

# LIVING THE MORNING OFFERING

## PATHWAY TO WORK-A-DAY SANCTITY

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What do we mean by devotion to the Sacred Heart? The word devotion refers, not to mere isolated actions, but to a way of life. As the most fundamental act of religion, devotion means the will to do readily whatever concerns the service of God. Devotion is always wrapped up in other actions. ‘We say that a man prays devoutly, for example, or hears Mass with devotion.

In the first few centuries, when Christianity was struggling against paganism and the worship of false gods, the Church had to put great emphasis on defining and proclaiming the divinity of Christ, and the union of the two natures in one divine Person. But as centuries rolled on and the true faith became widespread throughout Europe, privileged individuals and certain religious groups were permitted to glimpse more clearly the place that the Heart of the God-man holds in the economy of man’s salvation.

In substance, the Sacred Heart devotion was foreshadowed in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius and thus the faithful were gradually prepared for the great manifestation, which was to take place almost a century and a half after St. Ignatius’ time. Toward the end of the seventeenth century, when a great part of Europe had been torn from the unity of Christ’s Church, and when the withering blight of Jansenism within the Church itself had replaced the love of God in so many Christian souls with ‘a spirit of fear, Christ appeared to a humble Visitandine nun at Paray-le-Monial, in France. He manifested to her His Sacred Heart, and commissioned her to spread, the devotion throughout the world. Devotion to the Sacred Heart owes its origin to these apparitions, and the marvellous spread of this devotion is due to the Promises made by our Lord in these apparitions in favour of those who practise and spread this devotion.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart comprises three essential elements. Consecration, Reparation, and the Apostolate. It is a way of life motivated by apostolic, reparative love. Its purpose is to develop the supernatural (divine) life of the soul through an ever-deepening love of the God-Man, by reparation for our own past sins and the sins of our fellow men, and by an earnest endeavour to establish Christ’s reign within our own hearts and in the hearts of others.

In devotion to the Sacred Heart we single out for special adoration the Heart of the God-Man, the symbol of His immeasurable love for His Heavenly Father and for us. Through devotion to the Sacred Heart we are drawn to the very Heart of God, for the God-Man is truly the eternal love of God made manifest in human form. “The kindness and goodness of God has appeared to all men,” as St. Paul tells us, and the Sacred Heart is the symbol of the God-Man’s love for us. By prayerful consideration of the mortal life of the God-Man we penetrate the interior of Christ and come to know the ideals, purposes, and aims of His Heart. In this way our admiration develops into love, because we come to recognize that the driving power of all His activities was love for us, His sinful human brothers. He came on earth to expiate our sins,, to reconcile us to His Father, and to make it possible for us once more to attain to our supernatural destiny, our eternal happiness with God.

If we have within us a spark of human gratitude we will want to associate ourselves with Christ, to dedicate ourselves unreservedly to His service, to further the one great ambition of His life: the establishment of His kingdom within our own hearts and within the hearts of others. This we can accomplish by consistent devotion to the Sacred Heart. In this devotion the chief aim is the establishment of Christ’s Kingdom in our own hearts and in the hearts of our fellow men. In it the apostolate, or zeal for souls, is closely interwoven with consecration and reparation.

### CONSECRATION

Consecration means total dedication to a person, or an, ideal, or a purpose. We say that a man is consecrated to his family when all his thoughts, endeavours, labours, and sacrifices are for its welfare and happiness. A youth is consecrated to his studies when he does not permit any extraneous activities to divert his mind and his energies from his scholastic pursuits. A soldier is consecrated to his leader when he is ready to obey his commander, not only in matters of ordinary

