to it?" "Oh! No, my Lord! You know that I would rather suffer anything rather than offend You...even die..." "Well then, know that it was I who supported you and took pleasure in seeing your fidelity in front of the devil. Do you think that I would have abandoned you"? We too can take comfort knowing that the Lord is always with us, even when He seems to be hiding.

16. MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS – PRAYERS

ACT OF REPARATION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Adorable Heart of Jesus, glowing with love for us and inflamed with zeal for our salvation; O Heart ever sensible of our misery and the wretchedness to which our sins have reduced us, infinitely rich in mercy to heal the wounds of our souls, behold us humbly prostrate before You to express the sorrow that fills our hearts for the coldness and indifference with which we have so long requited the numberless benefits that You have conferred upon us. With a deep sense of the outrages that have been heaped upon You by our sins and the sins of others, we come to make a solemn reparation of honor to Your most sacred majesty. It was our sins that overwhelmed Your Heart with bitterness; it was the weight of our iniquities that pressed down Your face to the earth in the Garden of Olives, and caused You to expire in anguish and agony on the cross. But now, repenting and sorrowful, we cast ourselves at Your feet, and implore forgiveness. Adorable Heart of Jesus, source of true contrition and ever merciful to the penitent sinner, impart to our hearts the spirit of penance and give to our eyes a fountain of tears, that we may sincerely bewail our sins now and for the rest of our days. Oh, would that we could blot them out, even with our blood! Pardon them, O Lord, in Your mercy, and pardon and convert to You all that have committed irreverences and sacrileges against You in the Sacrament of Your Love, and thus give another proof that thy mercy is above all Your works. Divine Jesus, with You there is mercy and plentiful redemption; deliver us from our sins, accept the sincere desire we now entertain, and our holy resolution, relying on the assistance of Your grace henceforth to be faithful to You. And in order to repair the sins of ingratitude by which we have grieved Your most tender and loving Heart, we are resolved in the future ever to love and honor You in the most adorable Sacrament of the Altar, where You are ever present to hear and grant our petitions, and to be the food and life of our souls. Be, O compassionate Jesus, our mediator with Your Heavenly Father, Whom we have so grievously offended- strengthen our weakness, confirm these our resolutions of amendment, and as Your Sacred Heart is our refuge and our hope when we have sinned, so may It be the strength and support of our repentance, that nothing in life or death may ever again separate us from You. Amen.

ACT OF REPARATION TO THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY

Most holy Virgin and our beloved Mother, we listen with grief to the complaints of your Immaculate Heart surrounded with the thorns that ungrateful people place therein at every moment by their blasphemies and ingratitude. Moved by the ardent desire of loving you as our Mother and of promoting a true devotion to your Immaculate Heart, we prostrate ourselves at your feet to prove the sorrow we feel for the grief that people cause you, and to atone by means of our prayers and sacrifices, for the offenses with which people repay your tender love. Obtain for them and for us the pardon of so many sins. A word from you will obtain grace and forgiveness for us all.

Hasten, O Lady, "the conversion of sinners. So they may love Jesus and cease to offend God, already so much offended, and thus avoid eternal punishment. Turn your eyes of mercy toward us, so that henceforth we may love God with all our hearts while on earth and enjoy him forever in heaven. AMEN

Jesus, Savior of the world, sanctify Your priests and sacred ministers.

ACT OF CONSECRATION TO THE SACRED HEART

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, to Thee I consecrate and offer up my person and my life, my actions, trials and sufferings, that my entire being may henceforth only be employed in loving, honoring and glorifying Thee. This is my irrevocable will, to belong entirely to Thee, and to do all for Thy love, renouncing with my whole heart all that can displease Thee.

I take Thee, O Sacred Heart, for the sole object of my love, the protection of my life, the pledge of my salvation, the remedy of my family and inconstancy, the reparation of all the defects of my life, and my secure refuge at the hour of my death. Be Thou, O Most Merciful Heart, my justification before God Thy Father, and screen me from His anger which I have so justly merited. I fear all from my own weakness and malice, but placing my entire confidence in Thee. O Heart of Love, I hope all from Thine infinite Goodness. Annihilate in me all that can displease or resist Thee. Imprint Thy pure love so deeply in my heart that I may never forget Thee or be separated from Thee. I beseech Thee, through Thine infinite Goodness, grant that my name be engraved upon Thy Heart, for this I place all my happiness and all my glory, to live and to die as one of Thy devoted servants.

