

# LOVE, PEACE, AND JOY

A MONTH OF THE SACRED HEART

ACCORDING TO

ST. GERTRUDE

FROM THE FRENCH OF THE VERY REV. ANDRÉ  
PRÉVOT, OF THE SOCIETY OF THE PRIESTS  
OF THE HEART OF JESUS

BY

A BENEDICTINE OF PRINCETHORPE  
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## PREFACE

**W**HAT is our intention in publishing this modest work, dedicated to St. Gertrude and to the Sacred Heart of Jesus ?

1. To help souls—and already a certain number have made use of our manuscript with encouraging results. To help others to see and taste, with greater relish, how good is the Heart of Jesus, in order that willing souls, feeling the solicitations of His infinite tenderness, may resolve to respond fully to the earnest desire He has to love them and be loved in return, so that, without fear or reserve, they may lovingly abandon themselves to Him for ever.

2. We wish to imprint on the hearts of our readers one of those words of Gertrude to which Our Lord has promised to attach an especial grace, and which, filling their souls with a sweet unction, may become a source of spiritual riches for life. We wish to win for our dear Lord also a greater number of followers who, like St. Gertrude, would respond to His friendship by their confidence and fidelity ; who to console Him, as she did, would take His Divine interests to heart, seek only to please Him, to

atone to Him for the world's ingratitude, and by prayer and sacrifice try to pour balm on the wounds He receives.

Finally, we desire, as far as our inability will allow, to procure for the Church of Jesus Christ an increased number of defenders, who by their devotedness to a life of intercession, love, and atonement, will help this Holy Mother to obtain mercy for poor sinners, to repair the unceasing losses of her children, and deaden the terrible concert of blasphemy and impiety by their tributes of praise and of love.

And to whom do we offer this little work ? To all the friends of the Heart of Jesus, who in cordial charity ever rejoice in what may contribute to make that adorable Heart better known and better loved.

To the friends of St. Gertrude, whose number is ever on the increase in the Church of God ; to those who rejoice in seeing the wish of the learned and pious Father Faber accomplished in her regard :

“ Would that she could be in the Church once more as she was in ages past, the doctress and the prophetess of the interior life ” ( “ All for Jesus,” chap. viii., p. 324 ).

To those who believe in the promises of Our Lord to this soul so privileged by His Sacred Heart, and who have already, more than once, sweetly experienced in these writings a light and an unction not found elsewhere.

In fine we offer it most especially to those



souls (whose number is daily increasing) who, docile to the guidance by which the Holy Spirit leads the Church at the present time, lovingly devote themselves to the Work of Reparation. We wish to offer them, in the pious practices and holy dispositions with which the Heart of Jesus inspired St. Gertrude, an easy means of realizing in their lives that work which has become the most necessary and the most urgent of all.\*

We have divided this little treatise into thirty lectures, so that it may be used as a devotion for the Month of the Sacred Heart.

We hope that under this form it will everywhere meet with a more ready acceptance, and may with God's grace especially suit all the clients of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and all those souls who in the world, the cloister, or the sanctuary, devote themselves to the work of reparation. Grateful shall we be to God if, by the intercession of St. Gertrude and the mercy of the Heart of Jesus, we are able to obtain for this dear Saint the fulfilment of her desires, and

\* We venture to offer it (among others) to the penitent Associates of the Heart of Jesus, in whose ranks we ourselves desire to combat faithfully. We recognize, with them, the great necessity for penance in the work of reparation. But this necessity does not, in the slightest degree, diminish the need of atonement made by *religious acts*, which should accompany penance properly so-called, and all acknowledge that penance ought to be animated by *love*, thanksgiving, and joy. In this work we aim principally at the last two dispositions—viz., thanksgiving and joy—which are the effect and result of love.

assist in consoling our good Master, and contributing to the welfare of our Mother, the Church.

Oh, sweet and loving Saint, who desirest so earnestly that thy writings may more and more serve to glorify the Heart of Jesus, and unceasingly elicit acts of thanksgiving for the favours He has bestowed on thee, deign to pour abundant blessings on these pages (which are thine), in order that they may excite souls to praise the goodness of the Heart of Jesus, and give themselves to Him !

Since He has promised to grant to those who thank Him for the graces lavished on thee, whatever they may ask, obtain that, in return for the sentiments of gratitude and admiration these pages may awaken in our hearts, He may grant us to love Him and devote ourselves to Him like thee in peace and in joy.\*

\* In this work, to which we ask Our Lord to impart a grace of peace and joy for every soul of good will, we would deeply regret troubling the peace of any. Should a reader feel alarmed at expressions of St. Gertrude, or at the reflections we have added, we beg him to take such expressions, etc., in the sense indicated in our notes, especially pp. 49, 56, 70, 120, 122, 173.

We feel a sweet confidence that, by so doing, all will turn to the greater good of the friends of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

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# LOVE, PEACE, AND JOY

## THE EVE

### INVITATION OF THE HEART OF JESUS\*

#### I

THE DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART IS THE  
LAST EFFORT IN THESE LATTER AGES OF  
THE LOVE OF OUR LORD FOR MEN

ONE day, when St. John, the well-beloved Apostle of the Heart of Jesus, appeared to St. Gertrude in the splendour of an incomparable glory, "*My most amiable Lord,*" said she to Jesus Christ, "*whence cometh it that Thou dost present Thy most dear disciple to me — me, an unworthy creature?*" "*I wish,*" replied Jesus, "*to establish between him and thee an intimate friendship; he shall be thy Apostle, to instruct and to correct thee.*"

Then St. John, addressing himself to Gertrude, said: "*Come, Spouse of my Master, together let us lay our heads on the most tender bosom of the Lord, in which all the treasures of Heaven and earth are enclosed.*" As the head of Gertrude inclined to the right, and the head of John to

\* The fifth chapter being very long, we ventured to divide it, and thus have been able to place the first meditation on the *Eve*, instead of on the first day



the left of the breast of Jesus, the well-beloved disciple continued : “ *Here is the Saint of Saints ; all good things of earth and Heaven are drawn hither as to their centre.* ”

Meanwhile the beatings of the Heart of Jesus ravished the soul of Gertrude : “ *Well beloved of the Lord,* ” she asked of St. John, “ *did these harmonious beatings, which rejoice my soul, also rejoice yours when you reposed during the Last Supper on the bosom of the Saviour ?* ” “ *Yes, I heard them, and my soul was penetrated with their sweetness even to its very centre.* ” “ *How comes it, then, that in your gospel you have spoken so little of the loving secrets of the Heart of Jesus Christ ?* ” “ *My ministry,* ” answered the beloved Apostle, “ *in those early times of the Church was confined to speaking of the Divine Word, the eternal Son of the Father, some words of deep meaning upon which human intelligence might meditate for ever, without ever exhausting their riches ; but to these latter times was reserved the grace of hearing the eloquent voice of the Heart of Jesus. At this voice the time-worn world will renew its youth, be roused from its lethargy, and again be inflamed with the warmth of Divine love.\** ”

CONSIDERATION.—St. Gertrude has been, in a certain sense, the Evangelist of the Sacred Heart. Her book reveals to us the human Heart of Jesus, as the Gospel of St. John reveals to us the Divine Word. This loving revelation was a secret reserved for these latter ages of the world, when, after so much ruin and desolation, weak and disheartened souls are everywhere on the look out for a final triumph of the Church—an age of consolation, when faith will be renewed,

\* “ *Revelations of St. Gertrude,* ” as translated by the Benedictine Fathers of Solesmes.

piety will flourish, and charity again be re-kindled. This is what the Apostle St. John seems to predict in his Apocalypse when he says, in a remarkable passage which has been quoted as applicable to our times: "*I have given before thee a door opened, which no man can shut, because thou hast a little strength*" (Apoc. iii. 8).

We are weak, but by the Heart of Jesus we shall become strong; by the charity of the Heart of Jesus we shall triumph over death and hell, and in the Heart of Jesus, which is open, we shall find love, which is the source of all virtues.

The Heart of Jesus is a furnace of love; devotion to that Sacred Heart is a devotion which springs from love, takes love for its end, and makes use of love as its means. Love is, as it were, brought home to us by the human Heart of Jesus, Who communicates to us His own sentiments in permitting us, as His members, to feel the vibration of His own hidden pulsations, according to the great principle which regulates Christian life: "*Hoc sentite in vobis quod et in Christo Jesu*"—*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus* (Phil. ii. 5). It is love which draws us to love by its own irresistible charms, according to Our Lord's own prophecy: "*I, if I be lifted up from the earth*" (and My Heart has been opened by love) *will draw all things (all hearts) to Myself* (John xii. 32). In fine, it is love which would consume us in its flames in order to sanctify our sacrifices and atone for the faults of this sinful world, to the end that pardon may become the measure of love, even as love has been the measure of pardon. "*Many sins are forgiven her, because she has loved much*"—



*Remittuntur ei peccata multa, quoniam dilexit multum* (Luke vii. 47).

PRACTICAL CONCLUSION. — I. Confidence in the midst of our trials and the evils of the present time, because Jesus, having pity on our weakness, has opened to us His Heart, where we shall find strength in all our needs.

2. Love! love! Let us give ourselves to love! Devotion to the Sacred Heart is the devotion of love, which alone can banish the coldness of our times. The renewal which we seek is a work of love, and can be accomplished by love alone.

## II

### DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS, AND THE BOOK OF ST. GERTRUDE

St. Gertrude hesitated in her humility to publish the revelations of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, but He overcame her difficulty by saying to her: "*I wish your writings to be for later times a proof of the tenderness of My Heart, and I will make them a source of grace to many souls. While you write, I will keep your heart near to My Heart, and will instil into it, drop by drop, what you are to say.*"

She heard Jesus Himself say the following prayer: "*O Holy Father, I wish, for your eternal glory, that the heart of Gertrude may pour forth upon men the treasures which are contained in My human Heart.*"

When the book was finished, Jesus appeared to St. Gertrude, saying: "*This book is Mine; I have imprinted it in the depths of My Heart; there each of its letters has imbibed the sweetness*

*of My love, and from every word exhales the perfume of My mercy."*\*

St. Gertrude is the Messenger,† the Herald of Divine love, charged to make love known in its most touching manifestation, which is the Heart of Jesus, and to lead to that Divine Heart the hearts of all men. This is the mission which St. John announced to her, the mission which the Heart of Jesus has given her, the mission for which she has written her book.‡ She already sees this task partially accomplished in an exterior and official manner by the Blessed Margaret Mary, daughter of St. Francis of Sales, who was himself the spiritual son of St. Gertrude, and imbibed much of his own spirituality from her works ; but now she seems called

\* Jesus dealt in the same way with the book written by St. Mechtilde : *"All that is written in this book came from My Divine Heart, and thither will return. All those who seek Me faithfully will find in it a source of joy. Those who love Me will become more inflamed with My love, and those who are in sorrow will here find consolation."*

Our Lord had given His Heart to St. Mechtilde in a very special manner. This gift excited in her an ardent devotion to that Sacred Heart, and was for her the source of all other gifts. She often said : *"If all the blessings I have received from the benign Heart of God had to be written, a book large as one containing our Matins would not suffice for them all."*

† "Legatus Divinæ Pietatis." This is the title which Our Lord Himself has given to St. Gertrude's book.

‡ The Benedictine Fathers of Solesmes consider that the mission of St. Gertrude has truly for its object devotion to the Sacred Heart in the sense we indicate. They do not separate her and St. Mechtilde. Indeed, it may be said that St. Mechtilde's book passed through the heart and pen of St. Gertrude, who revised at least a great part of it, obtained Our Lord's approval of it, and circulated it among her acquaintances. It therefore really belongs to the school of St. Gertrude.

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upon to fulfil her mission still more completely by means of her new spiritual sons, who everywhere propagate her doctrine.\*

It is, above all, in the school of St. Gertrude and in all her teachings that devotion to the Sacred Heart shows itself easy and suitable to all, full of sweetness in its form, touching and irresistible in its attractions, because she everywhere points to love, with the joy and peace which are its fruits.

PRACTICAL CONCLUSION.—I. Let us listen with confidence and docility to the “ Messenger ” of Divine love, and we shall draw from her words the grace which the Heart of Jesus has deigned to attach to them—viz., the grace of love.

2. Let us resolve faithfully to imitate St. Gertrude in what she has done for the Heart of Jesus, for she frequently repeats that by this means we shall obtain as recompense the same favours that she herself received.

\* The mission of the Blessed Margaret Mary seems rather to have for its object the exterior and official worship of the Sacred Heart, while that of St. Gertrude aims more at its interior and mystical character. St. Gertrude brings before us the mysteries of the Sacred Heart in a more complete and practical manner ; she also gives a more attractive and encouraging form to devotion to the Sacred Heart (see Preface of the Benedictine Fathers).

If we may be allowed to add our own impression to this, we would say that, with regard to the life of love and of sacrifice, which ought to be that of every devoted client of the Heart of Jesus, the two Saints are in perfect accord ; but if the Blessed Margaret Mary is the stronger exponent of sacrifice, St. Gertrude knows better how to communicate that love which nerves us to accept it.

## FIRST DAY

### LOVE OF THE HEART OF JESUS

#### I

#### LOVE THE SOURCE OF DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART

WE have already heard Jesus say to St. Gertrude : “ *It is the love of My Heart which has inspired your writings ; I wish them to be for later ages the evidence of My love, to draw souls to My Heart.* ” On one occasion the Sisters were making the adoration of the Cross on Good Friday ; when the moment came for St. Mechtilde to kiss the crucifix, as she pressed her lips on the wound of the Heart, Our Lord said to her : “ *In this wound of love, so great that it embraces Heaven and earth, and all that they contain, unite thy love to My Divine love, that thus it may become perfect ; and even as iron glowing with fire becomes, as it were, one with it, so let your love be transformed and absorbed in Mine.* ”

Another day she saw Our Lord opening the wound of His loving Heart, and saying to her : “ *See the immensity of My love : measure it by those words which I addressed to My brethren : ‘ As My Father hath loved Me, I also have loved you ’* ” (John xv. 9). “ *Hast thou ever heard*

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*words which express a stronger or more tender love ?”*

CONSIDERATION.—The source of devotion to the Sacred Heart is love—that is to say, the Heart of Jesus would give us this devotion as a last effort of His love, and the most perfect gift He can bestow. It is love which desires to give itself without reserve, even to the end of time, to the ends of the earth, to the utmost limits of its affection; love which seeks to warm the world, where charity is now so cold; love which has come to bring fire on earth, and desires at the end of time to consume it entirely in its flames; love which aims more at loving than at being loved, for that is the law of love. Jesus would once more tell His ungrateful creatures how much He loves them, would press them to His Heart, remind them of all He has done for them, and again try to touch their hearts and to save them. He asks, of course, for a return of love, and bitter indeed is the complaint of disregarded love; but at least He will have done all that is in Him, and if He is not loved by all, all at least will have shared in His affection. Behold, then, why Our dear Lord wishes the devotion to the Sacred Heart to spread now throughout the world. Exterior signs of it are already everywhere visible—pictures, statues of the Sacred Heart, solemn festivals celebrated, and pious practices adopted in its honour; but this is not enough: love must penetrate still more deeply, and enkindle its flames in the very depths of our hearts. “*Ignem veni mittere in terram*” — *I have come to cast fire on the earth* (Luke xii. 49). The love of Jesus must transform us into Himself, even as fire transforms iron into its own nature, that so He



may offer to His Heavenly Father souls—victims in one holocaust with Himself.

In former days victims had to be consumed by fire in order that they might rise to Heaven as an odour of sweetness ; in like manner the Church must also be consumed by the fire of love, that as a pure victim immolated with Jesus she may rise to Heaven when her sacrifice is accomplished.

Yes, Our Lord would make our souls so many victims of love, consumed with Him by those flames of love which issue from His Divine Heart, in order that love may obtain pardon for our age which no longer loves ; that the love of our hearts may gradually gain the souls of our brethren, and make them love with us ; that love may consume our sacrifice, and render us worthy in Heaven of that supreme good, the centre towards which the flames of love must necessarily ascend.

PRACTICAL CONCLUSION—I. *Love and Sacrifice*.—They must never be separated. Love is a flame which requires a victim, and sacrifice is only consumed in the flames of love. Oh, may we be this victim, and immolate ourselves in this sacrifice ! For love is God Himself ; sacrifice makes us holy, makes us Godlike. A victim consumed is a soul united to God, lost in God, transformed in God.

2. *Always Confidence*.—What have we to fear ? It is love that calls us ; love that gives all, provides all, will accomplish all ; love that can wish only what is good for us. Impossible, then, to respond to love otherwise than by confidence. And since it is boundless love that invites us, let us respond also by a boundless confidence.

## II

THE OBJECT OF DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART  
IS THE LOVE OF THE HEART OF JESUS,  
ESPECIALLY IN HIS PASSION AND IN THE  
HOLY EUCHARIST

The love of the Heart of Jesus revealed itself to St. Gertrude principally in the mysteries of the Passion and of the Holy Eucharist.

One day, as St. Gertrude affectionately held and kissed her crucifix, Our Lord said to her :  
*" Each time that a man does so, or merely looks upon a crucifix with devotion, the mercy of God looks down upon his soul. He ought then to think in his heart that these tender words are addressed to him : ' Behold how for thy love I have willed to be attached to a cross, naked, disfigured, covered with wounds, and with all My members violently distended. My heart is so passionately enamoured of thee that, were it necessary in order to save thee, I would again willingly endure, for thee alone, all that I have suffered for the salvation of the whole world.' "*

Jesus then revealed to St. Gertrude the love of His Divine Heart in the Holy Eucharist :  
*" My delights are to be with the children of men. To satisfy My love I have instituted this sacrament. I have obliged Myself to remain therein even to the end of the world, and I wish it to be frequently received. Should anyone deter a soul from Communion, he would impede the delight of My Heart. I have done My utmost to manifest the tenderness of My Heart in the Blessed Eucharist. When, impelled by the vehemence of My love, I enter a soul by Communion, I fill it*



*with graces, and all the inhabitants of Heaven and earth, and all the souls in Purgatory, experience at the same moment some new effect of My bounty."*

CONSIDERATIONS.—The express object of devotion to the Sacred Heart is the love of Our Divine Lord, manifested principally in His Passion and in the Holy Eucharist. Such is the object, spiritual and at the same time material, which is proposed to our love: "*Inspice et fac secundum exemplar*"—Look and make according to the pattern that was shown thee (Exod. xxv. 40). Look, for it is the object most worthy of your attention. May your heart, won by its attractions, be fixed on it for ever! May it so absorb your mind that you know nought but it and the lesson of love which it gives you! May it so engrave itself in your memory that you may have it always present to your recollection! So imprint itself in your imagination as to purify and sanctify it! So penetrate all the powers of your soul that they may be directed according to the law of love! Look, for it watches over you with so much tenderness and mercy! Jesus has willed to be lifted on high in order to attract the eyes of all! Gaze at Him, for in doing so you will be healed of your wounds, as were formerly the Israelites when they looked at the brazen serpent! Look, for He is our Light, our Master, and our Guide in the ways of salvation!

"*Et fac secundum.*" Do as He did. Love, feel, and live as He did, for He is the Model proposed by God the Father to the elect. He is the Wisdom of God Himself, manifested to the world for its instruction; the Strength of God, displayed for its salvation; the Divine

Head to Whom we must remain united, and on Whom we must always depend.

But what has He done? What lesson has He given us? what example has He offered for our imitation? He has loved us, and given Himself for us. The love of the Heart of Jesus is no sterile affection. It is a love that shows itself by the sacrifice of the Passion, which is continued and is applied to each one of us in the sacrifice of the Holy Eucharist. "*Dilexit me et tradidit se.*" He has loved me, has given Himself, sacrificed Himself for me. He has loved me. He loves me still, and will always love me. He continues and will always continue to give Himself, to sacrifice Himself for me. That is love! that is the Heart of Jesus!

Truly, then, like the Apostle, urged by the charity of the Heart of Jesus, I would henceforth see but one object, know but one science—Jesus crucified. I would hide myself for ever in that Heart of Jesus which was opened for me on the Cross; would give and sacrifice myself with Him for God, and for my brethren, and consume myself for ever in the flames of His love.

Oh yes, Lord, may it be ever so! O love, make no delay! Do quickly what Thou dost! Plunge me with Thyself in the Heart of Jesus crucified, in order that my poor nature may be consumed in its flames, and my life may become pure and holy with Thee!

Plunge me in the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, that my sacrifice, like His, may be perpetual, and that I may ever be in union with Him, a victim of worship, of praise, and of love.

PRACTICAL CONCLUSION.—I. Let us often look at the crucifix, but let us look at it with love.

Let our gaze mount to the Heart of Jesus, to wound it with a wound of love, and thereby heal the wound that sin has made therein. And in return His eyes, so full of mercy, will look upon us and still more inflame our love.

Let us look, and imagine we see inscribed around that crucifix those words of love: "*Dilexit me et tradidit se*"—*He loved me, and delivered Himself for me.* Yes, for me, for me, as if I had been the only one in the world, and were it necessary He would deliver Himself again for me alone in order to gain my heart. For Him, then, and Him alone, be all my love.

2. Let us make our sacrifice continuous, like that of Jesus. Let us place ourselves in His Eucharistic Heart. In that sanctuary the victim must offer itself unceasingly.

It is there that God is honoured by the sacrifice of praise ; thence is poured forth throughout the Church the prayer of intercession by which souls are saved. Thus we shall console the Divine Heart, which delights to be with the children of men.

SUMMARY.—The *spiritual* and principal object of devotion to the Sacred Heart is the love of Our Lord devoting Himself for the salvation of men, especially by His Passion and by the Divine Eucharist. The *material* object is the Sacred Heart of Jesus, that true human Heart hypostatically united to the Divine Word, the Heart living in all our tabernacles ; the symbol of the boundless charity which Jesus Christ has for each one of us ; the burning furnace of that love which He would kindle upon the earth ; the asylum for every afflicted heart ; the

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source of delight for our souls, and the principle of every grace. And still a Heart filled with bitterness by the indifference and ingratitude of men. The *relative* object of our worship is the image of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, whether represented with symbols of His Passion or with such as remind us of His Eucharistic life.

## SECOND DAY

THE ESPECIAL OBJECT OF DEVOTION TO THE  
SACRED HEART IS TO DRAW ALL HEARTS  
TO THE LOVE OF OUR LORD

WE have already seen that Our Lord's design in the writings of St. Gertrude was to make known the tenderness of His heart, and thus to draw many hearts to Himself.

He also, on several occasions, gave His Heart to Gertrude in a perceptible manner, and received her heart in exchange, to mark the mutual gift of hearts His love demands between Himself and us. He kept the heart of Gertrude ever faithfully united to His own, that it might be to us as a model. "*Gertrude,*" said He to St. Mechtilde, "*so adheres to My Heart, and I have united her to it so closely, that she has become one spirit with Me. Thus she lives in an absolute submission to My will. The members of a body are less dependent on the heart than Gertrude is subjected to My will. The moment a man says, even in thought, to the hand, 'Do this'; to the eye, 'Look'; to the tongue, 'Speak'; to the foot, 'Advance'; at once, without the slightest hesitation, the hand, the tongue, the eye, the foot, obey. Gertrude is to Me as a hand, an eye, a tongue, which I can use as I wish, without meeting any resistance to My desires.*"

Jesus showed Gertrude in an especial manner



how much the Divine Heart desires the conversion of sinners. One day, as the Saint was praying for some miscreants who had caused great harm to her monastery, Our Lord appeared to her. His arm was painfully bent and distorted, and the sinews appeared quite broken. He said to her : “ *Those who pray for the conversion of these unfortunate men pour a soothing balm upon My suffering arm, and with a delicate hand bring back little by little the muscles to their proper place.*” Surprised at such an excess of goodness, Gertrude said to Jesus : “ *Most sweet Lord, how can you call such men your arm, unworthy as they are of such an honour ?*” “ *I call them so in truth, because they are members of the body of that Church of which I glory to be the Head. Therefore, the state of their souls causes Me unspeakable anxiety. My Heart has an intense desire for their conversion.*”

CONSIDERATIONS.—I. The particular object which Our Lord had in revealing to the world the devotion to His Sacred Heart was, as we have said, His love for men, all of whom He would draw to Himself. He wants their hearts : “ *My child, give Me thy heart.*” But love supposes knowledge. Love finds its source in knowledge and in sympathy. If hitherto Jesus has not been loved, it is because He has not been known ; therefore He makes a last effort to spread among all the knowledge of His love. It suffices for man to look at that Heart opened by love to comprehend how much he is loved, to see that he has a Saviour, a Friend ; and if he gives this a moment’s thought, he must necessarily feel attracted, for love wins love.

2. Jesus, then, wishes, first, to make known to us His love for all mankind, and thus to

extend the empire of His love, which consists principally in the mutual gift of hearts between Himself and us, and in the union of the life and feelings of our hearts with His own. Our loving Lord takes, as it were, the first step by giving us His Divine Heart. Is it not only just that His little creatures should give Him theirs in return? Such is the law of love, and in this exchange it is surely we who gain—beauty, peace, joy, and happiness. Oh, what wonderful condescension! that our God, in order to gain our hearts, should deign to give us His own, and exchange His treasures for our poverty, His power for our weakness, His wisdom for our ignorance! Oh, let us go forth from ourselves, as love makes God come forth, as it were, from Himself for love of us!\* Of ourselves we are misery, error, sin, trouble, and vexation. May our hearts go forth from this turmoil in which they languish, and lose themselves in Jesus; plunge themselves in that ocean of mercy, that fountain of all good, that centre of peace, that torrent of delight!

Unity of life and feeling is another law of love engraven in our nature. A friend lives the same life as his friend—*convivit*; their wishes and thoughts are alike—*concordat*.† Without this union there can be no true friendship. O Jesus, Who art our Friend in the highest sense,‡ come and live in our hearts, which Thou dost wish to possess entirely. May Thy Heart be our heart, Thy Will be our will, Thy Virtues our virtues! Speak in us, pray in us, and do Thou Thyself work in all our actions. It is only by

\* *Amor divinus extasim facit* (St. Denis).

† St. Thomas.

‡ *Christus est maxime amicus* (St. Thomas).



this union that we can satisfy Thy love, that our actions can become truly sanctified, and merit that eternal reward which Thou hast promised.

3. By the devotion to the Sacred Heart, Jesus has especially wished to propose to sinners the object and means best calculated to effect their conversion. If the sinner place himself for one instant before that Heart which has loved and still loves him so tenderly ; if he say to himself, " Behold this Heart which to save me has suffered such cruel torments, and I by my sins grieve it and fill it with bitterness !" it is impossible for him not to feel touched and desirous of conversion. And to encourage him, to facilitate his return, the loving Saviour at the same moment offers him the easiest and surest *means*—viz., love, which His Heart is ready to communicate to him. Whatever may be the number of his sins, love will efface them all. Jesus will give him love, and love will give him the assurance of pardon.

Jesus has deigned, above all, to prepare, as it were indirectly, the most efficacious means of obtaining the conversion of sinners, by inflaming the zeal of their more faithful brethren, who are to assist Him in saving these poor souls. It is, above all, by holy contact with this Heart, which has so loved men, that the zeal of a devoted soul bursts forth into flame. In seeing what Jesus has done for man, she would wish to do as He did—pray, devote herself, suffer. Nothing would be too hard when done to "*fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ*" (Col. i. 24)\* to insure the salvation of souls.

\* There is no want in the sufferings of Christ in Himself as Head, but many sufferings are still wanting, or are still to come, in His body the Church, and His members the faithful.

**PRACTICAL CONCLUSION.**—1. Let us study the love of the Heart of Jesus, and try to make it known to others.

2. Let us frequently say that prayer of His children, "*My God, I give Thee my heart, give me Thine in return,*" and let us endeavour to transform ourselves entirely into Jesus by the imitation of His Sacred Heart.

3. Let us zealously work by prayer and sacrifice to bring back to the Heart of Jesus those poor souls whose conversion He so ardently desires.

**MAXIMS.**—1. By the writings of St. Gertrude Jesus would reveal to us more and more the tenderness of His Divine Heart, and draw our hearts more and more to His love.

2. Union with the Heart of Jesus requires that we should live in absolute dependence on His will.

3. He who prays for the conversion of sinners pours balm on the wounds of Jesus.

**SUMMARY.**—The express aim of the devotion to the Sacred Heart is—

1. To propagate the knowledge of the love of Jesus Christ for all mankind.

2. To establish the reign of love in faithful souls by the mutual gift of hearts between Jesus and ourselves, and by the union of our lives and sentiments with His.

3. To make known to sinners the object and the means best calculated to effect their conversion, by drawing them to love Our Lord ; and also to aid their conversion by exciting the zeal and obtaining the prayers of souls animated with devotion to the Sacred Heart.

## THIRD DAY

### THE INWARD LIFE OF THE HEART OF JESUS

**S**T. GERTRUDE saw her companions hastening one day to the church to hear a sermon, while she was detained by illness in her cell. "*Ah, my beloved Lord,*" said she, with a sigh, "*how gladly would I go to the sermon if I were not ill!*" "*Wouldst thou, My beloved,*" replied Our Lord—" *wouldst thou like Me to preach to thee Myself?*" "*Most willingly,*" answered Gertrude.

Then Jesus drew her soul near to His Heart, and she there soon distinguished two beatings most sweet to hear. "*One of these beatings,*" said Jesus, "*works the salvation of sinners, the other the sanctification of the just. The first speaks without intermission to My Father, in order to appease His justice and draw down His mercy. By this same beating I speak to all the Saints, making excuse to them for sinners, with the zeal and indulgence of a good brother, and urging them to make intercession for them. This same beating is the incessant appeal I mercifully address to the sinner himself, with so unspeakable a desire to see him come back to Me, that I never weary of awaiting his return.*"

"*By the second beating I continually say to My Father how deeply I rejoice in having given*

*My blood for the ransom of so many just souls, in whose love I take such manifold delight. I invite the celestial court to admire with Me the lives of these perfect souls, and to thank God for all the blessings He has already bestowed on them, or prepares to give them. In fine, this beating of My Heart is the habitual and familiar intercourse which I hold with the just, either to give them tender proofs of My love or to rebuke them for their faults, and cause them to progress from day to day and from hour to hour.*

*"No exterior occupation, no distraction of sight or hearing, interrupts the pulsations of the human heart. In like manner, the Providential government of the universe will never till the end of time arrest, interrupt, or delay, even for a moment, these two beatings of My Heart."*

On Holy Thursday, Jesus made the heart of Gertrude partake in the agony which His Divine Heart experienced at the approach of His Passion. It seemed to her that He passed all this day in an agony of suffering and dejection, foreseeing all that He would have to endure. Being the son of a tender Virgin, and even more sensitive to suffering than she, on account of His more delicate organism, He shuddered and trembled at every moment, having the convulsed and livid appearance of one at the point of death. And Gertrude, sharing His agonies, experienced so great a compassion that if she had possessed a thousand hearts she would have consumed them all in pitying so dear and loving a friend; she also felt in her heart violent beatings (the effect of love and desire), corresponding to the beatings of the Heart of Jesus, and wellnigh causing her to swoon away by their intensity. Our Lord

then said to her : “ *The love with which I was inflamed at the time of the Passion, when My Heart endured all these agonies, I feel to-day in thy heart, which has so often been moved and penetrated with compassion for all I suffered for the salvation of My elect. Therefore, in return for the compassion thou hast shown Me to-day, I give thee all the merits of My Holy Passion for the good of thy soul, and I wish also that thou shouldst receive the same fruits of My Passion to distribute them through the whole Church, in all the places where the wood of the Cross is adored to-day.*”

CONSIDERATIONS.—The secret life of the Heart of Jesus may be summed up in this one word, *Love—Caritas est*. The two beatings of the Divine Heart which Gertrude heard are the beatings of love—love for God and for the souls of men, love for the just and for sinners, love which unites with the Sacred Heart, and produces union among themselves between the various members of His Body, and causes them mutually to love one another, and work for each other’s good, even as the human heart, which, as centre of the body, distributes to all its members the nourishing blood which they have contributed to prepare.