discipline but even if his very life is at stake. A man is consecrated to a cause when he willingly undergoes hardships, labours, and even ridicule, in order to promote the cause. A chalice is consecrated, i.e., set aside for one sole use: to hold the Precious Blood. To put it to any other use would be sacrilegious. Consecration to a person implies much more than mere admiration, much more than empty vocal or external loyalty. We can admire certain qualities in a man, e.g., his gift of leadership, his mental acumen, his military strategy; while at the same time we may condemn and repudiate certain other phases of his character, e.g., his cruelty, his vanity; or his immorality. Consecration to a person derives from the inherent goodness in that person and the knowledge of the favours he has conferred on us. Total consecration to a person embraces not only our whole person but his whole person, and the cause for which he stands. Only one man is totally to be admired; only one man lived and died for a cause which we can wholly accept and make our own without reservation. That one person is Jesus Christ. Hence our consecration to the Sacred Heart must be a total consecration to the God-Man and to His cause. In the case of Christ, our consecration to Him and to His cause wells not from only the admiration we feel for His character and ideals, but from a sense of deep gratitude for the benefits He has heaped upon us, from the realization of the role that Christ Crucified has played in our lives. He has not only redeemed the human race, but He died for ME. Even after the ingratitude of my personal sins, He has made it possible for me to escape hell. This sense of gratitude develops into a true love of friendship because we realize that Christ has loved me with a personal, individual love. Consecration to the Sacred Heart must involve on our part a sincere effort for the good of our Friend, a gradual assimilation to His character and ideals; a loyal self-sacrificing effort to promote the cause He has most at heart, the salvation of souls.

Our total consecration to the Sacred Heart necessarily implies a total dedication to Him of our whole person, body and soul. He has an indisputable right to it by a two-fold title. As God, He created me and keeps me in existence. As the God-Man, He redeemed me. Therefore, my consecration to Him must consist not only in an enthusiastic loyalty to Him and to His cause, not only in the form of friendship, but a giving of my whole self to Him, as He gives Himself to me. By the act of consecration I bind myself to Him by a new tie: I am now something sacred, consecrated to Him both body and soul. Therefore; I must use my soul and body for Him and His service alone. Hence, in the following of Christ, I must learn to know the Sacred Heart better day by day. I must learn to appreciate His cause, to realise what one soul means to the Sacred Heart. I must find out, and carry out, what I consider the service He asks of me.

### **REPARATION**

Reparation is the distinguishing character of Devotion to the Sacred Heart, as revealed by Our Lord to St. Margaret Mary, and as approved and practised by the Church today. Reparation stresses not only, that we seek refuge in the wounded Heart of Christ, but especially that we reciprocate His love by making reparation for our own sins and the sins of others. In his apparitions to the sainted Visitandine nun at Paray-le-Monial, Our Blessed Lord stressed the idea of REPARATION. "Behold this heart which has loved men so much, and is so little loved by them."

He complained of men's lack of appreciation for what He had done for them, and commanded the Saint to perform certain acts of piety and penance in reparation to His Sacred Heart, He asked her, and us through her, to be a victim of reparation for souls.

What is reparation? It is an earnest effort on our part to repair, to make up for, the injury done to the Sacred Heart by our own past sins and indifference, and by the sins of all men. If we have come to know and appreciate a person whom we formerly, ignored, offended, and treated with coldness, then we are not content with trying to make up for our own past offences by a loyal and constant service. As far as we can we try to make up for the offences; indifference, and coldness of others, and to bring others to know and appreciate our friend. This element of reparation is the most compelling motive for generous, wholehearted devotion to the Sacred Heart.

In order that our reparation to the Sacred Heart may be deep-rooted and effective as a motive in our daily lives to strive after sanctity—work-a-day sanctity—it is not sufficient that we have a rather vague idea of the punishments He has meted out in His justice, of the havoc sin has wrought among the human race, or of the penalty the God-Man paid for sin. We

must realize that we, by our personal sins, have had part in the whole sad mess; that we, too, have crucified Christ by our sins, that we exposed ourselves to the everlasting torments of hell, and that we owe reparation for our own personal sins. “Do not crucify Christ again by your sins” (Hebr. 6. 6). We must foster a deep sense of shame for our own sins, lest our reparation to the Sacred Heart take on an impersonal tone, and even tend to foster spiritual vanity and smugness.