Chaplet of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

By: Fr. Michael Barry

On the CrucifixSay the ‘Our Father’

On the first beadSay the ‘Glory Be’

On the next three beadsSay.....
‘Sacred heart of Jesus, Have mercy on us’

On the next bead.....Say the ‘Glory Be’

First Mystery of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

“For personal conversion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus”

‘Hail Mary’’Holy Mary’

On the next ten beads ...Repeat ten times..

“Jesus, let the redeeming love of Your Most Sacred Heart transform my heart with love for Thee”

‘Glory Be’

Second Mystery of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

“For my family to know and experience the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus”

‘Hail Mary’’Holy Mary’

On the next ten beads ...Repeat ten times..

“Jesus, let the redeeming love of Your Most Sacred Heart transform my heart with love for Thee”

‘Glory Be’

Third Mystery of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

“For repentance and reconciliation through the love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus”

‘Hail Mary’’Holy Mary’

On the next ten beads ...Repeat ten times..

“Jesus, let the redeeming love of Your Most Sacred Heart transform my heart with love for Thee”

Fourth Mystery of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

“For those who have asked me for prayers I commend them to the Sacred Heart of Jesus”

‘Hail Mary’’Holy Mary’

On the next ten beads ...Repeat ten times..

“Jesus, let the redeeming love of Your Most Sacred Heart transform my heart with love for Thee”

‘Glory Be’

Fifth Mystery of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

“For the church that it may spread the peace and love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the world, in our nation, and in our communities”

‘Hail Mary’’Holy Mary’

On the next ten beads ...Repeat ten times..

“Jesus, let the redeeming love of Your Most Sacred Heart transform my heart with love for Thee”

‘Glory Be’

At the end.....Repeat 3 times
“Father, into Your hands I commend my spirit”

‘Glory Be’

ACT OF CONSECRATION OF THE FAMILY

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, who made known to St. Margaret Mary your great desire to reign over Christian families, we are gathered here today to proclaim your complete domination over our family. From now on we promise to lead a Christ like life; we will strive to develop in our home all the virtues, which bring with them the peace that you promised. And we will not compromise with the spirit of secularism, which you have so strongly denounced. You will rule over our minds through our deep and living faith. You will be King of our hearts by our generous love for you; and we will cultivate this love by the frequent reception of you in Holy Communion.

Divine Heart of Jesus, preside over our family gatherings; bless all our family undertakings, both spiritual and temporal. Sanctify our joys and comfort us in our sorrows. And if any member of our family should have the misfortune to offend you seriously, remind him/her, O Sacred Heart of Jesus, of your infinite love and mercy for the penitent sinner.

And when the hour of separation comes, when death brings its sorrows into our family, whether we go or whether we stay, we humbly accept your divine will. And at the same time we will console and comfort ourselves with the thought that the time will come when our whole family will be united lovingly with you in heaven forever. There we will sing a hymn of praise to the infinite Mercy and Love of Your Sacred Heart.

We ask the Immaculate Heart of Mary and our glorious protector, St. Joseph, to offer you this family consecration of ours. May the memory of this consecration be with us always.

Glory to the Divine Heart of Jesus, our King and our Father! Praise to the Divine Heart of Jesus that brought us salvation.

To the Heart of Jesus be honor and glory forever. Amen

SAMPLE CERTIFICATE

Enthronement of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
In the home (*Refer to the Enthronement Booklet*)

- *Blessing of the image*
- *In the home the image is placed in a place of honor*
- *A song of Praise and Glory (“To Jesus Christ Our Sovereign King”)*

THESE ARE THE WORDS THAT SHOULD BE USED BY THE HEAD OF THE HOUSEHOLD WHEN PLACING THE IMAGE

**“I now enthrone Jesus as Lord and Friend of our family.
We are nourished by the Body and Blood of Christ and the Word of God.”**

THE FAMILY REPEATS TOGETHER

“Jesus we love You, we praise You! We accept Your loving heart over our hearts and our family. We seek you for the rest of our days. Thank you for coming into our home and into our lives.”

