

# Guide for Victim Souls of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Compiled from various sources  
by the Very Rev. Joseph Kreuter, OSB.

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In your charity, please pray that the Sacred Heart draws  
many souls here to read, contemplate and be enkindled.

Soli+Deo!

Other Texts:

From the Biography of Mo. Marie Deluil-Martiny: Immolation  
by Abbe L. Laplace.

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# Introduction

**T**HE exhortation of St. Paul to the Ephesians: "Be ye therefore followers of God as most dear children: and walk in love as Christ also hath loved us and hath delivered Himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odor of sweetness," has at all times found an echo in the truly Christian heart. There have been saintly souls almost the whole of whose life has been an expiatory life of suffering patiently and joyfully borne for the love of Christ and their fellow-men. We read their lives with a sense of awe and perhaps the desire that we might practice the same heroic love. Meanwhile we perhaps do not reflect that occasionally we ourselves have yielded to an impulse to make an expiatory sacrifice of some lawful pleasure for the love of Christ and some soul redeemed by His precious death, but in danger of being lost to Him. Surely, there is perhaps not a truly Christian soul that does not, at some or other, imitate its Master and seek to cooperate with Him in His work of atonement for the sins of the world. For, as our Holy Father Pius XI says in His encyclical on the Sacred Heart and World Distress: "If zeal for the divine law and brotherly love are as great in him as they should be, then not only does he practice penance for himself and his own sins, but he takes upon himself the expiation of the sins of whole generations, imitating even the Divine Redeemer, Who became the Lamb of God 'Who taketh away the sins of the world.'"

If there ever was a time since the advent of Christianity when the decay of faith and morals and the consequent multiplication of sin and sorrows have made it necessary, on the part of those who still have the faith and love of God and of their fellow-men in their heart, to have recourse to prayer and penance "for the defense and restoration of the moral order in the universe" (Pope Pius XI), surely that time is now. This is the conviction of an ever-increasing number of souls under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, whose mission it is to raise up in the Church what is required, in God's Providence, to meet the needs of the times. It was with the purpose of encouraging and guiding such souls and increasing their number that this book was compiled. May it please the Divine Master to bless it so that it may help to cultivate in many souls the sacrificial spirit of His Sacred Heart.

*Alcuin Deutsch, O.S.B., Abbot St. John's Abbey*

## Preface

**I**N 1920 the first “Manual for Victim Souls of the Sacred Heart” was published in German by the Rev. Max Schmid, S.J. Since then nine editions have appeared, and no less than 70,000 copies have been sold. In 1933 the first English edition, prepared by the author of the original, was printed by the Loyola University Press, Chicago. It has been exhausted for some time. In answer to many and urgent requests the present book has been prepared. It is intended as a Guide for members belonging to the “Association of Victim Souls in Union with the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.”

Among other important material, this Guide contains the instructions on the victim spirit and the victim life that made the old Manual so valuable to its patrons. Based on the writings of the most devout servants of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and composed in their spirit, these lessons point out the path traveled by them on their way to holiness and happiness. To read them is, therefore, to inhale the atmosphere of the saints; it is to arm ourselves likewise for the warfare of life.

Thirty years ago the great Pope Leo XIII consecrated the whole world to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. After pronouncing the Act of Consecration he said: “This is the greatest act of my pontificate.” Today the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is the most widely practiced and the most favorite devotion of the people. This volume, perhaps more than any other on the Sacred Heart of Jesus, will draw the souls closer to the side of Jesus and give them that fuller realization of the desires of our divine Savior, which is one of the needs of our time.

The lively interest evinced by the Rev. Max Schmid, S.J., in the preparation of this “Guide for Victim Souls” is hereby gratefully acknowledged.

*Very Reverend Joseph Kreuter, O.S.B., St. John's Abbey*

# The Reparation Due to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus

(Extracts from the Encyclical of our Holy Father, Pope Pius XI)

**A**ND truly the spirit of expiation or reparation has always had the first and foremost place in the worship given to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, and nothing is more in keeping with the origin, the character, the power, and the distinctive practices of this form of devotion, as appears from the record of history and custom, as well as from the sacred liturgy and the acts of the Sovereign Pontiffs. For when Christ manifested Himself to Margaret Mary, and declared to her the infinitude of His love, at the same time, in the manner of a mourner, He complained that so many and such great injuries were done to Him by ungrateful men -- and we would that these words in which He made this complaint were fixed in the minds of the faithful, and were never blotted out by oblivion: "Behold this Heart" -- He said -- "which has loved men so much and has loaded them with all benefits, and for this boundless love has had no return but neglect, and contumely, and this often from those who were bound by a debt and duty of a more special love."

Now, how great is the necessity of this expiation or reparation, more especially in this our age, will be manifest to every one who, as we said at the outset, will examine the world, "seated in wickedness" (1 John v, 19), with his eyes and with his mind. For from all sides the cry of the peoples who are mourning comes up to us, and their princes or rulers have indeed stood up and met together in one against the Lord and against His Church (Cf. Psalm ii, 2). Throughout those regions indeed, we see that all rights both human and Divine are confounded. Churches are thrown down and overturned, religious men and sacred virgins are torn from their homes and are afflicted with abuse, with barbarities, with hunger and imprisonment; bands of boys and girls are snatched from the bosom of their mother the Church, and are induced to renounce Christ, to blaspheme and to attempt the worst crimes of lust; the whole Christian people, sadly disheartened and disrupted, are continually in danger of falling away from the faith, or of suffering the most cruel death. These things in truth are so sad that you might say that such events foreshadow and portend the "beginning of sorrows," that is to say of those that shall be brought by the man of sin, "who is lifted up above all that is called

God or is worshipped" (2 Thessalonians ii, 4).

But it is yet more to be lamented, Venerable Brethren, that among the faithful themselves, washed in Baptism with the blood of the immaculate Lamb, and enriched with grace, there are found so many men of every class, who laboring under an incredible ignorance of Divine things and infected with false doctrines, far from their Father's home, lead a life involved in vices, a life which is not brightened by the light of true faith, nor gladdened by the hope of future beatitude, nor refreshed and cherished by the fire of charity; so that they truly seem to sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. Moreover, among the faithful there is a greatly increasing carelessness of ecclesiastical discipline, and of those ancient institutions on which all Christian life rests, by which domestic society is governed, and the sanctity of marriage is safeguarded; the education of children is altogether neglected, or else it is depraved by too indulgent blandishments, and the Church is even robbed of the power of giving the young a Christian education; there is a sad forgetfulness of Christian modesty especially in the life and the dress of women; there is an unbridled cupidity of transitory things, a want of moderation in civic affairs, an unbounded ambition of popular favor, a depreciation of legitimate authority, and lastly a contempt for the word of God, whereby faith itself is injured, or is brought into proximate peril.

But all these evils as it were culminate in the cowardice and the sloth of those who, after the manner of the sleeping and fleeing disciples, wavering in their faith, miserably forsake Christ when He is oppressed by anguish or surrounded by the satellites of Satan, and in the perfidy of those others who following the example of the traitor Judas, either partake of the holy table rashly and sacrilegiously, or go over to the camp of the enemy. And thus, even against our will, the thought rises in the mind that now those days draw near of which Our Lord prophesied: "And because iniquity hath abounded, the charity of many shall grow cold" (Matt. xxiv, 12).

Now, whosoever of the faithful have piously pondered on all these things must need be inflamed with the charity of Christ in His agony and make a more vehement endeavor to expiate their own faults and those of others, to repair the honor of Christ, and to promote the eternal salvation of souls. And indeed that saying of the Apostle: "Where sin abounded, grace did more abound" (Romans v, 20) may be used in a manner to describe this present age; for while the wickedness of men has been greatly increased, at the same time, by

the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, a marvelous increase has been made in the number of the faithful of both sexes who with eager mind endeavor to make satisfaction for the many injuries offered to the Divine Heart, nay more they do not hesitate to offer themselves to Christ as victims. For indeed if any one will lovingly dwell on those things of which we have been speaking, and will have them deeply fixed in his mind, it cannot be but he will shrink with horror from all sin as from the greatest evil, and more than this he will yield himself wholly to the will of God, and will strive to repair the injured honor of the Divine Majesty, as well by constantly praying, as by voluntary mortifications, by patiently bearing the afflictions that befall him, and lastly by spending his whole life in this exercise of expiation.

And for this reason also there have been established many religious families of men and women whose purpose it is by earnest service, both by day and by night, in some manner to fulfill the office of the Angel consoling Jesus in the garden; hence come certain associations of pious men, approved by the Apostolic See and enriched with indulgences, who take upon themselves this same duty of making expiation, a duty which is to be fulfilled by fitting exercises of devotion and of the virtues; hence lastly, to omit other things, come the devotions and solemn demonstrations for the purpose of making reparation to the offended Divine honor, which are inaugurated everywhere, not only by pious members of the faithful, but by parishes, dioceses and cities.

We earnestly desire that this custom of expiation or pious reparation, long since devoutly introduced and devoutly propagated, may also be more firmly sanctioned by Our Apostolic authority and more solemnly celebrated by the whole Catholic world.

There is surely no reason for doubting, Venerable Brethren, that from this devotion piously established and commanded to the whole Church, many excellent benefits will flow forth not only to individual men but also to society, sacred, civil, and domestic, seeing that our Redeemer Himself promised to Margaret Mary that "all those who rendered this honor to His Heart would be endowed with an abundance of heavenly graces."

