

In accordance with the decree of the Holy Father Urban VIII the contents of this
booklet are submitted for the judgement and approval of the Holy Church

MONS. NICOLA TAFURI

THE MONTH OF JUNE

CONSECRATED

TO THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS

FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE DEVOTION

IN THE SAME FASHION AS THE MARIAN MONTH

SEVENTH EDITION

TRANSLATED BY SIMONE FINALDI

PUBLISHED IN NAPLES IN 1957

M. D'AURIA – EDITORE PONTIFICIO

CALATA TRINITÀ MAGGIORE, 52

Introduction

How ignorant people are of Jesus Christ! What St. John the Baptist said to the Jews about Jesus could be repeated to Christians today: “There is one among you, you do not know – *Medius vestrum setit quem vos nescitis.*”

It is known that Christ is God, that He died for us, that He is present in the Eucharist, but people do not know Him as a son knows his father, as a friend knows his great companion; they do not know the goodness of His Heart. If they did, there would be intimacy, trust and affection. Now, the devotion to the Sacred Heart helps us to know and love Jesus, showing us the mysteries of His mercy and the feelings of love for us that move Him.

No, the devotion to the Heart of Jesus is not just the privilege of one or two pious people. We are all renewed by His blood and filled with His blessings, He was pierced on the Cross for us all, we all wounded Him with our sins, we are all the objects of His love and tenderness, and we should all be fervently devoted to Him.

This Heart is the centre, the soul, the life of the entire Church militant, Church purgative and the whole Church triumphant. On earth, in purgatory and in heaven not one holy thought is formed, not one virtuous act is performed, nor a celestial delight enjoyed, that does not have its ultimate source there. As St. Augustine tells us this Heart is another Noah’s ark and those that enter will escape the flood. St. Peter Damian called it the universal treasury of all that is good, from which everyone can obtain riches for their soul, and St. Bernardine of Siena said it was a furnace of burning love destined to inflame the universe. It is useless to try and express how dear the devotion to the Sacred Heart is to Jesus Christ. He Himself, our worshipful

saviour, instituted it with the greatest urgency, and declared that He would keep in His heart stores of grace for all those who embrace the devotion and work to make it more widely known. What other devotion will so rapidly raise a soul to the heights of holiness? O, so this is the greatest devotion of all!

To that end, to give this opportunity to as many people as possible, the seventh edition of this small book of short and clear meditations has been put together. It is the humblest of these, and the only advantage it has is the fact it is suitable for all.

In the journey towards Christian perfection there are three stages: they are the purgative way, in which we are raised from our vices, bad habits and faults; the illuminated way, in which the utmost is done to correct our defects and to learn saintly virtue; and the way of unity, which has as its goal a final oneness with God and His ultimate goodness and love. The three parts of this book correspond to these three ways, which are the beginning, middle and end of Christian perfection. The first part of this book seeks to show how fantastic the great, loving and beneficial care of the Sacred Heart is, in order that people may abandon sin and turn to Christ. The second part strives to unveil the principal virtues of this Heart, so that people may imitate them and come closer to perfection. The third part offers the various ways in which people may become united to the divine Heart, so that they may be entirely one with Him.

The meditations are accompanied by examples, stories, brief prayers, hagiographic accounts, and short songs, which are intended to be as pleasurable to read as they are edifying to hear. This present text is taken from that of P. Muzzarelli, in the hope that the following of this devotion in the month of June, as well as in that of May, with pomp and solemnity by the faithful, will be universally practiced within the Church.

O, that this could take place, how many precious advantages people would gain from it! How many more graces would issue from that throne of mercy that is the Heart of our sweet saviour, and rain down upon the earth! How much sooner this miserable world would be raised from the abyss of ruin and corruption into which it has fallen!

This month comes after May, which is consecrated to the Mother of divine love: what time could be better or more beautiful? So Mary, she who believed, will be our road, our guide, our star, to lead us to Jesus. In this way, devotion to the Mother, will lead to devotion to the Son. After a month of flowers from heaven, comes a month of heavenly fruits.

Let us therefore not only hand over this month to the Sacred Heart but also work tirelessly so that as many as possible may do this pious exercise of the Month of the Sacred Heart! The Heart itself asks us to do this by means of the words of those holy men and women who enrich this devotion.

To all the faithful who, in the month of June or in any other month, in accordance with the advice of their Ordinary, participate publicly in the pious devotion to the most Sacred Heart of Jesus, the following is promised:

1. An indulgence of ten years off purgatory for every day of the month.
2. A plenary indulgence, if the person has done at least ten days of the devotion (as well as having received confession, Communion and having prayed for the intentions of the Pope).

If the devotion has been faithfully completed privately, the following is promised:

1. An indulgence of seven years off purgatory for everyday of the month.

2. A plenary indulgence, as long as the whole month has been done, and all the above conditions have been adhered to.

(Congregation for indulgences, 8th May 1837, 30th May 1902 and 1st March 1933)

On 8th August 1906, St. Pius X made it possible for the plenary indulgence *Toties Quoties* to be obtained for the holy souls of the Church where the month's devotion had been faithfully observed.

ACTS OF VIRTUE

To be done everyday in the order in which they are set out

(These suggested acts are grouped together, so that one can choose the one which best answers one's own needs, and whichever one of them one is most able to put into practice each day).

1. Induce people, those you have some kind of relationship with, to practice the month in honour of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Join the Apostolate of Prayer or the Sacred Heart League, and work to complete more perfectly this pious practice; procure others to take part in as many of these devotions as possible.

2. Examine yourself carefully and see if you can find within yourself anything that may be an obstacle to the grace that the Sacred Heart wants to give you in this month. If any obstacles are found, remove them without delay. Descend into the depths of your heart and look at your inclinations and affections; if aught is seen that may cause the Sacred Heart sorrow, work to amend it.

3. Put on a medal or an image of the Sacred Heart. If you already have this laudable habit, try to carry it with a real, renewed spirit of faith and devotion. Work to spread, as best as you can, medals, images and other items of the Sacred Heart, so that at least one image is received and exhibited in a house where there were none before.

4. Make every effort to correct the vice you are most prone to indulge in, practice the virtue you are most in need of. Mortify your senses as often as possible during the day to repair the damage you have done to the divine Heart when you have been too free.

5. Accept from the hand of God, willingly and with love, the pains and troubles of this day, offering them to the Sacred Heart as payment for your sins.

Meditate for a quarter of an hour on the Passion of Jesus.

6. Try to find out, through prayer, what the Heart of Jesus desires of you, and do not delay in fulfilling His request, even if it is costly for you. Devoutly carry out the Way of the Cross in order to receive from the infinite mercy of the Sacred Heart, for those who loved Jesus and then betrayed that love, the possibility of returning to Him.

7. In order to imitate the zeal and divine glory that are present within the Sacred Heart do not embark upon any action without first putting it before the Lord, renewing, as often as these words are long, your pure intention by repeating, “Everything for you my God, everything for you”. Recite the Creed five times during the day, and make five offerings for the conversion of the millions who do not yet know Jesus Christ.

8. Do a visible act of humility, that virtue so loved by the Sacred Heart, such as kissing the earth, serving the poor, or showing your defects. Choose to do that which you would least like to. Do every action of the day as if it were done in the presence of gentle Jesus.

9. Suffer peacefully an affront done to you, a disparaging event or incident, or any other type of humiliation, for the sake of the Heart of Jesus that was so humiliated for you. Take any ornament off your clothes that is a sign of worldly importance and make a sacrifice for the Sacred Heart.

10. Show that you are not attached to what you think about yourself: do not defend yourself in front of others, even if you are being falsely accused. Do not speak

about yourself or of that which can turn to your advantage. The important thing is to be humble of heart because that is what the Sacred Heart desires for you.