ALL

Lord Jesus, today, _____, we the members of the
(today’s date)
_____ family
(Last Name of family)

lovingly enthrone You as Lord and Friend. Freely we make a covenant with You, dedicating to Your divine Heart our own hearts and all the members of our family who are not with us. We entrust the fulfilment of our covenant to the immaculate Heart of Your Mother and to Saint Joseph, head of the Holy Family and our protector. We promise to do our best to make our home a domestic church through family prayer and we pledge ourselves to be loyal to the vicar of Christ and the teachings of the church.

Parents Signature (or head of household)

Children’s Signature (or members of the household)

Priest or Lay Witness Signature

HEALING THE FAMILY TREE CHAPLET

On the three small beads say:

Lord have Mercy, Christ have Mercy, Lord have Mercy

First Mystery: "To God, The Father, for the healing of generational fathers"

One Our Father (The Lord's Prayer)

On the ten beads say ten times:

"Holy Family of God, Jesus, Mary & Joseph, intercede for our family"

Glory to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be world without end. Amen.

Second Mystery: "To Jesus, Son of God, Healing of all relationships: children"

One Our Father (The Lord's Prayer)

On the ten beads say ten times:

"Holy Family of God, Jesus, Mary & Joseph, intercede for our family"

Glory to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be world without end. Amen.

Third Mystery: "To the Holy Spirit, Reveal and Heal Generational Sin and Bondage"

One Our Father (The Lord's Prayer)

On the ten beads say ten times:

"Holy Family of God, Jesus, Mary & Joseph, intercede for our family"

Glory to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be world without end. Amen.

Fourth Mystery: "To Mary Healing of All Mothers"

One Our Father (The Lord's Prayer)

On the ten beads say ten times:

"Holy Family of God, Jesus, Mary & Joseph, intercede for our family"

Glory to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be world without end. Amen.

Fifth Mystery: "To St. Michael the Archangel to defend and protect us from evil"

One Our Father (The Lord's Prayer)

On the ten beads say ten times:

"Holy Family of God, Jesus, Mary & Joseph, intercede for our family"

Glory to the Father, to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be world without end. Amen.

On the three beads say: *Three Hail Mary's for the Pope's Intention's.*

Prayer of Consecration of the Family to the Sacred Heart

SS.CC Secular Branch

Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and of Perpetual

Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament of the Altar

SS.CC USA West Secular Branch Evangelization Ministries

Fr. Michael Barry SS. CC. Director

EVANGELIZATION AND HEALING MINISTRIES

HEALING THE FAMILY TREE

Patterns

Broken Relationships (divorce, loners, family not speaking to each other, homosexuality, adultery, etc.) **Sexual Excesses** (molestation, abuse, adultery, pornography, etc.)

Violent Behavior (wife/husband beating, family anger, hate, yelling, excessive fighting in the home) **Addictions** (alcoholic, pornography, gambling, overeating, other)

Deception (lies in the family over serious things, e.g. land, property, money, secrets, shame, etc.) **Deaths** (violent, sudden, accidental, suicidal, un-mourned deaths, war deaths, others)

Abortions (miscarriages)

Curses or false, vows and promises

he **Occult** (witchcraft, black magic, ouija boards, horoscopes, curanderos, tarot cards, palm reading, psychics, new age, other)

Secrets (old stories not shared with family, wounds not shared)

Predominant diseases

The Leading: *What is it? What is God asking of you?*

Culture & past generations prayers.

The Chaplet: Healing the Family Tree (5 mysteries)

Mass

(At every Mass which you attend, pray as follows)

At the beginning: We pray for **forgiveness and forgive** those who have offended us. Forgiveness is not a feeling it is an act of the will.

At the Prayer of the Faithful: We pray for the **breaking of curses** (The Prayer) and **bondages** (General Intercessions) in the family.

At the Offertory: We pray for the *healing of the specific patterns* that you have identified.

At the Consecration: We pray silently before the consecrated Lord for the **healing of my family tree**.

At the Remembrance of the dead: We release all the departed members of our family into the fullness of God's Love. We forgive them and ask their forgiveness for anything between us and want us all to be in the one family of God here and hereafter. We also accept all **aborted and miscarried babies into the family, we name them, ask their forgiveness and release them into the fullness of God's Love so that we may be a family here and in the hereafter.**

After Communion: We pray the unity of our common adoption as God's children especially through the Mass and Sacraments.

After the Mass

The Leading Observe your family and keep on praying for the leading. This is the healing that is taking place or the changes that you observe happening in your family.