And this indeed we more especially and vehemently desire and confidently expect, that the just and merciful God who would have

spared Sodom for the sake of ten just men, will much more be ready to spare the whole race of men, when He is moved by the humble petitions and happily appeased by the prayers of the community of the faithful praying together in union with Christ their Mediator and Head, in the name of all. And now lastly may the most benign Virgin Mother of God smile on this purpose and on these desires of ours; for since she brought forth for us Jesus our Redeemer, and nourished Him, and offered Him as a victim by the Cross, by her mystic union with Christ and His very special grace she likewise became and is piously called a reparatrix. Trusting in her intercession with Christ, who whereas He is the "one mediator of God and men" (1 Timothy ii, 5), chose to make His Mother the advocate of sinners, and the minister and mediatrix of grace, ... and as a token of Our paternal affection we most lovingly impart the Apostolic Blessing to you, Venerable Brethren, and to all the flock committed to your care.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's,  
on the eighth day of May, 1928,  
in the seventh year of Our Pontificate.

Pope Pius XI

# Part I; Chapter 1: Association of Victim Souls in Union with the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary

## Origin of the Association

**W**HEN the Reverend Mother Mary of Jesus founded the Daughters of the Heart of Jesus in 1872, her aim was, as she herself said, “to give to Jesus a generation of victim souls, a true Guard of Honor of the Divine King, which would make reparation for His betrayals, draw upon the plenitude of His Heart and reunite in one center the rays of light and love which are being lost amidst the mass of indifferent and lukewarm souls.”

Mother Mary of Jesus, with her usual broadness of view, conceived the plan of extending to souls living in the world the benefits of the Society, its spirit and graces bestowed on it by God.

Just as in the Middle Ages the Religious Orders spread among the laity a spirit in harmony with the purpose and spirit of the Orders, as for example the Franciscans, a spirit of voluntary poverty; the Dominicans, a spirit of the apostolate and penance; the Carmelites, a spirit of contemplation and prayer; so also the Society of the Daughters of the Heart of Jesus, as soon as it was founded, began to diffuse among its contemporaries a threefold spirit of sacrifice, reparation and union with Jesus in the Holy Eucharist.

Knowing full well that the Heart of Jesus demands, not only prayers and protestations of love, but also sacrifices, sufferings, tears and blood, in order that he might continue to bestow upon the Church the fruits of His Redemption, these pious souls ardently desired to participate in the work of reparation and redemption.

Retained in the world by bonds willed by God and desiring to do for the Heart of Jesus all that was not incompatible with their state in life, they asked the Daughters of the Heart of Jesus to communicate to them that spirit of victim, which makes our souls living hosts of Christ.

They also asked the Church to authorize and bless their association, its name and work.

Such is the origin of the “Association of Victim Souls in Union with the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary.” Though it was only in 1904 that the first group of Victim Souls received the approbation of His Eminence Cardinal Richelmy, Archbishop of Turin, the history of the Association is that of all works visibly willed by God. For as soon

as this pious association was born, it spread rapidly in France, Italy, Belgium, Austria, Germany, and Switzerland; one might say throughout the entire world. Immediately the number of associates increased to several thousands. Pope Pius X, when bestowing the blessing on the Association, January 22, 1909, deigned to give his name to it. A number of pious prelates in their turn inscribed their names among the associates.

A great number of fervent and zealous priests enrolled themselves under this standard of sacrifice. Many Religious of all Orders were happy to consecrate more formally their penances and sufferings by asking to be inscribed among the Victim Souls.

But that which arouses the wonder of our age of sensualism, of indifference, and of apostasy is the eagerness which so many souls of the elect, living in the world, show in entering this Association.

The spirit of Reparation which is making itself felt more and more in the face of the evils of our age, is animating these souls, and these have realized that if at present the world has need more than ever before of the action of the good, this action cannot be fruitful except in so far as it is sustained by prayer and immolation.

### **Timeliness of the Association**

**W**HY, then an Association of Victim Souls in the age of indifference and apostasy in which it seems that every effort must be by preference lean towards active and exterior works? Why Victim Souls? It is because it is necessary now more than ever to make reparation for the outrages against the Heart of Jesus. Now, it is the Victim Souls and all those who under other names realize in their life a faint image of the Passion and Redemption of Jesus – it is these that best attain this end of reparation. Furthermore, in this our age in which sinners are going away from religion in masses, it is necessary to convert the greatest number of souls possible. Is it not again the Victim Souls that are the best instruments of this Apostolate? To be sure, exterior works are good; they are necessary for the conversion of the world, but still again we must not forget that in this divine work of the redemption of souls, nothing can be accomplished without the Cross. It is on Calvary much more than on the Mount of Beatitudes that Jesus saved the world.

Victim Souls are nothing else, so to speak, than a Calvary of continued through the ages; a Calvary renewed without ceasing; a Calvary which rises up everywhere in front of the Father of all lights and of all graces; and it is by their blood, that is to say, by their

sufferings of all sorts generously offered in communion with those of the Redeemer, that achieves “that which is lacking in the Passion of Christ”. They purchase the salvation of poor sinners, their brothers, and labor most efficaciously in the fight against evil.

They exert themselves especially to draw down the blessings of Heaven on the labors of the Apostolic Workers and to obtain for all the members of the clergy numerous choice graces in order that the Heart of Jesus may be glorified greatly in them. And such is the spirit of the Association that the very best auxiliaries of the clergy will be found among the Victim Souls. There is no Association, therefore, more opportune or more necessary; all supernatural souls are convinced of this.

### **Purpose of the Association**

**T**HE Victim Souls abandon themselves unreservedly to the Adorable Heart of Jesus in order that He may dispose of them according to His good pleasure. Desiring nothing but His Holy Will, they accept in advance in a spirit of reparation all the pains and sufferings, both of soul and body, that He may judge good to send them, in order that they may assist ever more and more in the extension of the Reign of the Heart of Jesus – in order to obtain the exaltation of Holy Church – abundant graces for the Priesthood and the salvation of souls.

Part I; Chapter 1: Conditions for Membership, What the Sacred Heart asks and gives, Who may Become an Associate.

To be admitted among the Victim Souls and to enjoy the spiritual benefits accorded to them, it is necessary:

1. To make with the consent of one's confessor the Act of Oblation and to be firmly resolved to persevere until death in this spirit of immolation

2. To have one's name inscribed in the tablet of Victim Souls which is found near the tabernacle in every church of the Daughters of the Heart of Jesus to symbolize the hidden life of sacrifice of these souls in union with the Heart of Jesus perpetually immolated on the altar.

3. It is recommended that each member recite once a day the Seven Last Words of Our Lord Jesus Christ upon the Cross in order to be united more particularly with the Daughters of the Heart of Jesus, who make them the object of special devotion, reciting them seven

times a day, adding each time the Precious Offering of the Blood and Water which flowed from the Wound in the Heart of Jesus.

None of these conditions bind under pain of sin.

N.B. Priests are required to celebrate, if possible, two Masses each year for the Institute of the Daughters of the Heart of Jesus.

## **What the Sacred Heart Asks of Victim Souls**

Our Lord asks of a Victim Soul:

- 1.Unreserved devotedness to the interests of the glory of God and to the wants of the Catholic Priesthood.
- 2.An absolute obedience to the directions of Holy Church.
- 3.The practical understanding of the Decree of Pius X relating to Holy Communion.
- 4.An ardent desire for the reign of the love of the Heart of Jesus over souls, parishes, dioceses and nations.
- 5.An absolute confidence in His ever merciful love.

## **What the Sacred Heart Gives to Victim Souls**

Our Lord gives a Victim Soul:

- 1.His Heart, wherein we find all necessary graces; for He is the magnificent supplement to our feeble powers.
- 2.His Passion, to supernaturalize and deify our sufferings.
- 3.The Precious Blood and Water which came from His wound of love to offer it in sacrifice, in propitiation and reparation.
- 4.The Eucharist, to live by it, to be nourished by it and to make other souls live by it.
- 5.His Mother, the Virgin Mary, to honor her and have her honored, to glorify her by imitating her steadfast constancy in immolation.

## **Who May Become an Associate**

Every Catholic is a victim, for every Catholic is another Christ.

Has not God willed that every human being should be a victim? Who is there among men that does not suffer?

To become a victim in the hands of God does not imply that one requests extraordinary sufferings, but it does mean that one offers up

to Him the pains sent to each soul by God and foreseen by Him in a measure from all eternity.

All Christian souls, then, by a conscious act of the will, may become in turn instruments of redemption.

If there are some souls who cannot understand the life of reparation which transforms all the acts of this life into a perpetual oblation to the ends of the Divine Sacrifice, there are, on the other hand, souls who are called to it by the very fact of their vocation:

1. Priests, other Christs living among men continuing the work of Redemption, applying the merits of Christ's Passion and giving Jesus in the Eucharist to be the life of souls.

2. Religious, whose whole life is an offering and perpetual immolation by their vows and rules.

3. Apostles, who in the world do their best to work for the material well-being and the moral resurrection of the people. Works of charity subsist much more by prayers and immolations, than by money or personal effort.

4. Souls, to whom God has given delicate health, a difficult existence, a burden to carry, a cross to bear or drops of gall to drink.

5. Eucharistic Souls, who understand the life of Jesus in the Tabernacle and wish to resemble Him and to become hosts for the Host – hosts by the Host – hosts with the Host.

## **Part I; Chapter 1: Spiritual Advantages**

**B**ESIDES the very special protection of the Heart of Jesus during life and at death over those souls that have dedicated and abandoned themselves to Him, a protection in life and in death that will be a source of very many special graces of sanctification, Victim Souls share in all the prayers, good works, and mortifications which are practiced in the Institute of the Daughters of the Heart of Jesus.

The certificate of admission which bears the signature of the Superioress of the house where the associate is received is the official recognition of this affiliation and it is indispensable for the validity of the membership.