11. Put an end to any vain reflections in your heart on your good qualities, whether physical or spiritual. Do not behave coldly or in an adverse manner to those who do not consider you; in this way you will not be lacking in humility, that virtue which Jesus Christ has in His Heart and calls you to learn.

12. See Jesus Christ in your superiors and an order from them as one coming from God Himself. Do, therefore, punctually all that they ask of you, in order to imitate the perfect obedience of the Sacred Heart. Visit Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and ask him to give you faith, and love for obedience.

13. In order to please the Heart of Jesus, divine model of obedience, do not desire to follow your own will, even in what is just and holy, as are exercises of devotion and practices of mortification; always follow the advice of your spiritual director. Kiss your medal or image of the Sacred Heart often, and say, full of trust: “Heart of Jesus, I am yours, save me – *Tuus sum ego, salvum me fac.*”

14. Mortify your own will five times, offering these five acts to the Sacred Heart. For example: 1. Do you have an ardent inclination to do something? If it is useless, renounce it; if it is useful and good, suspend the carrying out of the action for a little time. 2. Do you have a desire to see some delightful thing, or in some way to satisfy your curiosity? Deny yourself this satisfaction. 3. Are you thinking of saying something witty, or telling a joke to make people laugh? Stop yourself. 4. Would you like to go to a confidant and let off steam about something bad that happened to you elsewhere? Stay where you are and be silent. 5. Do you wish to smell a flower, listen to music, go for a walk or take any other such innocent pleasure? Deprive yourself of it, for love of Jesus Christ.

15. Do some kind of corporal penance according to the advice of your spiritual director. Devoutly recite half a decade of the Rosary, asking Our Lady that you may enter and be closed into, the Heart of her divine Son.

16. Observe a strict silence when there is no need or just reason to speak and remain in God's presence, in order to imitate, according to your capacity, the Sacred Heart. Say seven *Our Fathers*, *Hail Marys* and *Glory Bes* in honour of St. Joseph, asking him to obtain for you the interior peace and order that is so necessary for receiving the aid of the Sacred Heart.

17. Fast from food, mortify your stomach, and stay in uncomfortable positions or postures. Say five *Our Fathers*, *Hail Marys* and *Glory Bes* in honour of St. Margarita Maria Alacoque, that she may obtain for you the spirit of Christian mortification.

18. To please the very pure Heart of Jesus keep a guard on all your senses: be vigilant as to the movements of your heart – take even the smallest thing that could stain you into account. Visit an image of the most Holy Immaculate Mary and say before it, on your knees, the *Tota pulchra es* and twelve *Hail Marys*, asking her to keep you perfectly pure in your heart and your soul. Say five *Our Fathers*, *Hail Marys* and *Glory Bes* in honour of St. John the Evangelist, who rested his head on Jesus' Heart, so that he may inspire many with the idea and love of holy virginity.

19. Be particularly modest and quiet in Church, avoiding those small acts of irreverence that sadden the Heart of Jesus. Hear a mass with bowed head and offer your moments of distraction to Jesus as a gift. Recite nine *Glory Bes* in honour of the holy Angels, so that they may clothe you in the modesty of Jesus Christ, and help you to put that modesty into practice, particularly in Church before the Blessed Sacrament.

20. Carry with greater patience your everyday cross, whether it be illness, poverty or certain temptations, and carry it not just with lamentation, but giving thanks to the Lord, who gave it to you for your good and to make you into the image of His Son. Look at Christ crucified for a quarter of an hour, with faith, and thinking at every moment of His divine patience; learn how to exercise your patience alongside Him to gain eternal life.

21. Do not judge or suspect your neighbour. Keep your distance from any shadow of murmuring. Do not give any reason for discord and avoid any type of argument. Visit Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and ask fervently from His Heart, love for those around you.

22. Do not mortify anyone with unpleasant words, even if they are only said in jest. If you have done it to anyone, go and ask their forgiveness. If you know anyone who holds something against you, even unjustly, go and reconcile with them. In this way you will remove an occasion of sin the person may have had, by holding a grudge against you.

23. Give alms to a poor person. Help whoever is in need with a good word of warning or correction. Pray for someone you may know who is outside the grace of God. These are all great acts of charity and the Heart of Jesus Christ delights in them.

24. Pass some time in a hospital, bringing relief to those who are unhappy. Visit someone who is ill, recognise in him or her the person of Jesus Christ. Have a mass said, or hear more than one, for the souls in purgatory who, in life, were devoted to the Sacred Heart.

25. Make allowances for the imperfections of others, and excuse their defects. Bear patiently with those who are annoying or difficult. Perform a good act for those who you dislike or have an innate distaste for.

26. Forgive any of your enemies; bless those – through prayer if it cannot be done in any other way – who have offended you. Visit the Sacred Heart, either through an image or the Blessed Sacrament, and ask that all wicked Christians, who have forgotten the ultimate law of love for the enemy, mend their ways.

27. In order to imitate the sweetness of the Heart of Jesus, treat every one with gentleness and love. Be full of affection and concern for your neighbour, even if you have to tell them something negative, do it with a sense of obligation and courtesy. Receive communion or hear a mass in order to heal all the injuries and sacrilege done to the Sacred Heart in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

28. Do not answer things done to you with bitterness and if you must punish those responsible, punish them less than they deserve. Do not be transported by anger, no matter what the harm or injury received. Suffer every adversity without resentment. Recite thirty-three *Our Fathers* and *Glory Bes* in memory of the Heart of Jesus that in all the years from Bethlehem to Golgotha beat for love of us.

29. Sacrifice today something you hold dear, to the divine Heart. Recite five times during the day the prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, for the poor and destitute. Make any kind of offering in the Church for the worship of the Sacred Heart.

30. Ask the holy Heart pardon for all the times you have been unenthusiastic or negligent in this month's practice. Promise that Heart faithfulness and constancy; and subject yourself to a reordering of your life, in a way you yourself prescribe, with the help of your spiritual director, without forgoing it out of distaste, laziness or any other difficulty.

NOTE

In so far as to the practice of the devotion for the month, the proposals of P. Muzzarelli are to be followed as with the Marian month, leaving out whatever is to be left out.

**If the devotion is done in public in the Church some of the following
verses can be sung:**

Heart of Jesus, which suffers
So that our unworthy heart
Which has so little love,
May be opened before you.

Do not disdain but accept,
At least the pain it carries
And set it alight with the fervour
Of your sweet goodness.

Heart of Jesus that rejoices
In saving the wretched sinner,
Give to us the treasures
You want to share with all.

Our heart is devoted to you
Though it has fallen a thousand times,
Now it comes to present to you
These praises and this honour.

O, divine and open Heart
So great and so wounded:
You welcome all and open to all
The infinite blessings of heaven

O, divine Heart that offers
All to our hardened heart,
Peace and life your faithful,
Your people, now do ask.

FIRST DAY

MEDITATION ON THE DEVOTION TO THE HEART OF JESUS*

I. The Heart of Jesus! How immeasurable is the dignity and excellence of this most holy Heart! It is enough to say that it is the Heart of a God-Man, which manages to hold in harmony all human and divine perfections; it is the centre of the love of God for men and the love of men for God. It is the most perfect work of the Holy Spirit, which formed it by virtue of the love of an immaculate virgin, and enriched it with all the gifts the Spirit had to give. This Heart contains all the light of divine wisdom, all the passion of divine love, all the delights of divine blessedness and all the marvels of divine omnipotence. It is an ever-shining sun that illuminates, raises and perfects all other hearts; it is a precious mine in which treasures of peace and joy, grace and glory, all the riches of heaven, are to be found, an immense chasm of holiness, mercy and love. The saints on earth, after years of reflection, have always found new things to marvel at in this Heart. The chosen ones in heaven, after long centuries of contemplation, all find new beauty in it. O, a thousand times fortunate are those who know and love it. O, a thousand times ill-fated are those who disparage and abandon it.