We know that Christ has risen from the dead and now can suffer no more, that He is infinitely happy in His glorified body, that sins can no longer grieve Him. But we must remember that Christ in His mortal life, especially in His agony, passion and crucifixion, foresaw all our personal sins and infidelities, and that they added to His sorrow and sadness and torture. He saw, too, our contrition for our sins and our expiation and reparation, and these were a solace to Him in His agony. The Sacred Heart now expects of me a very special service and love, intensified by the spirit of reparation for my past sins and infidelities. What an incentive to heroic love and service their past sins proved to all the great penitents of all times: Peter, Mary Magdalene, Ignatius, and all the glorious choirs of penitents, who “will sing the mercies of the Lord forever.”

How can we practise this apostolic spirit of Consecration and Reparation? Principally by prayer and penance.

### **CONSECRATION AND REPARATION THROUGH APOSTOLIC PRAYER**

Prayer is the lifting .up of our minds and hearts to God, to adore Him, to thank Him for His benefits, to obtain the remission of our sins, and to gain all the graces we need for salvation. Prayer is absolutely essential for our supernatural well-being. For adults it is necessary for salvation. Through prayer we fulfil the purpose of our creation, the praise of God; we acknowledge with gratitude His great gifts of redemption; and of our heavenly reward with Him for all eternity. Prayer is to the supernatural life what air is to the lungs. Prayer is the wing by which we rise above material things and reach to the eternal. Prayer is principally an act of the superior faculties of man’s soul, the intellect and the will. But as human beings, composed of matter and spirit, we naturally give expression to our interior sentiments by words, i.e., vocal prayer.

The more we develop the life of grace through prayer, the more fit instruments we become in bringing Christ to the souls about us; the more we become Christophers, Christ-bearers, in the truest sense of the word. Yet apostolic prayer, prayer for all the souls for whom Christ died, holds a position of unique importance in God’s Providence for souls and in the carrying out of the Consecration and Reparation of devoted clients of the Sacred Heart.

### **THE APOSTOLATE THROUGH PRAYER**

Through apostolic prayer we can do much to render effective the will of God that “all men be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.” The Sacred Heart wishes the fruits of His redemption to reach men through their free co-operation and that of their fellow men. He wishes us to serve Him as a society, and through society to reach our eternal salvation. The realization of the tremendous responsibility God had placed on us individually for the salvation of our fellow-men impels us to constant apostolic prayer for the establishment of the kingdom of Christ in the hearts of all men. Our zeal for souls, like Christ’s, must embrace the whole world.

What surprises await us in eternity! We will realize that our successful struggle here below was due, in no small measure to the prayers and penances of some obscure saint unknown to us. We will be gladdened by the gratitude of souls, whom we never knew in this life, whose salvation was furthered in great part by our prayers and penances. We are one Mystical Body of Christ, and member must help member. Apostolic Prayer is the supernatural power plant; sending forth the power of grace. It lends efficacy to the words and works of priests and missionaries, religious and lay-folk, throughout the world.

Innumerable and diverse should be the objects of our apostolic prayers: The Sovereign Pontiff, Christ’s Vicar, who has at heart the interest of the lambs and sheep of Christ’s flock; the pagans that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death; souls separated from the life-giving truth and sacraments of the Church through schism and heresy; the tempted; the sinners; the dying. We should often recite thoughtfully and slowly the Acts of Consecration and Reparation, wherein are enumerated the many interests of the Sacred Heart, towards which we should direct our apostolic prayer.

With the interests of Christ, the Good Shepherd, at stake throughout the world, how can we be satisfied with only a half-hearted effort to sanctify ourselves through apostolic prayer, and bring to fruition the desire of the Good Shepherd that all may belong to His fold! One can readily understand how, through apostolic prayer, we can carry out our consecration to the Sacred Heart and His interests throughout the world. One can easily realize that the effort we make to pray well, the self-denial we must practise in foregoing more pleasurable occupations for prayer, the self-conquest entailed in rising early and giving up some extra sleep in order to enjoy the privilege of assisting at Mass, all these implement and develop our act of reparation.