We, then, members of the mystical body of Jesus, and animated by His Divine Heart, ought to receive in us that current of love which flows from Him to His members ; we should feel the vibration of His Divine pulsations, and thus partake in His sentiments and live entirely by His holy life. This life, as we have said, is love, a love which, through the pulsations of the Heart of Jesus, has, as it were, a twofold movement—that of thanksgiving for the life received, that of reparation for the life



misused—just as in the human body there is, through the heart's pulsation, the double movement of circulation, which distributes the arterial blood to the different members, and the reabsorption, by which their lost vigour is restored.

Oh yes, let us be wholly animated with the sentiments of the Heart of Jesus! May our heart ever beat with this twofold pulsation of thanksgiving and reparation which is incessant in the Divine Heart! Let us, in the first place, cultivate that spirit of thanksgiving which this grateful Heart desires so much to continue in us, and begin by congratulating Our Lord on the glory He has acquired by suffering for men, and on the manifold joys He tastes in the hearts of so many whom He has won by His love. Let us, then, by Him invite the heavenly Court to celebrate with us the infinite charity of our God, and give Him thanks for all the blessings He has granted or has in store for us, and let us unite ourselves to the concert of praise which rises without ceasing from every quarter of the earth, inspired by that of Jesus in the tabernacle of our altars.

Let our hearts incessantly speak to God the Father on behalf of poor sinners, who are His children even as we are ourselves. Let us continually offer our tribute of reparation to appease His offended justice, and our prayers of impetration to draw down His mercy upon all. Finally, let us call to our aid all the citizens of Heaven, and unite with the just on earth in interceding for our brethren and imploring pardon for them. Above all, let us unite ourselves to the ardent desires of the Heart of Jesus for their conversion, offering for them without ceasing the Blood of the Redeemer,

Whose voice is ever heard, and Who asks mercy for all.

The work of reparation ought to be accompanied by a sentiment of *compassion*; this increases its efficacy, and leads us to the practice of *immolation*, which is its necessary consequence. Jesus complains in His sufferings of not finding compassionate hearts. Ah, let us at least respond, as devoted friends, to His appeal! Let us warmly sympathize with His Heart, overwhelmed with bitterness and opprobrium. Let us compassionate Him in His Church, which is at the present time crucified — with Him upon another Calvary; compassionate Him in those poor sinners who, as wounded members, renew in themselves the sufferings of His Passion; compassionate Him by desire, by love, by suffering. Let us grieve with Him in order to console Him, share His sorrows to sweeten them, offer ourselves without reserve with Him, as victims of propitiation and of immolation, in order “*to fill up*” (in ourselves) “*those things that are wanting to the sufferings of Christ*” \* for the conversion of sinners, and zealously devote ourselves by prayer, by action, and by sacrifice, in union with Him, and without reserve. Oh, how deeply will the Heart of Jesus be touched in favour of those who try thus to console Him! How lovingly will He bless those who thus aid Him in insuring the efficacy of His Blood, and securing the salvation of souls who are so dear to Him! Ah, doubt not! He will give to us also, as to St. Gertrude,

\* As we have said above, there is no want in the sufferings of Christ in Himself as Head, but many sufferings are still wanting, or are still to come, in His body the Church, and in His members the faithful.



in an especial manner, and by a special application, all the fruit of His Passion, in order that we may apply it to ourselves and pour it over the souls of others.

PRACTICAL CONCLUSION.—1. Habitual acts of thanksgiving to the Sacred Heart of Jesus for all that He has bestowed upon us.

2. Fervent acts of reparation to compensate, as far as we are able, for the ingratitude of men towards this loving Redeemer.

3. Lively feelings of compassion for the Divine Heart, so overwhelmed with bitterness and contempt.

4. Unreserved offering of ourselves as victims of immolation and propitiation, in order to console this Divine Heart, and by generous, unbounded, untiring zeal, accomplish in ourselves what is wanting in His Passion for the conversion of sinners. (See note, p. 24).

## FOURTH DAY

### DESIRES OF THE HEART OF JESUS

#### I.

ST. GERTRUDE once saw Our Lord on Holy Thursday, before the Sisters approached Holy Communion, reduced to a state of extreme exhaustion by the intense desire of His Divine Heart to be united to these beloved souls. He was, as it were, prostrate on the ground, having no strength. She was so touched at this sight that she felt herself on the point of losing consciousness ; but Our Lord fortified her, and gave her to understand that this exhaustion was the triumph of His love, and that He was about to be filled with delight in giving Himself, by Holy Communion, to these souls for whom He had so ardently longed.

One day St. Mechtilde, astonished at the proofs of the tender love of the Heart of Jesus, through a feeling of respect, was about to withdraw from Him a little, but He, on the contrary, drew her more closely, saying : *" No, remain with Me, that I may enjoy My happiness."*

Another time He said to her : *" Nothing gives Me so much delight as the heart of man, of which I am so often deprived. I have all good things in abundance. The heart of man is alone still wanting to Me."*

CONSIDERATIONS.—The Heart of Jesus is all desire—*totum desiderium* (Cant.). He desires the glory of His Father, for which alone He works. He desires the heart of man, that He may take His delight therein. Before His Passion He ardently desired to suffer, in order to purify us in the baptism of His Blood. Now He desires, with a longing desire, to come to us in Holy Communion, that He may sanctify us. He desires us because He has redeemed us by His sufferings, purchased us by His labours, conquered us by His victories. He desires us because we belong to Him, are His glory and His delight. Let us, then, give Him what He longs for so much. Who are we that we should refuse unto love what love desires? My God, Who in the plenitude of Thy being dost eternally suffice for Thyself, Thou wilt through the most tender friendship to have need of us, and dost solicit our hearts with infinite love; can we have the baseness to refuse them? Thou askest them in order to sanctify and bless them, and we are foolish enough to withhold them! Thou wouldst fill them with good things, with Thy love, Thy Divine beatitude, and we are so ungrateful as to close them against Thee! Oh no! O God, so loving and so worthy of love, to Thee, and Thee alone, may our hearts belong! We give them to Thee for ever, without fear or reserve, and through love alone abandon them entirely to Thy Will.

## II.

Jesus desires us. Shall we not respond to His love? He longs for us. Shall we not long for Him? Desire is said to be the love of an

absent good. Alas ! Jesus is absent from us—*peregre profectus est*. Let us long to go to Him, to find Him, to reach Him : “ *Oh, ire ! Oh, sibi perire ! Oh, ad te pervenire !* ” (St. Augustine, Sermon clix.). Let us desire Him with the desire which consumed the Apostle’s heart when he cried : “ *I am straightened . . . having a desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ* ” (Phil. i. 23). Oh, if we knew how, from His throne above, He longs for us ! If we knew how all the Saints, sharing His desires, await with impatience—as He said to St. Gertrude—the moment when we shall go to increase their number, how we should despise this earth ! How our thoughts would rise to Heaven, and our hearts and desires be fixed on high, where all our treasure is !

But while awaiting the time when it may be given us to possess Jesus in Heaven, let us desire to do His will, to gain His Heart, to unite ourselves to His Cross. Like Gertrude, let us always seek to know His will in order to accomplish it with fidelity. Be “ *in haste* ” to execute His commands, eagerly seize the least sign which manifests to us the good pleasure of His Heart, and unceasingly ask Him to give us that Sacred Heart, the pledge of His tenderness, our supreme treasure, and the organ of our love, and to unite us to Himself in one bond of charity ! O love, that which thou doest, do more quickly ! Oh, if the gifts of love are so desirable, what must love itself be—the source from which they spring ? Lord, it is Thou Whom I love, Thou for Whom I was created. Naught can satisfy me but Thyself ; naught can content me but the gift of Thy Heart ! More and more do I wish to give Thee mine without reserve, that Thou mayest in like manner bestow upon me Thine own.

But let us not forget that the Cross ever accompanies the gift of the Heart of Jesus. The soul, united to this Divine Heart, and wholly animated by His sentiments, desires, like Him, that baptism of blood in which it will complete its self-purification, and be transformed with Him into a pure victim for the salvation of the world. Love of the Cross is the mark of souls devoted to the Heart of Jesus. In them the desire of the Cross is often so intense as to become, as it were, even a passion. "*I believe*," said one of these generous souls, "*that the desire of suffering will cause my death.*" Let us also cultivate this desire in union with the Heart of Jesus, saying with the Divine Victim, "*Ecce venio . . . ut facerem voluntatem tuam : Deus meus*"—Behold I come . . . that I may do Thy will, O my God (Ps. xxxix. 8, 9), and henceforth may it be done to us according to His good pleasure.



## FIFTH DAY

### DESIRES OF THE HEART OF JESUS—*Continued*

#### I.

CONTINUING the same subject already treated of, let us give ourselves up to boundless desires. In the first place, in our prayers, like Daniel praying for his people, let us be *men of desires*, and our supplications, like his, will merit to be heard for the welfare of the Church.

St. Gertrude, concentrating in her heart universal and infinite desires, prayed with the desires of the whole world, "*ex affectu totius universitatis*," for the greatest good of the whole universe in Heaven, on earth, and in Purgatory. Hers was truly a heart according to that of Jesus. Great like His, loving and burning with desire like His. Let all our works be animated with her boundless desires, in order that they may respond to the needs of the Church, which are truly without number. Little in themselves, these works will become great by our desires, and Jesus, Who takes the desire for the reality, will give them an incomparable value for the salvation of the world. "*Oh, my God*," exclaimed St. Catherine of Siena, "*how wilt Thou be able in these unhappy times to*

*provide for the wants of Thy Church? I know what Thou wilt do. Thy love will raise up men of desires. Their finite works, joined to infinite desires, will make Thee hear their prayers for the salvation of the world."*

It would seem, however, and above all with regard to the Cross, that in these times, when souls are so weak, the Heart of Jesus looks to us for great desires to supply for sufferings which are beyond our strength. "Lord," said St. Gertrude, inspired by the Heart of Jesus, "I offer Thee all the sufferings of my Sisters, with the desire to endure them till the end of the world if such is Thy good pleasure." Jesus answered: "Frequently make Me this offering, which inebriates My Heart, and prevents it from refusing you anything." "Since this offering is so agreeable to Thee, O Lord," said Gertrude, "teach me how I shall be able to make it continually." "Always offer Me, with a contrite and humble heart, the desire to endure, were it necessary for My glory, all the sufferings of the world till the end of time, and thou shalt obtain from My Heart whatever thou shalt choose to ask."

Gertrude was very especially a Saint of desires, and by these deserved the assurance from Our Lord many times repeated that her goodwill and her desires would be accepted and counted as though they had really met with their accomplishment. There are, in fact, a certain number of Saints who became Saints only by their desires.\* God heard the prepara-

\* St. John Berchmans, for example. The Venerable Father de la Colombière also said, in speaking of that vow of perfection which had sanctified him: 'God could not fail to take the desire for the reality.'

tion of their heart. The perfection of their dispositions gained for them an increase of grace, and the holiness of their intentions gave incomparable merit to the least of their actions. It is an especial characteristic of devotion to the Sacred Heart (as St. Gertrude has made it known) to sanctify us by desires. Let us adopt this means, so easy, so sweet, so encouraging; let us turn all our intentions towards God, and in our most trivial actions unite ourselves to the Heart of Jesus by a pure, sincere, and boundless desire to glorify His Father. Thus our souls will become enriched with incomparable merit, while the Heart of our good Master will have the consolation of extending and satisfying in us His own desires.

## II.

There is, above all, one mystery of love in which Our Lord would regret to be frustrated in His desires, or to meet with impediment to the delight of His Heart—viz., the mystery of the Blessed Eucharist. Let us thoroughly understand why He instituted it. It was that He might be with us till the consummation of time. Not, indeed, to remain alone, abandoned in His Tabernacle, a true prisoner of love, where we leave Him so often to languish in isolation. Ah yes! it is there, above all, that He desires us with a longing desire, urging us to come and unite ourselves to Himself, by calling us unceasingly, entreating us, forcing us, as it were, to approach. Respond, then, to His appeal. Go to visit Him with an eagerness equal to His love. Go to gather up the graces

which He wishes to bestow on you by His Holy Sacrifice. Go to unite yourself to Him by Holy Communion. He opens to you His Heart. Fear not. Say not so readily that you are not sufficiently prepared. Since He, Who knows all, invites you, it is because He has no desire to await a longer preparation. He well knows of what we are capable. He does not demand from us perfect dispositions; He is satisfied with our goodwill. Go, then, to Him without delay, with confidence and trust. Prefer to abandon yourself now to His loving mercy, rather than have at a future time to render an account to His justice for Communions missed through your own fault, tender invitations to which you have not responded, or for privileged graces of His Heart which you have declined to receive.

Instead of wasting time in discussion, let us rather strive, like St. Gertrude, to draw to Jesus, along with ourselves, the souls of our erring brethren, whom He longs so earnestly to unite to Himself in Holy Communion. *"Make them come in,"* said Jesus to His spouse, *"those souls for whom thou hast prayed this week, for I wish to have them at My table."* *"And how, Lord, can I make them enter? All unworthy as I am, if I could draw to Thee these men with whom Thou dost deign to take Thy delight, I would willingly go, from now till the day of judgment, with bare feet, in search of them throughout the whole world, would take them in my arms, and come and offer them to Thee in order to satisfy, even in the slightest degree, the infinite desire of Thy Divine Heart. But how can I do it?"* *"Thy desires,"* answered the Lord, *"and thy goodwill suffice for all."*

And we also, if we wish to please our Saviour, let us try to bring back to Him those stray sheep whom He longs to press to His Heart. Let us pray, work, combat, suffer, and, if necessary, die to conquer those souls for Him. To-day, more than ever, is a time for combat. See what enemies make war against the Church ! What infernal plots are laid for her destruction, as if Satan was attempting a last effort to prevail against her ! Let the soldiers of Christ, then, put all other thoughts aside, and stand forth to the battle ! This is not the time to be occupied with ourselves and our own interests,\* no matter how important they may seem ! We must fight ; we must succour the Holy Church ; we must save our brethren. This is the wish of the Heart of Jesus. This is our own desire.

PRACTICAL CONCLUSION.—I. Let us desire every moment, as St. Gertrude did, to know the wishes of the Heart of Jesus, in order to share and to accomplish them.

2. Let us consider our desires to respond to those of Jesus, as the best preparation for Holy Communion. Holy Communion is a succour for our needs, rather than a recompense for our good dispositions. It is, above all, a *nourishment* for which desire is an excellent preparation, just as *appetite* is for the food of our body.

\* It will be easily understood that this is not meant for everyone. But are there not many souls whose advancement in perfection would be surer and more rapid if once for all they forgot themselves, to think only of the interests of Jesus and His Church. "*Think of Me, and I will think of thee,*" said Jesus to St. Catherine of Siena. For many souls this is the best means they can make use of in order to free themselves from their miseries, and advance with rapidity in the ways of love



3. Let us be men of desires for the salvation of our brethren and the triumph of the Church.

As the desires of Mary hastened the coming of our Lord, so the desires of the just, in shortening the days of tribulation, may hasten the triumph of the Church.

## SIXTH DAY

FIRST-FRUIT OF DEVOTION TO THE HEART  
OF JESUS—THE HEART OF JESUS GIVES  
LIFE TO ALL OUR ACTIONS

### I

ON one occasion Jesus, holding His Heart in His hands, presented it to Gertrude, saying: "*Behold My most loving Heart, the harmonious instrument whose tones enrapture the Holy Trinity ; I give it to thee, and as a faithful and ready servant, it will be at thy command to supply for thy weaknesses.\* Make use of My Heart, and thy works will be pleasing to the sight and the ear of God.*"

Gertrude hesitated to do this. Jesus, however, overcame her fears, and, enlightening her humility more fully, said to her: "*A man has to sing before a distinguished audience, but his voice is shrill and false. He can scarcely produce any sounds which do not grate on the ear. But thou art near him ; thou hast (we will suppose) a well-trained, clear, and brilliant voice ; thou canst either give him thy voice or sing in his place. Thou desirest to do so, and he knows thy desire. Wouldst not thou feel indignant with him were he to refuse his consent to thy proposal ? In like*

\* According to the text, "To repair at all hours thy negligences."

*manner I know thy misery, and My Heart can supply for it. It wishes to do so most earnestly, for it would find therein a real joy. All that it asks is that thou trust all to its care, if not by word, at least by some sign of thy goodwill."*

CONSIDERATIONS.—We have already recalled how the twofold action of the human heart consists in vivifying our different organs and repairing our lost strength. This is also the twofold action of the Heart of Jesus in His mystical body the Church. He alone can give life to our souls ; He alone can effectually repair all the losses we sustain.

In the first place, let us consider how the Heart of Jesus vivifies all our actions and renders them pure and holy. The different organs of the human body, though in themselves without understanding, become, as it were, voluntary agents when acted upon by the will and intelligence.

In the same way, the various works of man become transformed and holy if they are united to that Divine principle—viz., the Heart of Jesus.

The essential point, then, in Christian life is complete union with the Heart of Jesus. When this union is habitual it enables us to arrive rapidly at the highest perfection, as our Lord Himself taught St. Mechtilde. One day, when she had just received Holy Communion, it seemed to her that her heart was absorbed by the Heart of Jesus and made one with Him.

"It is thus," He said to her, "that I wish the heart of man to be united to Me, that it may wish for nothing of itself, but regulate all its desires according to those of My Heart, as two winds which, blowing together, form but

one current of air. Man ought also to unite himself to My Heart in all his actions. If, for example, he is about to eat or sleep, let him say :

“ ‘ Lord, in union with that love which made Thee create this refreshment for me, I wish to take it, for Thy glory and the good of my body.’ In the same way, when he has any work to do, let him say : ‘ Lord, in union with that love which made Thee labour with Thy hands, makes Thee still work in my soul, and leads Thee now to enjoin upon me this task, I wish to acquit myself of it, for Thy glory and the salvation of all mankind. Since Thou hast said, “ *Without Me you can do nothing*,”\* deign to perfect this work by its union with Thy works, as a drop of water, falling into a river, assimilates itself to the stream.’ Let man, in fine, so unite himself to My Heart that in adversity, as well as in prosperity, he may will only what I will, and thus, as copper melted in the fire with gold becomes with it one precious metal, his heart will in like manner become one with Mine, which is the highest perfection of this life.”

Let us apply this doctrine in detail to the different acts of our life. We ought, in the first place, to unite our prayers to those of the Heart of Jesus. “ Once, on Palm Sunday, St. Gertrude, burning with desire to give hospitality to Jesus, as the family at Bethany had done on that day, threw herself at the foot of her crucifix, and kissing with fervour the wound of the sacred side of Jesus, she tried to imbibe all the desires of His most loving Heart, beseeching Him by all the prayers which had

\* John xv. 5.

issued from that adorable Heart to come and dwell in her. Jesus at once heard her prayer, and loaded her with favours." How could He have resisted His own desire, or turned a deaf ear to the prayer of His own Heart?

He had Himself recommended to her this method of prayer. "*Each time thou wouldst pray for any souls, offer Me My most gracious Heart, in union with the love which made Me take this human heart for the salvation of mankind, and in union with that especial love with which I have given it to thee so often, and I will then grant thee whatever thou mayest ask for men. It will be as if the safe of a rich man were brought to him, that he might draw from it presents for his friends.*"

Do we not feel that prayer thus made must have an irresistible power with the Heart of Jesus? Oh, best of friends, I ask of Thee what Thou wishest more than I—the salvation of souls; I ask it in the name of the love Thou hast for them; I ask it for the consolation of Thy Heart; for the sake of the love Thou hast shown to me so often, and for the sake of that Heart of Thine which Thou hast so frequently given me! Oh yes, if we pray thus we shall be able to say as the Church invites us: "*Hoc igitur invento Corde tuo et meo.*"\* I have discovered how to pray in a supremely efficacious manner; I have found the Heart of Jesus, which is also my heart, since I am a member of His body, and with this Heart I will pray to God, my Father, and my prayer will always be heard.

St. Gertrude teaches us also how our actions are ennobled and sanctified by union with the

\* Off. S. Cordis Jesus, Lect. II., Noct.



Heart of Jesus. She recommends the soul to place all her works in His Heart as in a sacred refuge, that they may be transformed and sanctified by His Divine intentions.

## II

It seems, however, that the Heart of Jesus desires, above all, that we shall unite our sufferings to His, in order that He may communicate to them His infinite merits. There is nothing that He recommends so frequently. One day, when St. Mechtilde felt that her infirmities rendered her, as it were, useless in the service of God, Jesus said to her: "Place all thy sufferings in My Heart, and I will give them the highest perfection for the utility of the whole Church. Even as My Divinity has united to itself the sufferings of My humanity, in order to make them Divine, so I wish to unite thy sufferings to Myself, in order to render them perfect. Offer them to My love, saying: 'O Love, to Thee do I entrust my sufferings, with the same intention with which Thou hast brought them to me from the Heart of my God; and I beseech Thee, with my deepest gratitude, to receive them again when Thou hast given them their highest perfection.' Thy heart will thus unite itself to the love which makes Me embrace the Cross with My whole Heart, and to the gratitude with which I thanked My Father for having permitted Me to suffer for those I love; and even as My Passion has borne infinite fruits, both in Heaven and on earth, thy sufferings, even the most trivial, when united to My Passion, will bear

such fruits that the citizens of Heaven will receive from them an increase of glory ; the just an increase of grace ; sinners their pardon ; and the souls in Purgatory an alleviation of their pains. What is there, in fact, that My Divine Heart cannot change for the better, since all that is precious in Heaven and on earth has its source in the goodness of My Heart ?" And why should not we also, in all, even the most trivial of our sufferings, assure to ourselves the incomparable fruits which union with the Heart of Jesus secured for our Saint ? Why should not we also receive them with the love and gratitude which she drew from the Saviour's Heart ? It is so sweet and easy to do so ! It is not a question of suffering more, but of suffering better, with more consolation and fruit. We have only to suffer all in union with the Heart of Jesus. May it be henceforth our habitual practice !

Is it not evident that if we thus place our trials in the Heart of Jesus, they will at once be greatly alleviated ? On one occasion, as St. Mechtilde was praying for a person in affliction, Our Lord said to her : "*Let her, with childlike simplicity, bring all her troubles to Me ; let her seek her consolation in My compassionate Heart, and I will never abandon her.*" "Jesus," adds the Saint, "*has bestowed on us the gift of His Heart, in order that we may, when in sorrow, seek our refuge and our consolation therein.*"

St. Gertrude was in the habit of offering to God the canticle of praise and thanksgiving "*with the melodious instrument of the Heart of Jesus, according to the intentions of that Heart, and in the name of all creatures.*"

St. Mechtilde also made frequent use of this most amiable Heart as a lyre by which to make the chant of praise and thanksgiving resound in the name of all creation.\*

The Heart of Jesus was for the two Saints the especial organ of their love, and it frequently happened that when they found themselves slothful and without devotion they felt the Divine Heart placing itself on their own like burning gold, and inflaming them with its love.

Jesus had given His Heart to St. Mechtilde, and He offers it, in the same way, to each of us, for a triple union and as a triple source of incomparable and enriching grace.

1. As an organ of love: "I give thee My Heart," said He to her, "that by its love thou mayest love thy God and all creatures for His sake."

2. As an organ of thanksgiving: "Blessed be Thou, O most amiable Heart of Jesus," said she each morning—"blessed be Thou for the praise, thanksgiving, and other tributes of honour, which Thou hast offered to God the Father during this night in my place."

3. As a means of reparation: "Dost thou wish to be perfectly faithful to Me?" said Jesus to His servant, when He saw her grieving for her failures. "Love better to see thy negligences repaired by My Divine Heart than by thyself (supposing even thou wert able to repair them), that thereby it may receive greater honour and glory."

Oh, may we also thus *make use* of this loving Heart, which longs to expend itself entirely

\* A favourite practice with both Saints was to praise Mary by the Heart of her beloved Son.

in our service—" *totus in nostros usus impensus* " ! May it be the organ of our love, that our whole life may be one of pure love ; the organ of our thanksgiving, that through it, both day and night, there may rise from our hearts the tribute of gratitude which is so pleasing to God ; the organ of our prayers and desires, that they may mount direct to Heaven as an incense of sweet odour, and obtain all they ask, in blending themselves with those of Jesus ! Who is always heard by His Eternal Father. May He be the mainspring of our actions, and communicate to them His infinite merits ! Finally, may all our sufferings be united to His, that we may be consumed with Him in one sacrifice of love, and with Him glorify God our Father, and save the souls of our brethren !

PRACTICAL CONCLUSION.—I. Let us pray, by means of the Heart of Jesus, by imbibing His desires, loving with His love, wishing with His will, and thus our prayer will always be heard, because it will always be in accordance with the Heart of God.

2. Let us *make use* of the Heart of Jesus in all our actions, that He may render them perfect.

3. Let us faithfully offer to Jesus all our sufferings, even the most trivial, that He may unite them to His own, and enable us to accept them with the love of His Divine Heart—a twofold condition, which will insure for them an incomparable merit.

4. In prayer let us, as we have said above, use the Heart of Jesus as the instrument by which we express our love, our thanksgiving, and all the acts of worship we owe to God.

## 44 Love, Peace, and Joy

Such prayer will be as easy for us as it will be acceptable to Him.

THEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES.—I. Suarez\* promises efficacy to prayer even in cases which seem hopeless on the following two conditions :

(a) That it springs from a heart closely united to God.

(b) That it is offered to God with very great fervour.

Is not the Heart of Jesus "*maxime amicus*" (our greatest friend)? And if we appropriate to ourselves, by union with Him, those strong cries and supplications which He addressed to Heaven, may we not hope to be heard like Him?

2. Our actions derive their supernatural value from the grace which produces and the love which *informs* them. Now, the Heart of Jesus is the source of grace and the furnace of love; hence, the more we are united to the Heart of Jesus, the more our actions are filled by His grace and inflamed by the fire of His love, and, consequently, the more is their supernatural value increased.

3. Let us connect the two following principles :

(a) "*In satisfactione magis attenditur effectus quam quantitas*" (St. Thomas).

(b) "*Satisfactio pro altero, præsertim vivo infallibilis est*" (Suarez).

We may infer from this that by uniting ourselves in prayer to the love of the Heart of Jesus on the Cross, and by appropriating to ourselves the Divine satisfactions which He transfers to those who are thus united to Him, we insure to our trials an incomparably satisfactory value.

\* "De Oratione."



4. According to the law of love, Jesus looks upon us as being one with Him—" *velut unum sibi* " (St. Thomas). Hence it results that He loves and thanks God for us as for Himself, and therefore we may appropriate this love and thanksgiving as though really ours and offered for us.

## SEVENTH DAY

SECOND FRUIT OF DEVOTION TO THE SACRED  
HEART—THE HEART OF JESUS MAKES  
ATONEMENT FOR US

### I

WE have already seen how Jesus gave His Heart to St. Gertrude, to atone for all her negligences and render her works perfect.

One day Gertrude, pondering in her heart, with a deep feeling of gratitude, the signal service granted to her by the Heart of Jesus, in thus making atonement for her, asked our Lord for how long a time He would allow her to enjoy this favour. '*As long,*' answered Jesus, '*as thou shalt desire to possess it. Never wilt thou have to regret that it has been withdrawn by Me.*' At the sight of such goodness, the Saint, more and more penetrated with admiration and gratitude, descended with deep abasement into the valley of humility ; but our Lord lovingly followed her thither, and seemed to pour from His Divine Heart a river, as it were of gold, which flowed down upon this humbled soul, and by which He enriched it with an abundance of His graces. Thus, according as she humbled herself for her faults, the Lord, by means of the graces flowing from His Sacred

Heart, entirely effaced them, and communicated to her in their stead His Divine virtues, that so she might appear all holy and spotless like Him. The Heart of the Good Master would not only repair the losses Gertrude suffered through her failures, but even those which resulted from her occupations and the distractions arising from the duties of the day. One Friday, as night approached, Gertrude, casting her eyes on her crucifix, said to our Lord, with a heart full of compunction: *'Most sweet and loving Creator, what torments Thou didst suffer to-day for my salvation, and how sorry I am to have passed the day in distracting occupations without recalling to mind what, at each hour, Thou didst endure for me—Thou, Who, being Life itself, didst die through love of my love!'*

Jesus answered her from the summit of His Cross: *'What thou hast thus neglected to do, I have supplied for thee. Every hour, as the day passed, I gathered into My Heart what thou shouldst have collected in thine own; consequently it is so filled with graces for thee that it is, as it were, quite overflowing, and I was eagerly awaiting the moment when thou wouldst address this prayer to Me, for without it all that I had collected would have been of no profit to thee; but with this prayer thou canst, before God, My Father, appropriate all, as if belonging to thyself.'*

O love, O generosity of the Heart of Jesus, how truly dost Thou deserve the praise of all hearts!

Can anything, also, be more touching than the liberality with which Jesus paid Gertrude's debts to the Blessed Virgin? "*Oh, my Brother,*" said our Saint one day to Him, "*since Thou*

*becamest Man to pay the debts of mankind, deign now, I beseech Thee, to supply for my poverty and repair the faults I have committed against Thy Blessed Mother.*" At this Jesus, rising at once, with great reverence drew near to His Mother, and saluted her, bowing His head with charming and gracious dignity. This tribute of respect from the Son of Mary superabundantly paid all Gertrude's debts. May not every soul devoted to Jesus Christ appropriate to herself the sentiments and confiding language of St. Gertrude, in order to induce the Heart of Jesus to pay all her debts to God and to her neighbour?

CONSIDERATIONS.—We have already spoken of reparation as one aim of devotion to the Sacred Heart, but that was as reparation offered to the Heart of Jesus for others; now we speak of reparation for ourselves, and it is that Heart which atones for us and in us.

According to St. Gertrude, of all helps which we find in devotion to the Sacred Heart, this is the best calculated to aid our spiritual progress. One day, recalling to mind the different favours she had received from God, she wondered which of them, if made known, would be most conducive to the spiritual advancement of men. Our Lord condescendingly responded to her thought, and indicated to her clearly the merciful desire of His Heart to repair all our faults: "*Make known to men the benefit they will derive from ever remembering that I, the Son of the Virgin, stand before God the Father for their salvation, and when they commit any fault, I offer My spotless Heart to the Divine Justice for them.*"

Let us meditate with simplicity on the

lessons given us by St. Gertrude. We shall then see how the Heart of Jesus wishes to repair our faults, supply for our involuntary failures, and acquit for us the debts we owe to God and to the Church, on one condition—viz., that we ask this grace with a heart, contrite and humble certainly, but above all replete with confidence. And He will fully do what we ask in order to perfect our works, complete our task, and consummate us in Himself.