II. The Heart of Jesus! What would you, Christian, do without it? You need to love, and this Heart, in which you will see the most sincere and constant affection, is given to you, while all the objects of your love are vain and transient. You need light in making decisions, strength for your battles and comfort in your misfortunes, and this

* These first ten meditations are part of the purgative way

Heart, in which you will find the wellspring of all that is good and the remedy to all that is bad, is given to you. You need to be saved, and if your heart does not become like that most perfect Heart, you will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven. You need ways to be saved, and devotion to the Sacred Heart is the surest way of salvation because it is a continual exercise in loving Him who is eternal life. It is the shortest way, since it goes directly to Jesus Christ. It is the easiest way because it calls you to love, and love overcomes every obstacle. It is the sweetest way, since it is adorned with celestial delights. It is the most honourable way, for it has been trodden by all the greatest saints and even the queen of saints, Mary! If this Heart were to offer you honour, pleasure and riches on this earth, you would not spare effort or sacrifice to obtain a little of all those things that are like dust that blinds and disappears while, in reality, He offers you real and eternal riches, which are worth more than this whole world, even were there a million worlds. Would you then refuse Him?

III. The Heart of Jesus! Be quick to remove whatever obstacles lie in the path of this most loving Heart, which is coming to meet you and to fill you with its gifts. These obstacles may be your sins, your bad habits, your attachment to worldly things, your self-love, your laziness, your tastes and complaints and your uncontrolled passions. Hurry, and use all the methods at your disposal to change. Pray: Jesus will not deny you what He is so willing to give. Meditate: in meditating on His qualities and His greatness, the fire of His love will come to you. Receive it well and often in Holy Communion, all His treasures are contained in this food from heaven. Visit Him also in the Blessed Sacrament: therein are all His celestial flames, and you will return time after time, inflamed with love. Additionally, invoke the Virgin Mary and St. Joseph: these two are the depositories and dispensers of all His divine riches, hurry! O, if you

only knew what a precious grace it is that this Heart is offering you by calling you to His love, you would not delay in giving your whole self to Him. Think that if you are far from this Heart, though you possessed all the riches in the world, you would be dissatisfied and have not one moment of real peace in life or in death. Far from this Heart you will be unhappy in time and in eternity. Far from this Heart you will always be a soul without a heart, a heart without a soul, a life without life.

EXAMPLE: Margaret Mary Alacoque of the Visitation Convent at Paray-le-Monial, was the favourite disciple of the Heart of Jesus, chosen and formed by Him to make known the treasures, manifest the wishes, establish the worship in the Church and to spread the devotion, of His Heart everywhere. Her life was nothing other than the continuous and marvellous intertwining of the many loves of that Heart. From her cradle she was immersed in gentle and celestial blessings. Already, at the age of three, she was horrified by any sin, even tiny ones. She instinctively fled from profane conversations, preferring to be alone before God. At nine years old, having made her First Communion, the holy young girl was so drawn to and moved by Jesus Christ, she could think of nothing else. Her relatives tried to oblige her to marry, but the fervent youngster won every fight, and, renouncing the world, became a nun. She received three incredible visions regarding the worship owed to the Sacred Heart. The first in December 1673, on the day sacred to St. John the Evangelist from whom, the same day on which, a century earlier, St. Gertrude understood that God had reserved for a later date the devotion to the Heart of Jesus, to call the whole world to conversion. While St. Margaret was praying then, before the Blessed Sacrament, Jesus appeared, showing her His Heart, bemoaning human ingratitude, and declaring

her chosen by His great mercy. The second vision happened six months later on the Friday of the octave of Corpus Christi. Jesus showed Himself, with His five glorious wounds shinning like five suns and emitting flames of love, especially the wound in His side, and He laid on her the charge of making Him known and loved. The third came on 16th June 1675, when He showed her the incredible works of His love, which were answered by men with much indifference and coldness, and He confirmed her in the office He had entrusted to her. This is the divine origin of the devotion to the most loving Heart of Jesus, wanted by Him for our good, and promulgated throughout the world.

HOMAGE: Wear on your heart an image of the Heart of Jesus, and holding it with true affection, say often, Sweet Heart of my Lord Jesus, be my true love.

PRAYER: *Tui amoris in me ignem accende*

O sweetest Heart, I love you so little, may I be set alight by the fire of your love.

SECOND DAY

MEDITATION ON THE SYMBOLS OF THE HEART OF JESUS

I. Can you see the cross planted on the Heart of Jesus? Look at it and weep. It is the expression of how He was disparaged, of His pains, humiliations, agonies and death that He underwent for us. By lowering Himself, He procured for us eternal glory. His expiration gave us everlasting joy, His death, everlasting life. This shows us that from Bethlehem to Calvary He suffered, He loved His suffering, and a heart that does not love the cross is not really Christian. There is no picture more expressive than that of the cross, to show to us the horror of sin and the mercy of God. There is no book more eloquent than the cross, to manifest the value of a soul and the importance of saving it. There is no wood more perfect than that of the cross to light the fire of divine love in our hearts; Jesus Christ alone was worthy to be a sacrifice of infinite charity. How much longer, O Christian, will you be so indifferent and unloving towards a God that loves you so? Remember, that one day that cross will be either your eternal triumph or your eternal ruin.

II. Do you see the flames that burn in Jesus' Heart? Look at them and weep. They show the invisible fire of immeasurable charity that is forever blazing for us in that Heart. They demonstrate the marvellous effects of the divine love, so that as fire illuminates, heats, consumes and purifies, so divine love brings to hearts the celestial light, it ignites them with holy fervour, it consumes everything impure and makes those hearts worthy of God, for this love is the death of all vices and the life-blood of all virtues. O, ever-living and ever-victorious flames, that have blazed, and blaze still

in millions of hearts! O, flames even more wonderful, because they are directed towards unknowing and ungrateful hearts! O, flames most surprising, for they can extinguish all the waters of human ingratitude! O, flames so tireless, that have triumphed coming from the Heart of God, and pushed the most sublime beings to act with love towards men, so should they triumph in the hearts of men, pushing them to make sacrifices for God! O, Christian soul, those flames cast themselves towards you too, searching for you, to set you alight and sanctify you, to take you to heaven. If it were not for the many impediments that you place in their way, they would make of you a seraph of love. How much longer will you remain amazingly cold in the midst of all these flames? Beware! The same God has prepared eternal devouring fire for those who have not accepted the flames of his love.

III. Do you see the crown of thorns surrounding the Heart of Jesus? Look at it and weep. Those thorns are a sign of the offences, refusals and bitterness He has received from the world. What a vile contrast exists between the flames of love and the thorns of ingratitude! The thorns wind around the Heart many heretics and their errors; many non-believers with their stubbornness; many enemies of the Church, who have made war on the bride of Jesus Christ; many blasphemers that lessen His honour, who have caused scandal and wounded Him; and many sinners who sadden Him. More and more thorns are placed there by bad Christians, with their dishonesty, their bad example and their evil habits. Think how many pointy thorns you too have wound around that loving Heart! Do you wish to continue to sting it with the thorns of your sins and disorders? Do so no more! Open your eyes to His love and fidelity, open your eyes to His ardent wish to save you and to your danger of losing yourself, open your eyes and begin to live a truly Christian life.