Things to Remember in my Spiritual journey

Me — My culture; *The Leading*: What is it? *Healing*: What is God asking of me? *Transformation*: My daily life. I am a new creation. I live the truth of Jesus Christ and I intercede for my family. I am in the Word at least 15 minutes each day. *Intercede*: Family Tree-continued prayer, attend Mass often. *Enthronement*: a place of honor in the home. *Prayer*: Unity Fasting Eucharist Adoration. My journal: Keep a journal of God's messages to you and your family.

The Prayer

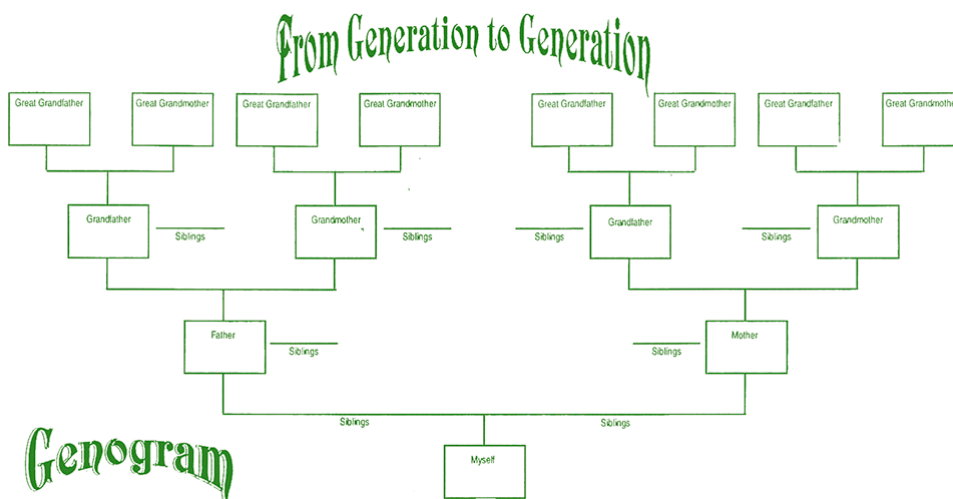
Almighty God and Father I come before you in the POWER of the Eucharist and in our common adoption by You our Father, through Jesus, Your Son. I am broken, hurting and in deep pain. I have wounds and pains that only You know their extent, the constant suffering that I endure. Much of this has been caused by my own pride and sinfulness. I ask Your forgiveness Lord. I pray the trust of Your

Word ... “even though your sins be scarlet. they shall be made white as snow.” (isaiah 1:18)

I embrace your forgiveness Lord Jesus, and pray that I can live in that forgiveness. Heal my hardness of heart. My Lord, your own family had much brokenness—my family too is dysfunctional. You overcame all of that by the Cross--help me now and heal my family. Give me the desire and the courage to forgive all my family members in the different generations who have caused brokenness, hurt and shame. I ask this forgiveness too for harboring judgment, criticism and negativity against my family, both living and dead. Let any hurt or brokenness that has been transmitted through the Generations now be healed by the love between the Father and the Son. With this in mind I especially now have the courage to forgive _____ (Name that person that you need to forgive) Lord Jesus you freed so many from evil and evil spirits. Once again beg you to break any evil that has held our family bound through the generations. In the name and power of Jesus Christ I break any curse, spell, evil intent or negativity that has overshadowed our bloodlines and family lineage. With Jesus before me I plead His precious blood on all who in my heritage have been involved in witchcraft, sorcery, ouije boards or any other form of evil. I pray you Jesus to set them free and let the present and future generations be totally under your loving care and protection.

Mary, my mother, as I inherited you at the foot of Jesus Cross I now ask you to intercede with your Son for my family here on earth. i ask you to join me in my prayer and secure for my family the healing and freedom we desire. Ask your Son, Jesus to send a special cordon of angels to our family to guard and protect us. Finally, Heavenly Father, if I have neglected anything, in my prayer for my family tree, may you bind us together in your love which first came to us through Jesus, Your Son, who is your Mercy. Heavenly Father have Mercy on our family always!

AMEN



ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Prayer to begin the adoration

Blessed are you, Lord Jesus, for this moment of intimacy;
 Blessed are you for I am here before You:
 the one who called me from my mother's womb,
 the one who gifted me with his confidence
 inviting me to be a laity of the Sacred Hearts.