The Heart of Jesus eagerly desires, in the first place, to repair all our faults. He looks upon them in a certain way as if they were His own : “ *Verba delictorum meorum.*”

On account of His union with His mystical body the Church, and the intimate connection that exists between Him and us, they are contrary to His interests ; they tend to the ruin of His work, are more injurious to Him than to ourselves, and far more than ourselves does He desire to efface and to destroy them ; this is for Him a pressing need, a necessary consolation. The only thing that He asks from us is that we lay them before Him with a contrite and confiding heart, which never loses courage ; with a goodwill\* which rises courageously after each fall, and which, occupied entirely with the interests of Jesus, believes that, by His infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, He will always be able to repair the faults of our weakness, our ignorance, and our malice, which are in their nature limited. Lay them, therefore, before Him in all confidence, and every

\* This goodwill, if thorough and sincere, contains the will to work and combat as much as we are able for our amendment.



day, every hour, make with fidelity the *Offering of our faults*, so well known to the friends of the Sacred Heart.\*

## II

In the next place, let us lay before the Heart of Jesus our involuntary failures, our many losses, the result of our weakness, our omissions also, and our negligences, and thus give to that Divine Heart the glory and consolation of repairing them. Let us even, as Jesus desired St. Mechtilde, much prefer to see our faults repaired by His love rather than by ourselves, even if we were able to do it, in order that His honour and glory may be increased, for surely that is the supreme desire of every soul devoted to the Sacred Heart. His glory consists, above all, in manifesting His goodness and His mercy, and how can He show His goodness but by bestowing upon us what we require? And how raise up the throne of His mercy, if not on the basis of our miseries?

If we have really blended our interests with His, according to the law of love and the condition of our association with Him, what have we to do when those interests have suffered by our negligence but simply tell Him all, that He may supply for all by His infinite riches?

For the same reason, in the spiritual association which Jesus has deigned to form with us, in order to provide for the wants of His Church, we can only (poor indigent sinners as we are) draw from *the rich treasure* of the Heart of our

\* See with regard to this an admirable chapter of Père Ramière in his book on "The Apostleship of Prayer."

Divine Associate what we need to pay our debts—that is to say, all that we, on our part, are bound to contribute in the Communion of Saints.

Jesus has said it. His Heart ardently desires to atone and satisfy for us. It is His joy and His glory. All that He asks from us is that we have recourse to Him, with a repentant heart, certainly, but without any doubt, and, above all, with the confiding heart of a friend.

Touched, as we have seen, by the sorrowful compunction evinced by Gertrude, He restored to her all the graces she had lost during the day. When He saw her humbling herself for her faults, He poured His grace upon her in abundance in order to efface them, and clothed her with His Divine virtues. His Heart was charmed with her confidence, which nothing could disconcert, because she knew He was her Friend, and she could rely upon His mercy. It was to this confidence that He attributed all the favours He bestowed upon her. How could it be otherwise? How could the Heart of Jesus remain insensible when we address Him as our Friend, our Brother, our Spouse? when we remind Him that He has shed His Blood to pay our debts, and that it is precisely of this Blood we would profit by rendering it efficacious for our Redemption? All this tends, indeed, to perfect that work of Redemption, to accomplish in us what is wanting in the Passion of Christ,\* and to consummate us in Him so that, at the end of time, He may be able to say for Himself and for His members, "*Consummatum est*"—*All is consummated*. In thus asking our Lord to supply and to repair

\* Note, as above, p. 24.

for us we are sure to enter into His design, to respond to His desire, and accomplish His Will; for we know from Scripture that if we ask Him anything according to His Will we shall certainly obtain it. Let us, then, draw near to the loving Heart of Jesus with the assurance of obtaining all the help that we require. He will perfect our works, and, according to the word of the Holy Spirit, complete in us what is wanting on our part for the accomplishment of His work.

Do we not feel how encouraging, how strengthening, how enriching, is this doctrine? How quickly would devotion to the Sacred Heart, thus understood and thus practised, be able to raise us to the highest perfection! Yes, if we would truly glorify Jesus according to the motto of His friends, A. M. D. G., if we would be victims consumed by His love, let us adopt these practices, and faithfully, each day and each hour, lay our failures and our debts before the merciful Heart of Jesus, that each hour and each day may be perfected and consummated by His love. *Oh, "let us give to Jesus according to the liberality of His generous Heart"* (as He asked St. Mechtilde), *"according to His goodness, and not according to our own"*—that is, let us have boundless confidence in His love, that, becoming rich through His infinite liberality and generosity, we may, in our turn, make Him a liberal and generous return.

Since this good Master places His *talents* so freely at our disposal, let us employ them with confidence for His glory; let us labour generously in His service, that *nothing may be wanting* in the consolation we owe Him, and the glory we ought to procure for Him.

PRACTICAL CONCLUSION.—I. The daily offering of our faults to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, at each examen, after every action, with a deep sentiment of confidence and true love, saying to Him, as He Himself taught St. Mechtilde : “ *I wish to be perfectly faithful to Thee ; I would much rather see my faults repaired by Thy love than by myself, supposing I were able to repair them, in order that a greater honour and glory may redound to Thee.*”

2. The offering of our involuntary failures, omissions, etc., resulting from our occupations, our distractions, our weaknesses, etc., saying to Our Lord, as He again inspired St. Mechtilde : “ *Lord, I wish to give to Thee according to the liberality of Thy generous Heart, according to Thy goodness, and not according to mine. Deign, then, to return to me all that I have involuntarily lost, that I may give it back to Thee with a liberality like unto Thine own.*”

3. The offering of the debts we owe to God, to Mary, to the Church, to the souls in Purgatory, to sinners, to the agonizing ; debts incurred in the fulfilment of the duties of our state, of our various employments, etc., saying to Jesus, like St. Gertrude : “ *Oh, my Brother, since Thou didst become Man to pay the debts of mankind, deign now, I beseech Thee, to supply for my indigence, and entirely acquit those debts which I have incurred.*”

## EIGHTH DAY

THE EASY WAYS OF DIVINE LOVE THROUGH  
DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART, AS  
UNDERSTOOD BY ST. GERTRUDE

**I**N the book of St. Gertrude, the Heart of Jesus has arranged everything so as to draw us sweetly to Himself by the easy way of love. When the book was finished He appeared to her holding it close to His Heart, and said: "*I press this book to My Heart in order to penetrate each letter with the sweetness of My love, and I will that in each page the picture of My gratuitous goodness should be seen.*"

Another time, when the transcriber of this book carried it hidden under her mantle as she went to Communion, to offer it to Our Lord for a tribute of everlasting praise, as she prostrated before the Sacred Host, one of her companions noticed how Jesus, in the excess of His infinite goodness, came to meet the Sister thus prostrate, and embraced her tenderly, saying: "*Yes, I wish that all the words of this book, which you offer Me, or, rather, which My Spirit has Himself dictated, should be filled with the richness of My love. Whosoever, coming to Me with a contrite and humble heart, shall desire to read herein for the love of My love, I will make him repose upon My Heart, and will show him,*



*as with My finger, the places most suitable and advantageous to him."*

The book of St. Gertrude comes, then, from the Heart of Jesus, and leads us to Him by a path full of sweetness, goodness, and love.

CONSIDERATIONS.—One of the marvels of St. Gertrude's spirituality is that she, more than any other, renders easy and accessible to all the sanctification of the soul and the highest perfection. To be united to God, associated to His works, and to the merits of Our Lord, appears to be with her the affair of every hour and of every circumstance ; that the least movement of sincere goodwill suffices for anyone to acquire a right to the highest merits and the most glorious reward (pref. to the translation by the Benedictine Fathers). This thought of the learned editors of St. Gertrude is only, as may be seen, the development of the title of this chapter. The spirituality of St. Gertrude may be reduced to three things—*desire, union, abandonment* : desire of God's glory ; union with Jesus, with His Passion, with His Heart, with His Saints ; abandonment to the good pleasure of God and to His Providence. Can anything be easier than this for a soul of goodwill ? Anything more consoling, more attractive, more encouraging ? There is here no question of great mortifications, of long and difficult practices, of extraordinary and sublime virtues. Of these St. Gertrude speaks little. She draws the three dispositions, desire, union, and abandonment, from the Heart of Jesus, and bears them everywhere. This seems to be her whole secret for loving God, advancing in love, and attaining the perfection of her love. May this dear Saint aid us to seize her secret

thoroughly—above all, to put it in practice, that, following her in these easy paths of Divine love, we may, like her, arrive at the term which should be the object of all our desires! What joy for us, in our little work, if these simple reflections help even one soul to find its way, that way of truth which we ought to choose; that way of freedom which our heart needs to find in order to advance with rapid pace in Divine love!\*

Let us first see how easy is this way and how safe. Desire may be considered to relate more especially to prayer, union to action, and abandonment to suffering, though, indeed, these three dispositions are, in some degree, necessary to prayer, action, and suffering, in order to insure to them all their value. We have already spoken of desires in prayer, and of souls who thereby obtain everything—like Daniel, who obtained the deliverance of his people, and Mary, who, by her desires, drew the Saviour down to earth. Is anything easier than to practise this prayer of desire, in appropriating to oneself the desires of the Heart of Jesus by the assistance of St. Gertrude, in making use of her books? Desire there finds expression under the most pious and most varied forms—desire of praising God, of loving Him; desires of zeal; universal and perpetual desires, extending from all to all. Now, any one of these different forms offers matter enough

\* Let us not forget that what is here said supposes a soul of goodwill, who does what in her lies, with regard to prayer, action, and sacrifice, and who seeks a means and a way to make further progress. Our good Saint indicates this way, simple, easy, suitable to all, and able to make us advance with speed, to run in the commandments and the counsels of God.

for meditation and prayer, and to sustain a soul for long—indeed, for a considerable portion of one's life. One may try, for example, to become familiar with the beautiful and rich formulas in the book entitled "Prayers of St. Gertrude." In making use of them for some time, the soul will, as if by necessity, become, after the manner of St. Gertrude, a soul of desires, and thus enter the path of high sanctity.

As a means of sanctifying our actions, St. Gertrude proposes to us especially union—union with the merits of Jesus, union with the Saints and with our brethren. We have already seen how union with the Heart of Jesus enhances the value of our works. By union with the Saints we in the same way appropriate their merits, in virtue of the principle that "*charity makes its own what belongs to our neighbour*." This appropriation is more or less perfect, according to our greater or less union with those glorious friends who desire nothing more than to communicate to us their merits and open to us their treasures.

Union with our brethren here below also enables us to appropriate to ourselves the merit of their good works, in virtue of the doctrine of the Communion of Saints ; and theologians recognize that this participation in the merits of our brethren is proportioned to the degree of union existing between us in the order of charity, or on account of some especial spiritual affection.

In the third place, with regard to suffering, abandonment (which must not, however, be separated from desire and union) seems to be the easiest and most perfect disposition. It is the "*Fiat voluntas tua*" of the *Paternoster* and of the agony of Jesus. By the "*Fiat*" of the *Pater*

I resign myself entirely to the Will of God, that it may be perfectly accomplished in me. Now, "*this is the will of God your sanctification*—*Hoc est voluntas Dei sanctificatio vestra*. Therefore conformity to that holy Will must be the best means for attaining holiness.

In repeating the "*Fiat*" of the agonizing Heart of Jesus, I abandon myself without reserve to the designs of His Heavenly Father with regard to the redemption of the world. Now, God's design is, that all men should be saved; I therefore co-operate, as far as I am able, in the salvation of souls, and become as much as possible associated with our Divine Saviour in the redemption of the world. Thus everything, it seems, may be included in "*abandonment*"—viz., conformity to the Will of God.

If we broach the question of voluntary suffering or mortification, may we not include it also in conformity, so far, at least, as it refers to the practice of mortifications marked out for us by the Will of God, the attractions of grace,\* or the voice of obedience? And here, again, is not such practice sweet and easy, since we are guided by those Divine attractions; holy, since we only seek in them the accomplishment of God's will; and quite safe, since we are guided in all by the rule of obedience?

PRACTICAL CONCLUSION.—Aim at becoming a soul of desires.

Unite ourselves to the Heart of Jesus in all our occupations.

Practise childlike conformity to the Will of God in all our trials.

\* This grace may be a good word, or lecture, or thought—anything, in fine, that Providence sends to anticipate and encourage our goodwill.

## NINTH DAY

THE EASY WAYS OF DIVINE LOVE BY DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART, ACCORDING TO ST. GERTRUDE—*Continued*

IT is no longer difficult to show how St. Gertrude included all holiness in these three easy and encouraging means: Desire, Union, and Abandonment. Of this we have already given, and will still give, proofs.

With regard to desires, for example, a holy soul, seeing how Our Lord loved St. Gertrude, asked Him what thus won His affection. "*Several virtues,*" answered the Saviour, "*which I have bestowed upon her; but especially that charity which makes her desire the salvation of all men for My glory, and that fidelity which makes her consecrate all she has, without any reserve, for the salvation of the whole universe.*"

Jesus, in order to show her that He undertook to realize and to complete her desires, made a holy soul write to her these encouraging words: "*Your soul yields to your Beloved a hundred for one, by the desires it forms for itself and for its neighbour. The Lord Jesus makes up for the weakness of those desires. He renders to God the Father the worship you would wish to offer Him for yourself and for others, and perfects your endeavours in such a manner that nothing is wanting.*" We see by this how a



soul of desires may find those desires accomplished by the Heart of Jesus, not only with regard to her own sanctification, but also with regard to the wishes which, inspired by zeal, she forms for the Church and for the salvation of souls.

I know well that we can only appropriate to ourselves those especial favours granted to Gertrude in proportion to our own dispositions ; but it is precisely about these dispositions that there is question in this chapter, and the more perfect they are in us, the more surely shall we obtain a result similar to that of our Saint.

We have already seen how, by union, Gertrude appropriates to herself the merits of Jesus. She does the same with the merits of the Saints. One day, before Communion, finding herself but little prepared, she asked the Blessed Virgin and all the Saints to offer to God for her all the good dispositions with which they had prepared to receive His graces. She also besought Our Lord to offer for her His own perfect dispositions, when, on the day of His Ascension, He was about to appear before His Father. Then, some time after, as she tried to discover what she had gained by this prayer, Jesus said to her : "*Thou hast gained to appear in the eyes of the citizens of Heaven, adorned with all the merits thou hadst asked for.*" Then He added : "*Why shouldst thou distrust Me, Who am the Lord Almighty and beneficent ? Cannot I act like an earthly friend who adorns his friend with his own ornaments, in order that he may appear as richly attired as himself ?*"

Gertrude in the same way appropriated the merits of her neighbour. One day when her

Sisters had performed particular devotions for the souls in Purgatory, Jesus said to her : “ *And thou, what wilt thou give Me to increase My liberalities to these suffering souls ?* ” She answered : “ *I offer Thee all that my Sisters have done, appropriating it entirely to myself, in virtue of the union which Thou hast, by Thy charity, established between us.* ” And Jesus gave her to understand that He had fully accepted her offering.

Finally, with regard to suffering, the disposition which Jesus requires from St. Gertrude is, above all, abandonment. He wishes her to look upon the most crucifying arrangements of His Providence as pleasant and agreeable. He wishes her to let Him find His repose in the labours which He imposes on her ; to abandon herself to Him with regard to illness, persecutions, interior trials—in a word, to every suffering. But also, if Gertrude asks expressly to suffer more, Jesus indicates to her that the disposition He likes best to see in her is abandonment to His good pleasure, so that she should choose nothing for herself, neither consolation nor trial, but remain entirely abandoned to the sweet Will of God in suffering or in consolation, in sorrow or in joy.

Gertrude had drawn these most sanctifying dispositions from the Heart of Jesus. That Heart is, as we have already said, all desire. It is also the centre of union and the resting-place of abandonment. It is the Heart of Jesus which must communicate to us those sentiments which sanctify our works (*hoc sentite*). It is the Heart of Jesus which unites us with our brethren, as the heart of man unites the different members of his body by means of circulation and by

using for the benefit of all the vital resources contributed by each.

It is, above all, in Communion, the *sacrament of union*—" *Sacramentum unitatis ecclesiasticæ*" (St. Thomas)—that the Heart of Jesus unites us to Itself and to each other, and if we fully enter into this union we may by it appropriate to ourselves the various merits of the Saints and of our brethren on earth.

Finally, the sentiments of the Heart of Jesus with regard to suffering may be included in abandonment—loving, filial, complete abandonment. Loving, which makes Him say on entering the world: "*Burnt-offering and sin-offering Thou didst not require: then said I, Behold I come that I should do Thy Will: O My God, I have desired it, and Thy law in the midst of My Heart*" Ps. xxxix. 7, 8, 9). Filial abandonment, which causes Him, in His agony at Gethsemani, to exclaim: "*Father, not My will, but Thine be done,*" in all this terrible Passion which unfolds itself before Me! Complete abandonment draws from His lips, at the consummation of His sacrifice, those words: "*It is consummated. Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.*" *Dispose of Me, and of all My sufferings, according to Thy designs and for the completion of Thy work.*

The PRACTICAL CONCLUSION may be gathered from the three principal points indicated in the reflections.

## TENTH DAY

LIFE OF FRIENDSHIP WITH THE HEART OF  
JESUS, ACCORDING TO THE TEACHING OF  
ST. GERTRUDE

ONE day Our Lord drew St. Mechtilde's attention to her sister Gertrude, who apparently accomplished all her acts in His presence, frequently raising her eyes to His sweet face, and finding abundant light and grace in her loving intercourse with Him. Mechtilde wondering at this spectacle, Jesus said to her :  
*"My chosen one, as you see, lives always with Me, and seeks only to fulfil the good pleasure of My Heart. As soon as she knows My wish on one point she fulfils it immediately, and then tries to find out My further desires, that she may satisfy them at once. Thus all her life is spent in loving and pleasing Me with the most perfect friendship."*

REFLECTIONS.—Love alone renders our path easy. To live in friendship with Jesus gladdens the heart, and enables us to run in the way of the commandments. This was St. Gertrude's life, and this is the great teaching of her book. It is, in fine, the dearest wish of the Heart of Jesus, and the sweetest consolation we can offer Him.

Now, in what consists this life of friendship with Jesus ? *"Friendship,"* says St. Thomas,

"consists in a mutual affection founded on a communication of goods." In the first place, then, we must render to the Heart of Jesus love for love. O Jesus, Thy Heart loves me; I see it clearly in every way. It is consumed by love. Thou wilt have it represented as crowned with flames, to show us that it is a furnace of love. Notwithstanding my infidelities, Thou lovest me to such an extent that if my heart contained a mere portion of this love it would at once burst asunder. And I also, I love Thee, I give myself to Thee—to Thee Who art love itself. Without fear, without reserve, I abandon myself for ever to Thy love. What have I to fear? My confidence, strengthened by the thought that Thou art my Friend, will for ever be unshaken.

I shall expect all from Thee, my Friend, knowing that Thy riches and Thy power are equal to Thy goodness. Weak though I may be, I shall become, as it were, all-powerful, for I can do all by Thy love, which gives me strength.

Such is mutual friendship. It is founded, as we have said, on a communication of goods. Jesus has given me all, and I give all to Him.

"*All that I have is thine*"—*Omnia mea tua sunt*—has He said to me. He must also be able to say: "*All that thou hast is Mine*"—*Et tua mea sunt*. He has given me His life, His labours, His merits, His blood, His Divine Heart; He gives me His body, His soul, His Divinity; He wishes to give me His glory, His happiness, His eternity. I must also give Him in return my life in all its details, my heart with all its affections, my soul with all



its powers, myself and all I have, for time and for eternity.

The exchange ought to be complete. And do I not gain everything by it? "Yes, Lord, take all and give all. Take all my miseries, since, indeed, I possess nothing else; then give me all Thou wilt of Thy riches, to make me like Thee, amiable and loving, that Thy Heart may rejoice in loving me as much as It desires, and seeing Itself loved by me as much as It has a right to expect." Furthermore, according to the Angelic Doctor, where friendship is perfect, one friend must make all his happiness consist in living with the other—"Convivitis delectabiliter." Jesus fulfils this condition so thoroughly! He finds all His delight in living with the children of men. He will remain with us till the end of time. "His eyes and His Heart remain always in our midst." He ever dwells in our tabernacles, to be our companion through life.

"O Lord, may I place all my happiness in remaining with Thee. One thing alone I desire, and I ask it from Thy love—viz., to dwell always close to Thee, in body or at least in heart; to behold Thy Eucharistic beauty and glory; to feed ever on Thy love; to pass my days and nights, as far as Thou dost wish, in blessing, in loving and contemplating Thee!"

The last condition of friendship is to share, by the deepest sympathy, every pleasure and affliction of the one we love, and have but one heart with him—"Concordat cum ipso." Jesus has fulfilled this condition admirably. He has taken our human heart, and made Himself one Heart with us; He has espoused all the interests of humanity in becoming man; He has taken all

our sorrows on Himself ; He feels by sympathy all our joys more keenly than we do ourselves. Oh, may it be the same with me, dear Lord ! May my sentiments be guided entirely by Thine, and may there be between Thy Will and mine, not only union, but unity. O Jesus, may Thy Heart be my heart, Thy sorrows my sorrows, Thy joys my joys ! O friendship ! O union ! O unity ! May I leave myself entirely to go unto Jesus : He is my Centre, He is my All ! O Jesus, Thou in me and I in Thee ! May we be united for ever, now and in eternity !

This life of friendship was truly the whole life of Gertrude, and in every line of her book the Heart of Jesus seeks only to draw us to that life. One day, as she was reading in public on the commandment, "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with all thy strength,*" one of the Sisters, struck by her loving accent, said to Our Lord : "*How much, O my God, Thou art loved by Gertrude, who teaches us with such ardour how we too ought to love Thee !*" And Jesus answered : "*From childhood I guarded and prepared her for My friendship, and preserved her pure till the day when of her own free-will she united herself to Me. Then I gave Myself entirely to her. . . . And now, with full delight, I repose in her heart. Love has united her inseparably to Me, as fire unites gold and silver to form a precious combination.*"

Gertrude gave all to Jesus, Who was able to say of her with delight, "*She has given Me all she has, without any reserve, for the salvation of the world,*" and He, in return, gave all to her—His Divine Heart, which became the heart of Gertrude ; His sacred wounds, which He im-

pressed on her ; His merits, which she used at her will ; His almighty power, of which she could dispose as a sovereign.

All the life of Gertrude was passed under the eye of Jesus, as we have seen at the beginning. She found no pleasure but in Him. "*I find nothing on earth in which I can take pleasure,*" said she to Jesus, "*except Thee alone, my Lord, Who art full of sweetness.*" And Jesus answered her : "*And I find no delight in Heaven or on earth without thee, because I have associated thee by love to all My joys, so that I enjoy no satisfaction apart from thee, and the greater My satisfaction, the greater will the fruit be for thee.*"

Thus the heart of Gertrude became for Jesus an agreeable abode, where He found His delight, and loved to rest both day and night. And He, too, gave His Divine Heart to her in a very especial manner. They had, as it were, one heart in the most complete sympathy.

What the Heart of Jesus wishes, as we have said, most from us is this life of friendship. He has opened His Heart to us for this purpose, and will henceforth call us His friends. He stands at the door of our heart and knocks : "*My child, give Me thy heart.*" He solicits us with infinite tenderness ; He needs our love in order that His own may be satisfied. We may say that He begs for our love. Oh, let us give Him what He desires ! Let us live with Him that life of friendship which is so glorious for God, since it is the triumph of His power, the exaltation of His mercy. It is, at the same time, so sweet and so fruitful for our souls, and enables us so powerfully to obtain graces for our brethren. "*One only soul beloved by God,*" said the Angels to St. Gertrude, "*has more*

*influence over the Divine Heart than thousands of others to obtain the conversion of the living and the deliverance of the dead."*

PRACTICAL CONCLUSION.—1. Let us speak to Jesus in our prayers as to a friend—"*Amice commoda mihi tres panis. Ecce quem amas*"—and we shall be entitled to expect all from His affection—" *ab amicis maxime speramus*" (St. Thomas).

2. Let us perform all our actions for Jesus, our Friend, and remember that when we serve our neighbour it is He Whom we serve—" *mihi fecistis.*"

3. In our sufferings let us keep with Jesus, our Friend, and never forget that the Cross is a gift of His love, the proof of our own, and that His friendship will sweeten, ennoble, and sanctify all our sufferings.

## ELEVENTH DAY

### LIFE OF TRUSTFUL ABANDONMENT TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

WE give an especial chapter to the *life of abandonment*, as we have already done to the *life of desire*, because abandonment is, I may dare to say, the principal virtue of souls devoted to the Sacred Heart. It is the especial characteristic of St. Gertrude's spirituality,\* and the practice which Our Lord seems to ask more than any other from the enervated souls of the present century.

By abandonment He offers them a means by which they are enabled to participate in His almighty power. He opens to them the treasures of His Heart, which undertakes to supply for all the shortcomings of souls *abandoned* to Him, and to perfect all their works. He makes them docile instruments, who place no obstacle to the action of God, and faithfully give Him the glory in all.

Oh, may we, through the intercession of St. Gertrude and the especial grace promised to the friends of the Sacred Heart, fully realize the infinite tenderness of the Heart of Jesus!

\* "*The Heart of Jesus*," say the Benedictine Fathers, translators of St. Gertrude, "*reveals His infinite mercy to St. Gertrude, and inspires her with unlimited confidence, which is as an especial gift and a characteristic of her spirituality.*"



He claims our confidence. May we ever, without fear or distrust, lovingly abandon ourselves to Him, Who desires to be our strength, our wisdom, and our love !

THE PRINCIPLE OF CONFIDING ABANDONMENT TO  
THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Let us first consider the principles which Our Lord inculcated with regard to this to the beloved disciple of His Heart. They may be reduced to two :

FIRST PRINCIPLE : CONFIDENCE BY ITSELF CAN EASILY OBTAIN ALL IT REQUIRES.\*—It was the source of every grace to St. Gertrude. She attributed to it alone all those which she had received, and invites the friends of the Heart of Jesus to place boundless confidence in Him, in order to receive from Him immeasurable grace.

One day, when she was praying for the salvation of a prodigious number of sinners, not daring to speak of reprobate souls, Our Lord first reproached her gently for having, by thus placing bounds to her confidence, put limits also to His Divine mercy ; then, after she had worded her petition according to the infinite mercy of His Heart, as she begged to know what she should do to obtain this immense grace, He answered her, "*Confidence by itself can easily obtain all things,*" and He granted all

\* In this there is question only of confidence inspired by grace and regulated by the Will of God. Let us also remember that the efficacy attributed to confidence, to desire, and to union, must not be understood in an absolute sense, but only in proportion to our dispositions and to our co-operation. Far be it from us to entertain any presumptuous illusion.

that Gertrude's confidence had hoped from His goodness.\*

St. Mechtilde repeats several times: "*It is impossible that anyone should not receive all that he had believed and hoped he would obtain.*" "*Therefore,*" adds Our Lord, when inculcating to her this truth, "*it gives Me real pleasure when men hope great things from Me, and I will always grant them more than they expect.*"†

SECOND PRINCIPLE: BY CONFIDING ABANDONMENT, THE SOUL MERITS THAT JESUS SHOULD SUPPLY IN ALL THINGS FOR HER.—"*Dost thou not think,*" said Our Lord to St. Mechtilde,

\* St. Gertrude attributed in the same way to the exceeding confidence of St. John, the beloved Apostle of the Sacred Heart, the wonderful graces he had received from his Divine friend, particularly that of having been called to Him without undergoing the horrors of death, and of seeing his virginal body already admitted to the glory of Heaven.<sup>1</sup> She at first attributed these favours to the virginity of John and to the martyrdom of compassion which he had endured at the foot of the Cross; but Jesus Christ told her that they had been granted to him as a reward for the assured confidence with which he had expected them from His boundless tenderness. The love which had inspired him with this audacity merited to see itself crowned with success.

† Our Lord adds: "*To him who shows Me this friendly confidence, I will give a grateful, loving heart, a heart full of My Divine praise.*" What a kind and consoling promise!

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<sup>1</sup> The tradition that St. John the Evangelist was translated to Heaven without dying, body and soul, here repeated by St. Gertrude, had some currency among the early Fathers, but was confuted by St. Jerome and St. Augustine, and the best supported opinion is that he died a natural death (*cf.* Butler, "Lives of the Saints," December 27, and Maldonatus, "In Joan," xxi. 22).

"that I am sufficiently rich to pay all thy debts?"  
 "Yes, Lord," she answered; "I trust everything to Thee." Jesus then said: "See, then, how I offer to God, My Father, the years of My childhood, to supply for what thou wert unable to do during thy early years; the labours of My youth, for the negligences of thine; My later years and My Passion, for the faults and omissions of thy whole life. Thus, I wish thy entire life to receive in Me and by Me its supplement and its perfection."

This is the most touching commentary of those words of Holy Scripture: "*Complevit labores illius*"—*she, i.e., Wisdom, accomplished his labours.*\* Oh, tenderness, oh, liberality of the Heart of Jesus, our Friend! He wishes to complete our works Himself, and to give our life its last perfection. He ardently desires to do so; it is for Him a real joy, for in this consists the triumph of His love and the glory of His mercy. The one thing He asks from us for this is that we trust in Him, abandon ourselves to His goodness, and leave the rest to Him. Oh yes, now and for ever, in all and for all, confidence in and abandonment to the Heart of Jesus, that He may deign to complete our task, and render full and perfect the measure of glory and of consolation which He expects from us!

### THREE LESSONS GIVEN BY THE HEART OF JESUS TO ST. GERTRUDE WITH REGARD TO CON- FIDING ABANDONMENT

I. One day, when St. Gertrude felt quite cast down and discouraged at prayer, Our Lord

\* Wisd, x, 10.

mercifully inspired her with great confidence in His Divine Heart, and, inviting her to present herself before Him, like Esther before Assuerus, He thus addressed her : “ *What dost thou command, My sovereign ?*” The Saint answered : “ *I ask, O Lord, that Thy most amiable Will may be fully accomplished in me.*” Then Jesus, naming to her one after another the persons who had recommended themselves to her prayers, said : “ *What dost thou ask for this soul and for this, and for that other, who claim more especially thy prayers ?*” Gertrude answered : “ *I only ask, O Lord, that Thy Will may be perfectly accomplished in them. All my desire and my delight is to see Thee fully satisfied in me and in all Thy creatures.*” “ *My Heart,*” replied Jesus, “ *is so touched with that confiding abandonment of thy heart to My holy Will, that it will itself supply for whatever may have hitherto been wanting in thy life in this respect, and will henceforth love thee as if thy whole life had been perfectly conformed to My good pleasure.*”

Let us also desire only the accomplishment of the Will of God in ourselves and in others ; in our own affairs and in those of the Church ; in our works of zeal and in all that we have at heart. Let us hope with confidence to obtain by our fidelity in abandonment a mercy like that which St. Gertrude obtained from the Heart of Jesus—viz., that He Himself may deign to repair all that has been wanting in us in this respect, and accept all our past prayers as if they had been in perfect conformity with His holy Will ; all our past actions as if they had been performed only to accomplish His desires ; and all our past sufferings as if they had been accepted with perfect resignation.

2. One night, when St. Gertrude was suffering more than usual from fever, she felt anxious to know whether it would increase or get better. The Lord Jesus appeared to her, carrying health in His right hand and sickness in His left. He offered her both hands, that she might choose that which she preferred. But putting aside His two hands, she bent towards His loving Heart, in which she knew the plenitude of every good resided, and answered: "*Lord, I choose nothing ; I desire only the good pleasure of Thy Heart.*" Then Jesus, causing a fountain, as it were, of grace to spring from His Heart, made it flow into that of Gertrude, saying: "*Since thou renouncest thy own will to abandon it entirely unto Mine, I pour into thee all the sweetness and all the joy of My Divine Heart.*"

What an instructive and encouraging example! Let us choose nothing ; let us ask nothing ; but abandon ourselves in all confidence to the all-wise and all-loving will of our best friend. He will choose what is most advantageous for us, and will at the same time fill us with the sweet joy of His Heart ; for no joy can be greater for a creature than to give pleasure to His Creator, to be guided by His most amiable Will, and to confide all to His watchful Providence.