In the audience which Pope Pius X granted to the Superior General of the Daughters of the Heart of Jesus, December 14, 1907, receiving with fatherly kindness the request made to him and most cordially blessing the Association of Victim Souls, he enriched it with the following favors:

## For Priest Associates

The faculty of investing with the Scapular of the Agonizing Heart of Jesus and the Compassionate Heart of Mary.

## Indulgences for All Associates:

1. An indulgence of one year each time a visit is made to the Blessed Sacrament
2. An indulgence of 300 days each time the Act of Oblation is renewed for the aims of the Association
3. An indulgence of 100 days for the performance of any work of zeal promoting the worship of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

## Act of Oblation:

“Ecce Venio!” Behold me, O Good and Sweet Jesus! Divine Lamb, perpetually offered on our altars for the salvation of the world. I wish to be united to Thee, to suffer with Thee, to be immolated with Thee in union with the Daughters of the Heart of Jesus.

For that end I offer Thee whatever pains, griefs, humiliations, and crosses Thy Divine Providence has placed in my path. To Thee I offer them according to the intentions for which Thy Sacred Heart offers and immolates Itself.

May my poor sacrifice bring blessings upon the Church, on the priesthood, on our country, on our brethren and all poor sinners. Be pleased to accept it through the hands of Mary, our Mediatrix, and in union with the sufferings of her Immaculate Heart. Amen.

## Organization of Victim Souls

Although entire liberty is left to the personal generosity and initiative of each particular victim, it is good that a union exist between souls who have received the same spiritual mission.

We find that union in the Association of Victim Souls in Union with the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary approved by the Sovereign Pontiff, enriched by numerous indulgences and established by the Daughters of the Heart of Jesus, whose whole life consists in an act of perpetual immolation in union with the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

If many souls imbued with the spirit and doctrine of this life have asked that they might participate in the prayers and merits of the Daughters of the Heart of Jesus, it is because the Daughters of the Heart of Jesus have brought themselves near the Altar so as to be as

near as possible to the Sanctuary, to the Priest, with whom they have desired to be associated, in the measure of which the Apostle speaks according to the beautiful thought of St. Augustine: "As we are all called Christians because of the mysterious unction with which we are anointed, so also are we all priests because we are members of the one Pontiff. It is precisely this to which the Apostle St. Peter alluded when he spoke of the Holy Nation and the Royal Priesthood." (The City of God, I. IX, a 10)

"But you are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people (1 Peter 2:9)...Redeemed...with the Precious Blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:19)...Be you also as living stones built up, a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5).

This Association counts a membership of more than 200,000 souls, belonging to all classes of society in different nations. Pope Pius X honored the Association by becoming its head, and a great number of cardinals, bishops, priests, and seculars have followed his example, thus realizing the "Cor unum et anima una" demanded by Our Lord after the Last Supper.

Other Associations may exist already united to various Religious Communities of Reparation. These souls may also share in the treasure of the Association of Victim Souls by a simple inscription giving them the right to the prayers, merits and indulgences of the Association.

This favor, however, is not a confirmation of the rule, of the prayers and of the acts of all similar Associations.

They will unite themselves to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Himself, applying themselves to surround with glory and honor the August Victim and show the most profound testimony of respect and love. This will be their life and their reason for existence.

The Association is founded not only to work for the salvation of the souls that compose it, but also to employ all their strength with the help of grace for the salvation of all souls, the service of the interest of the Heart of Jesus, by the Holy Church, of the Catholic Priesthood by prayers, sacrifices, and by extension of the devotion to the Heart of Jesus and to the Immaculate Virgin, Queen and Helper of the Church.

How shall we do such sublime things from the depth of our poverty? We shall do all by Jesus Christ, by union with His Heart and His Sacrifice, by the offering of His infinite merits and of the

precious chalice of His adorable Blood. We shall keep ourselves hidden in this Divine Chalice like the drop of water which the priest mixes with the wine at the Altar in order that our humble reparations and our sacrifices may be joined to the sacrifices of Our Savior and that from His Oblation and ours there may be one only Oblation.

Let us love Jesus by sacrifice; it is the strongest love.

Let us pray; it is the condition of success.

The glory of God is the Will of God.

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

Mary Immaculate Virgin, pray for us.

## **Part I; Chapter 2: The Victim Soul in Action**

### **A. Rule of Life**

The following rule is proposed to Victim Souls to facilitate for them the means of being penetrated more and more with this spirit of reparation which must be the very essence of their life. It can be modified according to the demands of the duties of their state of life.

1. Rising. To have a fixed hour for rising and to conform to it most exactly unless there is a grave reason for not doing so.

2. On awakening to raise the heart to God, to unite it to the “Ecce Venio” of the Heart of Jesus offering Himself to the Heavenly Father on His entry into the world to accomplish His will in all things. The Divine Will is manifest to all: interiorly, by grace; exteriorly, by authority, by the lay of God and incidents of daily life. Make a compact with Jesus that each heartbeat will be an offering of the Precious Blood, an act of union with the Sacrifice of the Altar.

3. To add to their morning prayers a quarter of an hour or, if possible, a half hour, of mental prayer in union with the heart of Jesus, which never ceases praying for us in the Blessed Sacrament; to offer to the Eternal Father the prayer which His Son is making in the Host.

4. To hear Mass every day; not only to assist at it, but to offer Jesus Christ by the hands of the priest in union with the Virgin Mary and to put oneself totally in the hands of the Savior as a little victim united to the Great and Divine Victim, and to receive Communion each time that one assists at Mass, every day if possible, and to receive according to the wishes of the Sacred Heart, the spirit of the Church, and the desires of the Holy Father.

5. Often during the course of the day to lift one’s heart to God, to

unite it by thought and love to the Divine Victim which is immolated on altar after altar; for the Divine Lamb continues His Eucharistic Journey without interruption, and the sacrifice never ceases to be renewed because of the difference in the time of the different parts of the world. What more noble than a heart which never ceases to offer Jesus and to be immolated with Him by its fidelity to all the little sacrifices inspired by grace!

6. To make a visit to the Blessed Sacrament every day if possible, recalling the sorrowful complaint of the Heart of Jesus to St. Margaret Mary: “From the majority of men I receive nothing but ingratitude by their irreverences and sacrileges, by their coldness and contempt which they have for me in this Sacrament of Love. Do you, at least, give Me this pleasure by making up for their ingratitude as much as you are able.

7. Following Mary, their Divine Mother, Victim Souls will love to make the Stations of the Cross, receiving and offering the Blood of Jesus for the Church and for souls.

8. It is also with Mary “meditating upon the mysteries of Jesus and keeping them in her heart,” that they will unite themselves to the different events in the life of Our Lord, offering each day to their heavenly Mother the filial tribute of the Rosary and the Magnificat.

9. Daily spiritual reading also should have for its special end the acquiring of a more intimate and deeper acquaintance with the Heart of Jesus, the true “Book of Life”, wherein is contained the science of love.

10. To practice some exterior mortifications every week with the approval of the confessor.

11. Above all, fidelity to interior mortification. When one is face to face with a sacrifice which one may make or leave, cooperating with grace or resisting it – Our Lord does not only accept sacrifice; He asks that it be given to Him – it is then that one may really and actually make a choice and prefer the Cross.

12. With Jesus, the Apostle, they will lend themselves to exterior works of which the supernatural foundation is made, “as in the Apostleship of Prayer”, of prayers, sacrifices, work for Our Lord, bringing to it a spirit of faith and of confidence in the divine aid, of zeal for the glory of God, of forgetfulness of self, of complete devotion.

13. They will give themselves to souls to instruct them in their catechism; to keep them under their patronage; to sustain them by their individual apostleship exercised in the very intimate union with

Jesus, the Host.

14. They will foster vocations and render services to seminaries and poor churches.

15. They will accomplish their social duties as perfectly as possible, which is nothing else but the practice of charity under its different forms and many aspects.

16. Before all, they will make themselves ardent propagandists of the practice of daily Communion, of Communion of little children, keeping in mind that a Victim Soul is a Eucharistic Soul which, living by the Host, must make others live by it.

## **Part I; Chapter 2, cont'd: Holy Mass and the Seven Last Words**

B. Holy Mass:

Resumé of the Life of Jesus Christ – Resumé of the Christian Life

First Part

From the Beginning of the Mass to the Offertory

The priest, who is the representative of Jesus Christ, descends the altar steps and purifies himself by the confession of his sins and by sentiments of contrition.

Following his example, I should purify myself by acts of humility and of repentance for my faults.

I confess to Almighty God ... Act of Contrition.

Second Part

From the Offertory to the Consecration

The priest offers the bread and wine of the Sacrifice. I should offer myself in like manner. "Here I am, my God, to do Thy Will."

An offering of my entire being ... my body and all its senses ... my heart with all its affections and desires ... my soul with all its faculties – an offering of the past in reparation...of the present in order to sanctify it ... of the future in preparation – an offering of the merits of Jesus Christ...and offering of the Masses being celebrated today, throughout the world.

An Act of Oblation: Take, O Lord, and receive my freedom, my memory, my understanding, my will; all that I have and all that I

possess Thou hast given me, O Lord. I return it all to Thee; it is all Thine. Do with it as Thou wilt. Give me Thy love and Thy grace; they satisfy all my desires (St. Ignatius Loyola).

### Third Part

#### From the Consecration to the Communion

The priest immolates the Divine Victim; he says in the Name of Jesus Christ: "This is My Body... This is My Blood."

In union with my Savior I should immolate myself without reserve. Humble and loving acceptance of the daily crucifixion ... duties of my state of life ... trials of this life ... hidden sufferings ... physical pain ... annoyances ... humiliations ... deceptions ... loss of temporal goods, of friends, of parents ... spiritual trials ... crosses no matter what kind they be – a general and particular acceptance in union with Jesus Christ.