EXAMPLE: Blessed Claude de la Colombière was chosen by heaven to be the apostle of this devotion and worked with St Margaret to pass on the heritage of the Sacred Heart. Being of the Society of Jesus, he was a man of great innocence and eminent holiness; St. Margaret called him a *lily planted in new ground*. He led a most heavenly life, and overflowed with desire for martyrdom, for the glory of God, of the faith and for the good of Christians. He was sent to convert heretics in England and found there so much suffering that he named it the *country of crosses*. He even saw with his own eyes the martyrdom of four Jesuits who were disembowelled, and he too was to suffer the same fate, but a letter from the King of France recalling him saved him from execution. O, with what fervour did this holy brother work to promote devotion to the Sacred Heart! Jesus made known to him, through St. Margaret, that this was his mission and he was not to fear the difficulties that would arise. Blessed Claude gave himself generously to that loving Heart, serving it and glorifying it all his life. Indeed, he laboured much and won many battles in the fight to spread this holy apostolate! Without fear or concern, flying in the face of derision and contrary events, he took every opportunity to make known and to love that Heart that had in it so much love for men. He spoke of it passionately from the pulpit, in the confessional, in private discourse, and he was astonished at how his work bore fruit. His work was so fruitful that many sinners were converted by his lighting of this holy flame, many good people became perfect, and many souls fell in love with the divine lover. He brought down many celestial graces and blessings to earth, and with his death he crowned his precious and apostolic life.

HOMAGE: Recite devoutly the invocations to the Heart of Jesus, using the symbols with which He revealed them to St. Margaret.

PRAYER: *O, symbola Cordis Iesu, immensi amoris pignora!*

O resplendent flames, O cross, O thorns: from you everlasting grace is born.

THIRD DAY

MEDITATION ON THE WOUND OF JESUS' HEART

I. The blow of a lance pierced the side of the dead Redeemer and blood and water came out. What a height of barbarism on the part of the world! What a height of love on the part of Jesus Christ! Indeed, it is love, rather than a lance, that pierced the divine Heart. That visible wound shows the invisible wound of His charity. That Heart could no longer keep imprisoned its amorous flames and so they were released and allowed to go free through the whole world. This most holy wound tells us that though His suffering had ended, His love had not; even after death He wanted to give us the last drops of His blood, and show us that He had none left to give, and so water came from his side. O, what a merciful opening, which shows to us the depths of the adorable Heart of Christ, the mysteries of divine wisdom, the power of divine goodness and infinity of divine mercy. He wanted His Heart to be opened in order to draw our hearts towards it, to unite with His all our heart's affections. With laments and sighs then, He asks nothing but love. O Christian, how can you resist this undeniable proof of His love? How is your heart not moved to tears of tenderness and contrition at this sign of infinite affection? How can you not carry a sign of love for a God who is wounded for love of you? How is it that when Jesus breathed His last rocks were split and yet at the opening of His Heart, yours does not break? Ah, your heart is too hard and ungrateful, if even the blood of a god cannot soften it!

II. The Heart of Jesus is wounded and opened not just to demonstrate His love, but also to be our treasure. From that Heart the Church sprung, formed from Him and

sanctified by His precious blood, enriched with His gifts and declared his beloved wife. From that Heart come the Sacraments, which like seven marvellous canals channel the waters of grace over the whole earth. From that Heart the Apostles received their zeal, the martyrs their strength, the Doctors of the Church their wisdom, virgins their purity and all the saints their virtue. For twenty-one centuries that Heart has been open, pouring out graces on all humanity, and it will not close ever again. It will continue its work until the end of time. Yes, this is real hidden treasure, treasure that has within it all riches but is hidden from worldly sight that does not appreciate what is on offer. This treasure contains every good, and nothing is lacking to those who love it. O, how ungrateful and at fault you are if you do not accept the invitations of this Heart, the Heart of the creator; yet you beg His creatures for that love and that goodness which they will never be able to give you.

III. The Heart of Jesus was wounded and opened for us not only to show us His love and to be our treasure, but also to be our refuge. It is always wide open to receive everyone: sinners to save them, the lukewarm to inflame them, the just to sanctify them and the afflicted to console them. It calls everyone to imitate its virtue, listen to its counsel, receive its graces and reach its glory. O, how lovely it is to be in that holy place! Where can a richer, safer and more beautiful home be found? All the palaces of kings are as nothing compared to that place. Here is the nest of the dove, the cave of the turtledove, the hiding place where we are safe from assault by passions, by the insinuations of the devil and by the flattery of the world. Here is found a throne of mercy, a tower of strength, a furnace of charity, a fountain of living water, a host of celestial delights. Here is found a port of peace, an ark of salvation, the way to heaven and the centre of happiness. O, what advantages and wisdom you will gain if you take

refuge in this Heart. Those who are gathered there have their names written in the book of life.

EXAMPLE: When the holy family fled to Egypt to escape the rage of the impious Herod who had commanded the slaughter of the innocents, as the trustworthy source Jean-Joseph Gaume tells us, they were attacked by robbers while on a lonely dark road. The youngest of the brigands, seeing the heavenly baby in Mary's arms, was moved and his heart was softened; he defended them saying to the child, "When you grow up remember me." The Heart of Jesus began to triumph against that of the wayward young man. When, thirty-three years later, the Redeemer had grown up, he was crucified between two thieves. One of them joined with the Jews in mocking and berating the suffering Lord, and he cried, "If You are the Christ, save Yourself and us as well." But the other shouted at his companion telling him, "Even now, when you have been tortured, do you not fear God? We are being justly punished and are receiving the reward we deserve for our deeds, but He did nothing wrong." So saying, he turned to Jesus and pleaded, "Lord, remember me when You come into Your Kingdom." Jesus readily and generously replied, "I tell you solemnly: today you will be with me in paradise." It was he that defended the holy family as they fled to Egypt, he was the good thief St. Dismas and this was a great victory of the Heart of Jesus, the first fruit of His dolorous passion and death, a mighty work of His omnipotent grace. Even now, in that gloomy Galilee that was once infested with thieves and robbers, there is a place called the cave of the good thief.

HOMAGE: Consider how you have widened and deepened the wound in Jesus Christ's side with your sins and embark upon a real act of contrition.

PRAYER: *Vulnus Cordis Jesu, recipe me*

I am invited into that tender Heart so near by that holy sweet wound so dear.

FOURTH DAY

MEDITATION ON THE LOVE OF THE HEART OF JEUS

I. If you understood O Christian, how you are loved by the Heart of Jesus, you would not spare any expense to return that love. Every moment of His thirty-three years of life were spent for love of you. Just as His first breath in the womb of Mary was full of love, so was His Heart's last beat on the cross. Ardent love! It is like an all-consuming fire that ignites, inflames and sanctifies the hardest hearts. Tender love! He loves you more than your mother, more than your father; more, immeasurably more, than your most affectionate friend or relation. Love through actions! This love did much for you, suffered for you and died for you in the midst of a thousand humiliations and pains. Sincere, disinterested and constant love! He alone loves you without ever pretending, but with every feeling and complete honesty. He loves you for no reason other than his ineffable goodness, and only for your good. He has never stopped loving you when you have been unhappy or ungrateful. Infinite love! This is so great, that even the love of all the angels and saints for God is as nothing. Eternal love! As He has loved you from the beginning so, if you return that love, He will love you for eternity. After all this, how can you have so little love for Him? You should weep tears of blood thinking of the offences you have caused and how often you have abandoned Him.

II. How the Heart of Jesus wishes to be loved by you, exactly because it loves you so! He has said, "I have come to bring fire to the earth." If only we had the desire to see it lit. He, with the whines of his infancy, with the trials of His life, with the agony of His

death, shows you His love and asks love from you. He is always repeating to you His words on Calvary, ‘I thirst’: I thirst for love! He commands you to love Him in order that this desire is fulfilled. In order to persuade you to obey this command He promises you all the joys of paradise if you love him, and threatens all the torments of hell if you do not. But why all this? Would it not be a great achievement if you allowed yourself to love Him, who is a sea of perfection, while you are a sea of misery? And could there be greater misfortune than not to love Jesus Christ? Yet He, who has no need of you, desires your love so strongly, and you who need Him, care so little for His love. You have a heart and it was made to love: offer it then to that Heart that loves you the most, that has searched longest for it and deserves it more than any other.