### **CONSECRATION AND REPARATION THROUGH PENANCE**

The words penance, sacrifice, and self-denial are distasteful words in the twentieth century. But penance is not a monopoly of the ages of faith. It is an essential part of Christianity; it belongs to the whole following of Christ. Listen to His words: "Unless you do penance, you shall all likewise perish." "If any man would be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." We are members of the Mystical Body of Christ, Who was crucified, and it ill becomes the members of such a body to give themselves up to a life of luxury and ease, especially when tens of thousands of our fellow members of the Mystical Body are pining away in loathsome prisons, slowly dying in slave-labour camps, suffering tortures and death for their Crucified Head. Our penance is to carry cheerfully our daily cross, all the little inconveniences and hardships necessary to carry out in the best possible way the duties of our state of life: What innumerable occasions of self-denial present themselves daily to a devoted father of a family, to a loving and hardworking mother, to obedient children, to priests, religious, and lay-folk! We can all practise the self-denial needed to make some mental prayer each day, to say the family rosary, to do some spiritual reading in place of reading trash, to retract a little from the lawful pleasures we allow ourselves: the cinema, smoking and drinking. We must bear in mind Our Lady's behest at Fatima:-Prayer and Penance.

### **THE APOSTOLATE THROUGH KINDNESS**

All of us, no matter how lowly be our station in life, have an unlimited power for good; for helping souls, for co-operating with the Son of God in saving souls, for making reparation to the Sacred Heart for the sins of men, and that power is kindness in thought, word and action.

If we study the life of Christ we see the constant, unchangeable kindness that the divine Master displayed at all times and in all circumstances, even in those most trying to human endurance. At all times "He went about doing good."

We cannot pass through life without profoundly influencing for good or evil the lives of our fellowmen. The shadow of St. Peter, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, brought bodily health to the diseased who could not reach His person. The very presence of the true lover of the Sacred Heart brings cheer, encouragement, and strength to faltering souls daily encountered in this work-a-day world of ours.

Kindness, urbanity, courtesy, from a supernatural motive, practised for the love of the Sacred Heart, must not be confused with the politeness which worldlings practise from selfish or business motives. The kindness of the follower of Christ springs from a love of Christ Whom one sees and serves in his fellow-men. "As long as you did it to these my least brethren, you did it to Me." Kindness thus practised is one of the most potent incentives to virtue, a magnet that draws men's hearts through us to the Sacred Heart.

Kindliness towards all, and at all times without exception, is not an easy virtue to practise. It presupposes self-control and frequently demands self-annihilation. It often entails self-conquest in no small degree; it demands self-forgetfulness and a close rein on our varying moods. Yet kindness is productive of so much good to souls that the earnest client of the Sacred Heart will make every effort to practise it day by day, and all day long. Our kindness must be sincere, sympathetic, and practical. Our almsgiving must be done tactfully and unobtrusively. Cheerfulness must be an ever-present characteristic of our kindness, that cheerfulness that flows from the joy of a good conscience, the joy of living on God's good earth, and of association with future citizens of heaven, the joy of realizing the privilege we have in making up for

our own past sins and coldness, and for the sins of those who have not known the infinitely kind Heart of Jesus.

### **THE APOSTLESHIP OF PRAYER.**

Devotion to the Sacred Heart can be easily and effectively practised by membership in the Apostleship of Prayer in union with the Sacred Heart, or as it is frequently called, the League of the Sacred Heart.