Ita Pater. Yes, Father.

Obediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis! Obedient unto death, even the death of the cross! (Philippians 2:8)

### Fourth Part

#### From the Communion to the End of the Mass

Jesus Christ unites Himself with the priest and with the faithful.

I should unite myself to Him ... Sacramental or Spiritual Communion ... In becoming one with Him I accomplish more perfectly the four ends of the Mass: I adore ... I thank ... I petition ... I expiate.

The more I shall purify myself by humility,

The more I shall offer myself unreservedly,

The more I shall immolate myself with generosity,

The more worthy I shall be to unite myself with Jesus, thus fulfilling the words of St. Paul: Vivo autem, jam non ego: vivit vero in me Christus. And I live, now not I, but Christ in me. (Galatians 2:20).

Mihi enim vivere Christus est. For me, to live is Christ. (Philippians 1:21)

## **C. The Seven Last Words of Our Lord on the Cross**

1. Pater, dimitte illis, non enim sciunt quid faciunt. Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.

2. Hodie, mecum eris in Paradiso. This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.

3. Mulier, ecce filius tuus! Ecce Mater tua! Woman, behold thy son...Behold thy Mother.

4. Deus meus, Deus meus, ut quid dereliquisti me? My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?

5. Sito. I thirst.

6. Consummatum est! It is consummated.

7. Pater, in manus tuas commendo spiritum meum. Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.

### **Commentary on the Seven Last Words of Our Lord on the Cross and the Offering of the Precious Blood**

The Seven Last Words – With what spirit of reparation and with what profound respect they should be recited! Renew in your souls the sentiments that the Heart of Jesus experienced when the dying lips of Our Divine Savior pronounced these last words, while His Blood flowed in streams down the Cross and consummated His Great Sacrifice. Pronounce these divine words as a victim united to Jesus, begging that their effects be renewed each hour, because the words of Our Lord produce that which they signify. Say them, not for yourself alone, but for all souls:

Pater, dimitte illis, non enim sciunt quid faciunt. Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. Ask pardon for all sinners.

Hodie, mecum eris in Paradiso. This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise. Request Heaven for the thousands of souls that pass before God each day.

Mulier, ecce filius tuus! Ecce Mater tua! Woman, behold thy son... Behold thy Mother. Lead and recommend all souls to Mary.

Deus meus, Deus meus, ut quid dereliquisti me? My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? Pray for the divine adoption of all souls and an innumerable family of faithful children for the Heavenly Father.

Sitio! I thirst. Ah, this word is for you.

Jesus in the height of His sufferings thirsts to continue His Passion, which so glorifies His Divine Father; but because the will of this Heavenly Father is that the Bloody Passion of Our Savior may have an end, Jesus asks for a generation of Victim Souls. He wishes that His Passion be a mystical union until the end of time. Say then in your turn, I thirst! I shall accomplish what is lacking in the Passion of my Savior! I must be baptized with a baptism of blood and my heart burns with a desire to receive it.

Jesus knows that He has been heard. He has obtained that which He desires. Listen! He then says:

Consummatum est! It is consummated. And He adds:

Pater, in manus tuas commendo spiritum meum. Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.

His spirit is left to us as a heritage in order that it may do for our humanity what it did for His holy humanity, and that they may be united in one and the same oblation and sacrifice.

## **Part I; Chapter 2, cont'd: Stations of the Cross**

### **D. The Way of the Cross**

**First Station: Jesus is Condemned to Death**

Ask for the grace to suffer well.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son and the tears of Mary, their merits and their sufferings in reparation for the outrages that wounded the Heart of Jesus so deeply for the needs of Holy Church and the Catholic Priesthood...for all the intentions of the Association. (To be repeated at each Station.)

Suffer! We have only this means of resembling Our Savior.

**Second Station: Jesus is made to bear His Cross**

Beg for the grace to accept sacrifices promptly.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son and the tears of Mary, their merits and their sufferings in reparation for the outrages that wounded the Heart of Jesus so deeply for the needs of Holy Church and the Catholic Priesthood...for all the intentions of the Association.

Let us generously accept all that is painful: not counting the cost of the sacrifice, but rather seeing in the sacrifice only that which glorifies God.

### Third Station: Jesus Falls under the Weight of His Cross

Implore the grace of courage in sacrifice.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son and the tears of Mary, their merits and their sufferings in reparation for the outrages that wounded the Heart of Jesus so deeply for the needs of Holy Church and the Catholic Priesthood...for all the intentions of the Association.

The strength and peace of the soul consist not in the absence of temptations and repugnances, but rather in surmounting and overcoming them.

### Fourth Station: Jesus Meets His Blessed Mother

Pray for the grace to imitate the Blessed Virgin in sacrifice.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son and the tears of Mary, their merits and their sufferings in reparation for the outrages that wounded the Heart of Jesus so deeply for the needs of Holy Church and the Catholic Priesthood...for all the intentions of the Association.

It is Mary who will lead us to Jesus, who will keep us close to Jesus and who will offer us to Jesus.

### Fifth Station: The Cyrenian Helps Jesus to Carry His Cross

Ask for the grace of humble generosity in sacrifice.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son and the tears of Mary, their merits and their sufferings in reparation for the outrages that wounded the Heart of Jesus so deeply for the needs of Holy Church and the Catholic Priesthood...for all the intentions of the Association.

Let each one seek the hardest, the most difficult, the last place.

### Sixth Station: Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus

Pray for the grace to sacrifice yourself joyfully.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son and the tears of Mary, their merits and their sufferings in reparation for the outrages that wounded the Heart of Jesus so deeply for the needs of Holy Church and the Catholic Priesthood...for all the intentions of the Association.

Let us give to Jesus the love of compassion, the love of reparation, the love that shares everything, the love that refuses nothing.

### Seventh Station: Jesus Falls the Second Time

Ask for the grace of constancy in suffering.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son and the tears of Mary, their merits and their sufferings in reparation for the outrages that wounded the Heart of Jesus so deeply for the needs of Holy Church and the Catholic Priesthood...for all the intentions of the Association.

Profound humility, confidence without limit, unreserved abandonment to the action of grace.

### Eighth Station: Jesus Consols the Daughters of Jerusalem

Pray for the grace to appreciate the benefits of the Cross and thank God for them.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son and the tears of Mary, their merits and their sufferings in reparation for the outrages that wounded the Heart of Jesus so deeply for the needs of Holy Church and the Catholic Priesthood...for all the intentions of the Association.

Love of the Divine Heart that has conquered us and has made glad our hearts.

### Ninth Station: Jesus Falls the Third Time

Implore the grace of a lively faith in the efficacy of suffering.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son and the tears of Mary, their merits and their sufferings in reparation for the outrages that wounded the Heart of Jesus so deeply for the needs of Holy Church and the Catholic Priesthood...for all the intentions of the Association.

God always triumphs and the more magnificently according as the victory has cost us more.

### Tenth Station: Jesus is Stripped of His Garments

Ask for the grace of peace in the sacrifice of our rights.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son and the tears of Mary, their merits and their sufferings in reparation for the outrages that wounded the Heart of Jesus so deeply for the needs of Holy Church and the Catholic Priesthood...for all the intentions of the Association.

Now is the time to redouble our love and devotedness and to offer in sacrifice of reparation the precious Chalice of the Altar.

### Eleventh Station: Jesus is Nailed to the Cross

Ask for the grace of accepting all the little sacrifices of our vocation.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son and the tears of Mary, their merits and their sufferings in reparation for the outrages that wounded the Heart of Jesus so deeply for the needs of Holy Church and the Catholic Priesthood...for all the intentions of the Association.

We must accept sacrifice and kiss the Altar to which love binds us.

### Twelfth Station: Jesus Dies on the Cross

Ask for the grace to be ever more united to Jesus by sacrifice and oblation.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son and the tears of Mary, their merits and their sufferings in reparation for the outrages that wounded the Heart of Jesus so deeply for the needs of Holy Church and the Catholic Priesthood...for all the intentions of the Association.

O Lamb of Our heavenly Father, unite us to Thee on the Cross and on the Altar!

### Thirteenth Station: Jesus is Laid in the Arms of His Mother

Pray for the grace of fidelity in all little sacrifices.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son and the tears of Mary, their merits and their sufferings in reparation for the outrages that wounded the Heart of Jesus so deeply for the needs of Holy Church and the Catholic Priesthood...for all the intentions of the Association.

Unite the chalice of your anguish to that of the Blood of Jesus and offer both for the intentions of the Association.

### Fourteenth Station: Jesus is Placed in the Sepulcher

Ask for the grace of silence in trials.

Eternal Father, I offer Thee the Precious Blood of Thy Divine Son and the tears of Mary, their merits and their sufferings in reparation for the outrages that wounded the Heart of Jesus so deeply for the needs of Holy Church and the Catholic Priesthood...for all the intentions of the Association.

All else fails and one must learn to be happy with Jesus alone.

## Part I; Chapter 2, cont'd: Various Prayers

### E. Act of Consecration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

(By St. Margaret Mary)

I, N.N., give and consecrate to the Sacred Heart of Our Lord Jesus Christ my person and my life, my actions, penances, and sufferings, not wishing to make use of any part of my being for the future except in honoring, loving, and glorifying that Sacred Heart.

It is my irrevocable will to be entirely His, and to do everything for His love, renouncing with my whole heart whatever might displease Him.

I take Thee, then, O Most Sacred Heart, as the sole object of my love, as the protector of my life, as the pledge of my salvation, as the remedy of my frailty and inconstancy, as the repairer of all the defects of my life, and as my secure refuge in the hour of death.