III. The Heart of Jesus, precisely because it loves you so and wants to be loved by you, is jealous of your heart. It should be His, because He is God and its creator, so He is its legitimate and absolute owner. He is owed it, because He redeemed it with His precious blood. After Christ paid such a price for it, it should not belong to you or to anyone else, but only to Him. It is owed to Him because He is its beginning and its end, and He detests every reserve and division of your affections. If you think you are able to belong to that Heart while not hating sin, you are deceiving yourself. If you do not say goodbye to your worldly habits and profane friendships, you will not have any communion with the divine Heart. If you belong to the world you cannot belong to Jesus, if you belong to Jesus you cannot belong to the world. Why do you still doubt? If you suffered all the torments of the martyrs, if you laboured for Him for centuries and if you loved Him with the love of all the saints and the angels, it would still be

little. And you wish to deny Him your miserable little heart? If you do not begin to love Him soon, you run the risk of not being able to love him for the rest of eternity.

EXAMPLE: In a gambling den on St. Bartholomew's road in Naples, alongside the other angry players, a young desperate man bet almost all he had. A group of bullies began to make fun of him and call him a madman, but in that madman the victories of the Heart of Jesus can be seen. His mother dreamed, from the first moment of her pregnancy, to give birth to a boy marked by the cross, who would lead others to Jesus. The pious woman had great hopes for him to be a saint, and she taught him well, by word and example. But he, in company with other young men, lived a life full of vice. He lost everything through gambling and, being reduced to a state of terrible poverty, he left Naples and was taken in by a monastery in Manfredonia. There he did the most servile jobs. The doorman, who lived a holy life, saw that the boy was in need of light and direction, and, taking him aside, reasoned with him in an attempt to open his eyes. The young man was confused and moved, but he did not decide to give himself to God. One day, while he was riding a donkey from one monastery to another carrying a message, he heard in the open country the beautiful sound of a bell ringing. He was deeply affected by that holy sound and, as the voice of God, it moved him. He got down from his donkey, tied it to a tree, fell to his knees and began to weep. The bell rang sweetly and he cried bitterly. After many tears of regret, he swore he would change his ways and become a friar and a saint. It was the Heart of Jesus that called and won over his heart. He became a lay Franciscan brother, but on account of his poor health, he was released from the Order. He went to Rome, where he met St. Phillip Neri, who loved and guided him admirably. That young man became the father and consoler of the sick, seeing in any sick person Jesus Christ, and he is the great St.

Camillo de Lellis, founder of the the Camillians or Clerks Regular, Ministers to the Sick.

HOMAGE: During the day, do frequent acts of love towards the loving and lovable Jesus.

PRAYER: *Sero te cognovi, sero te amavi.*

For me, O tender Heart, you beat with love so fast. To you then I give my heart, before my time is passed.

FIFITH DAY

MEDIATION ON HOW WORTHY THE HEART OF JESUS IS OF LOVE

I. Christian, if in the midst of worldly, unfaithful, imperfect hearts, there was one adorned with all the most beautiful and precious qualities, would you not feel obliged to love it? That is exactly what the Heart of Jesus is. This Heart contains an abundance and super-abundance of all that is likeable to you. If you are pleased by beauty, goodness and virtue, here you will find these things in both human and divine measure. If you find affection, tenderness and mercy admirable, this is the most affectionate, tender and admirable of all Hearts. You can make of it your ark, your refuge, the place where you bring your problems, your eternal home. If it is love you are after, you will find everything that makes up the love of the angels and saints, of Mary and the Holy Trinity and of all of paradise. In floods of tears, St. Augustine said, "You have conquered me, Lord. The fear of death or of your judgements or the terrors of hell did not move me, it was the love of your heart that changed me." And you remain still so cold before this loving Heart?

II. Christian, if this heart were not only endowed with all those qualities, but was also tied to you by the bonds of family and friendship, would you not feel even more bound to love it? So the Heart of Jesus is bound to you. It has a relationship of love with you. The Heart is that of a father that has generated you and given you graces through the contortions suffered on the cross; of a brother that has made you co-heir to his kingdom; of a spouse that asks for tenderness on your part in order to ensure

your happiness; of a friend that offers the most disinterested and affectionate friendship; of a shepherd who, after freeing you from the infernal wolf, feeds you on His own pure flesh; of a teacher who instructs you in the most beautiful virtues and the greatest truths; of a king who wants to rule over you in love and sweetness; of a benefactor, determined to give you graces on earth, so as to be able to glorify you in heaven. Just one of these gentle relationships would be enough to sweetly conquer any heart. And Jesus is more to you than a father, than a brother, than a spouse, than a friend, than a shepherd, than a teacher, than a king, than a benefactor: much more! He is your God! He is your everything! And you have not yet resolved to love Him!

III. Christian, if there were a heart that not only contained all the best qualities, and had ties to you, but also knew the way to make you happy, would you not need to love it? That is exactly what the Heart of Jesus is. O, how sweet it is to enter that sanctuary of love and approach that throne of mercy from which issue pardon, peace, hope and every good! How great it is to surrender your own affection to that Heart that better understands how to share and help! How lovely it is even to cry into that Heart where comfort for every pain and ointment for every wound is found! The divine Heart does not wait for another life to make known to its servants the delights it has to offer. It sprinkles its secret gifts like a river in the hearts of those who love it, gifts that make the cross loveable and suffering sweet. If you had these gifts, the joys of this world would be disgusting to you, and you would you not be attracted by riches. However, in order to appreciate these gifts, you must taste them and in order to do that you must truly love the loving Heart of Jesus. Therefore, remove all that could sadden him, begin to love him with facts. Then, even in the greatest pain, you will find a foretaste of paradise.

EXAMPLE: In a church in Florence a rich and noble lady prayed long, but what was she asking for? She was praying for the grace to have a son, since she had already been married for some years and was having difficulty conceiving a child. That grace was given her, and she offered the fruit of her womb to the Sacred Heart before the child was born. While pregnant, she had a strange dream: that she gave birth to a wolf, which then changed into a lamb. She brought a dear child into the world and that day being the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle, when he was baptised, she named the boy Andrew. Immersed in the happiness her son brought, she forgot the dream she had had and concentrated on bringing him up as a Christian. When he grew up, he fell in with corrupted and corrupting young people, and became wayward and full of vices. He left his paternal home and gave himself up to a life of sin and worldly pleasure. His saintly parent wept and prayed long for him before the Sacred Heart of Jesus. After some years, they ran into each other in the streets of Florence and she said to him, "My son, my strange dream has come to pass." "What did you dream mother?" asked the son. "That I gave birth to a wolf, and see: an ugly wolf is what you have become." So she wept and added, "There was another part to my dream." "What happened?" her son asked. "Being taken under the cloak of Mary the wolf became a lamb," his mother said. Hearing this, the troubled young man was moved and his heart began to change: he entered the cathedral of Florence and unburdened the heavy load of his sins onto a confessor – with tears of contrition he changed from a wolf into a lamb. The marvellous Heart of Jesus worked and moved in the heart of that newly converted young man. He entered the Carmelite order and began a new life, learning the virtue of patience and zeal for the gospel. He became a priest and

bishop of Fiesole, doing much good for the glory of God and the benefit of men. He is St. Andrew Corsini.

HOMAGE: Recite with feeling thirty times the devout prayer, “Sweet Heart of my Jesus, help me love you more.”