3. One year, for the Feast of the Circumcision, St. Gertrude asked Our Lord for spiritual New Year's gifts for the members of her community. Jesus answered her: "*If anyone will generously renounce his own will to seek only My good pleasure, My Divine Heart will illuminate him with a vivid light to know My wishes. I will show him in what he has failed with regard to his Rule, which is the expression of My Will, and will atone with him for all his shortcomings.*"



*Like a good master instructing a dearly loved child, I will let him lean on My Heart, will gently point out to him his faults, will kindly correct what he has done amiss, and supply what he has neglected. And if, as a heedless child, he pays no attention to some points, I will attend to them for him, and make up what he has passed over. The New Year's gift most conducive to My glory that I can bestow on these souls is the desire to please Me in all things, and confiding abandonment to My Divine Heart. I will grant them, with the atonement for all their failures of the past year, light and strength to conform themselves henceforward entirely to My holy Will."*

Let us take to ourselves this luminous and consoling lesson. Let us wish only for the good pleasure of the Heart of Jesus, and then let us ask Him with confidence to repair all for us—our failures, our negligences, our omissions. Thus, by confiding abandonment we may be able to obtain that all the years of our religious life shall have the same value in His sight as if we had observed our Rule perfectly, since He will mercifully supply for all our shortcomings.

The same thing may be said of every task marked out to us by His Providence which we desire to accomplish perfectly. Confiding abandonment to His merciful goodness will always be the best means for obtaining our success.

**PRACTICAL CONCLUSION.**—Confiding abandonment—to give ourselves to the Heart of Jesus through love, with all confidence, and without fear or reserve.

## TWELFTH DAY

### LIFE OF CONFIDING ABANDONMENT TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS—*Continued*

#### ADMIRABLE FRUITS OF CONFIDING ABANDON- MENT TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

BY this confiding abandonment we deserve—

1. That He will pay all our past debts.
2. That He will perfect all our works in the present time.
3. That He will prepare for us for the future an ever-increasing abundance of grace, for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

1. We have three debts to pay : *debt of atonement* for all our faults ; *debt of gratitude* for graces received ; *debt of charity* towards God and man, according to that word of St. Paul : “ *Nemini quidquam debeatis nisi ut invicem diligatis* ”—*Owe no man anything, but to love one another* (Rom. xiii. 8). We incur this debt by our failures and shortcomings in the duty we owe to God and to our neighbour. If we leave the *debt of atonement* to Our Lord, He will pay it out of the treasures of His Heart, as we have seen above.

*The debt of gratitude*, which St. Gertrude was so wishful to pay entirely, as may be seen

in so many places, where she calls to her aid the thanksgivings of all creatures, of those especially who may read her book in future times, is paid for us by Jesus through the thanksgivings of His Eucharistic Heart, as He paid it for St. Gertrude, particularly with regard to the debt of gratitude she owed to Our Blessed Lady.

Finally, our *debt of charity*. This Our Lord will also acquit, "*in drawing from the riches of His Heart treasures, both new and old*"—that is to say, His own merits and those of His Church, both in the Old and in the New Testament. These will more than satisfy for all our failures and shortcomings in His service.

2. With regard to the present, be it prayers, actions, or sacrifices, Jesus will complete all in such a manner that *nothing will be wanting*, especially in the six following points, which he will fill up for us, as He filled the six water-pots of Cana, "*usque ad summum*," to the very brim.

(1) *Our Faults*.—He covers them over by the merits of His holy life, as He showed St. Gertrude, and makes them serve for our advancement, by the practice of humility and by our efforts to correct them. He wishes to make them contribute, in an admirable way, to the glory and consolation of His Heart, by teaching us to atone for them with the intention of atoning at the same time for the faults of our brethren throughout the whole world. Let us offer Him these faults with a free and full confidence, that so He may utilize them according to His merciful designs. He looks upon them (in a way) as if they were *His own*—"*Verba delictorum meorum*"—*The words of My sins* (Ps. xxi. 2)—since we are one with Him,

and He undertakes to draw from them a large amount of good, according to the hopes we have placed in Him: "*Misericordia quemadmodum speravimus*"—*Mercy according as we have hoped in Thee.*

(2) *Our Failures.*—St. Gertrude had implored one of her Sisters to beg Our Lord to correct her failures. The Sister received from Him the following answer: "*Just as a field covered with manure becomes in consequence more fertile, so the knowledge which Gertrude has of her failures makes her gather fruits of grace much more delicious. Besides, I hide them by the abundance of My gifts, and in time will transform them into as many virtues.*"

The Heart of Jesus will act in the same way with all His friends, for He is careful about His own interests and those of His Church, to which our shortcomings seem detrimental. Leave him to act; He will remedy all. Only let us humble ourselves each time we are aware of our failures, earnestly endeavour to correct ourselves, and then confidence and abandonment! He will, by the bestowal of other gifts, prevent any loss that might result from them, and little by little, if we leave Him to act, He will transform them into virtues. But let us remember, we must leave Him free to act. Our troubles, our agitations, our vexations perhaps, and our impatience with ourselves, impede the work of His mercy, and do us much more harm than our failures themselves. Abandonment and confidence! Let the work go on! Let the work go on!

(3) *Our Negligences.*—We have seen in several places how Jesus undertakes to repair all our negligences with regard to love, praise, zeal,

etc., in proportion to our confidence in Him, and we have already meditated that consoling word of Our Lord to St. Mechtilde : “ *Prefer far more that My love repair thy negligences rather than thyself, in order that all the honour and glory may redound to Me.*”

(4) *Our Omissions.*—The good Master has taught us above how He wishes to supply for them.

(5) *Our Incapacities.*—Let us remember with regard to these Our Lord’s recommendation to St. Gertrude : “ *I give thee My Heart, that it may supply for all thy incapacities. . . . Make use of it, and thy works will charm the eye and the ear of the Divinity.*”

(6) *Our Inutilities.*—Even the time we pass in sleep and our early years, before we had attained the use of reason, Our Lord deigns to utilize in applying to them the merits of His life, provided we offer them to Him with confidence, as we have seen above.

In a word, Jesus takes a fatherly care of our interests, which are one with His. Let us cast all our cares into His Divine Heart, and He will take charge of them. Leave all to Him, and we *shall want for nothing*. Let us abandon ourselves, with full confidence, to His all-wise, all-beneficent Providence, and He will make everything tend to the accomplishment of His merciful designs over us.

3. In fine, with regard to the future, if we have entirely abandoned ourselves to Our Lord, so that He may do as He wills with us, for the accomplishment of His designs, He will render us prodigies of grace, in order to compensate Himself for so many hearts which close themselves against His gifts and bind the arms of



His mercy. For He is essentially *a good diffusive of Himself*. His love has need to love; His goodness seeks to bestow. Let us trust and abandon ourselves. His love for us will ever increase, His liberality be greater every day, until He is able to crown us in His mercy.

PRACTICAL CONCLUSION.—St. Thomas says: “*Confidence is hope strengthened by any conviction*”—*Fiducia est spes roborata ex aliqua convictione: Deum esse meum amicum*.

Hence confidence is the certain fruit of devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, since this devotion necessarily makes us His devoted friends.

Through the following means we may, by successive degrees, attain the full measure of confidence which Our Lord expects from us:

I. VIRTUE OF CONFIDENCE.—It may have several degrees.

(1) *Faith*.—My God, I trust in Thee, to obtain both grace and glory, according to the teachings of our holy Faith.

(2) *Circumstances arranged by Providence*.—I trust in Thee, according as Thou dost show, by these arrangements of Thy Providence, that Thou desirest me to do so—for example, in imposing this charge on me, Thou wishest me to trust to Thee for strength to fulfil it; in placing me among edifying companions, Thou wilt me to trust to Thee for grace to profit of their example.

(3) *The Attraction of Grace*.—I trust in Thee as far as I am drawn by Thy grace: for example, this morning at Holy Communion Thou didst inspire me to advance in humility; I trust entirely to Thee for grace to do so,

knowing "*that He Who hath begun a good work (in me) will perfect it*" (Phil. i. 6).

(4) *The Will of God*.—I wish to confide in Thee, as entirely as Thou dost wish it Thyself.

(5) *Indefinite Advance in Confidence*.—Increase in me without ceasing both faith and confidence.

2. GIFT OF CONFIDENCE.—Grant me, O Lord, for the sake of Thy glory, the *especial* gift of confidence, which is above all virtue, and the sweetest present Thou canst bestow upon Thy devoted friends.

The virtue is in part the result of our own efforts. The gift comes purely from God, and St. Gertrude attributes her graces to the gift of confidence rather than to the virtue.

3. STATE OF CONFIDENCE.—Lord, establish me most firmly in the state of confidence, which is the most glorious for Thee, and the most profitable for Thy Church.

This state includes three dispositions :

(1) *Pure Love*.—I desire God alone, and forget myself entirely.

(2) *Pure Abandonment*.—I abandon myself without reserve to God, that He may do with me absolutely whatever He may will.

(3) *Pure Confidence*.—Therefore I have full confidence in Him, since it is He alone Who works, both as end and as means, whilst I completely disappear. He cannot be wanting to Himself.

Thus is obtained that full degree of confidence to which *nothing is wanting*, and which glorifies so immensely the Heart of Jesus in allowing Him to accomplish in us and by us the designs of His infinite mercy.

## THIRTEENTH DAY

### THE LIFE OF WORSHIP IN THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

WE may consider this life successively in regard to the four ends of the Divine Sacrifice, referring, however, the life of prayer to the fourth day.

#### LIFE OF ADORATION

The Holy Spirit Who formed St. Gertrude so carefully for religious perfection taught her, above all, "to adore God by Jesus Christ, which is the first and highest of all devotions," and the Heart of Jesus, the perfect Adorer of the Father, is always the Divine organ through which she offers to God the tribute of her adoration.

The Holy Spirit now, more than He has ever done in times gone by, wishes to lead us also to a life of adoration, and the Heart of Jesus ardently desires to communicate to us His own perfect sentiments in this regard. "*Venit hora et nunc est quando veri adoratores adorabunt Patrem in spiritu et veritate*"—*The hour now is when the true adorers shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth* (John iv. 23). Nothing is more remarkable nor more consoling

in the midst of the troubles of present times than this diffusion of the grace of adoration, this multiplication of works established and religious institutions consecrated to it. This comes, in the first place, from the diffusion of the eucharistic spirit, which seems to be one of the graces of these later times, and of which adoration is the first and principal characteristic. It comes also from the special need of our century, when, revolt against God attaining its limits, adoration, which is submission to Him, should also spread to its uttermost bounds, that atonement may be equal to the offence.

This is the reason why Divine Providence, which in every period takes care to supply the Church with remedies opposed to the evils by which she is attacked, pours over her, in present times, the spirit of adoration.

We ought, then, to broach the subject now proposed for our meditations with an ardent desire to profit by it, and with boundless confidence, for nothing is more calculated to excite our desires and strengthen that confidence than the thought: I know that I enter into the designs of Providence, and conform myself to the Will of God, which should regulate every desire. I know that I place myself in the actual stream of grace, which will bear me gently along and make me abound in spiritual gifts.

I. EUCHARISTIC ADORATION.—The eucharistic soul ought to adore God in union *with* the Heart of Jesus and *by* the Heart of Jesus which is the model and organ of all perfect adoration. The first act of sacrifice which Jesus makes in descending on the altar, as He formerly did when He came into the world, is

an act of adoration. "*Behold, I come to do Thy Will, O God*" (St. Paul, Heb. x. 9). "*I acknowledge Thee for my Creator and Sovereign Master, and my heart submits itself entirely to Thee. Thou hast given me my body, and all that I possess. I come to sacrifice my whole being unto Thee, in the acknowledgment of my entire dependence.*"

Can the eucharistic soul do better than appropriate to herself these sentiments of the Heart of Jesus when He enters the sanctuary, in order to recognize with Him and by Him the sovereign domain of God, to submit to it with her whole heart and abandon herself to it without reserve?

It is thus that our sacrifice ought to commence, and if we feel ourselves powerless in the presence of this infinite Majesty, let us make use of the Heart of Jesus, which will supply for our incapacity and offer for us to the Most High its tribute of perfect adoration. Our Lord places His Divine Heart at the disposal of the eucharistic soul like a willing servant, as He told St. Gertrude. He earnestly desires to aid us in fulfilling our duties of religion to God. It is a keen joy and a real glory to Him to supply for what is wanting in us. Let us, then, make use of His Sacred Heart, and we may be certain that our acts of worship will no longer be unworthy of the thrice holy God.

2. SOLEMN ADORATION WITH EXPOSITION OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT.—This adoration seems to be the best suited to the eucharistic soul, because Jesus in the Sacred Host thus manifests Himself in the most striking way as the object, the model, and the organ of our adorations. The works of adoration evi-



dently adopt more and more this form of devotion, and if in the last two centuries some institutes were founded for adoration without exposition, all those founded in the present century have consecrated themselves to solemn adoration with exposition. It is also with this solemnity that the perpetual adoration, which becomes more and more general, has been established in several of our dioceses, and already, for some centuries, the devotion of the Forty Hours, which continues perpetually in Rome, is always accompanied by exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

(1) This form, as we have said, more manifestly reveals to us Jesus, the Sacred Host, as the *object* of our adorations; proposes Him directly to our worship, and invites us by itself to pay Him our homage. "*Venite, procidamus ante Deum; venite, adoremus Dominum*"—Come, let us adore and fall down before the Lord (Ps. xciv.).

In solemn exposition Jesus shows Himself as the Divine Sun, from which we receive light, warmth, and life; as the King, crowned with glory, to Whom we ought to submit. He is on His throne, surrounded by honour and majesty, receiving the worship of Angels, who form His Court and who invite us to join our adorations to theirs.

(2) But under this form Jesus still remains the same *model* of our adorations, because He is ever the Hidden Victim, sacrificing, humbling, annihilating Himself. This is perfect adoration. Let the eucharistic soul gaze on the model shown her from on high and resplendent in her sight. Midst the graces lavished on her by God, the lights which He has poured into

her, she will feel that her duty is to remain always hidden, to sacrifice herself entirely to the Divine Majesty from Whom she has received all, to humble herself in proportion to the gifts bestowed upon her, and to annihilate herself in the most perfect submission, the most absolute dependence.

In the same manner, with regard to her brethren whom she represents before Jesus, or rather with Jesus Himself, she will feel that she has only one thing to do—viz., to imitate the Divine Saviour, Who always remains as a Victim to intercede in their favour; Who humbles Himself for them, and makes Himself their slave; Who, for their sake, becomes obedient in the Holy Eucharist in a more touching manner than on Calvary; annihilates Himself for them more profoundly than on the Cross, in order to be always Jesus, their Saviour. Let the eucharistic soul unite herself to these sentiments, and offer them without ceasing to God for her brethren, through the eucharistic Heart of Jesus.

(3) Jesus, the Sacred Host, solemnly exposed, offers Himself to us in a most especial manner, to be the *organ* of the worship we wish to pay to God in the name of the whole Church, since in this public adoration He appears as the Pontiff and Victim of her universal worship. He is there to adore God in the name of all. The eucharistic soul has only to unite herself to Him, and by His Divine Heart she can offer to God all the homage of the most perfect religion for herself and for her brethren.

Our Lord had inspired St. Gertrude with a great devotion to gaze on Him thus exposed to view in the Sacred Host. This was one of her

favourite practices, and one day the good Master said to her, in reference to this: "*Each time that anyone thus looks lovingly at the Host, which contains sacramentally My Divine Body, he will increase his merits for Heaven, and add to his eternal joys an especial delight, corresponding to that with which he devoutly contemplated this precious Body on earth.*"

3. NOCTURNAL ADORATION.—For souls devoted to the Sacred Heart, there is a very especial joy in adoring Him and offering Him their worship during the silence of night, when He is forgotten by others. This joy was foreseen by the Royal Prophet when he rose during the night to adore his Lord, and manifested also by the Apostle, when, as Holy Scripture tells us, the gaoler found him in his prison singing the praises of Jesus Christ with his companion, in the midst of darkness.

In like manner, the love of the eucharistic soul knows no repose. Her heart is ever watching, even during those hours which Nature has consecrated to sleep. Her desire to honour Jesus never fails, night or day, *voluntas ejus permanet die ac nocte*, and her worship of the eucharistic God is perpetual. Yes, truly perpetual, for she has associated herself with others, by whom she is replaced when obliged to absent herself from before the Tabernacle, and Jesus Himself, the Sacred Host, placing Himself *in the midst* of those souls, reunited in His name, joins with them, watches with and for them, and perfects their work of adoration. Like to the strong woman of the Scripture, the soul devoted to the Holy Eucharist "*hath tasted and seen that her traffic is good: her lamp shall not be put out in the night*"—Gus-

*tavit, et vidit quia bona est negotiatio ejus: non extinguetur in nocte lucerna ejus* (Prov. xxxi. 18). She works continually for the interests of the Church, which is her family, and for the glory of her Divine Spouse. Who could tell what fruits of salvation she produces by this indefatigable labour, what riches she amasses for the ransom of souls by this continual supplication! Hence the Heart of Jesus *trusts to her*. She glorifies Him both day and night, and the Divine Spouse prepares for her inexpressible joys *for the last day*. And on examining this subject from a theological point of view, nocturnal adoration gives an especial glory to the God of the Eucharist for several reasons. The worship He receives is offered in a more profound recollection when all Nature is in silence. The chants of praise are more pleasing to Him when a portion of one's repose is sacrificed to contemplate His perfections and celebrate His bounties. We thus, to a certain degree, imitate the citizens of Heaven, who, according to the beloved Apostle, serve God day and night in His temple. We repair by this meritorious work the disorders of the world, which consecrates the hours of night to gambling and intemperance, and the Heart of Jesus must feel a sweet joy in seeing before Him souls gathered together to console Him at a time when others outrage Him the most. In fine, the zeal of those ancient solitaries who in their deserts kept up a continual psalmody is thus perpetuated, as much as possible, in Christianity.\* O eucharistic soul, raise, then, your hands during the night to the Saint of Saints! Bless Him, invoke Him for us all.

\* V. Bertier, "Psalms" (Ps. xxxiii).

Adore Him in the presence of His Angels; repair the sins committed against Him, while the Sacred Host is thus raised between earth and Heaven, in order continually to draw down mercy upon the guilty world !

4. PERPETUAL ADORATION.—Let us apply to perpetual adoration what we have said about nocturnal adoration, which is only its completion.

The happiness of the eucharistic soul is complete when she can offer to Our Lord, with her associates, a perpetual worship, never interrupted by day or by night. She thus repeats without cessation the *Sanctus* which the angels sing in Heaven, and, even in this life, anticipates the eternal adorations which she will, ere long, offer to the Most High with the Heavenly Court.



## FOURTEENTH DAY

### LIFE OF ADORATION—*Continued*

5. **A**DORATION OF REPARATION. — Every act of adoration is one of atonement, whether it is in a general way, or, in particular, as it regards eucharistic adoration.

(1) Taking it in general, adoration, consisting in the acknowledgment of our dependence upon God and our entire submission to Him, is consequently directly opposed to sin, which is essentially an act of independence and revolt against Him. *Non serviam*—I will not serve; *Adorabo*—I will adore. These are the two opposite terms; therefore they who adore in spirit and in truth repair sin directly and efficaciously; and if the adoration is public and solemn, the reparation becomes equally public and solemn. This is the principle on which the adoration of the Forty Hours has been instituted — that devotion which has been carried on for so long in the Church to repair publicly, and with solemnity, the sins committed by the world against Our Lord.

(2) But, as we have already seen, since it is above all in the Divine Eucharist that the majesty and the love of our God are outraged, the atonement most required for His glory and the salvation of the world will be found

in eucharistic adoration. Where outrage is most odious, there adoration must show itself most intense. Where iniquity multiplies its offences, there adoration must multiply its worship, its solemn festivals, and the splendour of its services. And taking another point of view, here again is manifested one of the great duties of the eucharistic soul, one of the necessary tasks which she ought to accomplish in silence and humility. Precisely because she has to atone for the outrages committed by pride, she ought to humble herself more profoundly. Abasement and obedience unto death can alone offer a worthy satisfaction to the Divine Majesty, against which our century revolts with such audacity.

6. THE COMPANIONS OF THE ADORING SOUL.—Our Lord had confided St. Gertrude, in a very especial manner, to the Choir of Dominations, that they might assist her in the life of adoration. These celestial intelligences one day said to her: "As regal honour loves judgment, and as love, impelled by its ardour, ignores the curb of reason, each time that the King of glory abases Himself to your soul, and your soul in return plunges itself into Him by a transport of love, we adore Him in your name, and offer Him, for you, the worship due to His greatness, in order that His sovereign glory may lose nothing from the familiarity which He allows you."

Let us ask these dear companions of the adoring soul to help us also in the worship we ought to pay to the King of kings; to inspire us with their sentiments of profound respect, and associate us to the homage they render Him.

The Church makes us invoke them at Holy Mass, just before the God of the Eucharist descends on the altar, in order that they may help us to receive Him with the honour which is His due, and adore Him like the Angels who surround that altar : *adorant Dominationes*.

7. THE JOYS OF THE LIFE OF ADORATION.—This life is itself, for a soul able to comprehend, a life full of joy, order, and peace ; for it is a life entirely consecrated to the good pleasure of God, dependent on His holy Will, and abandoned to His Sovereign dominion. Now, the pleasure of God is joy itself ; His Will is perfect order ; His Sovereign domain is the reign of peace.

If we recite simply, but seriously and with sincerity, the popular act of adoration, we shall find in it all these different sentiments and dispositions.

“O my God, I *willingly* recognize Thee for my Creator and Sovereign Lord ; I rejoice in Thee, Who art the source of all good, and in Thy Divinity, which is the infinite source of infinite perfections. Oh yes, with my whole heart I submit myself entirely to Thee ; I abandon myself without reserve to Thy power, Thy wisdom, and Thy goodness, and place myself for ever under the influence of Thy love, which is goodness itself, all joy and all peace.”

These sentiments become more intense when expressed to Jesus Himself exposed on the altar, when we feel, as it were, the echo of the sentiments of His own Heart, and can say to ourselves : “By my adoration I am about to increase joy, order, and peace around Jesus and by Jesus, in Jesus Himself and in His members. I enter into the joy of my Master ;

He establishes me in His peace ; He ordains in me His charity. I rejoice Him, and He rejoices me. I appease His anger, and He calms my troubles. I dispel as far as I am able the evils which are the cause of so much suffering to Him. In me and by me I make Him live and reign in love and in joy."

8. THE VIRTUES OF THE ADORING SOUL.—By the life of adoration the eucharistic soul enters into the practice of the three virtues so eminently glorious to God, and which constitute the highest perfection—namely, *the love of complacency* towards God, *abandonment* to God, *dependence* upon God.

(1) This soul delights in acknowledging God for her Creator and her Master, from Whom she has received all that she has ; for the perfect Being to Whom she is indebted for all that she is. Now, is not this true love of complacency towards God, considering Him thus as the Sovereign Good in Himself and the source of all good to us ?

(2) Adoration ought also to lead to the complete abandonment of ourselves to God ; we submit entirely to His Sovereign domain, and this submission, if sincere and without reserve, whether for body or for soul, for mind or will, for time or for eternity, must necessarily result in the practice of complete abandonment.

(3) Hence it leads us to place ourselves so entirely under the hand of God that He can dispose of us as He wills, and that His Holy Spirit can, without any obstacle, guide us in all, and become the one primary agent of our actions. Had we not reason to say that this state is the most glorious for God and that of the greatest perfection for ourselves ?

Oh may the adoring soul advance with ardour in the practice of those three virtues which constitute the highest sanctity of Christian life ! The God of the Blessed Eucharist desires to grant them to her in full measure for His glory and the consolation of His Sacred Heart. Jesus is so happy to see at His feet a soul who places all her delight in Him ; one who abandons herself entirely to Him, and of whom He can dispose at His will. He will make her a prodigy of grace, to compensate for the continual resistance He meets with in other souls.

“ *Courage, good and faithful servant,*” He seems to say ; “ *enter fully into the joy of Thy Lord. Since thou hast left all for me, I will be everything to thee ; enter into the powers of thy God. Into that of the Father, by perfect abandonment ; into the jubilation of the Word, by union with the praises of Jesus Christ, thy Head ; into the love of the Holy Ghost, by union with that Divine Spirit Who abides in Thee. Live in abandonment, praise and love !*” Thus the life of adoration associates us with the power of God, makes us, as it were, one joy, one love with Him.

9. PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR ADORATION.  
—(I) *The Throne for Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.*—The Holy Spirit, in that canticle so especially one of adoration, praise, and love, teaches us an admirable method of rendering to Jesus in the Eucharist the public and solemn worship of adoration. Let us first of all raise a *throne* where He may be exposed to the eyes of all and receive our homage. This throne, *made of the wood of Libanus*, is, in a mystical sense, the immaculate heart and the arms of the Blessed Virgin, His Mother, which alone



are worthy to expose Jesus to our sight and offer Him to our worship. The columns supporting this throne are of *silver*, and symbolize the preaching or the public worship which should lead the souls of our brethren to Jesus in the Eucharist: "*the going up of purple*," because the blood of expiation, of penance, of mortification, is necessary to raise us up to Jesus, *the seat of gold*, for He reposes in charity, which is figured by gold. *The throne is covered with tapestry worked by the daughters of Jerusalem, in which are represented different figures, which symbolize the Saviour's love for our souls.*

What a happiness for us to work at these columns, these steps, these mystical coverings! After having thus prepared the throne on which Jesus deigns to receive our adorations, we will invite *the daughters of Sion* (the souls of our brethren) *to come and contemplate* (with us) *the true Solomon, the Prince of Peace*, in the diadem wherewith His Mother crowned Him on *the day of His espousals and in the day of the joy of His Heart*. We will take delight in crowning Him with honour and glory; we will proclaim Him King of mercy, King of love; we will celebrate His spiritual nuptials with our souls, and insure to His most loving Heart a day of perfect joy.

(2) *Adoration at all Hours*.—Our Lord had asked the Blessed Margaret Mary not to pass any hour of the day without coming to adore Him in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar. One can, with less inconvenience than at first would seem inevitable, manage to accomplish this practice of tender love, which is so rich in graces.

In holy religion the rule itself may lead us at several hours of the day before the Blessed

Sacrament. With regard to the remaining hours, it suffices to go for a moment towards the end of one hour, and this short adoration will serve at the same time for the following one. We can always go, at least in desire, and ask our Angel guardian to do so effectively in our name. Oh, how fidelity to this kind of perpetual adoration pleases the Heart of Jesus ! He says to the soul who is thus always with Him : “ *My child, thou art ever with Me, and all that I have is thine.*” Oh, who could tell what treasures of grace are opened to us by this word ?

(3) *Jesus Adorer for us.*—St. Mechtilde, as we have seen, having said to Our Lord, “ *I would wish to adore Thee in the name of all creatures,*” Jesus answered her : “ *I, Who am the centre of all creatures, the Priest of the whole creation, offer to God, as if from thee, this universal adoration in the name of all.*”

With this we conclude our words on perfect adoration.

## FIFTEENTH DAY

### LIFE OF THANKSGIVING

LET us here finish what we have elsewhere said of thanksgiving, and not fear to insist on this virtue, in which St. Gertrude especially excelled. Thanksgiving is the first fruit that Our Lord invites us to draw from His Divine Heart, and it will be the last hymn the Church will chant with Him at the end of time.

I. HOW MUCH THE EUCHARISTIC SOUL SHOULD EXCEL IN THE PRACTICE OF THANKSGIVING.—Her title alone will remind her of this, since *Eucharist* means *thanksgiving*. Jesus, in instituting the Divine Eucharist, wished to multiply His thanksgivings to His Father as many times as there would be Hosts consecrated throughout the world, and in uniting us to Himself in the eucharistic life, He would make our hearts the echo of His own infinite gratitude for Himself and for us. To respond fully to His intentions, the life of the eucharistic soul ought to be one of continual thanksgiving. Our Lord takes pleasure in making known to her, in the intimacy of prayer, all the mysteries of His love for her and for sinners, and invites her to unite with Him in paying, in the name

of all, that debt of gratitude which nearly everyone forgets.

Let her, then, be grateful like the Heart of Jesus and by the Heart of Jesus, that in union with Him she may be, in the Church of God, a public organ of gratitude !

This life of thanksgiving ought, it seems, to take a more considerable development in our century, since the grace of these latter times appears to be an effusion of the eucharistic spirit—viz., the spirit of thanksgiving—*spiritum gratiæ*. Besides, it is only right that at the end of time the world should chant more fully the hymn of gratitude to the Author of all our good, in order that the creature's thanks may crown the whole series of the Creator's benefits.

2. THANKSGIVING BY THE EUCHARISTIC HEART OF JESUS.—“*Quid retribuam Domino pro omnibus quæ retribuit mihi ?*”—*What shall I render to the Lord for all the things that He hath rendered to me ?* (Ps. cxv.), exclaims the eucharistic soul with the Royal Prophet. He has given me all, and has given Himself. What can I render him equivalent to or worthy of Himself ? What offering can I find in my treasures whose value would not be infinitely below that of the least drop of the adorable Blood which He has shed for me ? Truly I have nothing that I can offer. But Jesus, touched with compassion at the sight of my poverty, gives me His eucharistic Heart to serve as the organ of my gratitude, and that I may offer It to Him again as a gift of infinite value. By It I render to God as much, and even more, than He has given me, as the law of gratitude demands ; for I can only receive and possess all

that He has given me in a finite manner, while what I render to Him, by the eucharistic Heart of Jesus, is truly infinite. Thus I fulfil the duty of *gratitude* in all its perfection, and render to God more than He has bestowed on me. I give Him a free gift.

3. THANKSGIVING FOR ALL THINGS.—(1) *Even for the most insignificant.* “Thou knowest, O my God,” exclaims St. Gertude, “the cause of my most bitter grief, of my deepest confusion—viz., my infidelity, my irreverence, my ingratitude in the use of Thy benefits. Yes, if Thou, so great, hadst given to me, so undeserving, a mere thread of tow, it would have been my duty to show Thee more reverence and more love than I have done after so many graces.”

Such are the feelings which ought to animate the eucharistic soul in her gratitude towards God—humility, reverence, love, fidelity, with a good use of the blessings received. She should be animated with these dispositions in the reception of even the least grace, in order to give to her gratitude the delicacy and depth which befit our extreme lowliness and the infinite majesty of our Divine Benefactor.