Blessed are you because I came to listen to you and to be here alone with you
 But...I am not alone, Lord:

I bring with me the love and the company of my brothers and sisters of the Congregation, Religious and laity,
 that here, in the Eucharist we recognize you as Lord, we experience you as friend, we adore you as our only
 God.

I bring also the life and the concerns of my family and my friends
 of the communities where I serve and all the brothers and sisters who suffer in the world.

May your Spirit come and help me in my weakness and thus, with Mary and like Mary, may I become
 permeable to your grace: praising your goodness, thanking your gracefulness, blessing your greatness,
 confessing my littleness, interceding for those who suffer the most,
 confiding to you those you have entrusted to me.

Thus in my entire person, You, Lord, be always praised. Amen.

Confidence

Lord, let me come near to your Tabernacle to tell you of my pain,
 to speak of my loves, to give thanks for Your great Love
 and to praise the Father with you.

Because I am waiting for you, and you are not coming,
 Tell me, Lord, must I wait long to be with You?

If my question offends you, forget it,
 love is patient and it knows no measure!

All I want is to do your will, to do whatever you tell me
 without wondering why.
 Because I know that you will never forget me!

This way, Lord.

Lord, from this corner of the world we raise our prayers to you full of affection and love for our Sacred Hearts Congregation and for each one of the brothers, sisters and laity that make it up today.

Lord we recognize that you have been the brother and the faithful friend who has remained strongly connected to each generation.
You have encouraged our faith, communal life and mission.
You have allowed us to put the flavour and dynamism of the Sacred Hearts in the world enabling us to be salt and light, in the world and for the world.

Lord, you have chosen us as your beloved children, you have given us many vocations who have lives centered in you, today may their lives continue to question, challenge and encourage, so that we can let go of the bonds and securities that have made us selfish, individualists and hard of heart.
With you, we want to build a more just and united world.

Lord, responding to your call we have expanded to the five continents; each one wanting to be a new vessel, filled with the new wine; and in this way to live in proximity and in solidarity with the poorest, to work in projects that dignify the life of each one.
Lord, grant us the courage to leave all and to risk our lives for you and for those who live alone, or are abandoned, excluded, exploited.

May we as children of the Sacred Hearts not lack the faith, perseverance, enthusiasm, generosity, radicality and loyalty to do your Will.

United to the prayer of the Heart of Jesus

We are one:
with the prayer of the compassionate Heart of Jesus,
When we sing the praise of God of creation...
When we lift our hearts in thanksgiving to the Lord
for being present in human history...
When we praise the Father for the gift of his Spirit...

We are one
with the prayer of the compassionate Heart of Jesus,
When we contemplate the Eucharist and realize
that we are members of the body of Christ...
When we live according to the words of Jesus...
When we bring the world to Christ and
Christ to the world...

We are one
with the prayer of the compassionate Heart of Jesus,
When our hearts and our hands push us
beyond the barriers between races and religions...
When each person becomes

a brother or a sister for us...
 When our prayer inspires us to become
 a voice for the voiceless and strength for the weak...

We are one
 with the prayer of the compassionate Heart of Jesus,
 When we recognize
 that we are the Body of Christ for the world,

When we are willing
 to do God's will and not our own,
 When we are able to feel
 the pain of our brothers and sisters who suffer...

Then, we are one
 with the prayer of the compassionate Heart of Jesus.

Prayer of the SS.CC. Lay People

Lord Jesus Christ
 you have a heart like ours.
 You see our suffering, you know our concerns.
 You know also our burning desire for life,
 happiness, joy and salvation.

In your word and ministry
 you give us all we need to live:
 to the poor you give bread,
 to the grief-stricken, joy,
 to the lonely, a home,
 to the abandoned, help and comfort,
 to the discouraged, hope and confidence,
 to the despairing, strength and courage,
 to the sick, a loving consoling presence,
 to the dying, communion with God forever.

Give us a heart as big as yours
 so that all those whom we meet
 might feel understood, welcomed and loved.

Let us be your mouth,
 to speak words of goodness and reconciliation;
 Let us be your ears,
 to listen when no one else wants to listen.
 Let us be your hands,
 to give without expecting a return.
 Let us be your feet,
 to go where distress and misery reign.
 Let us be your heart, wounded out of love,
 to heal the wounds of all humanity.

As children of your Father,
 we want to be united by our love for one another;
 and to proclaim by our unity,
 that you are alive in our midst.
 Amen.