Be then, O Heart of Goodness, my justification before God the Father, and remove far from me the thunderbolts of His just wrath. O Heart of Love, I place my whole confidence in Thee. While I fear all things from my malice and frailty, I hope all things from Thy goodness.

Consume, then, in me whatever can displease or be opposed to Thee; and may Thy pure love be so deeply impressed upon my heart that it may be impossible that I should ever be separated from Thee or forget Thee.

I implore Thee, by all Thy goodness, that my name be written in Thee, for in Thee I wish to place all my happiness and all my glory, living and dying in very bondage to Thee. Amen.

(3 years indulgence applicable to the souls in Purgatory: Leo XIII, 1 June 1897. A plenary indulgence once a month under the ordinary conditions for all who recite daily this Act of Consecration: Pius X, 21 April 1908)

### Prayer of Reparation

Our Father Who art in Heaven, Thou Who didst say when speaking of Our Savior Jesus: "This is My Beloved Son in Whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him," grant that we in our turn may humbly say: "This is Thy Beloved Son in Whom Thou art well pleased, hear Ye Him!"

O Heavenly Father, He is Thy Son, but He is also our Victim and our Divine Mediator. Hear Him in these three hundred thousand

Hosts offered each moment of the day in every part of the world: the immaculate veil which covers all our miseries!

Hear the cries of His Precious Blood raised toward Thee in these thousands of Chalices and dropping again as dew upon our poor earth! It is the instrument of the world's salvation, it is the living immolated Lamb that reposes upon the heavenly altar before the throne of Thy Divine Majesty and also upon our earthly altars, O God Almighty, but these two altars make but one upon which the great mystery of Thy Glory and our salvation is accomplished.

Deign, O Heavenly Father, to make us partakers of the infinite merits that flow from this uninterrupted offering and accept it in thanksgiving for this inestimable gift, for Thy greater glory and for the salvation of souls.

But, my God, how numerous are they who do not even think of profiting by such a gift. In order that it may produce all its fruit, Thou willest that our souls gather drop by drop the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ and unite it to the Holy Host, offer it to Thee, and render Thee thanks for it.

Grant, O my Father, that despite my unworthiness, I may gather in those many graces that so many ungrateful souls do not know how to use. I offer these graces from them, begging Thee to have mercy on them, and also for those detained in Purgatory, who regret their neglect of this precious treasure.

If this offering has any merit before Thine eyes, O Adorable Trinity, deign to accept it again as an act of thanksgiving for so many neglected graces, for the triumph of Holy Church, for abundant graces for the Priesthood, for the salvation of our country, for the conversion of our separated brethren and all sectarians. Amen.

## F. The Blessed Virgin Associated with the Divine Sacrifice

Victim Souls will recall that the Institute which pays particular homage to the Priesthood of Our Lord Jesus Christ and which by its humble zeal aids the works of prayer established to reanimate the faith of the faithful in appreciating the excellence of this Divine Priesthood and in order to draw down heavenly blessings upon the Evangelical Works, honors in a special manner the Blessed Virgin "as the Associate of the Divine Sacrifice".

During the early days of its existence the Church had the entire world against it. Our Lord Jesus Christ left the Blessed Virgin Mary to aid the Church and to sustain it during the first trials. The present

day presents a similar picture: the entire world, the world of societies and nations, is again leagued against the Church; persecution is almost universal and more treacherous than the bloody persecution of former times.

To call upon Mary in a special manner to assist the Church, to honor the Blessed Virgin in the part of her life in which she was most visibly the Mother and Protectress of the Church, and at the same time “to excite all souls to be penetrated with her spirit, to imitate her virtues, to implore and to obtain her protection ... in the midst of this great persecution that rages against the Church ...” is truly “a timely work and one especially appropriate in the present circumstance ...” (from a letter of Pius IX, 25 August 1873), For the Blessed Virgin Mary after having destroyed all heresies will certainly destroy the apostasy of the present day that endeavors to expel God and the Church from human societies.

### Prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary for the Salvation of Our Country

O Mary, Immaculate Virgin, in this hour of peril and anguish thou art, after Jesus, our greatest hope.

Hail, then, O Queen, Mother of Mercy, our life, our sweetness, our consolation and our hope!... Exiles in this world that blasphemes and outrages Thine Adorable Son, we cry to thee who art so kind to those who love thee, but as terrible to the demon as an army in battle array!... We supplicate thee to turn away from our iniquities the threats of Eternal Justice and to turn toward us thy merciful heart. Only one glance, O Heavenly Mother, one glance from Jesus and from thee and we shall be saved!... And the vain projects of impiety shall disappear like wax exposed to a burning fire.

Do not say that thou canst not do it, O Mary, because thy intercession is all powerful over the Heart of thy Divine Son, and He does not know how to refuse thee!... Do not say that thou dost not will it, because thou art our Mother, and thy heart must be moved by the misfortunes of thy children!...

Therefore, since thou canst do it, and since thou most assuredly dost will it, hasten to our help! Save us and let them not perish who have placed their confidence in thee and beg for only that which thou thyself desirest so much: the reign of thy Son over our country and over all hearts.

Never was it heard that anyone who fled to thy protection was ever left unaided. Turn thyself, then, to Jesus, remind Him of thy

tenderness, thy tears, thy sorrows: Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Calvary. Speak to Him for us and obtain the salvation of our people. Amen.

## Magnificat

Magnificat anima mea Dominum: Et exultavit spiritus meus: in Deo salutari meo.

Quia respexit humilitatem ancillae suae: ecce enim ex hoc beatam me dicent omnes generationes.

Quia fecit mihi magna qui potens est: et sanctum nomen ejus.

Et misericordia ejus a progenie in progenies: timentibus eum.

Fecit potentiam in brachio suo: dispersit superbos mente cordis sui.

Deposuit potentes de sede: et exaltavit humiles.

Esurientes implevit bonis: et divites dimisit inanes.

Suscepit Israel puerum suum: recordatus misericordiae suae.

Sicut locutus est ad patres nostros: Abraham et semini ejus in saecula.

Gloria Patri, et Filio, et Spiritui Sancto, sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

My soul doth magnify the Lord and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior.

Because He hath regarded the humility of His handmaid: for behold, all generations shall call me blessed.

Because He that is mighty hath done great things: and holy is His Name.

And His mercy is from generation to generation, to them that fear Him.

He hath shewed might in His arm: He hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart.

He hath put down the mighty from their seat and hath exalted the humble.

He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He hath sent empty away.

He hath received Israel His servant, being mindful of His mercy.

As He spoke to our fathers: to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

(3 years indulgence. A plenary indulgence once a month under the usual conditions for all who recite this Canticle daily for a whole month.)

## **Part II; Chapter 1: The Aim of Victim Souls**

The aim of Victim Souls is threefold:

1. To repair the insults and outrages offered to the Sacred Heart.
2. To gain the grace of conversion for sinners.
3. To implore the special blessing of God upon the labors of priests and Religious.

### **Victim Souls Should Sacrifice Themselves for the Sacred Heart of Jesus**

**T**HE primary aim of Victim Souls is to make reparation to the Sacred Heart of Our Lord, in the first place for their own unfaithfulness, and then for the sins of the whole world. This thought of holy expiation should permeate their whole lives.

It is therefore not merely one day of each month, namely, the First Friday, that they devote to this purpose; not merely one Holy Communion each week; nor even merely one hour of each day: they consecrate to this high purpose every day of the year, its every hour, minute, and moment; every Holy Communion, every good work, every act of virtue; in short, their whole lives, together with their labors, sacrifices, and sufferings offered for this end.

The chief purpose of Victim Souls in all their works and sufferings must therefore be reparation, in some measure, of the terrible insults offered in our days to the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Sacrament of His love. This by no means excludes other intentions. Though Victim Souls are expected to offer each Holy Communion in a spirit of reparation, they may, nevertheless, offer the fruits of their Communion for some other intention, for a particular person, or for the obtaining of some special favor. All they need to do is to preserve the consciousness that their whole life, and consequently also this particular Communion, is above all, consecrated to reparation.

Surely such a general intention is eminently noble, and must prove acceptable to a soul that has an enthusiastic love for Our Savior. When we reflect upon the hatred which the world bears to a loving God and realize the Lord of Heaven and earth is spurned and offended; when we realize that the set purpose of so many millions of men in our day is to destroy all faith in Christ and to blot out the very

memory of the Redemption wrought on Calvary; when we read of sacrilegious hands laid upon the Person of Our Lord and Savior in the tabernacle by wicked men, must not all of this, if there be but a spark of love for Christ in our hearts, urge us powerfully to make reparation to the wounded Heart of Our Savior as far as lies in our power, to offer Him in the spirit of reparation all the labors and sacrifices and sufferings of our whole life?

Victim Souls must therefore rally round the wounded Heart of the Savior as so many seraphs on earth, whose whole endeavor is to offer Him honor, love, and reparation. They must unite themselves with His perpetual sacrifice on our altars in order thereby to be themselves unceasingly a propitiatory offering with Him, through Him, and in Him. With this end in view they must be ready to abandon themselves completely to His good pleasure and to accept whatever sufferings He may wish to send them. They must look upon the sufferings of their souls, that interior martyrdom of dryness and lack of consolation, as their precious portion on earth, because thereby they are better enabled to repair the insults and outrages heaped upon the adorable Heart of the Savior.

How great and noble is such a soul. It unselfishly forgets its own interests in order to live entirely for the interests of the Sacred Heart! And how Our Savior must be comforted and pleased by the manifestation of such nobility!

“You are indeed,” says Cardinal Mermillot to Victim Souls, “the comforters of the Heart of the Savior. Like Mary Magdalen you pour forth at the feet of the Master the precious ointment of your prayers and good works, and the tears of your devotion and love. Like Veronica you wipe His adorable countenance with the veil of humble self-denial.”