(2) “*Hoc facite in meam commemorationem.*” St. Mechtilde asked Our Lord what gave Him the most pleasure in man. He answered: “When he meditates with deep gratitude, and continually remembers all the sufferings and injuries I endured during thirty-three years; in what poverty I lived, what insults I had to support from My creatures, and, finally, how much I suffered on the Cross, dying by the most bitter death for the love of man, to redeem his soul by My precious Blood, and render it My faithful



*spouse. Let each one be animated with as much love and gratitude for all these benefits as if I had suffered them for him alone."*

Oh, may the eucharistic soul take these words to herself! What will please Our Lord the most in her will be that she keep constantly before her the remembrance of His benefits, and be grateful for them all. Since the Eucharist is the memorial of the Passion, the eucharistic soul must ever be mindful of it, in order to thank Jesus for so much love, in her own name and in the name of her brethren. May she faithfully, constantly, perfectly give to Our Lord what His Divine Heart desires the most—viz., gratitude—and console Him to the utmost for what He feels most deeply—that is, ingratitude! May she thus ever keep before her a lively remembrance of Jesus in His Passion and in the Holy Eucharist, and herself fully accomplish that last recommendation of His love: "*Hoc facite in meam commemorationem*"—*Do this for a commemoration of Me* (Luke xxii. 19).

(3) *Thanksgiving for all Our Sufferings.*—Generally speaking, the sufferings which Our Lord sends to the eucharistic soul are accompanied by divers marks of Divine and delicate tenderness, one more loving than the other, and which ought to excite in her an ever-increasing gratitude. We see this in a touching manner by the example of St. Gertrude. Our Lord showed her first that by the trials He sent her He wished to detach her from all creatures and draw her exclusively to Himself. "*I love so much to converse with thee,*" He said to her on an occasion of this kind, "*and have wished by this means to enjoy My happiness for a longer time. The mother of a little child whom she*

*loves tenderly and desires to have always at her side, when he wishes to go away and play with his little comrades, places hard by some object to frighten him, and he immediately runs back to take refuge on her bosom. So, as I wish to have thee always near Me, I allow creatures to make thee suffer, that thou mayest come to Me and repose in Me alone."*

In the second place, Jesus loads her with consolation in the midst of her trials, in order to manifest the tenderness of His Divine Heart and excite her to a deeper gratitude. He wishes thus to alleviate her sufferings so sweetly by the unction of His grace that they may appear to her much lighter than those of her Sisters, and in this manner the Divine Wisdom prepares for her through those very sufferings a *choice garment, whose beauty is enhanced by the flowers of humility and patience with which it is adorned.*

The Saint, giving herself up to transports of gratitude for all these tender manifestations of the love of Jesus, sees these delicate flowers transform themselves and become massive gold, and He gives her to understand that thanksgiving for even the slightest sufferings He sends us in His love supplies for what is wanting in their intrinsic worth, and gives them a value which may be compared to that of pure gold.

Our Lord inspires her to offer all her sufferings for the salvation of others, and, the Saint doing this with renewed signs of gratitude, Jesus accepts her offering with so much pleasure that He forgives for love of her an innumerable multitude of sinners.

Such, O eucharistic soul, is the tender love

of the Heart of Jesus for you ! Such are your sufferings in His sight ! Such the value of thanksgiving !

(4) "*Calicem salutaris accipiam*"—*I will take the chalice of salvation* (Ps. cxv.). St. Gertrude, at Holy Mass, offered to God, at the moment of the elevation, the precious Blood of Jesus, in thanksgiving for all His benefits, and feeling, at the same time, that in this offering she ought to unite herself to the sentiments of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, she prostrated, with her face to the ground, and said to the Heavenly Father : "*I offer myself with Jesus for all that can most contribute to Thy glory.*" Our Lord at once prostrated at her side, saying : "*I am but one with this soul.*" Quite overjoyed at this word, Gertrude said to Him : "*Yes, Lord, I am all Thine.*" And He answered : "*I have united myself so closely to thee, by the chains of My love, that I cannot live happily without thee.*"

Eucharistic soul, wilt thou that Jesus take His delight in thee ? Wilt thou, according to the best of thy power, make Him happy, and show Him perfect gratitude ? Drink from His chalice, that chalice from which He has drunk the first, and which He now offers thee in token of His friendship. Share the sorrows and sufferings of His Divine Heart, the true chalice of bitterness, whose overflowing contents He wishes to pour into the hearts of His friends. Thy gratitude must extend to this. Jesus has loved us with the truest, most earnest love—a love the most devoted, most tender, most constant—and therefore has, for our sake, drunk deeply from the chalice of suffering and humiliation. Our love must resemble His ;

gratitude must return Him like for like—“*cogita quoniam oportet te talia præparare.*”

4. THANKSGIVING FOR EVERYONE.—We have already shown, in several places, how St. Gertrude fulfilled, in the name of all, the duty of thanksgiving ; we have also seen how, in giving thanks for the Saints, she teaches us to appropriate to ourselves their merits and their virtues.

5. PERPETUAL THANKSGIVING.—“*Semper et ubique gratias agere*”—Always and in all places give thanks (Preface). Holy Church invites us to this practice at the moment when the eucharistic Victim is about to appear on the altar, by Him to return thanks to God always and in all places. This is the need of the eucharistic soul. Her debt of gratitude weighs her down. It seems to her that eternity will not suffice for its acquittal. Not only does she wish to employ her whole life in this, but she also invites her brethren to help her in offering to God a perpetual hymn of thanksgiving. “*Unable, O Lord, to bless Thee as I desire,*” exclaims St. Gertrude, “*I call all creatures to my aid. I beseech Thee to load with Thy favours those who help me, were it only by a sigh, to pay my debt of gratitude.*” And she obtained, by the ardent desires of her grateful heart, that whosoever (even a sinner) to the end of time thanked God for her should not die without being converted or raised to a higher sanctity.\*

6. THANKSGIVING IN UNION WITH ALL CREATURES.—“*For all Thy blessings,*” exclaimed

\* *The Association of Perpetual Thanksgiving*, at Bordeaux has St. Gertrude for its especial Patroness.

St. Gertrude, "O God most loving, and all love for men, I thank Thee, in union with the reciprocal thanksgivings which exist between the adorable Persons of the Holy Trinity, in union with those of Jesus and of all creatures reasonable or inanimate. Deign, O my beloved Jesus, to accomplish this duty of thanksgiving for me to the full extent which justice requires. Praise Thy Father in me and for me with all the strength of Thy Divinity, in all the love of Thy Humanity, and in the name of the whole universe of beings." She then invites all creatures to join with her in a hymn of thanks, making use of the Psalms of Lauds, which express these sentiments so well, and adding to them whatever the most lively and tender gratitude could inspire.

With regard to this subject, the book of the "Exercises of St. Gertrude" might be used with great profit, as it contains an especial one for thanksgiving.

7. THREE FRUITS OF THANKSGIVING.—In the practice of thanksgiving the eucharistic soul may find three inexhaustible mines of spiritual riches, which she may work for herself and for the Church :

(1) Those who thank God for the graces bestowed on others, and hope to receive the like, will obtain them.

(2) In thanking God for all the graces which others have been unwilling to accept, we deserve to receive them ourselves, and thus profit by the recommendation given in the Gospel: "*Colligite fragmenta ne pereant*"—*Gather up the fragments . . . lest they be lost* (John vi. 12).

(3) In thanking God for all the graces of which others have not made good use—crosses,



sacrifices, etc.—we appropriate them to ourselves, as if we ourselves had made profit by them.\*

Jesus loves better to show gratitude than to receive it. Let us leave Him to do this. Leave Him to enrich us with His graces, in order that we may do more for Him, and that He may have the joy of showing us in return His gratitude for all during the whole of eternity.

Misery and affliction call forth a deeper gratitude; let us, then, rejoice in our miseries, which manifest more clearly the bounties of Jesus, and should excite in us, as we have said, a deeper gratitude: "*Libenter gloriabor in infirmitatibus meis*"—*Gladly, therefore, will I glory in my infirmities* (St. Paul, 2 Cor., xii. 9).

\* Let us again remember that all this is to be understood in proportion to our dispositions and to our co-operation.

## SIXTEENTH DAY

### LIFE OF REPARATION

**I**T may be said that never was the life of reparation more wanted than it is in our days, for never was God so publicly outraged, so fearlessly blasphemed.

Never has the ruin of souls been so complete, for the faith of the people is sapped to its foundations. Never has scandal been so widespread, for it has become national, nor so disastrous, for it attacks even childhood, our last hope. Now, more than ever, then, has Our Lord need of souls who seriously and generously make reparation, and aid Him in atoning for these outrages against God, in saving souls from ruin, and in repairing these awful scandals.

### THE LIFE OF REPARATION IS ESPECIALLY THE PORTION OF THE EUCHARISTIC SOUL

Who will respond to the urgent need of the Heart of Jesus and of His Church? Without doubt all souls of goodwill who love God and their neighbour, but particularly all eucharistic souls. The life of reparation is their especial portion, for they live always with Jesus in the Tabernacle, and He is the *first object*, the *model* and the *means* of our reparations.

1. He is in the Tabernacle the principal object of the life of atonement, for, as we have shown elsewhere, it is principally in the Holy Eucharist that Our Lord is most cruelly outraged. Profanation of the Eucharist is for man the most fearful of crimes, since by it he eats and drinks his own condemnation. It is through contempt or abandonment of the God of the Eucharist that nations forsake the sources of life, pass fatally into a kind of practical apostasy, and end, by losing their faith, in irreparable ruin.

2. To atone for these crimes, the eucharistic soul should therefore principally direct her efforts. She also finds in the Eucharist a perfect *model* of the life of reparation; for what is Jesus doing in His Tabernacle? He prays, He immolates Himself, He atones; always living to intercede for poor sinners; always occupied in repairing the wrongs we do to God and to ourselves. His life is truly one of atonement, universal, perpetual atonement, humble and hidden, accomplished in peace and in silence, by the most absolute obedience, the most complete abnegation, the most entire donation of Himself. Oh, you who devote yourselves to reparation, look and act according to the model which is presented to you. In your hours of adoration contemplate Jesus dwelling in the Eucharist. Love God and men as He does. Devote yourselves and atone like Him, with Him, and by Him.

3. He is not only the model, but still more is He the *means* of our reparation. The eucharistic soul ought to appropriate to herself by love and union the satisfactions of Jesus, and then offer them to God as a treasure belonging to herself, and with which she is able to pay

the debts of the whole universe. With lips crimsoned by the Blood of Jesus, she gives utterance to that voice which speaks more eloquently than the blood of Abel, and she obtains mercy. She offers herself as one victim with Jesus, sprinkling her sacrifice with the sacred tears He shed to wash away the crimes of the world, and she merits to be heard because of the respect God has for His Divine Son, with Whom she is one.

As we have seen elsewhere, Jesus, whose tender Heart cannot endure that the desires of a loving soul remain incomplete, accomplishes them Himself. He perfects the tribute of reparation which we wish to offer to His Father, and offers it in our name, so that nothing may be wanting. He thus completes the work of the soul who atones, and whether by the merits of our Redeemer or by those of His Saints, her task becomes accomplished.\*

#### GENERAL FORMULA OF REPARATION

*That the work of reparation may be complete, we may purpose to ourselves to repair all the harm that sin has done to the sinner himself, to God, and to the Church.*

Divine Saviour, for Thee and by Thee I wish to repair, perpetually and universally, all the evil committed in the world, and especially in Thy sanctuary.

With regard to sinners, I unite myself—

1. To Thy *contrition*, which is able to repair all our iniquities, and I apply it to them to

\* Through her intention, which Our Lord accepts in some way as if it were fully realized.

cleanse them from their sins, all of which I would take upon myself with Thee.

2. To Thy *satisfactions*, in order to cancel the debt of punishment those sins have incurred.

With regard to *God*, I unite myself to Thy act of unceasing atonement, and to the love of Thy Heart, by which Thou dost restore to Him the glory and joy of which sin has deprived Him.

With regard to the *Church*, I offer up the merits of Thy Passion, which, by virtue of the union which exists between us, I venture to appropriate, in order to restore to the Church suffering all the satisfactory merits, to the Church militant all the graces, and to the Angels and Saints all the accidental glory, love, and joy, of which they have been deprived by the sins of men.

We may meditate on these different points more profoundly, for they are all founded on theology. On one side we shall see that sin is a universal evil, for it is an injury both to God and to creatures, and on the other side that Jesus has made universal reparation for all that evil, and that, in uniting ourselves to His Divine Heart, we participate in this general atonement, appropriating it to ourselves in such a way as to be able with Jesus and by Jesus to offer an entire reparation.

#### ST. GERTRUDE'S METHODS OF REPARATION

REPARATION FOR THE DISORDERS OF THE CARNIVAL.—On Quinquagesima Sunday St. Gertrude saw that Our Lord had all the repara-



tions which she and her Sisters offered Him during the Carnival marked down in the Book of Life.

*"I will give thee,"* said Jesus, *"in return for all these services, a measure full, pressed down, heaped up, and overflowing; for My human Heart, like thine own, feels more deeply the kindnesses shown to Me in times of sorrow than those I may receive in the time of prosperity. Like David, who deigned to admit into his palace and to his table the children of Berzellai (who had assisted him when he fled from the persecution of Absalom), and showed them his gratitude even till death—in like manner I will admit thee to the table of My delights, and for all eternity will be grateful to those who show Me honour now, when I am persecuted by the world."*

Jesus then recommended her to offer all her works of atonement in union with His Passion, from which they derive all their merit, and St. Gertrude begging Him to teach her how He wished her to do this, He indicated to her for this effect to pray with her arms extended in the form of a cross, by which we represent to the eyes of God the figure of His Divine and crucified Son.

REPARATION FOR BLASPHEMY.—St. Gertrude, deeply grieved by an injury she had heard against Our Lord, offered Him, with all the affection of her heart, the following act of atonement: *"I salute Thee, O life-giving Pearl of the Divinity; I salute Thee, O Flower ever fresh of human nature, my most amiable Jesus, my Sovereign, my only Salvation!"* And He answered: *"And I salute Thee also, I, Thy Creator, thy Redeemer, thy Spouse; I who have won thee at the price of all My Blood."* He then

bestowed upon her such tender marks of affection that the Saints were rapt in admiration; and He added: "*Whoever shall salute Me as thou hast done, to repair the blasphemies which are vomited against Me, shall receive from Me similar marks of affection.*"

"*Let us apply ourselves,*" concludes the book, "*to bless the Lord with all the fervour of our souls whenever we hear blasphemy, and if we cannot do it with an affection equal to that of St. Gertrude, let us at least offer Him our desires, bless Him with the fervour and love of all creatures, and trust that His tender Heart will accept our goodwill.*"

ATONEMENT FOR SACRILEGES.—It happened one day that, in folding up the vestments, a Host which had been placed on the altar fell, and there was a doubt as to whether it had been consecrated or not.

Gertrude at once had recourse to Our Lord, and learning from Him that it was not consecrated, she felt extreme joy in knowing that He Whom she loved so dearly had been spared so great an irreverence.

Nevertheless, on considering the many outrages Jesus receives in the sacrament of His love, she said to Him: "*Since Thou art so much offended, O Lord, not only by Thy enemies, but even by those who ought to be Thy friends, and sometimes by Thy priests and by religious (an injury which calls for the bitterest tears), I will say nothing to my Sisters, so as not to deprive Thee of the satisfaction they wish to offer on account of this Host, and which will be a sweet consolation to Thee.*"

She added: "*O Lord, tell me what satisfaction would be most acceptable to Thy Heart,*

*and I will try to accomplish it, were it even to exhaust all my strength."* Our Lord gave her to understand that He would willingly accept the offering of two hundred and twenty-five *Paters*, recited in honour of His sacred members; the same number of acts of charity towards others, done as if to Himself, in union with the charity He has for us; and if the same number of times they would deprive themselves of the vain satisfactions of earth in order to give pleasure to God. Oh, how great and ineffable are the goodness and mercy of our loving Saviour, thus to accept from us such trifling atonements!

Let us offer them to Him with our whole heart, counting upon His liberality to supply for what is wanting in them, and upon His own satisfactions to perfect the reparation we desire to make.

#### UNIVERSAL REPARATION

On one occasion, the Monday before the Ascension, St. Gertrude, assisting a Sister who was ill, by services beyond her strength, offered them to Our Lord in atonement for all the sins of mankind. It then seemed to her as if she enchained with a link of gold (symbol of charity) an immense multitude of men and women, and brought them to Him, while He, full of mercy and love, showed great pleasure, and most willingly accepted this offering, just as a King would receive from one of his most trusted officers all his enemies brought by him as prisoners, in order to make peace with him and thenceforth serve him loyally.

The next day, at Holy Mass, as she laid before Jesus the faults and imperfections of all the just, and ardently prayed for their amendment, she saw the soft dew of grace descending on their hearts, causing them to flower again with new beauty and invigorating them with fresh strength.

## SEVENTEENTH DAY

### LIFE OF REPARATION—*Continued*

#### DISPOSITIONS WHICH OUGHT TO ANIMATE THE EUCCHARISTIC SOUL IN HER LIFE OF REPARATION

WE include them in three of St. Gertrude's dispositions : *sincere goodwill, gratitude, unlimited desires*. In order that the reparation we offer to the Heart of Jesus may be fully agreeable, it must come from the depths of our heart, and we should be grateful to Him for deigning to make use of us to console Him in His sorrows and for the salvation of others ; but to make our atonement complete we must, by our desires, increase it in proportion to the evils we wish to repair, and by union with the satisfactions of our Saviour give it a merit as great as our desires.

We have already seen how St. Gertrude, animated by a sincere goodwill to satisfy for the sins of the world, succeeded by her ardent prayers and tender caresses in appeasing God's anger and rendering Him propitious to poor sinners.

Another reason why her sacrifice was received as an odour of sweetness and fully consoled her dearly-loved Saviour was because she gratefully



accepted the sufferings of body or soul, which He sent her to expiate the crimes of the world. For Jesus had taught her that gratitude gives value to the least sufferings and compensates for the satisfactory merit which may be wanting to them.

Gertrude, in fine, as she had also been taught by Him, accompanied her slightest works of atonement with a universal intention and boundless desires; and to supply for the inefficiency of those desires she united herself to the satisfactions of Jesus and His Saints, and thus accomplished the work of reparation.

#### PRACTICAL WAYS OF MULTIPLYING THE MEANS OF REPARATION

We will mention several (as easy as they are encouraging) suggested by St. Gertrude which may become mines of great wealth to the soul if employed in the spirit which animated her.

I. ABANDONMENT.—As the evil which we wish to repair comes from man's revolt against God, Who had arranged all for his greater good, the remedy and the atonement is in our conformity and entire submission to that all-wise, all-merciful Will. Again, if Our Lord wishes to make use of us in the work of reparation, we must not forget that He wants for this souls utterly abandoned to Him, with whom He can do whatever He wills.

If He find such, He will accomplish in them this necessary work, in a manner both agreeable to themselves, consoling for His Divine Heart, and fruitful for the Church. Let us only leave Him free to act and abandon ourselves to

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Him.\* Looking at it in this light, which certainly is the truest, reparation entails nothing terrible, sad, or even painful. It is a sweet, peaceful, and meritorious work, for which we place ourselves, as docile instruments, in the beneficent hands of Jesus, and at the disposal of His tender, merciful Heart, that by us and in us He may pour balm on every wound, remedy every evil, console all sorrow, and spread peace and order abroad. And will He not begin by ourselves? Shall we not be the first cured, consoled, pacified, re-established in order, and in an abundance of all that is good? What, then, have we to fear, and why be disturbed? Abandonment—abandonment for ever, and without fear, to Him who is all peace, all sweetness, all order, and all good.

2. HUMILITY.—Pride being the beginning of sin, humility destroys it in its root, cuts off in their very source the evils it has produced, and atones directly for the offence it has committed against God. Thus humility is the especial characteristic of the reparation of which Jesus shows us the example in the Eucharist. There, even more than in His Incarnation, He has humbled, annihilated, stripped Himself, not only of His Divine, but even of His human, form, and presents to our senses only an appearance without reality.

Eucharistic soul, behold your model! Humility should be your especial virtue, and as it is usually acquired by humiliation, let yourself be abased, hide yourself, keep silence, strip yourself as much as possible of your personality.

\* That is to say, to His Providence, which will render the burden of *requisite* sacrifices light, and to His grace which, by its attractions, will lead us to take upon ourselves the sweet yoke of such as are voluntary.

Allow yourself to be annihilated ; submit to all ; esteem yourself as nothing ; accept all failures, forgetfulness, contempt ; bear all contradictions, misunderstandings, without saying a word to justify yourself. When there is a question of self, always and in all places keep silence, like Jesus in the Eucharist. In His Passion even He several times spoke of Himself ; in the Eucharist never. Imitate Him, for He the Master gives the example to you, a mere servant, in order that you may resemble Him. Such is the immolation He asks from you ; not so terrible as that of Calvary, and even rendered sweet by His grace, but still no less an immolation, which will destroy your self-love for the sake of Jesus, and enable you to make a true and efficacious atonement.

3. ADORATION, PRAISE, THANKSGIVING.—We have shown, elsewhere, in what way they can be satisfactory, and what resources they offer to the soul as means of reparation.\*

4. THE CROSS.—Jesus atoned for all the sins of the world by the Sacrifice of the Cross, of which the eucharistic Sacrifice is only the reproduction. All our sufferings, then, in the general plan of the redemption are a means by which we may unite ourselves to the Cross of Jesus, to repair our sins and those of others. Let us accept them in this spirit. Let us abandon ourselves, gently and lovingly, without fear or reserve, to all the crosses which Jesus, in His providence and mercy, may send us. Let them do their work of expiation completely. By them, and by the sacrifices which His grace

\* We have not spoken here of Holy Communion, Mass, and adoration of reparation, etc., which in reality are connected with the means we have indicated.

may inspire us to add, we shall accomplish what is wanting on our part to the Passion of Our Saviour for His body, the Church, and thus fulfil our part in the great work of reparation which He has operated by the sacrifice of Calvary, and which He applies to our souls in that of the Holy Eucharist.

5. LOVE.—Love, in fine, which embraces all, perfects all, gives their price to all other atonements, and can supply for all. The love of the eucharistic soul is as balm to the wounds of the Heart of Jesus, a sweet compensation for all the worship of which He has been deprived, a grateful satisfaction for all the outrages which He has to endure. Love—love, and that is sufficient. Let us love for ourselves and for others, consume ourselves through love, spread love around us everywhere, surround Jesus with love. In our heart and by our heart let Him love as much as He desires, as much as He needs to love. Offer Him, then, all the love He claims in return, by drawing into our heart the affections of all His creatures and laying them at His feet. Let us do all we can that our Divine Friend may be loved as much as He desires. That will be the most acceptable reparation we can win for Him. The eucharistic soul who spreads love about her will repair all evil around her, and in proportion as she inflames others with Divine love, she will contribute to their pardon and their salvation. Like St. Magdalen, the soul who loves much for herself and for others obtains the remission of many sins, both for herself and for them.

*“Remittuntur ei peccata multa, quoniam dilexit multum”*—Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much (Luke vii. 47).

## EIGHTEENTH DAY

THE CONSOLER OF THE HEART OF JESUS,  
ACCORDING TO ST. GERTRUDE

“CONSOLANTEM ME QUÆSIVI”—*Jesus seeks for souls who console Him*, especially in the secret sorrows of His afflicted Heart; He asks for balm to be poured over the wounds of His heart—wounds which He feels most deeply because He received them in the house of those who loved Him, in the sanctuary of His temple.

“Others,” He tells us, “*were satisfied by striking me on the back, but my friends—those at least, who ought to be such, who were consecrated to Me—have wounded Me to the heart, have wounded Me even in the Sacrament of love, at the Altar, at the Holy Table, in the Tabernacle.*”

Oh, eucharistic Heart of Jesus, how deep are the pangs of Thy sorrow! What heart could fully sympathize therein? Where find consolation equal to Thy hidden sufferings? The eucharistic soul alone could comprehend the dolours of Jesus in the Blessed Eucharist, for He will reveal them to her in the intimacy of her life of adoration, will confide them to her as to a truly sympathetic friend, and will give her to share them by a heartfelt compassion. He will teach her how to find consolations



whereby to soothe them, will enable her, in fine, to accomplish the work of reparation, so necessary at present, and to draw down mercy upon her sinful brethren.

IT IS, ABOVE ALL, THE EUCHARISTIC HEART OF  
JESUS WHICH CLAIMS OUR SYMPATHY

1. We have already spoken of this, but to obtain more light we will develop still further the truth that the sorrows of the eucharistic Heart of Jesus are the *renewal* of the most cruel and inmost agonies of His Passion, and also their *continuation* at all times and in every place.

The most terrible of them all is manifested in the Garden of Olives, by that fearful sweat of blood, and those words of supreme desolation which it drew from Our Saviour's lips. There was, in the first place, the chalice of His Father's just anger, which He had to drink to the very dregs; then, as regarded Himself, the terror and apprehension caused by the sight of the sufferings He had to endure, both in His Passion and in His eucharistic life; and, thirdly, as regarded His mystic members, the weight of so many enormous crimes, which bore Him down, as if He had been the culprit, through His fellowship with us. The foresight also of the ingratitude of men, who would respond to such love only by new outrages; and, above all, the knowledge that a great number would be lost, notwithstanding or even because of His Passion.

And it is this agony which is renewed and perpetuated on all our altars.\* Jesus descends

\* Jesus now, of course can neither die nor suffer any more. Neither death nor suffering has any more power over Him. He suffered all in anticipation

thereon to drink anew to the dregs the chalice of His Father's anger, Who is unceasingly irritated by the crimes of the world and Whose vengeance He must unceasingly arrest.

2. He comes to unite Himself to sacrilegious men in order to bear, as it were, most truly the weight of their sins ; for He has to endure all their odious and humiliating treatments, and it is in the sanctuary that their most heinous iniquities are committed and fall directly on Him ; there that ingratitude appears more black because of the greater tenderness He displays ; there that love becomes a cause of more terrible obduracy and reprobation for those whom He had, nevertheless, once made His dearest friends. Who, then, could tell how His Heart is wounded, torn, crushed under the pressure of such suffering ?

And this agony is, as we have said, renewed for Him at all times and in all places. The awful sufferings of the Heart of Jesus are repeated as often as there are days when the Holy Sacrifice is offered, as often as in any place a new altar is erected, a new Calvary for the eucharistic Victim. Count, if you are able, and see if there is sorrow like that of the Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Eucharist—*"Videte si est dolor sicut dolor meus !"* (Lam. of Jeremias).

It is, therefore, the eucharistic Heart of Jesus which the loving soul should seek especially to console, and should multiply her consolations

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during His mortal Life, and Passion, and Death. Just as now the Holy Sacrifice, though the same as Calvary, is renewed in an *unbloody* manner, so, too, are His sufferings renewed mystically. His body and soul both enjoy the Beatific Vision.

in proportion to the multitude of sorrows this loving Heart has to endure—" *Secundum multitudinem dolorum meorum consolationes tuæ lætificaverunt animam meam* " (Ps. xciii. 19).

She should, by the inventions of her love, render her consolations universal and perpetual;\* and this is the task we would aid her to accomplish through the suggestions Our Lord Himself made to St. Gertrude. We will indicate in general several universal forms, which may be given to all the practices we are about to point out.

1. UNION WITH THE ALTAR.—By this we propose to follow Jesus into all the places where His eucharistic Heart is about to suffer, in order that we may be ever there to console and comfort Him. The priest especially can endeavour to fulfil this office of consoler, which belongs, above all, to him as *minister* of the Eucharist, and fulfil it in a universal and perpetual manner, by considering "the whole world as his parish," as St. Bridget advised a holy priest of her time, and as the Blessed Peter Faber was accustomed to do. In virtue of this office, he will endeavour to guard and console Jesus in all His Tabernacles.

2. We may also employ the form of universal and perpetual *adoration* at the foot of every Tabernacle; of universal and perpetual *Mass* at every altar; of universal and perpetual *Communion* (by Jesus in the Holy Eucharist) with

\* It is easily understood that these expressions, *universal*, *perpetual*, must be taken only in the sense of a pious desire, as in the prayer, "May the eucharistic Heart of Jesus be praised, adored, loved at every moment, in every tabernacle. . . ." But, still, this desire has no less a great value in the eyes of Our Lord, as He testified to St. Gertrude.

all who communicate, and into whose souls we enter with Him, to love them as He does, and return Him love for love with them, to console them with Him, and with them and for them, to give Him comfort and consolation.

What happiness and joy to be thus like the charitable Samaritan to Jesus, our beloved Victim! To watch near Him, to console His Heart, to pour oil and wine on His wounds—the oil of mercy and the wine of our love! In this way we give to Jesus what in these days He wants, the most, and claims with greatest earnestness.

Listen to the appeal He makes to us from the depth of His Tabernacle, as He has several times done to His Saints: “*Protect Me from the fury of My enemies; guard Me safe in thy heart to console Mine own, which is in such affliction! Let thy love be a balm to My wounds. It will make Me forget the sins of men; for I am more sensible to love than to injury. Be a victim with Me for those ruthless creatures who cause Me such suffering and whom My Heart incessantly loves. Live with Me in continual immolation for them; refuse Me nothing to obtain the triumph of My mercy and the salvation of souls. Consent even to suffer without consolation in order to console My Heart with greater efficacy. Remain always before Me to make atonement, and repair the outrages perpetrated against Me without ceasing.*”

When Jesus shall see us assiduous in the practice of reparation, perpetual and nocturnal adoration, communion of atonement, etc., He will say to us also, as He said to His Saints: “*I rejoiced, beloved soul, when I saw thee come into My presence. I wish to find conso-*

*lation with thee, and tell thee what gives Me the greatest suffering, what wounds most cruelly My Heart—viz., the injuries I receive in the Sacrament of My love, the crimes of those new traitors whom I had made My friends like Judas, and who treat Me now as the most cruel enemy. The anger of My Father is about to burst over them. I can no longer sustain its weight. Help Me by thy atonements, for My Heart ever loves these ungrateful creatures and wishes to save them. It will be deeply grateful to thee for thus coming to console Me in the place where they cause Me the greatest suffering; and in return thy Friend in the Blessed Eucharist will load thee with His consolations."*



## NINETEENTH DAY

### THE CONSOLER OF THE HEART OF JESUS —Continued

#### GENERAL PRACTICES FOR CONSOLING THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

WE may reduce them to the following points :

1. *Love*—above all, love. What the suffering Heart of Jesus needs most is to find a heart that loves Him, sympathizes with and is devoted to Him—a heart that knows how to understand His sorrows and to relieve them.

2. Then *Compassion*, which, in order to lessen the sorrows of His afflicted Heart, takes them, as it were, upon oneself. This is what the Heart of Jesus asks by those words : “ *I looked for one that would grieve together with Me* ” (Ps. lxviii. 21).

3. *Atonement*, which completely heals the wounds which give Him pain, in destroying their effect, or even suppressing their cause.

Let us, in fine, endeavour fully to console the deep sorrows of the Heart of Jesus, and make Him entirely forget them, by procuring for Him every kind of *joy*, of *pleasure*, and of *glory*.

First, *joy* in giving Him by our prayers and sacrifices the means of loving—yes, loving as

much as He desires, for love produces joy. Then *pleasure*,\* by providing Him the means of giving as much grace, etc., as He wishes, according to that true principle—the sweetest pleasure is to be able to give it ; in causing Him to exercise gratitude as much as He desires, according to that other principle—gratitude is the joy of a good heart. Finally, *glory*, in enabling Him to pardon as freely as He wishes, for the true glory of Jesus is the display of His mercy. Of this we shall speak later on.

Now, in order to offer universal and perpetual consolation to the Heart of Jesus, let us endeavour to apply it—(1) to all His past sorrows, those of His life on earth—above all, those during His Passion ; † (2) to all the present sorrows of His Divine Person in the Eucharist ; (3) to all His sorrows in the members of His mystical Body on earth and in Purgatory.