This pious association was founded in the Jesuit House of Studies at Vals, France, a little more than a century ago. The Jesuits Scholastics, preparing for the priesthood and the apostolate in the home and foreign missions, were impatient under the long and arduous course of studies, and anxious to get into the active apostolate. They seemed to forget at times that their work and studies could be readily turned to apostolic ends. This truth was forcibly brought home to them by their Spiritual Director, Father Francis Gautrelet, S.J., who explained that all their activities of the day could be turned to apostolic purposes and made a means of bringing many souls to God, by offering them all each day in union with the Sacred Heart, and for His intentions. This truth gave new courage and zeal to the students, and the idea soon spread into the neighbouring towns and convents and monasteries. It spread all over France, into other parts of Europe, and into the foreign mission fields. Pope Plus IX granted the association many indulgences, and its statutes were confirmed in 1866. Successive Pontiffs have exhorted all the faithful to join it.

Conditions of membership are easy of fulfillment. The prospective member must have his name entered in the register of the Local Centre where he lives, or where he wishes to join, and promise to say the Morning Offering every day. This is the First, and most essential practice. It is the little way of doing big things for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. The Second Practice is Mass and Communion of Reparation for the coldness, indifference and insults of so many towards the Blessed Sacrament. The Third Practice is devotion to Mary Immaculate, especially by the recital of the Rosary, or, at least, one decade, daily.

We will confine ourselves to the prayerful consideration of the First Practice, the Morning Offering, as this practice is within the reach and capacity of all. Moreover, the one who is imbued with the spirit of the Morning Offering will be quick to avail himself of the spiritual advantages of the other two practices.

### **THE MORNING OFFERING**

Solid devotion to the Sacred Heart is an all-day affair. It is not confined to certain times and set occasions. We cannot segregate our ordinary work-a-day lives and our spiritual endeavours. Man's whole nature, soul and body, is elevated through sanctifying grace. The supernatural life, the life of grace, must be integrated with all our daily activities. A great part of our day is given to material pursuits. We have our work to do. The father must labour for his wife and children; the mother must busy herself with the affairs of the household; the children must study and develop themselves mentally and physically. We must sanctify ourselves and help to save others in the hum-drum activities of our workaday lives. Happily, there is a way to give to the Sacred Heart total consecration and reparation, to practise constant zeal for souls, to make each moment count for eternity; to carry out Christ's command, "Pray always and do not faint," and St. Paul's admonition, "Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever also you do, do it all for the glory of God." This way is the Morning Offering devoutly made and consistently carried out. This is the First Practice of the Apostleship, of Prayer, in union with the Sacred Heart.

The Morning Offering properly understood is a practical way, for those who have made a retreat, of living in the spirit of the Exercises of St. Ignatius.

### **THE, MORNING OFFERING**

*"O, Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer Thee all my prayers, works and sufferings of this day, for all the intentions of Thy Sacred Heart, in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world, in reparation for my sins; for the intentions of all our associates, and in particular for the intentions recommended by Our Holy Father, the Pope, for this month."*

The Morning Offering consistently lived throughout the day gives eternal value to every thought, word, and action. Sincerely made and carried out, the Morning Offering is the Midas touch that turns everything, even our most insignificant activities, into gold; gold that passes current in heaven and that can effect the release of human souls from the bondage of sin and infidelity; gold, that can, as it were, bribe the willing Heart of Christ to shower extraordinary graces on souls that otherwise would have been lost.

The Morning Offering opens up wide vistas of apostolic endeavour. It furnishes us a compelling motive to give the best that is in us, no matter what task we maybe engaged in, for we are doing it all for Christ and for souls. It makes our day an uninterrupted and efficacious prayer.

### **O JESUS, I OFFER THEE ALL MY PRAYERS AND WORKS**

We begin our Morning Offering by addressing Jesus, Our Saviour, Our Leader, Our Model. At once there wells up in our hearts a sentiment of gratitude for all Jesus did for us out of purest love. "While we were yet sinners, God loved us." "He loved me and delivered Himself for me."

The name of Jesus suggests the most magnetic character that ever walked the earth. And He is my leader, my captain, my king. I am His by a two-fold title, Creation and Redemption. I want to stay close to Him, to share His sufferings, so that His victory may be mine for all eternity. We begin our Morning Offering in a spirit of gratitude and generous devotion: "Master, go on, and I will follow Thee, to my last gasp, with love and loyalty."