Is it not verily an ideal task which is set before these Victim Souls, that of offering reparation to their outraged Lord? No less ideal is the second object of the Association.

### **Victim Souls Should Sacrifice Themselves for the Salvation of Souls**

**T**HE second aim of Victim Souls should be to implore the grace of conversion for poor sinners. If the primary aim of these souls has for its immediate object the honor and reparation of the Sacred Heart, the same object can be gained indirectly through the offering of themselves to lead back many stray souls to the Sacred Heart.

It is to this second aim that Victim Souls devote not merely one or

the other good work, but their entire life with all its labors and sufferings. All this they do with a double intention, first as a tribute of reparation, and then as a means of the conversion of poor sinners. In so doing they may have in view some particular sinner or all poor sinners in general. At the same time they may offer up their Masses and Communion or any other pious exercise either for themselves or for their relatives and friends.

But as Victim Souls must realize that the offering of themselves and their good works is of little value in a work of such tremendous importance, since not even all mankind taken collectively can make adequate satisfaction for even one sinner, they ought not to neglect to unite their good works with the infinite sacrifice of the holy Mass, continuously being offered up to God throughout the world for poor sinners. They should therefore pursue, as it were, the divine Victim from altar to altar, in order to offer their good works in union with Him.

It is therefore recommended that they frequently join in spirit in offering of the many Masses which are being said at every hour of the day in some quarter of the globe, for which purpose they might accustom themselves at the beginning of each new action to say in the secrecy of their hearts: "Dear Savior, I perform this action for love of Thee as an act of reparation to Thy Sacred Heart. I unite it with Thine own sacrifice of the altar and offer it to Thee for the salvation of poor sinners." Thereby their actions, which are of small value in themselves, receive a great worth; thereby they gain a share in the fruits of the Mass for those who, because of their continued sins and impenitence, would otherwise be deprived of them.

In this manner, then, do Victim Souls endeavor to continue mystically the sublime propitiatory sacrifice of Calvary in their own lives. They unite the sacrifice of themselves with the sacrifice of the Cross, and thereby, according to the words of the Apostle, fill up what is wanting of the sufferings of Christ. Thus they exercise the mystic priesthood of which St. Peter speaks: You are a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood" (1 Peter 2:9).

## **Victim Souls Should Sacrifice Themselves for Priests and Religious**

**V**ICTIM Souls have a third object in view, to implore the blessing of Heaven upon the apostolic labors of priests, in order that the Sacred Heart of Jesus may be glorified as much as possible by His chosen servants.

It is precisely by prayer and sacrifice for priests that the Association performs an eminently apostolic work. For, it goes without saying, that the conversion of sinners is not so much the result of the efforts of the priest in the pulpit or in the confessional, as rather the work of God's grace. The priest is, so to speak, only the channel through which God's grace flows into souls; nay, in most cases he is merely the exterior force which sets in motion the grace of God. But the grace of conversion must be implored and in a sense merited, and it is implored chiefly by sacrifice. Victim Souls, therefore, by means of sacrifice, become co-workers of the priest in that great apostolate, the salvation of souls.

Now, we may ask: Who can become members of an Association of so high an ideal and purpose? Shall membership be limited to only the holiest and most courageous souls, who give evidence of true heroism in their spirit of sacrifice? Indeed, this is the ideal of Victim Souls, even though they may never reach it completely. But it is by no means necessary actually to possess this ideal disposition before joining the Association. The only necessary requisite for becoming a member is love of Our Savior, love of His Sacred Heart; not indeed a mere love of feeling, but an active love, a love urging us on to do something for Our Savior and His Sacred Heart, a love which will not shrink from sacrifice when there is question of making reparation to His Sacred Heart for the numberless offenses which are heaped upon Him.

The Association does not exclude even those who in their former life may have caused bitter grief to the Heart of their Savior. On the contrary, they will find in the Association the very best means of repairing, by redoubled efforts, their former unfaithfulness and offenses. In our works of reparation it is well ever to be mindful of our own offenses, just as the saints, conscious of their own guilt, thought that they could never do penance enough for their sins and negligences. It would surely be a mistake if even the most perfect of Victim Souls were ever to forget their own sinfulness, and neglect to make reparation and ask pardon for them.

Only those souls in whom love for Christ has completely died out, or whose love has grown so weak that they are unwilling to make sacrifices of any kind, are excluded from the Association. Anyone, therefore, who is willing to make sacrifices may courageously become a member.

## Part II; Chapter 2: Means to Attain the End

THE means by which Victim Souls seek to attain the end they have proposed to themselves are prayer and sacrifice. Their motto must be: "Prayer and sacrifice, love and suffering." Even as Jesus reconciled sinful humanity to His heavenly Father by prayer and sacrifice, by the same means Victim Souls fulfill their holy vocation of reparation.

### First Means: Prayer

Victim Souls will, above all, seek to perform the various practices of devotion to the Sacred Heart.

Of course, none of these exercises of piety is indispensable. The spirit, however, which should animate them must manifest itself in sacrifices, which they can perform even to a heroic degree, independently of the various exercises of piety which will be presently indicated. It remains, therefore, for the individual soul to make use of those practices which her individual circumstances make possible for her.

It should also be borne in mind that none of the requirements for a Victim Soul is binding under pain of sin, except such as are binding upon all men. It is, of course, possible to make a separate vow when making the offering of oneself as a Victim; but such a vow is not necessary, nor is it even advisable, and hence ought never to be made without permission of one's confessor.

The following exercises of piety are recommended to Victim Souls:

#### 1. The First Friday of the Month

Victim Souls will above all be faithful in the observance of the first Friday of each month by devoutly receiving Holy Communion, or, if hindered on the first Friday, at least on the first Sunday of the month. This devotion, which has become a cherished object of all clients of the Sacred Heart, will be especially dear to Victim Souls.

It is precisely the first Friday that Our Savior Himself appointed for special reparation. It was on this day that He once appeared to St. Margaret Mary and complained to her of the coldness and ingratitude with which most men requite His love and His benefits, and asked her to receive Holy Communion in reparation thereof.

It is well to bear in mind that Our Savior has made a most consoling promise in favor of those who regularly receive Holy Communion on the First Friday of each month. "I promise these in the excess of the mercy of My Heart that its all-powerful love will grant to all those who shall receive Communion on the first Friday of

nine consecutive months the grace of final repentance; they shall not die under My displeasure, nor without receiving the Sacraments; My divine Heart shall be their assured refuge at that last hour.” No wonder that thousand upon thousands, yea, millions of Catholics flock to the altar on the first Friday to gain for themselves a claim to this wonderful promise; so that now, since the introduction of frequent Communion, the first Friday has become a veritable feast day in most parishes. How zealous, therefore, Victim Souls should be in observance of the first Friday!

## 2. Communion of Reparation

Victim Souls will, moreover, feel themselves drawn to receive Holy Communion, not merely on the first Friday, but also at other times with the special purpose of making reparation to the Sacred Heart.

Even as the first Friday arose from an express wish of Our Savior, in like manner the origin of the Communion of Reparation is to be traced to an express desire on His part; for, on one occasion, He addressed the following words to St. Margaret Mary: “I come into thy heart in order that by thy burning love thou mayest repair the offenses which are offered to Me in the Blessed Sacrament by lukewarm and cold souls. Do thou at least afford Me some comfort: make reparation for the ingratitude of men by receiving Me in Holy Communion as often as obedience permits.”

Again He spoke to her, saying: “I wish thy heart to be a refuge to which I can fly and find joy when sinners drive Me from their hearts. When thou shalt realize that the divine justice is aroused against sinners, do thou receive Me in Holy Communion, place Me upon the throne of thy heart, and prostrate at My feet do thou offer Me adoration.”

Do not these words of Our Savior apply equally well to Victim Souls, since they too, like St. Margaret Mary, have consecrated themselves to the Sacred Heart for the very purpose of making reparation to Him? And how can this be done better than by the Communion of Reparation? To repair the offenses offered Him in the Blessed Sacrament, Our Lord Himself prescribed the reception of Holy Communion as the proper means of celebrating the Feast of the Sacred Heart.

Is it possible, then, for Victim Souls to remain indifferent to so earnest an appeal of the Sacred Heart? Will they not feel themselves powerfully drawn to fulfill this wish of their Savior as often as they can?

### 3. The Mass of Reparation

The most effective means of reparation is Holy Communion together with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. In Mass there is offered to God a gift which is of infinite value – the only-begotten Son of God, and His Precious Blood shed in reparation for us. This infinite gift is offered to God not only by the priest, but also by the faithful who assist at holy Mass – a fact which becomes clear from a consideration of the beautiful prayers used by the priest during the Holy Sacrifice.

When he raises the paten with the host at the Offertory of the Mass, he makes the offering not only for himself, but also “for all those present, for all believing Christians, for the living and the dead.” At the offering of the chalice he prays in the name of all who are present: “We offer unto Thee, O Lord, the chalice of salvation, beseeching Thy clemency, that in the sight of Thy Divine Majesty it may ascend with the odor of sweetness for our salvation and for that of the whole world.” At the conclusion of the Offertory he turns to the people and says these words: “Brethren, pray that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Father Almighty.”

At the moment of the Consecration the priest indeed speaks the sacred words alone, but soon after he offers the divine Victim in the name of all the faithful who are present, saying: “Wherefore, O Lord, we Thy servants and likewise Thy holy people offer unto Thy most excellent Majesty a pure Victim, a holy Victim, an immaculate Victim, the holy Bread of eternal life and the Chalice of everlasting salvation.”