PRACTICES WHICH OUR LORD TAUGHT ST. GERTRUDE BY WHICH TO CONSOLE HIS DIVINE HEART—I. *Jucundam mansionem* ‡—*In the Heart of St. Gertrude that of Jesus found a Place of Sweet Repose.*—St. Gertrude, feeling very tired, asked Our Lord for a little rest. “Which dost thou prefer,” replied the good Master—“that thou shouldst repose in Me, or that I should repose in thee?” Behold Thy servant, Lord ; be it done unto me according to Thy good pleasure. “Well, if thou dost consent to endure this fatigue

\* St. Thomas, when speaking of consolations for the afflicted, puts pleasure on the first line, *delectatio* ; compassion comes later.

† See Note p. 120.

‡ *Pleasant habitation* is the word by which the Church, in the prayer of the Roman breviary, characterizes the heart of St. Gertrude.

*still longer, thou wilt give Me the sweetest rest : I lean on thy heart, and there I console Myself for the ill-treatment I receive from so many ungrateful creatures. At the same time, the concert of thy good desires delights My ears with a pleasing harmony. The good sentiments of thy soul exhale for Me the perfume of all virtues. The love which directs towards Me each beating of thy heart creates around Me a refreshing breeze. I prefer to the sweetest draught the tender charity by which thou art inebriated for the salvation of all mankind, and I possess in reach of My hand the treasure of thy heart, wherein thou dost hoard up resources to do good to those who are in distress. See, then, what consolations thou dost afford Me by this passing weariness which thou art willing to endure for Me."*

Let us encourage ourselves to bear our fatigues and indispositions, great or little, bravely, with the thought of being able to give such comfort to our greatest Friend. Our sufferings will thus be sanctified by pure love, and fully utilized by Our Saviour's mercy, for the salvation of our brethren.

2. *The Garden of the Eucharistic Soul.*—There is another means by which the eucharistic soul can multiply the consolations and joys of the Divine Guest in the Tabernacle. St. Gertrude on several occasions tried to rejoice Our Lord by the loving ingenuities of her piety, and He showed her what pleasure they gave Him. One day she said to Him : "*How can Thy goodness find such satisfaction in the little things I do for Thee ?*" He answered : "*I see thy heart ever occupied in consoling Me by a thousand different practices, which are all My joy. I take as much pleasure in them as one would who was*

*conducted by his friend, with the most tender caresses, into a beautiful garden to let him breathe the softest air, to delight his eye with the sight of various flowers, charm his ear with the sound of sweet music, and refresh him with fruits of exquisite taste."*

What a charming programme for the eucharistic soul to try and realize before the Divine Guest in the Tabernacle, and thus, by treating Him really as a friend, make Him forget that so many others treat Him as an enemy! Caressing Him with the warmest affection to atone for the coldness and disdain of ungrateful souls. Introducing Him into a garden of delight, where He may breathe a pure soft air, instead of that of the world, which is so vitiated and empoisoned by the crimes of men. Rejoicing Him with the sight of various flowers, emblems of the different virtues He loves to see in souls who are His spouses. Charming Him with the sounds of sweet harmony—the *Amen* of praise, the *Alleluia* of holy joy, the *Deo gratias* of gratitude, which will deaden the infernal concert of blasphemy, so rife in our days; refreshing His taste with the exquisite fruits of good works, to make Him forget the bitterness of the gall and vinegar which sinners give Him to drink.

3. *Balm for the Wounds of Jesus.*—With regard to this, we refer our readers to what we have said in another chapter, where we have shown how the Heart of Jesus finds consolation in our desire for the cross, and where we have heard Him say to St. Gertrude, on account of this desire: "*Thou art the soothing balm of My wounds.*"

## TWENTIETH DAY

THE VICTIM OF THE HEART OF JESUS,  
ACCORDING TO ST. GERTRUDE

**G**ERTRUDE, *the suffering victim.*  
“My Heart finds such pleasure in Gertrude,” said Our Lord to a holy soul, “that it often happens to Me, when I am offended by others, to seek My rest in her, by afflicting her with some suffering of body or mind. She accepts these trials, in union with My Passion, with so much gratitude, and bears them with so much patience and humility, that she appeases me at once, and forces Me to forgive innumerable sinners for love of her.”

Gertrude, *eucharistic victim.* Jesus one day taught her by those words of Isaiah—“Arise, put on thy strength, O Sion” (lii. 1)—the advantage the Church militant derives from the devotion of the elect, insomuch that when a loving soul turns with all her heart to God, with the full desire to atone, if she were able, for the wrongs by which men injure the honour of Our Lord, and endeavours to appease Him, by her ardent prayers and respectful caresses, she often does it so completely that He pardons the whole world.

Gertrude, *victim of desires.* On the Festival of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, during the



elevation of the chalice, Gertrude offering to Our Lord the sufferings of the community, He said to her : “ *I will drink—yes, I will drink this chalice which the ardour of your desires has filled with so much sweetness for Me. I will drink it as often as you present it to Me, until you have, as it were, intoxicated Me with it in order to render Me favourable to your prayers.* ” “ *An how,* ” answered she, “ *O Lord, can we offer it to Thee ?* ” “ *As often,* ” replied Jesus, “ *as you form in your heart the desire to suffer all that one can suffer till the Day of Judgment.* ” Then He taught her in what words to express this desire : “ *Lord, for Thy greater glory, make my will agree with my words. I would that all the suffering of desire, ever experienced in Thy love by any human heart from the beginning of the world till the end, may accumulate in my heart, and remain there till the day of my death, in order that these desires may give Thee to find a more pleasing retreat in my heart, and make Thee amends for the ingratitude of men.* ”

CONSIDERATIONS.—Love shows itself by sacrifice, and sacrifice, offered up in the Heart of Jesus, exhales an odour of sweetness, not only for God Who receives it, but for us who offer it, and for those who assist thereat. Thus the life of sacrifice—in other words, the life of a victim—united to the Heart of Jesus, is a life of real sweetness, and, in the truest sense, a life of love, of joy, and of peace. May we understand this, and by practice and experience see and enjoy it : “ *Gustate et videte quoniam suavis est !* ” — *Taste and see how sweet it is !* (Ps. xxxiii. 9).

A victim may be considered in three different ways : as *suffering*—this regards herself and is personal ; as a *substitute* for others ; and in

*prayer and all religious acts ; this regards God.*

With respect to suffering, St. Gertrude seems to have adhered to the Rule of her Order, which was sufficiently severe, and to the great rule of abandonment to Providence. The Rule of St. Benedict supplied her with enough fasts, vigils, labours, and divers works of penance to keep alive the fire of her sacrifice, and the all-wise and loving care of Jesus added to these, besides the mortifications to which she was drawn by the attractions of grace, sickness, labours, and other trials, which served to intensify its flame.

The Saint found a means of supplying for whatever might be wanting, and of obtaining before God the merit of all that those Saints who endured the most have suffered, by the dispositions indicated above—viz., desire, union, and abandonment. All this, with regard to suffering, she had been taught by the Heart of Jesus. Which of us could not learn from her this science of the victim of the Sacred Heart, appropriate these sentiments, and thus excite ourselves to rival, in some degree, the most ardent lovers of the Cross ?

With regard to substitution—viz., taking the place of another—we see, by passages cited above, that Gertrude was always at the free disposal of Our Lord, to immolate herself in the place of others, and thus obtain their pardon. More frequently, indeed, He seems to have been satisfied with rather ordinary sufferings joined to extraordinary dispositions, by which their merit was increased. And, applying to her the rule of the Gospel, "*With what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again*"

(Matt. vii. 1), even as Gertrude suffered in the place of others, Jesus deigned to become with His Saints substitutes for her, so that she was able to appropriate His and their sufferings, as if she had, as it were, endured them herself ; and thus her most trivial pains gained an incomparable satisfactory value for herself and for others. Here, again, could not any of us try to do as she did ? There is nothing sad, nothing to dismay us. Is not the life of a victim, thus understood, even attractive, full of grace and the fruits of salvation ?

Finally, with regard to religious acts, Gertrude was most especially the victim of the Heart of Jesus, Who Himself was the perfect Worshipper of His Father. She lived with Him a true religious life. Praise, thanksgiving, prayer, desire, atonement, worship, the Divine Office—such were her whole occupations.

She also fulfilled in an admirable manner the four *aims* of a victim's life : *adoration, thanksgiving, reparation, impetration*. These four duties, accomplished in union with the Heart of Jesus, absorbed her entire life. It seems, however, that thanksgiving and supplication were its dominant characteristics, because Gertrude was a eucharistic soul, and the life of the eucharistic Heart of Jesus manifests itself principally by thanksgiving and by prayer.

We may also distinguish four *phases* in the victim's life : *oblation*, by which it is offered to God ; *immolation*—viz., its sacrifice ; *combustion*, by which it is purified, transformed, and sanctified ; *communion*, by which God unites it to Himself, and makes use of it to unite Himself to men. These four phases are seen in the life of St. Gertrude, as they are in that of Our Lord ;

but it may be said that the last—*communion*—has the greatest share, as it has in the life of the eucharistic Heart of Jesus. Her acts of oblation and immolation were accomplished with the utmost generosity. Her transformation in the fire of Divine love became continually more and more perfect ; but it was communion that held the first place—communion with Jesus, by unity of heart and life ; with the Saints, by the most intimate charity ; communion with souls, by the most devoted zeal.

Finally, the life of a victim may be considered in two different ways—viz., as the victim of Calvary, and the eucharistic victim. The victim of the Sacred Heart ought, it seems, to adopt the second of these forms, more particularly as Our Lord has manifested His Divine Heart to us especially in the Divine Eucharist under the form of His sacramental life, as if He would tell us that this is the more permanent,\* more ordinary state, and the one to which He would call the eucharistic soul, more particularly in these last ages of the world, when the Church seems to expect again an era of consolation, in a wide effusion of the eucharistic spirit.

It is especially the eucharistic victim that becomes manifest in the life of St. Gertrude, and she is well able to teach us that if in the victim of Calvary the virtue of patience is most apparent, humility is more characteristic of the victim of the Blessed Eucharist. If the victim of Calvary displays more generosity, that of the Eucharist is more distinguished by the spirit of abandonment. If the former imitates more perfectly

\* "*Sic eum volo manere, donec veniam,*" said Jesus with regard to St. John, who is the type of the eucharistic victim of the Sacred Heart.

the suffering life of our Redeemer, the latter is more conformed to the life of Jesus in the holy Tabernacle—a life of praise, prayer, and love. Such more especially was the life of St. Gertrude, and for this reason she seems to be more accessible as a model to us, and to lead us, in this way, more sweetly and surely to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

PRACTICAL CONCLUSION.—The various points we have just explained offer of themselves sufficient matter for practice.



## TWENTY-FIRST DAY

### THE VICTIM OF DESIRES

LET us complete what we have already said about the victim of desires, by showing how agreeable she is to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and how He accepts her goodwill for its reality. We devote a special chapter to this, although we have already spoken several times about it, because it is one of the forms characteristic of the spirituality of St. Gertrude, and a rich mine of spiritual treasures, easy to be worked by the friends of the Sacred Heart. In fact, it seems to us particularly useful in these trying times, when souls of goodwill appear, as it were, fettered, and reduced to live a life full of desires which they are unable to accomplish outwardly. It will, then, we think, be very useful to show that the victim of desires is not on this account less pleasing to Our Lord, and may acquire as much merit in His sight as the Saints of old, who did such great things, and may win from Him for His Church abundant grace proportioned to their desires.

I. JESUS ACCOMPLISHES THE DESIRES OF HIS FRIENDS IN PROPORTION TO THEIR EARNESTNESS AND INTENSITY.—St. Gertrude, reciting at the Office the versicle "*Salvum fac populum tuum*" — *Save Thy people* (from the *Te Deum*), with an ardent desire that Our Lord

would grant an abundant blessing to all the Church: "*How do you wish Me to act in this regard, My beloved?*" He said to her; "*for I now abandon Myself to thy will, as absolutely as I abandoned Myself on the Cross to that of My Father. Distribute, then, in virtue of My Divinity, whatsoever thou dost wish, and abundantly as thou dost desire.*" What a touching fulfilment of the Divine promise! "*Voluntatem timentium se faciet!*" What a motive for confidence! What encouragement for the victim of desires!

St. Mechtilde, hearing those words, "*Omne genu flectatur,*" etc., sung at Holy Mass, expressed the following desire to Our Lord: "*Oh, if I had only the power, how I would have Thee humbly adored, my most sweet and faithful Friend, by Heaven, earth, Hell, and all creatures.*" He answered her with kindness: "*Ask Me to fulfil thy desires Myself, for every creature is contained in Me; and in offering to My Father the different tributes of religious worship, I supply for all that may be wanting in creatures with regard to the accomplishment of these duties. This is what I now wish to do upon thy invitation, and thus realize thy desire. My love cannot endure that the desire of a faithful soul should remain imperfect when she is unable to accomplish it herself.*"

We see here that the Victim of desires is evidently pleasing to the Heart of Jesus, and united with Him in the sacrifice of praise. Her desire is universal, embracing Heaven and earth, Hell, and all creatures. It is perfect, for this Heart supplies for anything which might be wanting, and it becomes realized by His all-powerful goodness, which assures its efficacy.

2. JESUS ACCEPTS THE DESIRES OF HIS FRIENDS AS IF THEY WERE REALIZED.—This is the title of one of St. Mechtilde's chapters. St. Gertrude also teaches how Our Lord accepts "*the will for the deed.*" Praying one day for a person who was unable to accomplish a work which had been enjoined, He enlightened her by this response: "*The goodwill of that man in undertaking this work to fulfil my desire, notwithstanding the difficulties he meets with, is most agreeable to Me, and I accept that goodwill for the deed. Even if he be unable to succeed, I will reward him as if he had accomplished it.*"

The Heart of Jesus may even derive more glory from a desire the realization of which we have sacrificed to Him, than from the satisfaction we should have felt in seeing that desire fulfilled.

At the approach of some great festival, St. Gertrude, feeling ill, offered to Our Lord her wish to celebrate it with fervour. She asked that her infirmity might be no impediment, submitting herself at the same time, and above all, to His good pleasure. Upon this, she received from Him the following answer:

"*If I grant thy desire, I will follow thee to whatever bed of flowers thou mayest choose; whereas, if thou dost sacrifice it to My good pleasure, thou wilt follow Me to the garden of delights wherein I find My greatest happiness; for I shall be better pleased with thee if thou dost experience the desire and the privation, than if thou gainest thy wish and enjoyest this pleasure.*"

We will cite other examples: The Saint, on one occasion, being animated with an ardent desire to love God, said to Our Lord: "*Oh, how I long to be consumed with so burning a love*

*that my heart could liquefy itself and be lost entirely in Thee !”* He answered her : “ *Thy desires are the fire which so liquefy thy soul that My love may absorb it into My Divine Heart !”*

These words made her understand that a goodwill insures to a man the full effect of desires which have God for their object.

As St. Mechtilde was preparing for Holy Communion, Our Lord said to her : “ *Offer Me in thy heart a desire which includes all the desires and all the love which men have ever been able to offer Me, and I will accept this desire of thy heart as if thou really hadst such an intense and wide-spread love.*”

O most sweet Jesus ! how good and generous is Thy Heart ! Thou art content with the preparation of our poor hearts, and satisfiest all their desires. “*Desiderium pauperum exaudivit Dominus !*” Oh, grant that we may always act towards Thee according to the liberality of Thy generous Heart, regulating our confidence in Thee according to Thy goodness, and not according to our own ! Oh yes ; enlarge our hearts by holy desires ; by these we become, as it were, all-powerful, since we are enabled to offer God a love as intense and as great as we wish, to exercise our zeal for others in the most ardent and universal manner, and, to a certain degree, give God the same glory, and obtain from His liberality the same rewards as the Saints, whose love was so great, and the Apostles, who gained for Him so many souls ! Let us remember that several Saints became such only by their prayers and by the preparation of their heart—St. John Berchmans, for example ; the Ven. Père de la Colombière,; the Blessed Peter Faber, etc.

3. ATONEMENT BY DESIRES.—With the Heart

of Jesus, desires may produce even a *retro-active effect*, and be of full use in the life of reparation. One day St. Mechtilde was praying for a person in affliction who could not restrain her tears. She had shed so many during five years that, without the assistance of Divine mercy, she would have lost either her sight or her senses ; but upon the instant prayers of the Saint, Our Lord granted her the deliverance of this poor soul, adding : *"Tell her from Me to ask Me to be so merciful as to transform all these tears in such a way as though they had been shed through feelings of love and contrition."* The Saint, wondering at the goodness of Our Lord, who would thus change into holy tears those which had been shed so uselessly, He said to her : *"Let her only believe in My goodness, and I will do to her according to her belief."*

*"O marvellous condescension of Divine goodness !"* exclaims here the transcriber of St. Mechtilde's book. *"You who read that God has, by means of His beloved, granted such graces to men, I counsel you to appropriate them to yourselves ; for God (as He has Himself revealed) hears those who rejoice in the favours bestowed upon others, and hope to receive similar ones themselves."*

We can apply this retro-active effect of desires to all the losses we have sustained with regard to prayer, good works, and sufferings. Let us offer to the Heart of Jesus all that we have done through imperfect or purely natural intentions, with an ardent desire and a full confidence that He will, through the abundance of His merits, supply for all, as though it had been done according to His Divine Will. He will take pleasure in repairing our losses, in filling up the



voids of our miseries, and completing our works, in proportion to the measure of our faith.

St. Gertrude teaches us also how to find in the life of desires a means of universal reparation as easy for us as it is glorious for Divine mercy. Her practice for the Feast of the Epiphany shows clearly how desire transforms the most defective things into precious pearls, be it for ourselves or for others. Gertrude wished to offer Our Lord presents similar to those of the three Kings, and, finding nothing about her worthy of Him, she began with an anxious desire, to travel in spirit round the whole world, gathering up all the false myrrh, false incense, false gold, she could find—that is to say, all the sufferings endured without resignation to God's Will, all the prayers offered with sentiments He could not accept, and all the affections which He would deem inordinate.

Transforming all these in her heart, by the ardour of her desires, as by the fire of a crucible, she presented them to Our Lord as a choice myrrh, an incense of sweet odour, and as precious gold; and He, taking the greatest pleasure in this labour of His spouse, gladly received her offerings, and, inserting them into His royal diadem, like precious stones, said to her: "*Behold the pearls which thou hast just presented to Me. I accept them with so much pleasure, on account of their rareness, that, in memory of thy exceeding love, I will bear them on the diadem which encircles My brow, in presence of the whole court of Heaven.*"

Oh, what excellent means of reparation are offered to us by Jesus in these practices which He taught to His well-beloved Gertrude, for herself and for the entire Church! Let us

gather up all the inutilities, all the deceptions of our life, cast them, by holy desires, into the burning furnace of the Heart of Jesus, and all will be purified, transformed, and sanctified: "*Excoquam ad purum scoriam tuam*"—*I will clean purge away thy dross* (Isa. i. 25). Let us even cast therein, by the desires of ardent charity, the many prayers, affections, and sufferings which are not for God throughout the whole universe, and thus offer, by this Divine Heart, a glorious reparation to that jealous God, Who ought to be the end and aim of all things. We shall thus procure a sweet consolation for our Divine Saviour, Who complains of the inutility of His Blood and the loss of His grace; and we shall also add some precious pearls to the crown of Divine mercy.

## TWENTY-SECOND DAY

### THE VICTIM OF DESIRES—*Continued*

4. **U**NIVERSAL AND PERPETUAL DESIRES FOR EVERYONE.—On one occasion, as they read in the Gospel the words, "*Simon, amas me? . . . Pasce oves meas*"—Simon, lovest thou Me? . . . Feed My sheep (John xxi. 17), St. Mechtilde was led in spirit before the face of Our Lord, Who said to her: "*I am about to question thee, as I questioned My Apostle, and thou wilt answer in the sincerity of thy heart: Is there anything in the world so dear to thee that thou wouldst not abandon it for My love?*" She replied: "*Lord, Thou knowest that if all the world, with all it contains, were mine, I would abandon all for Thy love.*" And Jesus accepted her goodwill, as if she had really been mistress of the whole world, and had sacrificed it entirely for Him. Interrogating her a second time, He said: "*Is there any labour or act of obedience that thou wouldst refuse to accomplish for My love?*" She answered: "*Lord, with Thee, and for Thee, I am ready to endure every suffering.*" Again Jesus accepted her goodwill as if it had really had effect. Then He added: "*I recommend to thee in return three classes of men: the simple-minded, represented by the simplicity of the lamb, that thou mayest teach them My love;*"

*the afflicted and despised, typified by its meekness ; the universal Church, in fine, represented by the sheep, that by thy persevering desires and indefatigable prayers thou mayest draw down upon her My mercy."*

Behold, the Saint thus intrusted by Our Lord to provide for the wants of the entire Church, "*by her persevering desires and indefatigable prayers,*" and assured, at the same time, that her wishes to labour and suffer for that Church will be accepted as though followed by their effect. The victim of the Sacred Heart, who would consume herself in the service of souls through love for Him, may certainly apply the same promises to herself, in purposing the same expansion, ardour, and sincerity in her desires. This universal desire of St. Mechtilde for the good of all was at the same time the perpetual desire of her whole life. It accompanied her even to her agony, as we learn from St. Gertrude, who saw her at that dread moment, standing before the wound of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, exhaling into Him, as by each of her respirations, earnest desires for all the living and the dead ; and these desires, penetrating the Saviour's Heart, caused torrents of grace to flow over the whole Church.

Her perseverance in these holy desires to the very end merited for her, from the generous Heart of Jesus, a singular and truly admirable recompense. Causing the measure of His bounties to overflow, as St. Mechtilde had done that of her desires, He willed that, on the day of her death none of those in their agony throughout the Church, for whom she had prayed, should be lost, and granted to all who died the grace of a happy death. He permitted none

of those who resisted every grace to die that day ; and of the souls in Purgatory (for whom she had also prayed so much), He delivered an innumerable multitude ; while those whom justice prevented Him from releasing entirely, He introduced into a place of repose and consolation.

Oh, that we could thus forget ourselves to the end, and live only to desire the glory of God and the salvation of souls ! Let us continually inhale this desire from the Holy Ghost, and breathe it forth into the Heart of Jesus, in order to draw unceasing floods of grace upon the whole universal Church.

St. Gertrude gives us another example of universal and perpetual desires rendered efficacious by Divine generosity. On the Festival of St. James the Greater, this glorious Apostle appeared to her wonderfully adorned with all the merits of the pilgrims who go to venerate his relics. Full of admiration, she asked Our Lord why He rendered the sepulchre of this Saint more glorious than that of the princes of the Apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul. He answered : "*It is on account of the burning zeal by which he was inflamed for the salvation of souls. He was not able to convert multitudes, as he wished for My glory ; but his desire being impeded by a premature death, had, in My sight, the merit of a long life. I compensate him by the innumerable conversions which now take place at his tomb, and from the beginning I granted him the recompense of all the merits of the pilgrims who go there in such numbers.*" What an encouraging lesson for the victim of desires ! God looks at the heart, the intention, the wish. He gives fruit to our zeal, not in proportion to



our apparent success and exterior works, but according to what we would fain have done, supposing a premature death or insurmountable difficulties had not impeded the execution. Let us often remember that by our desires we may thus amass, in a short space of time, the merits of a long life, and acquire, before God, all the merits of the souls we had wished to gain for Him.\*

5. HOW DESIRE OF THE CROSS CONSOLES THE HEART OF JESUS.—When there was once question of sending several nuns to found a new monastery, St. Gertrude, whose only wish was to please God, prostrated before her Crucifix, and, weak as she was, offered herself to Him for this new foundation, with a longing desire to sacrifice herself for His glory.

Jesus appeared so touched by her goodwill that He came down from the Cross to embrace her tenderly, and, pressing her to the wound of His adorable Heart, said, with exceeding joy : “ *Welcome, My beloved spouse, thou who art the soothing balm of My wounds and the consolation of all My sorrows.* ” By these words Gertrude understood that when we offer our will without reserve to please God, notwithstanding the knowledge we may have of any suffering that such offering will entail, Our Lord accepts it as if, during His Passion, the sweetest balm had been applied to all His wounds.

Gertrude then asked Him why He had per-

\* It is also to be noticed that St. Gertrude attributes the great glory of St. Dominic in Heaven to the fervour of his desires while on earth. We may remember how he confidentially avowed to the Prior of Callamar that he had never asked anything from Our Lord and been refused.

mitted her, in the first place, to long for death, then to desire to sacrifice herself in different ways for His glory, and all without result. Jesus answered : “ *I take pleasure in suggesting to My elect sacrifices which they will never have to make, in order to test their fidelity to Me, and to multiply their rewards ; for I count all their good desires as if they were really fulfilled.* ”

6. THE DESIRE TO FEEL DESIRES.—St. Gertrude, being distressed one day that she could not excite in her heart as ardent a desire as she wished for the glory of God, received an assurance from Heaven that He is fully satisfied when anyone, unable for more, has at least the will to feel a strong desire ; and that in His sight this desire will be counted as though it were as great as one wished it to be.

Let us endeavour to animate our desires with the breadth, intensity, and perfection necessary to enable us to offer to God all the glory He claims, and win for the Church all the graces we can gain for her. It will then be done to us according to our desires : “ *Concupivit anima mea desiderare.* ” O Lord, I wish to be animated with desires like to those of Thy Divine Heart. I appropriate them to myself in all their intensity, wishing to be all desire with Thee, for the glory of Thy Father and the salvation of souls !

7. DESIRES DRAWN FROM THE HEART OF JESUS.—St. Gertrude invites us to draw (as she herself did) these holy desires from the Heart of Jesus. Our Lord said also to St. Mechtilde, with regard to a soul whom she recommended to Him, and who prayed to have a heart both loving and full of desire : “ *Let her seek in My Divine Heart whatever she wishes to have, asking*

*it from Me as a child asks his father for all he wants. Let her especially draw from it the spirit of desire."*

PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS.—We shall merely add a few points to what has been said in the reflections :

1. We will notice especially the effects produced by the desire for suffering.

The sufferings of the *present*, received with full desire, produce an entire effect of reparation for the Church (see the Twentieth Day, p. 129). Desires can produce, with regard to those that are *past*, a wonderful *retroactive* effect of reparation (see p. 139). *Future* crosses, in fine, accepted in advance with boundless desire, become a *chalice of inebriating delight for the Heart of Jesus* (p. 130), and a *soothing balm for His wounds* (p. 145).

2. Two conditions are required : *Confidence*—"*Fiat tibi sicut credidisti*" — *As thou hast believed, so be it done to thee* (Matt. viii. 13). *Fidelity* of the soul in doing whatever may depend on her.

Let us not forget here and in other places that when St. Gertrude speaks of the efficacy of desires and the merit of dispositions, she always supposes a goodwill and fidelity, and her words should be understood only as regarding an efficacy proportioned to the degree of grace and the co-operation of each soul.

3. St. Thomas admits in several places that, before God, the desire and the disposition may have as much merit as the reality ; that Abraham, for example, by his determination to observe chastity, may have had a merit equal to that of virgins in the new law ; and that a Saint, martyr in desire only, may be higher

than one who really gained the crown of martyrdom.

4. Summary: Our desires should be: (1) *Sincere*; (2) *united to the Heart of Jesus*; (3) *unlimited, universal, perpetual, entire*. Let us, then, endeavour to acquire these dispositions. They are neither difficult nor sad nor affrighting; they are, on the contrary, desirable, attractive, encouraging, and enriching. Let us enter into them fully by union with the Heart of Jesus, and they will highly sanctify our lives, for His glory and the salvation of souls. "*Adaperiat Dominus cor vestrum: ut serviatis illi corde magno et animo volenti.*"

## TWENTY-THIRD DAY

### VICTIM OF PRAISE OF THE HEART OF JESUS

ONE of the especial characteristics of devotion to the Heart of Jesus, according to St. Gertrude, is Divine praise, the life of praise, the sacrifice of praise—*hostiam laudis*—i.e., the victim of praise. The spirit of praise belongs very particularly to souls who devote themselves to make reparation in our unhappy century, when, as blasphemy is ever ascending, the praises offered up by the friends of the Heart of Jesus should form, as it were, a heavenly concert, and be able to deaden the infernal concert of His enemies. Yes, more and more must the interior life drawn from the Heart of Jesus manifest itself by Divine praise; and that life can scarcely be moulded in a better school than that of St. Gertrude. Thus, we willingly repeat those words of Father Faber: "*Gertrude was the special Saint of praise. . . . Would that she could be in the Church once more as she was in ages past, the doctress and the prophetess of the interior life*" ("All for Jesus," chap. viii.).

According to St. Gertrude, the Victim of Praise draws her life of praise from the Sacred Heart of Jesus. With Him she continu-



ally offers the sacrifice of praise to atone for the sins of the world ; she consumes herself with Him on earth in this work of love, in order to be united with Him in Heaven in everlasting praise.

I. PRAISE DRAWN FROM THE HEART OF JESUS.—“ One day, love taking possession of the soul, conducted her to Our Lord, and she, leaning over the wound of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Who was everything to her, drew from it a fruit of exceeding sweetness, and raised it to her mouth. It represented the eternal praises issuing from that Divine Heart, from which proceeds every praise given to God ; for it is the pure and adorable source whence all good things flow. The soul then drew forth from it a second fruit—viz., that of thanksgiving ” (St. Mechtilde).

From this we at once see that Divine praise can be distinguished from thanksgiving. The first, indeed, honours God in the gifts of His bounty ; the latter honours Him rather in Himself, in His infinite perfections, in His sovereign and admirable works.

St. Thomas seems to say that praise is, in general, honour rendered to a person on account of his skill in choosing means to attain his ends. Keeping this in view, who is more worthy of praise than Divine Wisdom, Who accomplishes His designs with infinite power, and arranges with infinite sweetness the means by which to do so ?

Praise, however, may also be considered in practice as including thanksgiving, as well as every word that honours and is addressed to God, whether it relates to His own intrinsic perfections or to the benefits He confers on ourselves or on His other creatures.

Divine praise, which should fill the soul—*repleatur laude*—is drawn (according to St. Gertrude) by the Heart of Jesus from the Holy Trinity, Who gives substantial, eternal, infinite praise to Himself. From the adorable Trinity, it flows by the Heart of the Incarnate Word into that of the Blessed Virgin Mary, then into all the Angels and Saints, and lastly into every creature in Heaven and earth. It rises again to God by the Heart of Jesus, which is its centre, and He offers to His Father the worship of all creation.