PRAYER: *Deus, cordis mei, Jesu dulcissime.*

Sweet Jesus, eternal love, you are the God of my heart

SIXTH DAY

MEDITATION ON THE GOODNESS OF THE HEART OF JESUS

I. The Heart of Jesus is a Heart full of mercy, which Jesus shows in bearing with sinners. This remains the case despite the fact that they add sins to sins and are ever ungrateful, despite the fact that He has an undying hatred for sin, and despite the fact that with one glance He could strike them down, yet still He bears with them. O, what mercy He shows by continuously calling them to conversion! He Himself said that He did not come to call the righteous but sinners, even though He is eternally blessed, and has no need of them. He searches for them with holy light, calling lovingly and inviting amorously. O, how much is on offer for those who accept this call! Like the loving father who opens his arms to the prodigal son, and embraces him; like a loving shepherd who rejoices at the finding of the lost sheep. What are you waiting for, Christian? It is already too long that that Heart has put up with you, that that Heart has been searching for you. You offend Jesus and He loves you. You turn your back on Him and He follows you. You reject Him and He calls you. Return, return to that Heart, and even though your sins are like an ocean, remember that His mercy is far greater. O, how sweetly you would be received, how the angels of heaven would rejoice! But if you delay, beware, for you do not know up to what moment His mercy will extend.

II. It is a most tender Heart. Unable, being God and infinitely blessed, to feel human misery, Jesus assumed a human heart, a Heart formed in the womb of the most tender mother, by the work of the Holy Spirit that is love, in order that He share in and help

with human suffering. The just and the unjust, the young and the old, the poor, the afflicted and the infirm, all his enemies have always been the recipients of his tenderness. He said, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me, and drink from the fountain of grace." He also said, "It is my delight to walk among the sons of men." These words are an expression of His love. He wept when He was a child, He wept over Lazarus' grave, and He wept over the future ruin of Jerusalem and these were tears of tenderness. Being tender towards all, He will be even more so towards those pious faithful people who love Him! Would this idea not be enough to win your heart back to that of Jesus Christ? He has stores of love, celestial delights and paradise itself saved for you. But these things are not offered to those who are attached to the world and mired in vice. Change your life, and hope in the goodness of that Heart.

III. It is a most generous Heart. Its infinite generosity shines out in all He does. How generous He was to become a man! He clothed His divinity in our human misery. How generous He was, to suffer and die for us! When one drop of His blood would have been enough to redeem not just our own, but a million worlds, He shed it all. How generous He was in blessing us! He passed to us His merits and His graces, He gave us His mother to be our mother and His Father to be our father, He also gave us himself in the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar. How generous He was in forgiving us! If He sees a single act of real penance, He forgives the most monstrous and unforgettable sins. How generous He will be when He rewards us! He pays back a hundred fold even a glass of water given in His name, He exchanges a moment of saintly suffering for an eternity of joy. How long will you remain mean towards a Heart that is so generous? Rise up, abandon sin, leave your vices, flee your passions, generously break your chains, and think nothing of the opinion of men, begin to love

Him with your whole heart. In this you will be able to bear witness to His generosity on earth, and know it more fully in heaven.

EXAMPLE: A young girl much loved by God was born in Siena. Jesus appeared to her from the age of six, when she was walking past the Church of St. Dominic, He showed Himself to her and blessed her, looking on her with love. She remembered that meeting all her life, and she soon consecrated herself with a vow of perpetual virginity. Because she was beautiful, her parents hoped to secure an advantageous match for her. One of Catherine's sisters, named Bonaventura, did her best to attract Catherine to the vain love of the world, and she began to fall, vainly changing her hair styles and beginning to seek compromises with the world. But Jesus did not allow her to fall into those traps, her sister who had been tempting her, soon died, and Catherine repented and promised to love only her celestial husband. Becoming a Dominican, she began to live another kind of life. She fasted and mortified her body with whips and chains of iron, and divine love grew in her, in proportion to her works of penance. At the Eucharistic table, Jesus filled her with celestial consolation, and she often saw in the sacred host, His divine beauty. The heart of this sister was absorbed and transformed into the Heart of the Jesus she loved. And that loving Heart gave her marvellous charisms. She received the gift of the stigmata, which gave her intense pain and intense joy. She also won many battles against the powers of hell, freeing many from their dominion. She was a prophet, seeing the far future with the same ease as the present. She performed many miracles, healing many with incurable diseases. High wisdom was given to her, so she solved many of the most complex theological questions and became the councillor of Popes, the oracle of Catholic

Kings, the bringer of peace between princes, a benefactor of Italy and the whole world. She is St. Catherine of Siena.

HOMAGE: Every time you hear the ringing of a bell, or the ticking of a clock, perform an act of love for the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

PRAYER: *Quid retribuam, nisi me totum?*

What can I give to you, generous Heart that loves me best? In you I will live and in you I will rest.

SEVENTH DAY

MEDITATION ON THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE HEART OF JESUS

I. The Heart of Jesus has removed every obstacle in order to draw to itself all hearts. Distance was an obstacle, and so He left his heavenly throne and came down to earth to be our brother and companion on our earthly pilgrimage. The difference in our natures was a barrier too, so He united in Himself the human and the divine nature, He lowered himself from being God to being a man, in order to raise man up to God. Sin was like a wall that separated heaven from earth, so the Saint of saints took on the semblance of a sinner, to attract sinners and He won the victory over sin. With all these obstacles having been removed, that most loving Heart became the celestial magnet to which all hearts are drawn. O, how many millions of hearts have been drawn to Him down the centuries? And O, how He is ever searching for more hearts, to attract them to His love and therefore to happiness! Christian, remove the obstacles to the love of that divine Heart and let yourself be free to be attracted to Him. Why are you deaf to his heavenly invitations? Why do you oppose His loving plans? He gains nothing from you and loses nothing without you. With Him, you gain everything, and you lose everything if you are without Him. How then, is it that He calls you and you do not care?

II. Not content with having removed every impediment, Jesus has taken every possible form to attract all hearts to His Heart. He attracts us by becoming a baby in a stable, so tender, sweet and gracious that all the angels of heaven loved him. He

attracts us by becoming a young man in a workshop, subjected for thirty years to squalor, poverty and fatigue. He attracts us by showing himself for three years journeying, saving souls, doing much good and many miracles. He attracts us by showing himself in chains, scourged, crowned with thorns and served with much humiliation and pain. He attracts us by showing Himself on the cross, with His head bowed to give us a kiss of tenderness, with arms wide open to give us mercy and with His Heart pierced, to give us a refuge of love. He attracts us by remaining with us always, hidden in the most Holy Sacrament of the altar. And yet after all this Christian, has He not done enough to attract your heart? Why is your heart so sensitive to all others save the One that loves you? How can you surrender to anyone who touches your heart and yet remain hard and ungrateful towards the most beautiful of all hearts?

III. Still not content, that Heart uses a thousand other artifices of wisdom and love to attract all hearts. O, how He Himself calls us with a light in our minds, or with an impulse of will, or through our conscience and the remorse we feel, or with a misfortune, or a moment of inner happiness! O how He calls us in a moment of silence or solitude, in church or at home, He asks us to mend our ways to become better at disregarding the false treasures of this time and work for true treasure in eternity! O, Christian if you do not feel how He loves you, you either have a heart of stone or none at all. Many times you have heard His call and have thrown those precious jewels in the mud. Obeying the call of that Heart, some have gone to the furthest reaches of the earth to preach its glory, others have renounced all power and greatness in this world to live consecrated to Him, to please Him others still have sacrificed their lives, yet you have not been able to make the smallest sacrifice for

Him. And yet even now, after disdaining Him, He is not wearied by your ingratitude and invites you, and calls to you saying, “I am at the door of your heart and I knock, open to me my bride, open to me my sister, I want to make My home in you.” Do you hear Him? Enough of being lukewarm then, and answer that Heart that ardently desires to effectively insure your good. Up with you! The Heart, that invites you to see, will help you not to fall back into evil, but to go ever onward doing good. But woe to you if you resist Him still! You run the risk that He will abandon you, and to be abandoned by that Heart is the same as being eternally lost.