Most of the faithful are, unfortunately, too little conscious of this exalted function which should be theirs at Mass. It is therefore all the more incumbent upon Victim Souls to unite themselves most closely with the sacrificing priest. In so doing they ought at the same time to unite themselves with the divine Victim, and with Him and through Him make of themselves and all they possess a sacrifice of reparation.

It is highly desirable and profitable for Victim Souls not to be content with thus offering the one Mass at which they are present; they should strive to unite themselves frequently during the day, in the spirit of self-oblation, with all the Masses which are said throughout the world.

How slight is the reparatory value of our own good works, because of our poverty and sinfulness! But Jesus, the loving Savior, comes to aid this our poverty and deficiency by giving Himself to us in holy Mass as a perpetual sacrifice of reparation. Well may we then follow

Him in spirit from altar to altar and take part in His uninterrupted sacrifice.

And how useful is the practice of making a new offering of ourselves at the beginning of each hour of the day! Thereby we please the Sacred Heart of Our Savior and gain a greater share in the graces of the Holy Mass. This good intention so frequently renewed, although earnestly recommended, is however by no means essential for sharing in the multitude of Masses that are said daily; it suffices if we make the intention in the morning to share in all the Masses that will be said during that day.

#### 4. Visits to the Blessed Sacrament

Victim Souls will naturally experience a strong yearning to pay frequent visits to their loving Savior in the tabernacle. Only too frequently He is left alone, not only during the long hours of the night, but also throughout the day; and yet we know He is there out of love for us, that we may not be left orphans in this vale of tears, that He may bestow His graces and blessings in richest abundance on those who come to keep Him company in His loneliness. But, oh, how few think of this loving Heart of Our Savior perpetuating His presence amongst us solely for our benefit!

Ought it not, then, to be the sweetest privilege of Victim Souls to present themselves frequently before the tabernacle in order to make reparation for the coldness and indifference of others by their own faithfulness and love?

It was this very loneliness of Our Lord in the tabernacle that deeply affected Venerable Mother Mary of Jesus, and therefore, while still in the world, she was wont to spend whole hours in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Being asked on one occasion what she found to say to her loving Savior during all these hours, she replied: "I tell Him that I long for a thousand hearts to offer Him, a thousand lives to sacrifice to Him, and thousands of souls to bring to Him."

From her ardent desire to make reparation for the coldness of men proceeded her endeavor to obtain for her newly founded Community the privilege of perpetual exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the little chapel of her convent.

From the same desire she adopted the practice of saluting her loving Savior in the tabernacle, whenever on a journey she spied the tower of a church or chapel. She also made it a labor of love to decorate the altar personally and to prepare everything necessary for the service of the altar. For this end she ever strove for the utmost

splendor and magnificence, upon which she once remarked as follows: “There was a time in my life when I was much given to display and extravagance, and had I remained in the world this inclination might have proved dangerous to me; but now that I have left all for God, I can indulge it without fear or restraint, because it enable me to exalt His divine Majesty.”

What a beautiful example for Victim Souls! If there were but one such person in every parish how well would the beauty of the Lord’s house be guaranteed! Then indeed the decorations of the altar would never consist of merely a few faded artificial flowers, nor would there be a single church in which after the brief half hour of the morning Mass Our Savior would be left entirely alone. Truly, such a Victim Soul would cause unspeakable pleasure to Our Savior and would merit a rich reward from Him.

## 5. The Holy Hour

The devout practice of the Holy Hour owes its origin to the promptings of Our Blessed Lord Himself. One day when He appeared to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, He said to her: “Every night between Thursday and Friday I will make you partake of that sorrow unto death which it was My will to suffer in the Garden of Olives. United with Me in the humble prayer which I then offered to My Father, you shall rise between eleven o’clock and midnight; and you shall prostrate yourself with Me for one hour, with your face to the ground, both to appease the anger of God by imploring mercy for sinners and to sweeten in some way the bitterness which I felt when My apostles abandoned Me, being unable to watch one hour with Me.”

The Saint observed this hour of adoration faithfully, and in return received countless favors from the Sacred Heart.

Undoubtedly many pious souls imitated the example of St. Margaret Mary, but it was only in the year 1829 that Father Debrosse, of the Society of Jesus, founded a Confraternity at Paray-le-Monial, whose members promised to observe the Holy Hour in accordance with the wishes of Our Savior. Pope Pius VIII granted the members a plenary indulgence for the observance of the Holy Hour; Pope Pius IX granted the same indulgence to members of the Apostleship of Prayer who observe the Holy Hour between sunset of Thursday and sunrise of Friday; Pope Leo XIII permitted the members of the Apostleship to observe the Holy Hour at any hour and on any day of the week, provided the observance to be in common and in public.

To gain the plenary indulgence attached to the observance of the

Holy Hour at present, the requirements are most simple: to spend an hour in prayer according to the intention above described, during the time indicated. The Holy Hour may therefore be hold in the church or at home; during which time one may kneel or stand or be seated, no special position being prescribed. In like manner we may perform the most various kinds of devotion: we may make spiritual reading on the Passion of Our Lord and then meditate on what we read; we may make the Way of the Cross, or recite the Rosary, contemplating the Sorrowful Mysteries; or we may say any other prayers to which we may feel inclined. It is, however, very desirable to occupy oneself with the consideration of the Passion of Our Lord, especially with His sufferings in the Garden of Olives.

## 6. The Offering of the Precious Blood

The last exercise, which is especially recommended to Victim Souls, is the frequent offering of the Precious Blood and Water which flowed from the wound of the Sacred Heart when it was pierced with the lance. This is an exercise which is specially practiced by the Guard of Honor, and hence souls of sacrifice ought frequently to offer this precious price of our Redemption to the heavenly Father.

The intention with which this offering should be made is, first of all, the expiation of the sins of mankind, the conversion of poor sinners, and the needs of Holy Church; and then very specially to implore greater perfection for priests and Religious, together with all the graces they need in order to triumph over the persecution which the powers of hell seem to be instigating against them in our day.

The following indulgenced prayer seems particularly suited for this offering:

“Holy Father, accept in reparation, for the needs of Holy Church, and in satisfaction for the sins of men, the Precious Blood and Water which flowed from the wound of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and have mercy on us.”

The six exercises of piety which we have just described are rather external practices, eminently characteristic of devotion to the Sacred Heart. They are therefore earnestly recommended to Victim Souls, but do not constitute the peculiar mark which should distinguish them. It is the second means, namely sacrifice, which should characterize them; for only souls that courageously make sacrifices merit in the truest sense the name of Victim Souls. However, one can be more or less generous in making sacrifices; and therefore we shall indicate the various degrees of this spirit of sacrifice. In the first place, timid souls should remember that it is not necessary, in the

very beginning, to aim at, much less to arrive at, the highest degree of sacrifice; it suffices that we have the firm determination of will to accept in the spirit of reparation whatever befalls us in the ordinary course of events. Indeed, the surrender of oneself to the Sacred Heart in the character of a Victim Soul does not demand anything extraordinary: it suffices that we perform ordinary actions in an extraordinary way, as perfectly as circumstances allow.

With this preliminary remark we proceed to the consideration of the second means to be employed by Victim Souls in gaining the object which they have proposed to themselves.

## **Part II: First Degree of the Spirit of Sacrifice**

### **A) Patient acceptance of crosses and sufferings**

1. The most essential requirement for Victim Souls is the courageous acceptance of those sacrifices which God imposes upon them, and which, consequently, they are in wise able to avoid; these, however, they should accept with the intention of thereby offering reparation to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and of contributing, in some measure, to the conversion of poor sinners.

They must therefore be firmly resolved to accept with full resignation and in the spirit of reparation whatever cross or suffering God may wish to send them. In their act of oblation they have made a complete surrender of themselves to the Sacred Heart to be dealt with entirely according to His good pleasure. They have consented in advance to accept in the spirit of reparation all sufferings, whether of body, mind, or soul, which the Sacred Heart of Jesus may wish to send them.

2. Not a few may shrink from joining the Association of Victim Souls when they consider that if they make an absolute surrender of themselves, God may send them very heavy crosses to bear, and hence, they argue, it is better for them to refrain from joining the Association, since they are far too weak to bear crosses.

Such fear, however, is entirely groundless. To surrender oneself to God in the character of a Victim Soul does not mean to ask Him for extraordinary crosses; this, indeed, would be imprudent, because we do not know whether we are capable of bearing them. A cross which taxes our strength may become for us a temptation to impatience or discouragement.

After she had on a certain occasion written enthusiastically of her

own thirst for crosses and sufferings, St. Margaret Mary thus cautioned a Sister Religious: "I would not have you understand me to mean that we ought to ask for crosses and sufferings, for the more perfect way is to desire nothing and to refuse nothing, but to abandon oneself entirely to the Beloved, to be crucified or humiliated according to His good pleasure."

St. Francis de Sales writes in a similar strain: "Should Divine Providence permit sufferings to befall you, do not reject them, but accept all quietly and lovingly. If, however, God does not send or permit such to befall you, do not desire or ask them. I am of the opinion that we ought not ask for bitterness of heart, as Our Lord once did, for we are not able to bear it as He did. For us it suffices that we accept it with patience."

3. On the other hand, the surrender of oneself in the spirit of Victim Souls does imply the conviction that sufferings are indeed a precious gift. Their attitude of mind ought to be such as might be expressed in the following words: "O Lord, if it is for Thy greater honor that I follow Thee not only in joy but also in suffering, I am willing. Thou needest not act like a father who may not handle the spoiled child roughly lest it fight and resist. I know that Thou wilt not send me sufferings unless they are for my good, and that I can give evidence of my love for Thee only by love of the cross."