Our Lord shows to St. Mechtilde also in what way His Divine Heart supplies for our incapacity to offer due praise to God. As the words "*In excelso throno*" were sung during Holy Mass, she saw Jesus sitting on the altar as on His throne, saying: "*Behold Me here, with all My Divine power, to heal the wounds which make you lament,*" and she said to herself: "*Oh, if He would offer a full and perfect praise to God the Father for me, I should be far more content.*" Then Jesus said to her: "*This bewailment, this sorrow of thy heart in never being able to praise God as much as thou dost desire, is precisely the wound I wish to heal, in supplying Myself for thy incapacity, and offering to the Father that full and perfect praise which thou dost desire.*"

The Heart of Jesus thus offers to God the Father a perpetual praise for us. A person complaining to St. Mechtilde of the pain she felt in not glorifying God as thoroughly as she wished, the Saint prayed for her, and, in doing so, felt very sad at the thought that she was in the same case herself. But Our Lord said to her: "*Do not distress thyself, My beloved; all*

*that I have is thine. When thou wishest to praise Me, and seest that thou canst not offer Me according to thy desire a perpetual praise, merely say : ' Good Jesus, supply for me, I beseech Thee, all that is wanting,' and I will at once offer this perpetual praise to God for thee. Thou must tell the person for whom thou prayest to do the same, and if she do so a thousand times a day, a thousand times also will I offer for her this praise to God the Father ; for My love never wearies."*

Here is a way for us to praise the mercies of God a thousand times a day and for ever. Oh, if we could understand the treasures placed at our disposal by the Divine Heart of Jesus ! We have already seen how Our Lord promised to St. Gertrude also to offer for her a tribute of *universal* praise, in the name of all mankind, and thus fulfil her intense desire of doing so, "as if nothing had been wanting." He even added that He prepared for her the reward of this perpetual and universal praise, as if she had offered it herself, with all the perfection that she wished.

Oh, what an encouragement to a life of praise ! Oh, if we could understand that infinitely thoughtful love, which makes use of these devices, that unbounded tenderness which the Heart of Jesus conceals under these promises, in order to draw us to a life of praise !

2. PRAISE OF ATONEMENT.—One day St. Mechtilde, when praying for a man in affliction, saw him before Our Lord, Who said : "*I now pardon him all his faults ; but he must repair his sins and negligences by praise. Thus, when the words, ' Per quem Majestatem tuam laudant Angeli '—By Whom the Angels praise Thy Majesty—are said at Mass, let him praise Me in union with*

*that Divine praise by which the Holy Trinity praises itself; that praise which flows first into the Blessed Virgin Mary, then into all the Angels and Saints. Let him afterwards recite a 'Pater' in union with that praise which from Heaven, earth, and all creatures reascends to God. Let him, in fine, pray that his supplication and his praise may be accepted in My Name, since it is I alone Who can have them graciously received by My Divine Father. Thus all his sins and negligences will be repaired by Me: Whoever acts in like manner, let him piously expect to receive the same grace; for it is impossible that anyone should not obtain whatever he had believed and hoped would be granted."*

This doctrine ought not to surprise us. Perfect atonement, according to St. Thomas, consists in offering to God something which gives Him more pleasure than the offence has caused Him pain. God is more sensitive to love than to insult, and the praise which we thus offer Him by the Heart of His Divine Son is incomparably more agreeable to Him than our sins are offensive. Besides, praise, when truly and seriously united to that Sacred Heart, necessarily includes humility and the recognition of our faults, as well as love and contrition—sentiments which by themselves repair those faults, and are able when sufficiently intense, to expiate entirely the punishments due to our sins.\*

\* It seems to us that the fundamental reason of this doctrine is that every sin includes an act of pride—that is, the irregular desire of our personal excellence, jealousy of God's pre-eminence, and revolt against it. Now, praise includes the precisely contrary acts—viz., the desire of His joy and glory, and submission to His excellence. Hence it atones at once,

Holy Scripture likewise shows us how the sacrifice of praise is the most agreeable to God and the most efficacious to deliver us from sin.

The entire forty-ninth Psalm aims at teaching us that, at God's judgment, the sacrifice of praise will insure our salvation. Exterior sacrifices are little, but that of the heart, that of praise, inasmuch as it includes the sacrifice of love and submission to God, will be accepted as a sweet odour, and obtain for us His mercy. This is the meaning of those passages: "*Non accipiam de domo tua vitulos. . . . Immola Deo sacrificium laudis. . . . Sacrificium laudis honorificabit me, et illic iter quo ostendam illi salutare Dei*"—*I will not take calves out of thy house. . . . Offer to God the sacrifice of praise. . . . The sacrifice of praise shall glorify Me: and there is the way by which I will show him the salvation of God* (Ps. xlix.).

*Laudetur Jesus Christus in æternum.* Let us give ourselves now to a life of praise, that we may consummate ourselves in it for all eternity. Praise by the Heart of Jesus, praise for ourselves and praise for others. Perpetual, universal, loving, and atoning praise, now and for ever. *Laudetur Jesus Christus in æternum!*

PRACTICES.—In order to form ourselves to a life of praise, let us meditate on the books of St. Gertrude and St. Mechtilde,\* who were especially Saints devoted to praise. In no better school could we imbibe this life, which so sweetly associates the soul to the Angels, is so pleasing to God, Whom it unceasingly glorifies, and so useful to the Church, which has such need of

\* *Divine praise* is, according to the translator, the characteristic of St. Mechtilde.



victims of praise, to atone for the sins of mankind.

Let us a thousand times a day entreat the Sacred Heart of Jesus to supply for our imperfect praise, so that a thousand times daily we may offer to God, through Him, that sacrifice of perfect praise which He desires above all. St. Thomas teaches that "*Jesus was prefigured in the Old Temple by the two altars—that of holocausts and that of incense,*" because it is by Him that we ought to offer all our works to God. First, works of penance, as though on the altar of holocausts ; then on the altar of incense, the more *perfect* sacrifice of our spiritual works, our worship, praise, and desires. This last is the sacrifice recommended by the Apostle: "*Per ipsum ergo offeramus hostiam laudis semper Deo.*" Thus indeed does the victim of praise offer Him her perpetual sacrifice as the most perfect of all.

## TWENTY-FOURTH DAY

### THE UNIVERSAL AND PERPETUAL VICTIM OF THE HEART OF JESUS, ACCORDING TO ST. GERTRUDE

**A**NOTHER characteristic of the spirituality of St. Gertrude is the *universal intention*. She takes from all to give to all. Her heart grows large like that of the supreme Victim, Who gave Himself without reserve for the Redemption of all mankind ; and she exclaims with the Royal Prophet, whose heart was according to that of God, and as the great Apostle, whose heart was the faithful echo of that of Jesus : "*Particeps ego sum omnium ; omnibus debitor sum*" (Ps. cxviii. ; Rom. i. 14).

Such should be the victim truly united to the Heart of Jesus, devoted and generous like Him, immolating herself for all, as He did on Calvary ; uniting herself to all, as He does in the Blessed Eucharist ; giving herself to all and for ever, as Jesus does in Heaven.

**I. THE VICTIM GIVES ALL.**—She gives all to all, and at all times, not only by prayer, but still more by action and sacrifice. The Apostleship of prayer, which, in uniting us to the intentions of the Heart of Jesus, makes us pray for all, is certainly a splendid work ; but we must extend this same intention of zeal to all our

works and to all our sacrifices. *Union with the altar* may help us to unite ourselves to the universal action of the eucharistic Heart of Jesus. Union with the Heart of Jesus, the Victim, associates us with His Perpetual Sacrifice.

Let us remember that the human heart has been formed upon the model of the Heart of Jesus; for, in creating it, the Eternal Word foresaw that He would one day appropriate it to Himself by the Incarnation—" *Christus cogitabatur homo futurus* "—and He fashioned it so that it could fulfil the Divine plan according to which the Heart of Our Lord was to be the centre of all, receiving all from the members of His mystic body, in order to give them all, and thus unite the whole human race in Himself. This is the reason why our human heart is in like manner the centre of animal life for the members of our body. Now, if by constant union we dwell in the Heart of Jesus, having one heart with Him as love demands, like Him, with Him, and by Him, we shall receive all from all, and in the same way give all to all. This is what the most loving Master taught St. Gertrude, and what she inculcates to others in many of her writings.

2. THE VICTIM APPROPRIATES TO HERSELF BY CHARITY THE GIFTS OF ALL.—St. Gertrude first draws from the Blessed Trinity Itsself praise, thanksgiving, and joy, to spread them afterwards on all creation. We have already cited examples of this, and could multiply them were it necessary.

She next appropriates (as we have also seen), by the bond of charity, the merits, praises, graces, and other gifts of all the Saints, who on their side willingly respond to her desires.

The following is one of the most remarkable examples of this : On the Festival of the Assumption, Gertrude, as a preparation for Holy Communion, recited three times the "*Laudate Dominum omnes gentes*"—*Praise the Lord, all ye nations* (Ps. cxxxvi.). By the first she asked (*as usual*)\* all the Saints to offer their merits to Our Lord for her, that they might serve as her preparation ; by the second *Laudate* she made the same petition to the Blessed Virgin ; and by the third, to Jesus Himself. She saw Our Lady rise at once, and approach to offer for her to the Blessed Trinity the incomparable merits which had raised her above the Angels on the day of her Assumption. Then, with a thoughtful kindness, Mary, quitting her place, made a sign to Gertrude to draw near : "Come," said she, "*my beloved child ; take my place, adorned with all that perfect virtue which won for me the love of the adorable Trinity, that so thou too mayest please Him like myself.*" And Gertrude felt as though God took all His delight in her, while the Angels and Saints approached her to do Him homage. Having received Holy Communion, she offered it to Our Lord, that He might intensify the joy and glory of His Blessed Mother in return for the merits which she had bestowed upon her. Then Jesus, as though offering a present to His most sweet Mother, said : "*See, My Mother, how I return thee double of what is thine, without withdrawing it from her, whom thou hast willed to favour with it for My love.*"

In the same way Gertrude appropriated to

\* Note this expression *as usual*, for there is here question of the habitual practices of St. Gertrude and the motives by which her spirituality was inspired.

herself, as we have seen (Chapter IX.), the merits of her brethren on earth.

She did in like manner with all that is good in the whole universe, as may be seen in that beautiful prayer she so often recited : “ *I salute Thee, Jesus, my Divine Spouse, adorned by Thy wounds as with so many flowers ; with the delight which Thy Divinity finds in Thee, and with the love of the whole universe, I salute and embrace Thee, and kiss the wounds Thou hast received through love* ”—*Ave, Jesu, Sponse floride, cum delectamento Divinitatis tuæ, et ex affectu totius universitatis te salutans amplector, et in vulnus amoris te deosculor.*

3. THE VICTIM GIVES TO EVERYONE.—This is one of the principles, one of the habitual practices of St. Gertrude. For example, when she took any refreshment, she offered it to Our Lord, with the intention of obtaining an increase of joy and grace for all creatures in Heaven, on earth, and in Purgatory : “ *Ut cedat in augmentum salutis omnibus cælestibus, terrestribus et purgandis.* ”

One night, when she was unable to sleep, she was so tired that her strength was almost exhausted, and still love gave her sufficient power to offer her infirmity, *according to her custom*, for the salvation of all mankind.

She recommended the same practices to others—viz., to endeavour with all their strength to draw men to God, in union with that love which induced Our Lord to redeem mankind ; and also to offer all their actions in union with his Sacred Heart for the salvation of the whole world.

St. Mechtilde acted in the same way, and apparently it was at that time a general practice of their community, one of the appointed regu-



lations in the school of St. Gertrude, who had learned these practices from the Heart of Jesus, and had been expressly recommended by Him to communicate them to others.

One year, on the second Sunday of Lent, she asked her Lord to make known to her something that it would be profitable for souls to observe during the coming week. He answered her by the words of that day's Office: "*Affer mihi duos hædos*"—*Bring Me two kids* (Gen. xxvii. 9)—that is to say, the body and soul of human nature. She understood from this that He wished her to make satisfaction for the whole Church. She then recited five *Our Fathers* in honour of His five wounds, to atone for all the sins committed throughout the entire universe by the five senses; then three *Paters* for all those committed by the three powers of the soul, and offered these prayers to Our Lord in union with that most perfect intention, which drew this prayer from His Divine Heart as a means of universal salvation. Jesus, fully appeased and satisfied, blessed Gertrude in return in an ineffable manner, bestowing on her the benediction of the whole human race, so that she received for herself alone all the blessings that He would have accorded to whatever men had been as well prepared as she to receive them.

Cannot we also try, by similar practices, to obtain a similar blessing?

The following Sunday Gertrude again asked Our Lord to teach her some practice for the ensuing week, and He answered: "*Purchase, by the recital of thirty-three Paters, all the merits of the thirty-three years of My life, and let the whole Church share this treasure with thee.*"

Having done this, she understood that the entire Church was wonderfully adorned with the fruit of the most perfect life of Jesus Christ.

At last, on the fourth Sunday, Our Lord said to her: "*Bring in all those whom, during the past week, thou hast adorned with the fruit of My holy life, for they are to eat at My table.*"

"*And how can I make them enter?*" asked Gertrude. She then told Him of that ardent desire for the salvation of souls of which we have spoken already. Jesus replied: "*Thy desire suffices for all,*" and at the same time He showed her that the whole Church took place at His table, adding: "*It is thou who art to serve this multitude to-day.*"

Then Gertrude devoutly kissed His five wounds, to draw from them atonement for all the sins of the world, supplement for every shortcoming or negligence, and an abundance of every grace. Our Lord granted her petitions under the form of the five loaves mentioned in the day's Office, which He blessed in giving thanks to God, and gave to her to be distributed to all the Church. He taught her by this that when any action, even the most trivial, is done for the welfare of the Church, were it only the recital of a *Pater* or *Ave*, He receives it as the fruit of His holy Humanity, and, giving thanks to His Divine Father, blesses it, and, multiplying it by this benediction, distributes it to the universal Church. Everyone can adopt the same practices as St. Gertrude, "*and may count on receiving a similar grace from the mercy of God.*"

May the Heart of Jesus give us also to understand, like St. Gertrude, how grateful these practices are to God, to whom they offer a

tribute of universal glory, in realizing the Royal Prophet's desire: "*In omni loco dominationis ejus, benedic, anima mea, Domino*"—"In every place of His dominion, O my soul, bless thou the Lord" (Ps. cii. 22).—and the prayer of the Church, that we may render thanks to God everywhere and for ever—"semper et ubique"; may He give us to understand what treasures they are for our own souls, since He will not fail to render to us in like measure by making us participate in the merits of all others; and also how profitable they are to our brethren, who by them are aided and relieved.

PRACTICAL CONCLUSION.—I. To endeavour, occasionally at least, to make use of these practices of Gertrude.

2. We may in this find assistance in the excellent little book entitled "Prayers of St. Gertrude."

3. We must remember that these practices, based as they are on the dogma of the Communion of Saints, can be efficacious only in proportion to our dispositions, and should very especially be accompanied by humility, which will banish all danger of illusion or spiritual pride.

## TWENTY-FIFTH DAY

### THE LIFE OF JOY IN THE HEART OF JESUS, ACCORDING TO ST. GERTRUDE

I. **A** LIFE OF JOY IS THE MOST DELIGHTFUL FRUIT OF DEVOTION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS.—In the vision to which we have already referred, Our Lord, having allowed St. Mechtilde to gather in His Divine Heart the sweet fruits of praise and thanksgiving, allowed her also to gather another and a still more precious one—that of spiritual joy. He said to her : “ *I also expect from thee a more excellent fruit than all the rest.*” She answered : “ *What is this fruit, O God, Thou dearest object of my love ?*” He replied : “ *It is holy joy, by which thou wilt pour out in Me alone all the delights of thy heart.*” “ *Oh, My only Beloved, how can I do that ?*” Jesus answered : “ *My love will accomplish it in thee.*” Then, in a transport of gratitude, she exclaimed : “ *Yes, yes, love, love, love.*” And He continued : “ *The love of My Heart will be everything to thee ; it will provide for thy wants, like a tender mother, lest thy joy be diminished, and thou shalt incessantly draw from it interior consolation and unspeakable satisfaction.*”

According to St. Gertrude, also, joy is one of the especial characteristics of devotion to the

Sacred Heart. She found therein the "*science of jubilation*," as Holy Scripture terms it. She wished to serve God with joy, and take continual delight in Him, according to the desire of His own most loving Heart. It is always under this aspect that her book teaches us to consider devotion to that Sacred Heart, and is it not also under this aspect that we ought to present it to the children of our century, who are so weak in virtue, so discouraged, and so egoistical?

Must we not attract them by joy, in order to lead them to its source—viz., to the Heart of Jesus: *fons totius consolationis*; to Him Who is the essential joy of God the Father? Oh, happy are the souls who come to this school to learn therein the *science* of jubilation!—" *Beatus populus qui scit jubilationem!*" (Ps. lxxxviii. 16). Despite their weakness, they will no longer fear to take up the yoke which that Sacred Heart will render light and easy. They will leave without regret the false joys of earth to draw true delights from the fountains of the Saviour. Sacrifice will no more dismay, nor the Cross even appal them, for the unction of grace and the attractions of love will sweeten their bitterness and imbue all with gladness.

" *We only do that well which we do with joy*"—*cum delectatione* (St. Thomas). If, then, we wish to serve God and love our neighbour *well*, we must manifest our joy in the service we render to Him and to them—" *servite in lætitia.*" Oh, let us do this, and not change the nature of things—God is joy; true devotion is joy; love is joy; sacrifice is the source of joy; the Cross itself is the condition of solid joy. Let us, then, open wide our hearts. It is joy which



invites us. Press forward, and fear nothing. Let us always rejoice and ever advance in love and in joy.

2. LIFE OF JOY, THE CONDITION AND RESULT OF THE FRIENDSHIP OF OUR LORD.—St. Gertrude, being very infirm, several persons advised her to forego for a time the delights of contemplation, until she had recovered her health, and she, always preferring to follow the judgment of others, acquiesced to their desire, on condition, however, that they would allow her the pleasure of decorating the pictures of the Cross of Jesus, and the lively joy she experienced in thus consoling her beloved Spouse. One night, not being able to sleep, she quietly occupied herself in preparing with straws the little tomb in which the Crucifix was to be placed on Good Friday. The God of goodness Who takes pleasure in the most trivial acts of those who love Him, bent over her, and said, "*Delight in the Lord, My beloved, and He will give thee the requests of thy heart,*" teaching her by these words, that when a soul takes delight in Him, whether in joyously accomplishing what regards His service, or in seeking some little natural pleasure in things that refer to Him, He, Who is full of kindness, looks at her with complacency, rejoices in her as a father who finds happiness in that of his children, and is ready to grant her whatever she may desire, that so her joy may be full.

Gertrude then said to Him: "*And what glory canst Thou derive, O most loving God, from a joy in which nature has more share than the soul?*"

Jesus answered: "*Does not an avaricious usurer take advantage of every occasion for increasing his capital? Well, I, Who have re-*

solved to find my delight in thee, am much more eager not to lose anything of what thou givest Me with the wish to afford Me pleasure and win My favour, were it but a simple thought or a movement of thy little finger.

St. Gertrude replied : “ If Thy immense goodness deigns to take such satisfaction in these trifles, how much more wilt Thou be pleased with the little poem I composed in order to console Thee for the sufferings of Thy Passion ? ” And Jesus responded : “ I take as much pleasure in it as one whom a friend, with the most affectionate caresses, led into a beautiful garden, to make him breathe the softest air, delight his eye with the sight of various flowers, charm his ear with the sound of sweet music, and refresh him with fruits of exquisite taste. I will return thee faithfully joy for joy, pleasure for pleasure, consolation for consolation. I will act in like manner towards those who read thy book with the same dispositions as thou hadst when composing it.” Such is the friendship of Jesus. Such is joy ! Oh, why should we not act like Gertrude in little things as well as in great ? Let us treat with Jesus as with a friend, gladdening Him by our joy, winning His love to us by the delight which we take in Him !

St. Thomas clearly shows that joy is the condition, as well as the result, of friendship. The friend, says he, finds his pleasure and his joy in the company of his friend—*convivit ei delectabiliter* ; and shares his joys—in *eisdem delectatur*. These are two indispensable conditions of friendship. He shows also that joy is the direct result of love, and that from a triple point of view. If I love God with a real love of benevolence, I rejoice to know that He

possesses all that I can wish for Him. If I love Him with a true love of union, I rejoice, that by charity, He is in me and I in Him. If I love Him with a love of concupiscence, I rejoice to know that He gives Himself, and will give Himself, entirely to me for all eternity.\*

This is love—true love. Let us receive it with open hearts—dilate them in joy, for joy and expansion are the same thing, according to the holy Doctor.† Let them be enlarged, and full of love and joy ; then give to Jesus as much of both as they are able to contain. And beware of sadness, for it, on the contrary, straightens the heart and renders it less able to love, in diminishing and destroying its power of affection. . . . Fly, fly from sadness ; for it can only harm us and injure the interests of the Heart of Jesus—“ *Fuge tristitiam, non est utilitas in illa.*”

3. A LIFE OF JOY IS INSEPARABLE FROM A LIFE OF SACRIFICE.—St. Thomas proves that joy is the natural effect of true devotion, because true devotion—viz., real devotedness or a life of sacrifice—separates the soul from the things of earth which defile and embarrass it, and unites it to God, the essential source of all joy.

A life of sacrifice would soon become insupportable for our weakness, were it not sustained by holy joy ; and that would not be of long duration were it not nurtured by a life of sacrifice.

We must give ourselves joyously to God,

\* The fundamental reason is that love makes the heart aspire after an object, the possession of which renders it *content*, so that it dilates, according to its capacity, in order to receive it. This contentment and dilatation constitute joy.

† “ *Dilatare, latum facere ; lætitia, latum facit* ” (St. Thomas).

because He loves offerings made to Him with gladness—“*hilarem datorem*”; and must accompany our sacrifices with simplicity of heart and joyous words, “*lætus obtuli universa*,” for these will please Him more than the gifts themselves. He will return us joy for joy, or, rather, as He has promised, the hundredfold, to encourage us in our sacrifices and enkindle us more and more with His love.

Gertrude performed all her actions with a joyous heart, thus increased their merit before God, and gave to the most trivial crosses the weight and value of great ones. Our Lord congratulated her warmly for thus finding satisfaction even in the most excruciating arrangements of His Providence in her regard.

When fatigued by the sins of men, He came to rest in her heart. He would send her some suffering of body or mind in expiation of those sins, and she accepted it with so much joy and gratitude that His Heart, consoled and rejoiced, was quite ready to pardon.

Thus, gladly giving to Jesus whatever He asked, and refusing Him no sacrifice, Gertrude deserved that He should refuse nothing to her, and should pour into her soul, by an abundance of Divine grace, a copious measure of holy joy. Let us imitate her example, and refuse nothing to love, gladly offering every sacrifice love may claim, and then, on our part, let us ask, ask with confidence, for Jesus will refuse none of our petitions, and our joy will be full—“*Ut gaudium vestrum sit plenum*.”

4. UNIVERSAL AND PERPETUAL JOY, DRAWN BY GERTRUDE FROM THE HEARTS OF JESUS AND MARY, AND FROM ALL THE SAINTS.—Gertrude drew her spiritual joy from the Divine Heart,

its inexhaustible source ! One of her favourite practices was to console and gladden Our Lord with the delights of His Divinity—“ *Cum delectamento Divinitatis Tuæ.*” She loved also to pour out this joy from the Divine Heart upon all creatures in Heaven, on earth, and in Purgatory, and then to make the sweet concert of universal joy remount to Him Who takes delight in the works of His hands—“ *Lætabitur in operibus suis.*”

Gertrude thus, on the least occasions, gave continual pleasure to Our Lord. If, for example, she took any refreshment, it was with the intention of giving comfort at the same time to Our Lord and to all His creatures. The little pleasures also which Providence multiplies on our path, became for her sources of universal joy. Why should we not adopt these easy and consoling practices ?

Nor could Gertrude forget that other source of holy joy, the Immaculate Heart of Mary—“ *Causa nostræ lætitiæ.*” Our Lord had taught her especially how to prepare for Him a joyous dwelling in Holy Communion, by appropriating to herself the *immense* joys of His most Blessed Mother’s heart ; and Mary herself took pleasure in communicating to her cherished daughter not only her merits and virtues, but the particular joys which, in the different mysteries of her life, inundated her soul and made her exult in God.

Finally, Gertrude drew joy from the heart of all the Saints. On several occasions Our Lord had shown her how, by rejoicing in the benefits granted to His elect, we merit for ourselves an increase of eternal happiness, and illuminate our souls here below with a reflection of the glory of God in His Saints.



One day also, when St. Mechtilde was rejoicing very particularly in the favours Jesus had bestowed on St. Agnes, she saw that glorious martyr clothe her with her own merits, and Our Lord taught her that by the joy we take in the graces granted to the Saints, we appropriate their merits, in a certain degree, to ourselves.

These practices open to us as many sources of joy as we have Saints to honour during the year. Their joys become our joys, their graces our graces, their glory our glory. Oh love ! love of Jesus and His Saints ! love and joy ! why do our hearts not open wide to receive you ? We are surrounded with love and joy, what have we to fear ? Yes, let us open wide our hearts in love and joy—“*Dilatamini et vos !*”

PRACTICAL CONCLUSION.—1. Make frequent acts of joy in the thought that God is ever joyous, and that we are united to Him by love.

2. Offer all our sacrifices to Him with a joyous heart.

3. Rejoice on all occasions at the happiness of the Saints and the graces bestowed upon our fellow-creatures.

## TWENTY-SIXTH DAY

### FRIENDSHIP WITH THE SAINTS IN THE HEART OF JESUS

THE learned and pious Lansperges, in his preface to the third book of St. Gertrude, uses these remarkable words: "*Gertrude manifests to us the exuberance of the love of the Heart of Jesus, Who, in these latter days, compassionating human weakness, deigns to lavish on us His gifts, the help of His Saints, and Himself without reserve.*"

Here is one of the most precious advantages of devotion to the Sacred Heart, as practised by St. Gertrude. By it Jesus *gives us His Saints*, with their worship of praise and their love, that we may glorify Him; their merits and their virtues, that we may sanctify ourselves; their intercession to encourage our zeal; their friendship, in fine, to console and rejoice us.

And, in order to render this friendship more intimate and more fruitful, He wills His Sacred Heart to be its source and ever remain its centre.

In it does St. Gertrude show us the *fountain of delights*, where the Saints seek refreshment, and invite us to join their company. That Heart is also as an altar on which they offer

their prayers for us and the worship they pay to God in our name. By its gentle beatings it invites the Blessed to unite with it in thanking and praising God for us ; transmits to them our petitions, and, supplying for our weakness, perfects the tribute of praise and thanksgiving we wish to offer them.

Our Lord was everywhere accompanied by His Saints, when he appeared to St. Gertrude, consoling her and helping her with and by them, and everywhere also did Gertrude glorify and try to rejoice Him with them. She appropriated their merits and graces to herself, as she did those of the Heart of Jesus. It seemed to her quite a natural and simple practice, suitable to all, to seek their help in all our actions and sacrifices, as well as in our prayers.

This friendship which Our Lord wishes us to contract with the Saints, and of which His Heart forms the sweet link, constitutes one of the greatest resources of our weakness, one of the most precious treasures of our poverty, and one of the purest joys of our exile.

Let us open our hearts to this friendship which the well-beloved of the Heart of Jesus inculcates to us in so many ways ; let us be friends of the Saints, because we are friends of the Sacred Heart, and in order that by their assistance we may become still more so. With regard to zeal, let us form an alliance with them, that they may help us in our combats with the world, and, by fighting with us, render us strong as that army in battle array, spoken of in Holy Scripture, to which final victory is assured.

With regard also to the eucharistic life so especially that of the friends of the Sacred Heart,

let us be in union with the Blessed, that they may aid us to pay homage to the King of kings, to console and give joy to the dear Prisoner of the Tabernacle, and even here on earth, render to the hidden God the worship of love and praise which is offered to Him in Heaven. Let us invite them to assist at our solemn functions, or, rather, ask them to aid us in celebrating in our temples a continual festival for Jesus, chanting with them the *Alleluia* of jubilation, the *Amen* of praise, and thus making those temples a foretaste of Heaven, while awaiting the time when we may be received as friends into the eternal tabernacles.

But let us see in detail in what consists this holy friendship which the Heart of Jesus wishes to contract between the Saints and us, and of which it is the only source ?

According to St. Thomas, it is a reciprocal love founded on a communication of supernatural goods. Now what communication or interchange can there be between the Saints and us ? What do they give us, and what do we give to them ? We, as friends of the Sacred Heart, give them all, and they give all to us.\* This is the highest degree of friendship, and makes us, like Jesus Himself, the closest friends —“ *maxime amicus* ” (St. Thomas).

THE FRIENDS OF THE SACRED HEART GIVE ALL TO THE SAINTS.—St. Gertrude, in a most luminous, encouraging way, teaches us how to offer to the Saints a perfect worship of *dulia* on the altar of the Heart of Jesus, and by uniting

\* We must not forget, however, that there can be question only of an *accidental* increase of happiness for the Saints, and for us a participation in their merits in proportion to our personal co-operation.

ourselves to Him, the Sovereign, Priest, and Victim.

This worship may be included in the four ends of sacrifice : (1) *Adoration* of God in His Saints, and *praise* addressed to themselves. (2) *Thanksgiving* to God in the name of His Saints, and to them for the graces they have obtained for us. (3) *Reparation* offered to God for His Saints. (4) *Prayer* by which to increase their joy and their glory.

1. *Adoration and Praise*.—St. Gertrude shows very particularly how the Saints are honoured by Holy Communion. On the Festival of St. James, she purposed to approach the Holy Table as if making a pilgrimage in his honour. She then offered to Our Lord His own adorable Body, in order to increase, in some degree, the glory and joy of this illustrious Apostle, and saw that St. James immediately placed himself with her at the Holy Table, giving warmest thanks to God for the gift St. Gertrude (by Holy Communion) had offered in his honour, and addressed to Him this prayer : “ *O Lord, deign, in return, to grant to Thy spouse all the graces Thou hast ever bestowed on any of the pilgrims who have come to venerate my tomb.*”

Here, again, is an inexhaustible mine of spiritual riches ; an easy way of acquiring, in God’s sight, the merit of pilgrimages sanctioned by the Church, of honouring the Saints by the Heart of Jesus Himself, beating in us at Holy Communion, and of increasing the joy and glory of those so dear to our God. Oh, how sweet that thought ! We insignificant creatures can give a greater joy and glory to the favourites of God, to these princes of Heaven, who honour us by their friendship, and show themselves so



full of gratitude! What joy and glory for ourselves!

2. *Thanksgiving.*—When preparing to receive Holy Communion for the Feast of All Saints and in their honour, Gertrude admired, and, to a certain degree, envied the brilliant robes they wore before God. As she grieved to see herself without any adornment, the Holy Spirit inspired her to render thanks to God for all those whom He had raised to the sublime dignity of virginity, and at once she saw her soul resplendent with the whiteness which distinguishes the choir of virgins. She then gave thanks for the holiness of Confessors and Religious, and her soul shone with the colour hyacinth, which characterizes them. Thanking God in the same manner for the different orders of Saints, she became clothed with the ornaments by which each of them is adorned. Giving thanks, in fine, for all the friends of God, she saw her soul covered with a mantle of gold. She then presented herself to Our Lord, Who, joyful to see her thus adorned, said to all the court of Heaven:

*“See, My spouse, who comes to me decorated with fringes of gold and every kind of ornament.”* Then, stretching out His arm, He made her repose on His Heart, lest she should be overcome by the torrent of delight which inundated her soul.

We see here, again, a touching application of one of the principles of St. Gertrude’s spirituality. When we thank God for graces bestowed on others, with a confiding hope of receiving the like ourselves, we merit in, some degree, to obtain them.

3. *Reparation.*—St. Gertrude at these words

of the liturgy—" *Omne genu flectatur*," etc., genuflected in the name of all the heavenly court, to repair whatever might have been wanting in the homage paid to God by the Saints during life, and they showed her how pleasing to them was the completion thus given to the tribute of glory they wished to have offered Him.

She also, in order to repair her own negligences in honouring the Saints, made use of the Heart of Jesus, which is the perfect organ of our acts of religion, and He praised and thanked them, in Gertrude's name, with the most wonderful marks of affection.