All my prayers and works: by these words we make a total offering of all that we are and all that we do. The fact that we have offered the whole day to the Sacred Heart means that we will try to make our day a full one, without any waste of precious time. We do not want to short-change Christ. The present moment is all that we can call our own. Therefore we must make use of it to the best possible advantage, and make it count for souls.

Since we make an offering of all our prayers of the day to the Sacred Heart, and since what we offer Him must be the best within our giving; it is clear that we must pray well, to the best of our ability. If we are accustomed to make some mental prayer, and we all should meditate daily, we should prepare for it carefully and bend all the powers of our mind to make it well. As we walk along the street, or ride a bus going and coming from work or school, we can meditate or make ejaculatory prayers. By them we satisfy for the temporal punishment due for our sins, as well as relieving the suffering souls in Purgatory.

Works: If I am working for the Sacred Heart, then I must give the best that is in me to the duty of the moment, no matter how insignificant it may seem. What a different colouring the Morning Offering gives to all the little, obscure duties of our work-a-day lives! Each little duty, each exertion, takes on an eternal importance; How glorious the toil of the working man in the shop, or office, or field, when done for the Sacred Heart. And how important for Christ and for souls the ceaseless chores of a good housewife, washing dishes, cooking and making beds. The Morning Offering enables us to live lives, day after day, motivated by apostolic, reparative love.

### **ALL MY SUFFERINGS OF THIS DAY**

Through living the Morning Offering we enhance our ordinary prayers and make our every action an acceptable prayer to the Sacred Heart. We likewise exercise a wide-spread apostolate by offering up to the Sacred Heart the sufferings of each day. These sufferings, when united with the sufferings of the Sacred Heart, are an inestimable means of reparation: They draw down upon us, and those on whose behalf we offer our sufferings, priceless graces which may mean the salvation of innumerable souls.

Sufferings of one kind or another are the inescapable lot of the banished children of Eve and are the inseparable companion of man in his fallen human nature. There is no man without his cross, be it sufferings of body or of mind, reversal of fortune, inconstancy of friends, treachery of enemies, unexpected separation from loved ones, the fear of real or imaginary disaster. And yet, suffering must be a most efficacious means of sanctification. Else why did Christ lead a life

of poverty and deprivation, later enduring the unparalleled sufferings and ignominy of His passion and death on the cross? And why else did He sum up our following of Him in these few unforgettable words: "If any man will come after Me, let him take up his cross daily and follow Me?"

There is something divinely refining about suffering. God's friends have all realized the value of pain, be it bodily or mental. In the crucible of suffering the dross of worldly attachments is burned away, and our souls are gradually enabled to cleave to God alone, the one supreme good. The saints saw in suffering a means of becoming more like their Divine Model, the Crucified Christ. Suffering not only refines our character and makes it Christ-like; it gives us a ready sympathy towards our suffering human brothers, and draws men to us with the cords of deepest love. Having experienced hardship, we learn to help others. As the poet-priest, Father Abram Ryan, has so beautifully written:

*"It is truth beyond our ken  
And yet a truth that all may read,  
It is with roses as with men,  
The sweetest hearts are those that bleed,  
The Flower that in Bethlehem bloomed,  
Out of a heart all full of grace,  
Gave never forth its full perfume,  
Until the Cross became its vase."*

The daily cross varies indefinitely with each person. It may be a body wasted with sickness and racked with pain or it may be any of the ills that flesh is heir to. It may be the depressing sense of failure in reaching some desired goal; it may be the disdain and contempt of those whose esteem and good-will we sought. It may be neglect and forgetfulness on the part of someone we love. But every cross, when borne for love of the Sacred Heart, can be an effective means of reparation for our own past sins and indifference, and for the sins of mankind.