Psalm for the SS.CC. Community

Praise to the Lord, he is our strength, the reason of our community.
 He has convoked us to contemplate his presence in the whole earth.
 We praise you when remembering our history; those who have preceded us in this family
 are deeply and lovingly present to us.
 We remember our Founder, pursued priest and shepherd,
 You were with him and you inspired him to form a family of men and women, missionaries
 of the Good News.
 We remember our Foundress determined to build a community who would live with the
 attitudes of Jesus and Mary.

Give us courage to be faithful to the charism of our Founders
 let us risk our lives in service to the poor, in the fight for justice,
 in the care of nature, in the defence of life and peace.

Forgive us for trusting in our own forces,
 forgive us for falling into ideological novelties,
 may our only doctrine be your Gospel.
 Give us the strength to announce your Word
 in clandestine situations today.

We give you thanks, Lord, for each Sister,
 for the young ones beginning the journey,
 and for those who follow you with a sure step.
 We praise you because you have chosen each of us to live your redeeming love.
 Take our hands that forge signs of your Kingdom, that we may always walk in communion
 with the Church.
 Look at us, at our hearts, we want to live the present in depth
 and confront the future with joy and hope.

Amen.

Thanksgiving for the Consecration to the SS.CC.

God our Father we give you thanks
 for our Congregation of the Sacred Hearts.
 We give you thanks for this religious family
 whose existence is the work of your Providence .
 We give you thanks for the fathomless riches
 that the heart of your Son has shown us
 a Heart that is full of love and kindness,

a Heart that is patient and merciful,
 a Heart that is a Treasure of Wisdom and knowledge
 a Heart that is the source of virtue
 a Heart that is full of divine kindness
 a Heart that is the sanctuary of justice,
 a Heart that is the refuge of peace and reconciliation,
 a Heart that is the source of life and resurrection.

Send your Spirit

Lord, send your Spirit over all your creation
 as you did on that first Pentecost.
 Send your Spirit on each one gathered here.
 Give us enthusiasm for Gospel action.
 Make us desirous of living the gift of our vows in our religious family.
 Enable us to contemplate, live and announce the merciful Love of the Father,
 that we may become, in the Spirit,
 a prophetic people, your people,
 forever and ever.
 Amen.

My Prayer, a Credo (The Creed of a SS.CC.)

I believe in your merciful love, God our Father, the Creator. I believe in your redeeming love, Son of the Father, and in your love, Holy Spirit, Sanctifier.
 I believe in your love that repairs and saves, Word of God made flesh in Mary, by your action, Holy Spirit, you who are the personal love of the Father and Son.

I believe, Lord Jesus, in the mysterious and redemptive plan of Your Father.
 I believe in our salvation and happiness, fruit of our humanization in your image and likeness.
 I believe in You, Jesus, my Lord and my God, our new and eternal covenant. For in you, the new Adam, we are called anew into the covenant of union with your Father that was lost.

With our Founders, I believe in the close union of your Sacred Hearts, Jesus and Mary, and in the fulfillment of the saving will of the Father, to repair and reestablish by your sacrifice, the lost dignity of man, that of being the beloved children of God the Father. I believe that we can cooperate with you in that by our vocation, charism and mission.

I believe in your redemptive love, obedient to the Father's plan, Jesus, son of Mary, she who was your collaborator in bringing about your incarnation and your work in history.
 Mary, I believe in your humble co-redemptive mission, which is the basis of our own.
 I believe in your contribution to the blessed fulfillment of God your Father's plan of love.

With our Foundress, I am one with You, I contemplate and I make reparation to your hearts pierced "by the enormous crimes of sinners" and by our own sins today. I believe that "God wants us to participate in the interior suffering of the Heart of Jesus." With our Founder I believe that I "am a child of the Cross and that in you, Jesus, I find everything."

I believe that we can cooperate humbly in the redemptive work of the Father, imitating you, O Mary, our Mother. I believe that we do this every day of our lives by “retracing” the sufferings of your childhood, your hidden life, your public life and your crucified life, Lord Jesus, so as to finally live with you forever.

I believe in your living mysterious presence in the tabernacle and I adore and make reparation to your heart that is continuously wounded. There you await my faithful and silent presence. I believe also in your promised presence in my heart, which is devoted to your love and service. There I might obtain from you the grace of perpetual adoration of your loving heart.