4. *Prayer*.—One of St. Gertrude's sweetest occupations was to pray for the increase of the glory and joy of the Blessed, and endeavour to obtain for them the *completion of their desires*, as the Blessed Father Faber expresses it in his pious "Memorial." We have already seen several of her practices with regard to this. We will add one more very touching example, which shows us how she received from all, and gave to all, in and by the Heart of Jesus.

One day, as, deeply conscious of her miseries, she prepared for Holy Communion, she addressed herself to her most loving Mediator, asking Him to deign to present her Himself to His Divine Father. Jesus, drawing Her to His Sacred Heart, watered her like a young sapling, with the lifegiving Blood, which flowed from His open side, and then presented her with great reverence, to the Blessed Trinity, who received her with ineffable tenderness and love. God the Father attached to the highest of her mystic branches all the fruit she would have been able

to produce, had she always been perfectly dependent on His Almighty power. God the Son and God the Holy Ghost attached in like manner to the other branches all the fruit she would have been able to produce, had she received the full influence of Divine Wisdom and charity. Having been to Holy Communion, it seemed to her that she took root in the Heart of Jesus, and that His Blood, passing like a Divine sap, through all her branches, caused her to produce wonderful fruits, which the Heavenly King held up for the admiration of His celestial court. This spectacle gave them unspeakable joy; they all rose out of respect, and offered their merits in the form of crowns, which they suspended to the branches of this tree, as a tribute of glory to Him Who, displaying thus the riches of His mercy, filled them with new delights. Then Gertrude entreated Our Lord to perfect the fruits she ought to have produced for all her friends in Heaven, on earth, and in Purgatory, and immediately her good works, symbolized by the fruits of the tree, began to distil a liquor of extraordinary efficacy, one portion of which, falling on the citizens of Heaven, filled them with joy; another portion, flowing into Purgatory, gave relief to the souls detained therein, and the third portion, spreading over the earth, increased in the just the consolations of grace, and in sinners the bitter sorrows of penance.

These are excellent practices, of which we, too, may make use, by appropriating to ourselves the treasures of the Saints, in our preparation for Holy Communion, and thus uniting ourselves more and more to them; for it is above all, in Holy Communion that the Heart

of Jesus forms the bond of union between them and us. We may also in this way increase their delight and their love ; in a word, return what we have received from them, doubled in value by the merits which the Heart of Jesus will add to it in us.

## TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY

### FRIENDSHIP WITH THE SAINTS IN THE HEART OF JESUS—*Continued*

THE SAINTS GIVE FREELY TO THE FRIENDS OF THE SACRED HEART.—We can distinguish in the works of the Saints, as in all good works, three parts or different merits. The *expiatory* part, inasmuch as they expiate sin ; the *impetratory* part, by which they obtain grace ; the *latreutic*, by which they glorify God. We say nothing of the *meritorious* part, properly so called, which they cannot communicate to others. St. Gertrude shows us how the Saints share these different merits with the friends of the Sacred Heart.

1. *The Expiatory Part.*—Our Lord taught St. Mechtilde to have recourse to the Saints to enable her to acquit all her debts to Divine Justice. The Patriarchs offered for her their ardent desires ; the Apostles, their labours ; the martyrs, their sufferings ; the confessors, their heroic virtues ; the virgins, their chastity. They thus opened to her the treasury of the Church's satisfactions, from which she could freely draw for herself and for others.

“ *When praying for one of her Sisters who had just died, St. Gertrude saw her leaning on the Heart of Jesus, while all the Saints approached,*



*according to their different orders, and deposited their satisfactions in the Saviour's bosom, to supply for what was wanting in the merits of this soul; and Gertrude knew that they did so, because the deceased, while on earth, had been accustomed to ask them to assist, in this manner, those who were dead. All the Saints, meantime, testified a great affection for this soul, especially the virgins, who treated her as their sister."*

What immense riches are thus offered to us, by which we may cancel the debts of the souls in Purgatory! This treasure of the satisfactions of the Blessed, from which the Church draws her indulgences, they freely open to their friends, now especially, as the end of time draws nearer, for all these satisfactions must then be exhausted or remain without profit for eternity. Let us, then, make friends with the Saints and our poverty, having at its disposal unbounded riches, will be able to deliver souls from Purgatory (thousands at a time), as Gertrude and her Sisters did.

2. *The Impetratory Portion.*—"When St. Mechtilde was in her agony, as the litanies were being recited for her, St. Gertrude saw the different choirs of Angels and orders of Saints rise, as they were invoked, and joyously approach to deposit all their merits, as rich presents, in the Heart of Jesus, Who at once gave them to His beloved in order to increase her joy and glory.

"The next day, when the Saint had gone to rest, St. Gertrude saw that, after her enthronement in Heaven, the Angels and Saints drew near to Our Lord, and genuflected before Him, as princes do when receiving the investiture of their goods from the hand of the emperor. The merits, which they had offered the previous evening to augment

*those of this well-beloved of Christ, were returned to them as if doubled and ennobled by her own."*

Here we have another and most profitable method of spiritual trading. In appropriating to ourselves the merits of the Saints we thereby double their value, and the holy advocates, through whose means this multiplication is effected, get back, and in all justice, their doubled merits with an increase of joy and glory, while we, by friendship with them, double our own resources, as well as their merits, their joy and their glory. This is an accomplishment of those words of Holy Scripture: "*It is better, therefore, that two should be together than one: for they have the advantage of their society*"—*Habent enim emolumentum societatis suæ* (Eccles. iv. 9).

3. *The Latreutic Part.*—St. Mechtilde, when chanting at the office of St. Agnes, the responsory ("*Amo Christum*"—*I love Christ*), interiorly complained to Our Lord that she had not, like Agnes, loved Him with her whole heart from childhood. Upon which He said to St. Agnes: "*Give her all that thou hast.*" By that word St. Mechtilde understood that God has conferred upon the Saints the privilege of being able to bestow all that His grace has worked in them upon those who love them, who thank Him, in their name, and delight in the gifts He has bestowed on them. St. Agnes, having done as Our Lord desired, Mechtilde was filled with ineffable joy, and asked the Queen of Virgins to give thanks for her to her Divine Son. Mary, complying with her request, gave her a share of all her riches, so, with them and the gifts of Agnes, she loved, honoured, and fully glorified God, for the past and for the present.

*O admirabile commercium!* — Oh, most precious friendship with the Saints! We give them our praises, our thanksgivings, our love, and they, in return, make us participators in all the gifts which God has so lavishly bestowed upon them for His glory. By them we are able to offer tributes of heavenly worship truly holy, and worthy of Him; for “*what we can do by our friends we can do, as it were, ourselves*”;\* and God receives the worship which is offered in our name by the Saints, as if we offered it ourselves.

CONCLUSION—*The Labourers of the Eleventh Hour.*—We are the idle labourers of the eleventh hour. Idle or negligent until now, and still very feeble, and very slothful in our humble work; but the Heart of Jesus, simply *because He is good*, wishes to place us (without any merit on our part) on an equality with the labourers of the preceding hours, both with regard to the fruits of salvation and the recompense. The Saints who have gone before us, will eternally glorify His mercy and liberality in this: *Pares illos nobis fecisti* — *Thou hast made them like to us.* By what means will He accomplish this? Friendship renders men equal: “*Amicitia pares invenit aut facit.*” His Heart, which gives all, will itself provide these sentiments of affection. It will beat in us, to make us love the Saints and gain their love, and for ever will it beat in the heart of the Saints, and cause them to love us with the most tender affection.

Thus, in the Heart of Jesus we shall be linked in close friendship with them, and this union, by an exchange of goods, will render us their

\* “*Quod possumus per amicos, per nos aliquo modo possumus*” (Principle of St. Thomas).

equal, and they will eternally praise and thank God for this : "*Pares illos nobis fecisti !*"

*The Companions of the Eucharistic Soul.*—Let us lose none of the precious resources which Our Lord offers to us in this friendship with the Saints. According as the different festivals come round, and bring us into contact, as it were, with the Saints, let us endeavour to invoke and honour them by the Heart of Jesus, who wishes to be the organ of our worship and our veneration. Let us seek their friendship, contract a bond of union with them in that Sacred Heart, and take advantage of the rich capital of their merits (in which we become partners), in order to glorify God and draw down fresh graces on the Church. Let each day at the foot of the altar be thus a new festival whereon to rejoice Jesus in the company of one of His elect.

It is above all by Holy Communion that the Heart of Jesus unites us in friendship with His Saints. We see this by the example of St. Gertrude, and how it is the natural result of the Eucharistic Sacrament, which is "*the Sacrament of ecclesiastical unity*"—*Sacramentum unitatis ecclesiasticæ* (St. Thomas). Therefore it is the eucharistic soul above all whom He desires to see enter into this supernatural alliance, this union so full of strength, so replete with consolation.

Oh, eucharistic soul, how fair is thy portion ! Enter into the joy of thy Lord. Serve Him with gladness ; for the Saints in Heaven associate thee to their worship of perpetual jubilation. Thy solitude will be peopled with their celestial choirs ; thy desert covered with the mystical flowers which bloom in the midst of their various orders. Thou canst offer to thy

Beloved the glory of Lebanon, by the clouds of incense given thee in their prayers ; surround the Tabernacle with the beauty of Carmel, by the variety of their merits which will charm the eyes of the Divine Prisoner ; and greet His ears with celestial music, in uniting thy voice to their songs of praise. Be grateful for the love and wisdom of the eucharistic God. He wishes to multiply the associates of thy zeal, the ministers of thy worship, in order that thou mayst have nothing to envy in those souls most enriched by active labours in the service of God, and that thou mayst attach thyself more and more to the portion His tender love has chosen for thee, the *better part*, which is, as we have seen, a heaven upon earth, and will never be taken from thee.



## TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY

### MY YOKE IS SWEET AND MY BURDEN LIGHT

THESE encouraging words of the Gospel seem fully realized in the devotion of the Sacred Heart, such as St. Gertrude inculcates it to us by her example and her writings, such, in fine, as Our Lord wishes to bestow it on His friends in the present century.

Let us yield to the attractions of His love, and try to taste the sweetness of that yoke in the Heart of the Saviour: *Gustate et videle*—"Taste and see." It will win us to His service, attach us more and more to Him, and soothe all our difficulties. Let us taste it ourselves, and, as much as possible win others by its attractions. Let our final practical conclusion be that word from the same Gospel which may be also referred to this devotion: "*Venite ad me omnes*"—Come ye all to the Heart of Jesus (Matt. xi. 28).

1. In this Gospel, which may truly be called that of the Sacred Heart, all seems arranged to draw us, gain us, encourage, console, and attach us for ever.

Our Lord first opens His Heart to those who are in sorrow, and who bear the weight of tribulation: "*Venite ad me omnes qui laboratis et onerati estis et ego reficiam vos*"—Come to

*Me, all you that labour, and are burdened, and I will refresh you (Matt. xi. 28). Come, fear not, I am your Saviour, your friend. I open to you My Heart, so meek and humble. There is nothing in Me that can affright you. I have come to serve you, to be your victim, to expend myself entirely for your welfare. I will bear all the trouble and leave you the consolation. Cast away the yoke of the world, which you have borne till now with so much toil and weariness. Lay down the burden of your sins, and in exchange take up my sweet and easy yoke, and in verity, I tell you, you will find rest for your souls, happiness in my service, and my loving Heart will ever be open to you as a fountain of peace and consolation."*

Such, it seems to us, is devotion to the Sacred Heart according to the Gospel. Divine Providence has willed to reserve its full manifestation to our days, so rife with sin and suffering, and to make especial use of St. Gertrude, in order to disclose to us the full realization of His Divine promises.

2. Truly everything in her life, as well as in her writings, speaks of peace and consolation. Throughout may be seen light, grace, sweetness, and joy, though with a mixture of shadow no doubt, for that is needed in every picture. Her life is one of prayer, love, confidence, and abandonment, rather than one of labour and suffering. If we would know her particular characteristic among the other Saints, we find it, not in a multiplicity of trials, extraordinary practices of virtue, great works undertaken, or severe penances accomplished ; but in peaceful abandonment to the tenderness of Jesus, faithful acceptance of His yoke (bearing it ever with

sweetness), and in constant union with His meek and humble Heart, ever serving the "Good Master" in love, in peace, and in joy. This is what Our Lord offers to us also. He has chosen this Saint to teach it, to instil it into our hearts, to show it by her example; and it is especially in these times of languor and coldness, that He makes this consoling offer, which alone can re-ignite our warmth, and strengthen our weakness.

Now, as the end of time approaches, He says to us what He once announced by the beloved Apostle of His Sacred Heart: "*Let him who thirsts for happiness, grace, and peace, come to My Divine Heart, their source, and draw from it 'gratis' whatsoever he will*"—*Absque ulla commutatione*\* (Is. lv. 1). "*My merciful Heart, which desires before the end of time to glorify itself by a supreme manifestation, and to love men to the utmost bounds of affection, has arranged all for this end.*

"*Let these languid souls only come to Me, confide in My goodness, and abandon themselves to My love. Let them be at rest in the meekness of My Heart, unite themselves to My humility and obedience, and they will no longer feel the weight of My yoke through the abundant consolation with which I will favour them.*"† Come, then, without fear or delay, and abandon yourselves lovingly and for ever unto Me."

May we all hear this appeal of the Heart of

\* Because whatever I ask from him that is painful to Nature is nothing in comparison to the abundance of peace which I will pour into his soul, for "*if a man should give all the substance of his house for love, he shall despise it as nothing*" (Cant, viii. 7).

† "*Computrescet jugum a facie olei.*"

Jesus. Come, poor souls, who shrink from the Cross, from combat from renunciation. Come ye to Him, and be enlightened. "*Accedite ad eum et illuminamini*" (Ps. xxxiii. v). The demon of sadness or of discouragement has deceived you till now: "*Come and see*"—*Venite et videte* (John i. 39). The Heart of Jesus, that source of peace, courage, confidence, and joy, opens to receive you. Fear not. Fly to this proffered asylum, where you will be free from alarm. Plunge into this fountain, where you will find all that your hearts desire. Yes, trust to this infinite goodness, abandon yourselves to this infinite tenderness, and you will taste and see—will see that interior troubles have given way to peace; that cruel sufferings are alleviated; discouraging oppositions have marvellously tended to the success of your undertakings; that the infirmities which sapped your courage have become light and acceptable and the sources of many graces; that this practice of mortification from which you shrank, turns to the good of both soul and body; and that all those trials in which the demon brought forward the Cross, while hiding its secret unction, have changed into sweet and heavenly consolations. Taste and see! confidence and abandonment! The Heart of Jesus offers you relief from the sufferings which would affright you; peace and joy of heart; an abundance of grace which will encourage you in proportion to the confidence and generosity of your abandonment.

PRACTICAL CONCLUSION.—1. Let us cultivate more and more devotion to the Sacred Heart.

2. For this let us make use of the example, the writings, and the intercession of St. Gertrude.

3. Let us endeavour to propagate these

writings as much as we are able, as the remedy and help prepared by the mercy of God for these later times.\*

\* On many occasions we have had experience that the writings of St. Gertrude may be placed in the hands of all, even of people of the world, though under different forms. "Le Cœur de Sainte Gertrude" and "L'Année de Sainte Gertrude," two books taken from the "Insinuations," by the Rev. P. Cross, might be recommended to those who would be likely to take alarm at too mystical a language. They have already done much good even to seculars.

We have also the "Prayers of St. Gertrude" and the "Exercises of Gertrude," edited in French by Dom Guéranger, and now translated into English.

M. l'Abbé Lagrelette, of Bar-le-Duc, who must not be forgotten when there is question of St. Gertrude, has had a beautiful chapel erected in her honour, and has edited prayers to her in leaflets and pictures, which for many years he has widely circulated, and which have much contributed to extend her honour. A notice, published from time to time, records the miracles wrought by her intercession, not only in France, but in all countries of the world, even in America, where the prayers and pictures of M. l'Abbé Lagrelette have propagated love of St. Gertrude, and of the Sacred Heart.



## TWENTY-NINTH DAY

### OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART

ONE of the last manifestations of the mercies of the Heart of Jesus, and an especial encouragement given to us in the present trying times, seems to be "*Our Lady of the Sacred Heart*," the sweetest, most merciful Hope of the despairing.

Far from turning away from our subject, we shall add to it a requisite completion by terminating our work with some words on "*Our Lady of the Sacred Heart*."

Continuing to follow our Saint as guide, we will simply put forward a few encouraging thoughts which seem to us very likely to facilitate the realization of our dearest hopes.

Pious reader, you, who have followed us throughout, what is your most earnest desire? To honour the Hearts of Jesus and Mary His Mother; to work for the conversion of poor sinners; to co-operate according to your means in the work of reparation? Well, you may attain all these ends in the surest, sweetest way, (*suaviter et fortiter*), by Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. She will lead you with a mother's gentle hand. You will see and feel by a happy experience that, in abandoning yourself to her guidance, you will do more for the glory of God,

your own sanctification, and the salvation of others, than by any other means.

OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART AND THE WORSHIP OF MARY.—By devotion to Our Lady under this title, we fulfil towards her, and in the most excellent way, the four aims of religious worship.

We honour and thank her by the Heart of Jesus, which gives itself to be, as it were, the organ of our universal worship; we implore her graces and our pardon by the titles dearest to her heart; for in invoking her as Sovereign of the Heart of Jesus, we invoke her as the Queen of love and of mercy, who cannot resist exercising towards us this twofold and glorious prerogative.

In the first place, what greater praise or more touching thanks could we offer to Mary than those of the Heart of Jesus, in which we unite to honour her?

On one of Our Lady's festivals, St. Gertrude chanted the office of this glorious Queen, in uniting herself to the Heart of Jesus. As she did so, she saw Him draw to that Divine Heart, the praises expressed in the psalms, and thence they flowed, like an impetuous current, towards the Blessed Virgin, His Mother.

At the antiphon, "*Thou art all fair*," Gertrude endeavoured to sing these sweet words by the very Heart of Jesus, in memory of the loving appellations and childlike praises He must have bestowed upon her in similar terms, during His mortal life. At this, stars of great brilliancy, symbolizing these praises, issued from the Heart of Jesus, and shed their lustre on Our Lady. Some fell here and there upon the ground, and were collected by the citizens of

Heaven, who presented them to Jesus with signs of inexpressible joy and admiration. Gertrude understood from this that the praises given to Our Lady by the Heart of Jesus are a source of unutterable glory and happiness to the Saints.

Meanwhile the Angels, uniting their voices to those of Gertrude's Sisters, asked: "*Quæ est ista*"—*Who is she?*—and Jesus, with a high and powerful voice, answered: "*The most beautiful of the daughters of Jerusalem.*" This voice, issued from the Divine harp of His Sacred Heart, whose chords seemed touched by the Holy Spirit, and thus enabled to celebrate worthily the eminent glories of the Virgin Mother.

Enraptured, as it were, with delight, Mary bent over the Heart of her most loving Son, and appeared to find therein the quiet of a peaceful sleep; but as the strophe, "*O Gloriosa Domina,*" was sung, she raised herself, as if about to respond to her daughters' call, and extended her hand over them in token of motherly protection, and as if to assure them that, having all power over her Son's Heart, she would efficaciously guard them from their enemies.\*

Following the example of St. Gertrude, let us, with profound humility and filial confidence, honour Mary, who is our Mother as well as being the Mother of Jesus. By the Heart of her Divine Son, let us thank her, invoke her, and implore her forgiveness. Whatever we do by her will be perfect. The more deeply we feel our unworthiness and inability to pay honour to this great Queen, the more firmly

\* "*L'Année de Sainte Gertrude,*" pp. 220, 221.

ought we to believe that in Jesus we can do all things. Let us offer to Mary His Sacred Heart. She will welcome our gift, and nothing will be wanting to our homage.

We will cite another example of our dear Saint, which will prove that Mary received what Gertrude offered her by the Heart of Jesus, more favourably than all her other gifts. It was the Festival of the Nativity. Gertrude, detained in bed by infirmity, saw the Angels of her Sisters offer their chants of devotion to the Queen of Heaven, under the form of green branches.

*"Alas ! my sweet Mother !" she exclaimed ; " why am I thus unworthy to unite my voice to those of my Sisters ?" " Do not be troubled," answered Our Lady ; " thy good will compensates for these apparent losses. No outward devotion, in fact, can please me so much as the intention which I see in thy heart, of praising me (according to thy custom), by the most tender Heart of my Son. As a proof of this, I will myself offer, in thy name, to the Blessed Trinity a branch, covered with flowers and fruits, and the three Divine Persons will accept it with delight."*

Jesus offers to us also His Divine Heart, that we may be able to honour Mary. He ardently desires that we should make use of it in this way ; and in doing so we give Him joy, and win from Him the testimony of His gratitude. Listen again. During the same office, Gertrude sang in spirit those words of the antiphon, "*O quam pulchra es*"—*How beautiful thou art*—addressing them to Mary by the very Heart of Jesus, and He by a gracious inclination, manifested to her His pleasure at this devotion, and added : "*When the hour has*

*come, I will return to thee the glory which now, in My Name, thou dost give to my beloved Mother."*

Oh tenderness ! oh joy ! oh love ! I would fain lose myself in the love of the Hearts of Jesus and Mary ! Oh, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, take my heart, unite it with that of Jesus, watch over it, that it may ever be a delight to thy maternal heart !



## THIRTIETH DAY

OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART—*Continued*

I. **O**UR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART AND DEVOTION TO THE HEART OF JESUS.—Our Lady of the Sacred Heart has the key to it. She opens it at her will, to let us enter and drink at the very fountains of grace. “*Cor Regis in manu Domine.*” The Heart of the King (we may translate in the spirit of St. Bonaventure) is in the hands of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. She can incline it in any direction, win its favours and insure its mercies for whom she likes. Have no fear of attributing to Mary too great a power over the Heart of her Son. Beyond all thought or expression, she is Queen of this Heart; for thus does Jesus love to honour His Mother.

The Church, to whom God confides His secrets, being wishful to make us understand more fully the power which Jesus has given to Mary, fears not, even in her liturgy, to make use of expressions which may seem exaggerated. Thus she allows us to sing: “*Tua per precata dulcissima, nobis concedas veniam per sæcula*”—*By thy prayers, so powerful over the Heart of Jesus, GRANT US for ever, O Mary, the pardon of our sins.* We ought to say, it would seem,

*obtain for us*, but such is the immense power of Mary's intercession that she appears to grant what in reality she obtains.

In the same spirit does the Church address herself directly to Mary in soliciting graces which God alone can bestow. She sings: "*Solve vincla reis profer lumen cæcis*"—*The captive's fetters break, pour light upon the blind*. Let us, then, imbibe the spirit of the Church, for the Church has the Spirit of God. On this immovable foundation, the *rock itself*, is based the devotion to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.\*

The greatest grace this good and all powerful Mother can obtain for us—that which results from the very title of "Our Lady of the Sacred Heart"—is devotion to that Sacred Heart of Jesus. Oh, let us earnestly beg her to obtain it for us! It is through her intercession that man has ever received this gift, from St. John the Evangelist, St. Gertrude, the Blessed Margaret Mary, down to our own day. St. John, in fact, took Mary for his mother first, and by her received the gift of Jesus' Sacred Heart; and if he represented all Christians in general, let us remember that he represented, in an especial manner, the friends of the Sacred Heart. Therefore it is through Mary, through Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, that we shall obtain devotion to the Heart of her Divine Son.

2. OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART AND POOR SINNERS.—Those whose conversion we desire to obtain: with regard to them, even the most despairing, Mary will be our sweetest, surest hope; will enable us to draw grace and mercy for them from the Heart of Jesus; and, in sustaining, with a mother's love, our zeal

\* See "L'Année de Sainte Gertrude."

for their conversion, will make us persevere until we have obtained it ; for a mother's heart never wearies nor becomes discouraged, and generally triumphs at last over the hardest hearts.

Oh, how gladly will she hear you remind her with filial confidence of those words of St. Gertrude, when imploring from her some extraordinary grace of mercy : “ *Oh, Mother of goodness, if God has given thee a Son whose Heart is the very fountain of mercy, is it not in order that thou mayest pour those waters of grace on all the miserable, and furnish thy inexhaustible charity with a means of hiding from Divine justice the multitude of our sins and failures.*” This tender Mother will at once look at you, as she looked at St. Gertrude, with a face beaming with grace and mercy. You will feel that her heart is moved, and that Jesus also, touched by her emotion, takes compassion on those whose pardon you implore.

Oh, if we only knew how deeply Mary feels the miseries of our souls ! how ardently she desires the salvation of those poor sinners for whom she has sacrificed her Son Jesus ! One day, when St. Gertrude reminded her of this by those words of the liturgy, “ *By Thee has our salvation come,*” the Mother of mercy seemed so deeply touched that, quite overcome, as it were, she leaned her head on the Heart of Jesus, and, multiplying her supplications and the manifestations of her love, she conjured Him to pour the graces of redemption abundantly on souls. Oh, how could the Heart of Jesus refuse such a request ? Is not the love He has for His Mother incomparably greater than His hatred for our sins ?

One day, when our Saint addressed Our Lady

by that other prayer of the liturgy, "*Ipsa intercedat pro peccatis nostris*," she saw Mary repeat it to her Divine Son, and Jesus, with a smiling face, answered her: "*My venerated Mother, I have given thee, in virtue of My Omnipotence, the right to reconcile to My justice according to the desire of thy heart, all the sinners who devoutly have recourse to thy intercession;*" and as Gertrude continued the sacred chant, "*Unite thy prayers to ours, O Mother of mercy,*" "*Yes,*" answered the Blessed Virgin, "*my heart speaks for thee to the Heart of my Beloved.*" When the heart of Mary speaks to that of Jesus, in behalf of us poor sinners, it is mercy, in concert with mercy, to succour the miserable; and this, their mutual intervention for the unhappy souls whose conversion we seek, is the sweetest hope and encouragement to our zeal.

Ah! I understand how the Church salutes Our Lady of the Sacred Heart as Hope of the despairing. Let us love to remind her of this sweet title, the last word of her glories as co-redemptress. Invoking her with confidence under this blessed name, we shall ever find our efforts for the conversion of sinners encouraged by consoling effects.

3. OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART AND SOULS DEVOTED TO ATONEMENT.—You especially, dear souls, ought to have confidence in Our Lady of the Sacred Heart. You respond to her most ardent desires. With every beating of her heart will she knock at the door of Divine mercy, which is naught else but the wound in the Heart of Jesus, and there, from the fountains of the Saviour, you will be able to draw in abundance the graces of atonement.

Oh yes! Go in all confidence to Our Lady of

the Sacred Heart. She will, as a tender mother, do for you as she did for St. Gertrude. First hide under the mantle of her mercy your own sins and negligences, and then, according as you offer her your works of reparation, "*she will turn towards the Heart of her Divine Son,*" and, with a maternal kiss, will offer them to Him, and by uniting them to her own works of atonement will confer upon them an incomparable value.

Perchance in this life of reparation, to which you are drawn by grace, you may fear your weakness and inconstancy, or shrink from drawing upon yourself trials beyond your strength. Offer yourself to Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, abandon yourself to her maternal guidance, and you will no longer fear. She will give you to imbibe, in the Heart of Jesus, that love which imparts strength. She will permit only such trials as would be for your good to assail you; more trifling, perhaps, than those which, without this offering, you might have had to endure, and accompanied certainly by a greater grace and sweeter consolation. She will draw from the treasures of the Heart of Jesus wherewith to supply for what is wanting to your little efforts, and you will see what so many before you have seen, that the path of the soul devoted to reparation is direct and luminous when she leans on Mary's hand, and that it is strewn with graces for yourself and for others.

Have boundless confidence, then, in this tender Mother, and if you shrink from offering yourselves as victims of the Heart of Jesus, be victims of "Our Lady of that Sacred Heart."



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## LITANY OF THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

Lord, have mercy on us.  
Christ, have mercy on us.  
Lord, have mercy on us.  
Christ, hear us.  
Christ, graciously hear us.  
God the Father of Heaven,  
God the Son, Redeemer of the world,  
God the Holy Ghost,  
Holy Trinity, One God,  
Heart of Jesus, Son of the Eternal Father,  
Heart of Jesus, formed by the Holy Ghost in  
the womb of the Virgin Mary,  
Heart of Jesus, hypostatically united to the  
Word of God,  
Heart of Jesus, Infinite in majesty,  
Heart of Jesus, Holy Temple of God,  
Heart of Jesus, Tabernacle of the Most High,  
Heart of Jesus, House of God, and Gate of  
Heaven,  
Heart of Jesus, glowing furnace of charity,  
Heart of Jesus, abode of justice and love,  
Heart of Jesus, full of kindness and love,  
Heart of Jesus, abyss of all virtues,  
Heart of Jesus, most worthy of all praise,  
Heart of Jesus, King and centre of all hearts,  
Heart of Jesus, wherein are all the treasures of  
wisdom and knowledge,  
Heart of Jesus, wherein abides the fulness of  
the Godhead,  
Heart of Jesus, in Which the Father was well  
pleased,

*Have mercy on us.*

## 202 Love, Peace, and Joy

Heart of Jesus, of Whose fulness we have all  
received,

Heart of Jesus, desire of the eternal hills,

Heart of Jesus, patient and abounding in  
mercy,

Heart of Jesus, rich unto all that call upon  
Thee,

Heart of Jesus, Source of life and holiness,

Heart of Jesus, Atonement for our iniquities,

Heart of Jesus, glutted with reproaches,

Heart of Jesus, bruised for our sins,

Heart of Jesus, made obedient unto death,

Heart of Jesus, pierced by the lance,

Heart of Jesus, Source of all consolation,

Heart of Jesus, our Life and Resurrection,

Heart of Jesus, our peace and reconciliation,

Heart of Jesus, Victim of sin,

Heart of Jesus, Salvation of all who trust in  
Thee,

Heart of Jesus, Hope of all who die in Thee,

Heart of Jesus, delight of all the Saints,

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of  
the world,

*Spare us, O Lord.*

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of  
the world,

*Graciously hear us, O Lord.*

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the  
world,

*Have mercy on us.*

V. Jesus, meek and humble of Heart,

R. Make our hearts like unto Thy Heart.

### PRAYER.

Almighty and Everlasting God, look upon the  
Heart of Thy well-beloved Son, and upon the  
praise and satisfaction which He rendered to Thee  
on behalf of sinners; and, being thus appeased,  
grant them the pardon which they seek from Thy  
mercy, in the name of the self-same Jesus Christ,

*Have mercy on us.*

## Litany of the Sacred Heart 203

Thy Son, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God for ever and ever. Amen.

O Sacred Heart of Jesus, teach me to be meek and humble of heart like Thee. Teach me perfect self-forgetfulness. Teach me what I must do to arrive at the purity of Thy love. Thou knowest my weakness, but Thou canst do all. Accomplish in me Thy Holy Will. Consume me by the fire of Thy love. Is not that, O Jesus, the office and desire of Thy Heart? and dost not Thou deserve that there should be souls who know and love Thee whilst there are so many who outrage and offend Thee?

O Jesu vivens in Maria, veni et vive in famulis tuis! In spiritu sanctitatis tuæ; in veritate virtutum tuarum; in perfectione viarum tuarum; in communione mysteriorum tuorum; dominare omni adversæ potestati, in Spiritu tuo ad gloriam Patris. Amen.—M. OLIER. (300 days of indulgence.)

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