We must all become saints, work-a-day saints, in the state of life in which we live. Like the saints, we must cheerfully carry out our daily cross. Our favourite saints and patrons, whoever they may be, carried their crosses with joy, and seized every opportunity of showing their love for God by patience and joy in the sufferings God permitted them. By living the Morning Offering we, too, can make our daily sufferings a precious means of proving our love for the Sacred Heart, and of making effective reparation for our own past sins and the world's forgetfulness of the loving Christ.

### **THROUGH THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY**

How apt and becoming it is that we make our Morning Offering through the Immaculate Heart of Mary! She is not only the first Adorer-Reparatrix of the Sacred Heart, she is our Mother, and Queen of all Saints.

If we wish to become work-a-day Saints, through consistently living the Morning Offering, we have a perfect example in the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The simplicity and obscurity that characterized her infancy and childhood were not in the least overshadowed by the immense dignity of Divine Motherhood. She always remained the handmaid of the Lord, to whom the Lord did great things. In that role she gave the world Christ.

In offering to the Sacred Heart our whole day through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, we have before our eyes the surest way of approaching Christ, and becoming like Him. For the millions of devoted clients of the Sacred Heart throughout the world, sanctity consists in performing extraordinarily well the ordinary duties of our humdrum, work-a-day lives out of apostolic, reparative love of the Sacred Heart. The Immaculate Heart of Mary is the most perfect example of such a life.

No human heart ever approached nearer the Sacred Heart of Jesus, nor more intimately shared His ideals and motives. Yet it was through the performance of her duties as spouse of Joseph and mother of Christ that she proved her immense love of the Heart of the God-Man, and identified herself evermore closely with Him. What an eternal importance the example of the Immaculate Heart of Mary gives to the seemingly insignificant work in the home, the school, the office,

the shop, the farm! We all feel that we can imitate, in our own small way, the humble and obscure life of our Mother Mary. We all know that our thoughts, works and sufferings of each day, when offered through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, take on new value in the eyes of the Sacred Heart, for He sees in them that most perfect act of reparative love, the life of His Blessed Mother, in Bethlehem, in Nazareth, and on Calvary's heights.

### **FOR ALL THE INTENTIONS OF THY SACRED HEART**

If we wish to know the Heart of Jesus we must try to fathom in some small way the well-spring from which flowed all the activities of His hidden life, His public life, His passion, His risen life. Zeal for the glory of His heavenly Father was the fountain-head of all His activities. This zeal was inextricably bound up with the salvation of souls. He achieved this glory by dedicating His whole life to wiping out the handwriting that was written against us.

In all His activities, from the Incarnation to His death on the cross, the human soul was the one object of His every prayer and work and suffering. He realized that, in the eyes of His Eternal Father, the human soul is of infinite worth, more valuable by far than all visible creation. Therefore, He was willing to pay an infinite price to give souls back to His Father. He realized the heinousness of sin and its enormity in the eyes of His Father. He was ready to pay the death-penalty to satisfy His Father's offended justice and sanctity. He loved souls to the end, and gave His life for them. "Greater love than this no man hath."

It was His knowledge of the loss of souls more than of His approaching physical sufferings that wrung from Him the cry: "My soul is sorrowful even unto death." The intentions of the Sacred Heart can, therefore, be reduced to the Salvation of immortal souls in all its phases.

Christ's zeal for souls sprang from His perfect knowledge of the infinite value His Heavenly Father puts on even one human soul, of the incapability of man, by his own power, to regain God's friendship, because of the infinite malice of sin, and of the infinite love of His Father for souls, Who did not hesitate to give His Beloved Son as our ransom. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." The God-Man's life on earth from the moment of His Incarnation to His death on the Cross was one unbroken act of reparation to the offended Majesty of God, for our sins and the sins of the world. Not content with remaining with us as our abiding friend in the Holy Eucharist and with nourishing our supernatural life with His very Self in Holy Communion, He wished to be our un-ending sacrifice in Holy Mass, to offer Himself, as once on Calvary, on all the altars of the world. The more we learn to know the value of the Mass, the more will we appreciate the privilege accorded us of partaking so intimately in its glorious purposes, through offering our day in union with the Holy Sacrifice everywhere. Gradually we will be discontented with merely offering our daily prayers and works and sufferings in union with the Mass. We will make that union more intimate by assisting when we can at daily Mass, and occasionally, at least, during the day, of recurring in prayerful, momentary thought to the Sacred Heart, offering Himself again in Holy Mass, in some remote corner of the world.