Lord, I believe that our adoration is the inexhaustible source of our ministry of contemplating, living and proclaiming the mystery symbolized in your Sacred Hearts.
I believe that our perpetual adoration can become a source of power for our ministry and mission, wherever we are, in the Church and in the world.

I believe in the importance of our being signs for the Church and the world, as members of the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, in whose service our Founders, Damien, Eustaquio and so many others of us want to live and die. Amen.

Prayer for the SS.CC Family

God, our Father, source of life and of all good,
look upon the Sacred Hearts Family gathered in the name of Jesus.
It strives to accompany the vocation of those whom you call to participate in our mission.
May your Spirit lead us to recognize your presence which renews and energizes us.
Do not allow fatigue and discouragement to stop us in the accomplishment of the mission begun by our Founders.
Rather, strengthen within us the capacity to serve until the end following the example of our brother Damien of Molokai..
Open the hearts of the young that they may discover their place in the world and in the Church by following in the footsteps of their Master and Savior, Jesus.
We ask this, with Mary, Our Lady of Peace and our Mother who journeys with us. AMEN!

Prayer for the SS.CC. Congregation

God, our Father,
we give you thanks for our religious family of the Sacred Hearts.
You never cease to manifest your Providence: you have led us by the hand.
Send your Spirit upon us that we may be able everywhere to truly witness your tender and merciful love, manifested in the Heart of your Son.
Conform our hearts and our communities to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, in order that in being faithful to our history we may forge paths for the future and give life always and everywhere.
AMEN.

Sacred Hearts of Jesus and of Mary,
Keep our Congregation faithful to its spirit.
And increase the number of its sons and daughters.
Give us Eucharistic hearts,
apostolic hearts, holy hearts.

Give strength and courage to our missionaries.
 Help us to overcome our difficulties.
 Remember our deceased Brothers and Sisters.
 May we all live, work, and die following our motto:
 "To the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, honour and glory".

Prayer for SS.CC. Vocations

God our Father,
 source of life and all good things, look on your Sacred Hearts family
 united in the name of Jesus, concerned about being near those
 you have called by their names, to proclaim that your Kingdom is
 for the weak and the simple.

May we recognize Your presence in the Spirit who recreates, transforms and dynamites us.
 Lord, in this mission initiated by our Founders,
 the Good Father and the Good Mother, do not let us
 be overcome by tiredness, or give into discouragement
 rather, make us more capable of giving ourselves to service
 in the example of Blessed Damien of Molokai

Open the hearts of young people so that they may discover their place in the world and in the Church
 following in the footsteps of the Master

We ask you this with Mary, our Lady of Peace,
 our companion on the way. Amen

Prayer for our Missionaries

Lord, I offer this hour for all the missionaries in the world,
 for the communities that they encourage and the people
 they serve. In a special way I want to pray for the Missionaries
 of the Sacred Hearts. May your Holy Spirit give them strength, courage and wisdom in their work of
 evangelization.

Protect them from all danger! And raise in our communities vocations
 that they can continue their mission. We ask this through
 Mary, your Mother, Queen of Peace.

Prayer of Abandonment in the Providence

Heavenly Father, through the power of the Spirit acting in the Hearts of Jesus and Mary, we ask,
 through the intercession of the Good Mother and the Good Father, the grace of complete trust in
 the goodness and providence of God and the grace of zeal and courage to put into action what we
 contemplate.

Sacred Heart of Jesus we place our trust in you.
 Immaculate Heart of Mary, be our model and guide.
 Amen

Prayer to Conclude the Adoration

At the conclusion of this moment of adoration, Lord,
I ask pardon for the distractions,
the result of my clumsiness and littleness.
I thank you for your patience and company
and ask you to give me the grace
to always adore you without using you,
to know you without diminishing you,
to serve you without hope of reward,
to give you without decreasing you,
to share you without losing you,
to preach you without honoring myself
and to announce you with the greatest efficiency and modesty
through out my entire life.
Amen.

17. RESOURCES

Congregation Website	http://www.sccpicpus.com/
	SS.CC. History, Secular Branch, Documents, Articles, etc.
US Province	http://www.sccc.org/
USA West Delegation	http://users.cpl.net/~scccwest/
USA West E-mail	sacredhaertssb@ymail.com
USA West Corporate Address	P.O. 8626 La Verne, CA 91750