EXAMPLE: In the court of Phillip II, King of Spain, there was a noble lady-in-waiting called Catherine Sandoval. She wondered for a long time whether to serve God or the world, but she turned to the world. She became, thanks to dances, theatre, fun and parties, silly, and too engrossed in the world. She became so vain because of her beauty, that she said to herself, “I must get myself a husband of royal blood, a crowned prince.” Various proposals were made to her, but out of vain pride, she refused them all, One of them came from a Knight who was madly in with love her, He promised a great gift to a servant of hers, if she could convince her to consent. This servant did her best, but to no avail. Worse, her mistress dismissed her in a rage, and full of pride, disdain and bitterness, she paced backwards and forwards in her room saying, “I must have a husband of royal blood, a crowned prince.” While walking between her golden dreams and silly projects, she saw a cross hanging on the wall. The Heart of Jesus spoke to her from the cross saying, “Catherine, do you want a husband of royal blood? I am the King of glory and majesty. You want a crowned prince? I am the Prince of princes, crowned not with flowers, gold or precious stones, but with long painful thorns for love of you; give me your heart and I will give you

peace.” In that moment, she was touched by divine grace, and the veil fell from her eyes and she recognised the vanity of the world, a storm of remorseful tears broke from her, as she took the cross and held it to her heart saying resolutely, “Here is my husband of royal blood, here is my crowned prince.” She generously consecrated her heart to that of Jesus, and she received much heavenly favour and ended her days in holiness. She is known and celebrated throughout Spain.

HOMAGE: When you hear clocks strike the hour, say affectionately, May the loving Heart of Jesus be known and loved by all.

PRAYER: Dulcissime Jesu, me totum trahe

Lovable Heart you attract me, and I, O Heart so fine, removing every obstacle, do offer to you mine.

EIGHT DAY

MEDITATION ON THE AFFLICTIONS OF THE HEART OF JESUS

I. O, how the Heart of Jesus is afflicted by the sins of the world! Being infinitely holy, He has an infinite hatred for sin; as the Son of God, He feels fully the offence that sin causes to His divine Father, as the lover of all mankind, He deplores all the fatal consequences that are brought about by sin. In being born, He brought war on sin, and dying, He triumphed gloriously over sin. For these reasons, that adorable Heart is inconsolably saddened. Sinner, how serious your offences are before God, and your faults, since they afflict the divine Heart! Jesus is pained by them, and do you feel nothing? Jesus is ashamed of them, are you not embarrassed by your sins? Are you ashamed of confessing them, but not of committing them? Jesus got to the point of sweating blood for your failings, why do you not shed a single tear of contrition? Weep! And do so not for the punishments your faults deserve, like remorse, illness, stripes, death and hell, weep rather for the bitterness you have caused that sweet Heart that loves you so. Weep! And work from today to console it, by flying from all occasions of sin and from every sin.

II. O, how the Heart of Jesus is afflicted by human ingratitude! He came down from heaven out of excessive love, and filled the earth with His blessings, so that He could say, "What more could I do for you that I have not done?" Sacraments, graces, light, comfort, temporal help, spiritual help...O, what treasures have come from His infinite goodness! And yet, He sees them all despised and lost. He sees that the love of the world is preferred to His love, human misery is preferred to His law, the chains of

Lucifer to His redemption. He sees people leave everything for nothing, for that nothing that makes one lose everything. O, how bitter is ingratitude to a heart that loves, and even more so to that divine Heart that loves more than everyone. Sinner, you that play such a part in adding to that bitterness, why do you not change or amend your ways? If a normal man had done for you a thousandth of what Jesus has done, would you not consider him worthy of your highest thanks? Weep for your past ingratitude and from today, try to respond to the gifts His goodness wants to give you.

III. O, how the Heart of Jesus is afflicted for the loss of those souls made in His image, He watches them become, through sin, images of the devil! He, who is both God and man, redeemed them at a price that is unimaginably greater than all the gold and silver of all the kingdoms and empires of the whole world and of a million worlds, with the infinite payment of His divine blood, and yet He watches them being taken away from Him. He, through grace, made them the most beautiful things of all the visible beauty in the universe, and He watches as they become ugly, mired in the dirt of sin and vice. He came down from Heaven to earth to carry men from earth to heaven, yet they forget heaven and think only of earth. He died in torment for them on the cross, to close hell to them and open paradise, and yet He sees that they go far from the road to heaven and fall into hell in their thousands. Sinner, your soul too hangs on the edge of this abyss of darkness and flames! Jesus sees your danger and is pained, how can you shut your eyes and continue to laugh and joke? If you lose your soul, that cost that divine Heart so much, that Heart that does so much to save it, what must your desperate pain be like for all eternity? Weep for the times you have not considered these things important and work, from today to console that Heart, taking every precaution for your eternal health.

EXAMPLE: In Rieti, was born a truly privileged girl child, while her parents were thinking of what name to give the little one at baptism, a mysterious white and beautiful dove appeared and circled over her head. So they called her Colomba, which is Italian for Dove. O, how the Heart of Jesus called to her with love and wanted her to be entirely His! At the age of seven, she asked to be allowed to enter a convent, but her family was against the idea. When she was twelve, a husband was found for her and presented to her, and she was told she had to marry. She did not wish to get married and one day, she cut off all her blonde hair and sent some to her relatives and some to her intended husband, telling them, "I offer to you the goods of the world, to convince you that it is not for me." She won many battles, and at the age of nineteen, became a Dominican nun in Perugia. She lived a life of much prayer and much penance, doing everything according to the Gospel. She said to herself, "I am named after the dove and I want to be a dove for the Heart of Jesus. The dove is white, so I want to preserve my innocence avoiding every defect. As the dove is pure, so I want to be a shining image of purity. As the dove is simple, so I want to live in lovely simplicity, fleeing from all duplicity, pretence and all malice. As the dove loves, so I want to live a life full of holy love. As the dove has no gall, I do not want to nurture the gall of resentment and hatred, but I want to have love and charity for everyone. As the dove flees from the serpent, I want to be ever watchful for the work of the infernal serpent. As the dove that passes over a muddy place, flaps its wings and rises over it, so as not to get caught, I want to always raise myself from this world of dirt. As the dove flies, I want to fly from the earth to heaven. And as the dove loves its nest, I want to be always looked after in the Heart of my Jesus." In that blessed nest she found every good, and she is the blessed Colomba of Rieti.

HOMAGE: Do an act of reparation to the Heart of Jesus, to console Him for the many afflictions you have caused.

PRAYER: *Cor Jesu amaritudine repletum propter nos, miserere mei.*

I am unthankful and You suffer afflictions for me. From all my failing I now promise to flee.

NINTH DAY

MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS AND PENANCE

I. The Heart of Jesus calls you to be ready to do penance. He said, “If you do not repent you will all be lost. And now what? Will you give the world the best years of your life, and give to God only the leftovers of your days? No, He would refuse this offering, as He refused Cain’s. With a life so free and worldly, do you still believe you belong to Jesus Christ? No, whoever wants to belong to Him must crucify the flesh and its concupiscence. Therefore hurry and repent! Jesus hates sin as much as He loves the sinner, and O, what a welcome you will receive from that Heart, that is inviting you and waiting for you! What more are you waiting for? As the days go on, your wrongdoings multiply. And your chains become tighter. If you only embrace repentance then you can no longer sin, sin will leave you but you will not leave it. Hurry, even though you do not know if you will receive the necessary grace to do it, you do not know if you will have the time to do it and you do not know if you will have the strength to do it. Today, this very day, you must begin a life of penance, it is late, but it is better late than never. Choose either penance or hell, either a moment of suffering and an eternity of joy, or a moment of joy and an eternity of suffering.