### **IN REPARATION FOR MY SINS**

We are impelled to love the Sacred Heart because, in spite of our sins and coldness, He has loved us with an infinite love, and has delivered Himself up to atone for our sins and for the sins of the world. Because we love the Heart of Jesus, burning with love for us, we wish to prove our love of Him by making reparation for our past sins and coldness, and for the sins of mankind. This reparation we can achieve in a very effective way by living the Morning Offering.

Effective reparation presupposes a growing knowledge of the loveableness and dignity of the person offended, together with a lively realization of the sins we and others have committed against this most loveable Person, and an abiding sorrow for them. "My sin is always before me." What a powerful incentive to make the best possible use of each passing moment! What an effective antidote against spiritual, sloth and indifference! Through this spirit of reparation we identify ourselves in a very special way with the Divine Heart, Whose mission on earth was primarily one of reparation, to make amends to God for the sins of mankind. Sincere friends are not content with empty words of sympathy when sorrow and bereavement come upon those they love; they wish to help, to do all in their power to alleviate the burden of sorrow. The



human heart is never so profoundly touched nor never so capable of placing the foundations of everlasting gratitude as when a friend comes to its aid in time of sorrow and bereavement, standing loyally by and sharing the burden of loneliness and grief. Clients of the Sacred Heart prove themselves just such friends when in a spirit of reparation, they seek to console the Sacred Heart in the most practical way for the sorrow caused by the sins and neglect of men. They are further moved to offer reparation by the thought that they, too, in times past have added to the grief of the Sacred Heart by their coldness and indifference.

How acceptable, therefore, does each act of the day become in the eyes of the Sacred Heart, when we wrap it round about in this sentiment of reparation!

### **THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY**

The same motives that compel us to honour, love and make reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus should incite us to honour, love, and make reparation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Her Heart is the most perfect of all purely human hearts, the seat of their surpassing virtues, the most loving Heart of our most loving Mother who loves souls with indescribable intensity. We are truly her children for she has given us supernatural life by the sacrifice of her Son—her sacrifice, too. She is the channel through which this supernatural life comes into our souls. She is grieved by the indifference and sins of men against the Heart of her Son, especially in the Sacrament of His Love. Therefore, we must not only love the Immaculate Heart of our Mother and return the affection and love she has for us, we must console her and make reparation for the forgetfulness and insults against her most pure heart. By our prayers, works, and sufferings we must endeavour to keep the souls of her other children from danger and perdition.

If we wish to have solid and practical devotion to the Immaculate Heart, we must learn to know that Heart, its virtues, its sentiments, and its whole interior life. That knowledge can only come by prayer. Ask the Sacred Heart, to learn to know the Immaculate Heart of His Mother. Read and, meditate on the glorious prerogatives of that Immaculate Heart. When we have come to know Mary's Heart interiorly, we will love it with an enthusiastic love which will bring us to dedicate ourselves without reserve to her Heart. We will endeavour to imitate her especially in her love of the Heart of Her Divine Son, and of the souls for whom He suffered and died. The effect of this love for her will manifest itself in consecration to her service, in reparation for the offences and coldness of men towards Her Heart, and in Apostolic zeal for souls. These three elements are essential for Devotion to the Sacred Heart. We must carry them over, also, in our devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Nihil Obstat,  
GULIELMUS DARGAN, S.J.,  
Censor Theol. Deput.  
Imprimi Potest,  
✱ JOANNES CAROLUS,  
Archiep. Dublinen,  
Hiberniae Primas.  
DUBLINI, die 20 Februarii, 1954.

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