This much, then, must be simply a matter of course for Victim Souls, that they accept willingly in the spirit of reparation all crosses and sufferings which Our Savior may see fit to send them; for this is implied in their act of oblation, and is in fact the plain duty of every Christian, as may be seen from the words of Our Lord: "He who will not carry his cross cannot be my disciple."

We may not therefore give ear to the voice of corrupt nature ever prone to complain when God sends crosses and sufferings. "He inflicts such deep wounds and His hand rests heavily upon me!" Yes, but can we fear aught from a hand which was pierced for us and was willing to be nailed to the Cross for us? "But He leads me upon so narrow and thorny a path!" Yes, but what if there be no other way to Heaven; would you rather be lost forever? And did He not Himself walk the way of suffering? "But He offers me a chalice filled with bitterness!" Yes, but remember that it is your Savior who offers it; and surely He who loves you with such infinitely tender love would never be so severe, apparently so harsh with you, if it were not for your profit, and perhaps even necessary for you.

Another thought deserving of our consideration is this: It may well be that difficult trials are actually in store for us; but if we have

formed the habit of offering ourselves voluntarily for anything that may befall us, will it not be easier to accept trials when God actually sends them? We shall therefore do well frequently to express our willingness to sacrifice our possessions, our health, our good name, everything that we may call our own, in accordance with the good pleasure of God, until we have reached that stage where we shall will only what God wills, and desire nothing that God Himself does not desire.

## **B) Complete Abandonment to Divine Providence**

1. The surrender of oneself to the Sacred Heart of Jesus as a Victim Soul necessarily implies the complete abandonment of oneself to Divine Providence. In their act of oblation Victim Souls expressly declare their readiness to accept from the hand of God whatsoever it may please Him to send them. Whosoever would therefore become a Victim Soul must abandon himself without reserve to Divine Providence.

Such is likewise the express wish of the Sacred Heart; for there is nothing which Our Savior asked with more frequent insistence from St. Margaret Mary than this complete and unreserved surrender of herself. "It is My wish," He says to her, "that you surrender yourself completely to My Providence, both when I heap tenderness upon you and when I visit you with sufferings."

Again He says to her, "I am your Guide, to whom you must abandon yourself completely without any care or regard for your own person; for you shall never be in want until My Heart is deprived of its power." In like manner, Our Lord wishes every Victim Soul to abandon herself completely to His good pleasure; yea, even that she allow no desire whatever to take possession of her heart which is not in full accord with His wishes.

Once when St. Margaret Mary was frightened at the sight of her own weakness and faults, Our Savior said to her: "Why are you frightened? Am I not sufficient for you? Can a child which is as much loved as I love you, be lost when it rests in the arms of the Almighty?"

The same words might be addressed by Our Savior to every Victim Soul; for there can be no doubt that she is a specially favored child of God. How then can she be lost if she surrenders herself into the arms of Divine Providence? She can only be lost if she withdraws from the loving care of Our Savior. It behooves us, therefore, to be totally

unconcerned about the future, and in accordance with the wishes of Our Savior to cast all our care upon Him.

2. St. Margaret Mary writes to a Sister Religious: “Let us ask for nothing and refuse nothing.” Would that all Victim Souls practiced this golden rule, for surely it contains deep wisdom! We mortals are so frightfully short-sighted, and as a result oftentimes pray frequently for some grace which if granted would be simply disastrous to us, whilst we oppose with all our strength some disposition of Providence which would be to our advantage. Do we not often come to realize in mature years that the very things which happened to us in early life were for our real good, though at the time we did not think so? Surely, then, we ought as Victim Souls to make it the rule of our life neither to ask for anything nor to refuse anything, but to leave all to the loving Providence of God.

Another profitable course is indicated by St. Margaret Mary in these words: “We ought to abandon ourselves to the Providence of the Sacred Heart, so as to be fashioned and formed according to His good pleasure, just as the statue is in the hands of the sculptor.”

Were we thus disposed, it would be easy for the skillful master hand of our loving Savior to produce in a very short time a really beautiful work of art out of the coarse, shapeless mass which we are by nature. As it is, He is obliged to apply the chisel repeatedly and to strike heavy blows with the hammer, in order to smooth off the rough corners and edges, and thus gradually produce His own likeness in our souls. And all this is accomplished only after many years of labor on His part, because of our stubborn opposition; whereas otherwise it would require but a few months.

3. We shall quote a few more authorities on this important subject. St. Ignatius writes thus: “There are but few who understand what Almighty God would make of them if they did not oppose Him. A block of wood, no matter how rough and shapeless it be, may by the skill of an artist be transformed into a beautiful statue. Many a one who hardly deserves to be called a Christian would become a saint but that he puts himself in opposition to God’s designs and the workings of divine grace.” To abandon oneself unreservedly to Divine Providence is to make a Victim of oneself – no doubt but that is just what is expected of a Victim Soul. Is she not to become a Victim? That very surrender of oneself to God’s Providence is a necessity, to be sure; but it is at the same time the most acceptable of all sacrifices that can be offered to Almighty God.

Father DeLehen, S.J., indorses the opinion of St. Ignatius in these words: “The surrender of your own will is precisely that kind of

sacrifice which is most agreeable to Almighty God and which confers greater honor on His infinite Majesty than any other. It is the most signal manifestation of love, the most exalted, the most meritorious of virtues. We may safely assert that by that submission we earn for ourselves, at every moment even, treasures of grace great beyond measure, and thus reap in a short time for all eternity a harvest of merits rich beyond description.” It may moreover be confidently maintained that by that very same submission the Victim Soul acts up to the demands of her sacred calling of atonement in the most perfect manner.

All Victim Souls therefore may listen to the exhortations St. Teresa addressed to her spiritual daughters as addressed to themselves. She says: “When you begin your spiritual exercises, take this only resolution, that you will endeavor to conform your will to God’s will. Rest assured that this conformity is the greatest possible perfection the soul can attain to; and the more eager you are in striving after it, the richer will be the graces the Almighty God will shower down upon you, and the quicker the pace at which you proceed along the path of the spiritual life. Believe me, there is no mystic knowledge beyond what I have just told you; and this is the foundation upon which the spiritual edifice is safely founded.” On our part we add that this conformity to our will to God’s will transforms us into genuine Victim Souls of the divine Heart of Jesus.

St. Clement Maria Hofbauer used to say: “The best means by which to attain holiness consists in sinking like a stone into the ocean of God’s will, and allowing oneself to be whirled and tossed about like a ball by the hand of Almighty God.”

We always return to God with a joyous heart when He throws His ball upwards, that is, when He elevates us to the realm of blissful contemplation or overwhelms us with His sweet consolations; but neither should we refuse to return to Him when He flings His poor ball to the ground, that is, when He lowers us into the depth of humiliation. Even then let us exclaim with a thankful heart: “My Jesus, I give Thee thanks that Thou hast lowered me, for I know that it is for my good; of it be for Thy honor let me be humbled anew. Have I not offered myself to Thee as a Victim Soul, that Thou mayest fully dispose of me according to Thy pleasure?”

It is indeed true that it is not always easy to make this complete surrender of ourselves to the Providence of God. Oftentimes God leads us over rough and dark paths; we stumble over the rough places and fear to advance in the darkness. Then indeed it is hard to abandon ourselves to the divine guidance. Even many a Victim Soul lacks the

courage to do so, because she forgets that God's ways are not our ways, that He sees farther than we, that He knows better what is for our real good.

Oh, that we could always keep alive the conviction that God's infinitely loving Providence seeks only our true good, even when He sends us heavy trials! True, God could, if He so chose, reveal to us the full scope of His plans in our regard, and then we should readily acquiesce to Him. But then where would be our merit? It is just by abandoning ourselves confidently to the divine guidance, even when we do not see the wisdom of His ways, that we glorify God and make reparation to Him for the complaints and oftentimes blasphemies of those who refuse in the blindness of their hearts to submit to the dispositions of His Divine Providence.

For the consolation of souls what have high aims in the spiritual life, it may be well to outline what seems to be the manner of God's dealings with them. The words of Father Grou, S.J., are most apt for this purpose. He says: "When a soul has made a complete surrender of herself to God, He at first gives to her a great confidence in Himself, a strong faith in His promises, perfect abandonment to His guidance. Later it pleases Him to test this confidence in a variety of ways. He seems to act in a manner contrary to what He has promised, as it were to abandon those who have delivered themselves to Him, to place them in a condition of darkness and spiritual desolation, so that they no longer know what to do, and are led almost to believe that God has delivered them up to perdition. If such souls nevertheless persevere in the service of God and do not in any way grow lax, but gradually make a sacrifice of all they hold most dear; if in their hearts they continue to hope against hope, they thereby glorify God supremely and amass for themselves a priceless treasure of merits." Indeed, such souls are the ideal Victim Souls of sacrifice.

So complete a surrender to the divine guidance, even in heavy trials, seems indeed to be ideal; and yet it ought to be taken as a matter of course. For we cannot change the disposition of God's Providence in our regard; even if we oppose and struggle against it; on the contrary, we thereby render crosses and sufferings only the heavier. We ought therefore, so to speak, make a virtue of necessity and accept all out of love for the Sacred Heart, to render Him atonement and to benefit poor sinners.

It is clear, then, from what has been said, that we fulfill the essential requirements of the Association of Victim Souls if only we willingly accept, in the spirit of reparation, the crosses which God sends us. But this will not satisfy the true and generous Victim Souls.

Inflamed with love of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, they will long to do more; they will impose voluntary penances upon themselves; they will make it a rule of life not merely to shrink from no sacrifice, but even cheerfully to use every opportunity for self-surrender, because they realize that sacrifice is the means best adapted to accomplish their aim in life, viz.: to make reparation to the Sacred Heart, to bring stray souls back to Him, and to implore God's blessing upon priests and Religious.

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