II. The Heart of Jesus calls you to be sincere in your penance. All sins are born in the heart, and there repentance must begin. Jesus Himself began there, His Heart carried the wounds of the sins of the world. It is because of this continual contrition, that we know He wept many times, but we do not know that He laughed. Before His bodily

passion had begun, it had begun in His Heart. O, what a great virtue this true penance is! A dead friend is not brought back by a sea of weeping, but with only one tear of true suffering, the grace of God comes. O, how senseless you are, you shed many tears for the things of this world, how is it that you shed none for the salvation of your soul? So, repent in your heart! Weep for your wrongdoings, and not just weep, but be ready to lose your life before doing them again. And not just be ready, but avoid all occasions of falling once more. Repent in your heart! So be sad for having offended God, and fear displeasing Him in the future, show your desire to abide by His justice, and continue to do good, work to deny yourself. True penance is made of hate for sin and love for God, if these things are not present, it is not Christian penance, and it is of no use for your eternal salvation.

III. The Heart of Jesus calls you to constant penance. His life was an act of mortification, from the womb of Mary to the cross, and every Christian's life should be the same, for they are a member of Jesus Christ: under a head that is crowned with thorns, there cannot be members who are crowned with roses. A century of penance would not be enough for one sin, and yet you who are guilty of many, wish to do no penance. You can pay off your heavenly debt at such a small price, and yet you do not want to. If the saints in heaven could wish for one thing, it would be to be able to do penance in order to be more deserving, are you so lazy that you do not want to earn forgiveness and glory? Penance can erase your past guilt, yet you do not know if it has all been forgiven! Penance can restore you from the effect of present evils, free yourself from heavenly punishment and do not fall again into sin! Penance can help you triumph over your passions, give you peace in your soul, and help you gain God's friendship and assure you of salvation! Our nature is horrified by penance, but the

Heart of Jesus makes it beautiful, so that it can be done with happiness and love.

Heavenly gifts are not given only to the innocent, but also to the penitent. From Calvary we can pass to the mountain of glory, we can pass from the purgatory of penance to the paradise of happiness.

EXAMPLE: A boy was born in Tagaste in Numidia, he showed promise of nobility of heart and great gifts. O how the Heart of Jesus worked marvellously in him, before allowing him to fall and raising him admirably! He went to study in Carthage and loved the theatre, which he frequently attended. As his knowledge grew, his habits worsened. Being a young man of impetuous character, he abandoned himself to his passions and even fell into terrible heresy. His wise and pious mother prayed and wept for him long, and an inspired person told her, "A son so dear, who has cost so many tears and so many prayers, will not be lost." He went to Rome, and having become well known, was called to Milan to teach rhetoric. There St. Ambrose the bishop who had long seen all the young man's good qualities, received him with the kindness of a father, and won his heart by his clear words, and lit his way towards the truth of the Catholic faith. The dear young man threw himself into the study of the scriptures and other holy subjects. A certain Potiziano spoke to him of the exemplary life of many Christians, and he was deeply moved, and ashamed of the disorder of his own life. His conscience was troubled, and so he went to a solitary place in the countryside, and casting himself down under a tree, he burst into tears that were caused by profound remorse. He received baptism from St. Ambrose at the age of thirty, as it was customary in those days to be baptised later. His holy mother, whom he loved, died, and she awoke in him the ideas of death and eternity. He then decided that he would strive to live a perfect life according to the gospel. Coming back to

Africa, he was made bishop of Hippo. His mind became full of the light of holy wisdom, his heart blazed with the fire of heavenly love, helping him to write immortal books. This is St. Augustine, the greatest genius of Christianity, and he is sometimes represented with a flaming heart in his hands, flames that were kindled in him by the loving Heart of Jesus.

HOMAGE: With humble and devoted heart, kneeling before an image of the Sacred Heart, say the litanies. (See the appendix)

PRAYER: Cor contritum et humiliatum, Deus non despicies.

I have offended you O infinite good, but now hear the cries of a humble contrite heart.

TENTH DAY

MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS AND THE FOUR LAST THINGS

I. The day will come when you will find yourself on your deathbed. In that moment, you will see clearly all the vanity of this illusory world, you will be separated forever from all the things you love and all the people you hold dear. What with the anxieties of your last illness, the temptations of the infernal enemy and the fear of divine justice, you will find yourself going through a very difficult time that caused even the greatest saints to tremble. If you have been devoted to the loving Heart of Jesus all your life, O, how much peace, consolation and courage will be given you in those terrible moments! O, how He will help you to fight well and suffer well in that last and most decisive battle! O, how sweet death will seem to you after you have loved the Heart of Him who will judge you; if you take refuge in his Heart, you will not find there any condemnation. If by contrast, you live far from that Heart, in the midst of sins and vanity, O, what bitter desolation you will feel in those supreme moments! O, how many painful reproaches you will hear from that Heart which you have offended and treated unworthily! O, what trouble, remorse and anguish will accompany your awful death! Since the place of condemnation will not be a place of refuge. Christian, the Heart of Jesus calls you to think clearly about death. A holy life sweetens the thought of death, and thoughts of death make for a holy life. Think about this and act on it.

II. A day will come when you will have to appear, together with all the rest of resurrected humanity, before the court of Jesus Christ. Then the Heart of Jesus will be like a book in which each person can read their achievements and failings, It will be a painting in which everybody will see their faults and their virtues, good works and evil ones. It will be a scale that will weigh all hearts perfectly. The rays of living light that will issue forth from that Heart will terrify the unjust and give peace to the souls of the just. So, on that day you will stand before Christ, you will see in His Heart all the love He brought to you, all the graces He gave you. If in life, you responded to them, O, what joy! You will find in Him the heart of a loving father, not of a severe judge, and you will run towards Him full of love. If you did not respond to His gifts what trouble for you! You will find in Him the Heart of a severe judge, not of a loving father, and in great confusion and fear you will wish to hide from Him. On that day the scrutinizer of hearts will come, and He will be shown the most intimate desires and dark secrets each heart contains. If you find yourself with a pure heart, virtuous and conformed to the divine one, O, what glory will be given you in the presence of angels and men! If your heart is worldly, full of vices and unlike that most perfect Heart, O what shame you will feel in the presence of angels and men! On that day that Heart will pass a sentence on you against which there will be no appeal: if you loved, you will go with the eternally blessed, if you have insulted and been offensive, eternal curses await you. Think about all this and act on it.

III. There will come a day when time will end for you and you will find yourself in eternity. Eternity! O, what a tremendous word that can change the greatest sinner into the greatest saint! If in time, you love and imitate the Sacred Heart, you will enter the eternity of paradise and there you will eternally contemplate all the love He brought

you and all the good He did you. You will be eternally overjoyed that you responded to that love and that good, your heart will rise forever towards that divine Heart with all the energy of amorous desire, and that divine Heart will give to you all the abundance of His glory, blessedness and heavenly treasures, And more then all the music and songs of heaven will be your joy, for you will be near and one with that most blessed Heart. If you do not take pains to love and imitate that Heart in time you will go to hell for eternity. You will think forever of His love and good and you will be forever regretful of your ingratitude, you will desire Him but you will never be able to possess Him. And more then all the torment and flames, separation from that Heart that is the only and supreme good of all hearts, will be hard for you to bear. So, thinking of paradise, save yourself from hell, and thinking of hell, work to reach paradise. Forgetting paradise has sent so many to hell. Think about this, and act on it.

EXAMPLE: A noble girl of Rome called Clarisse thought of nothing but the world, forgetting God and her soul. Her head was full of vanities, balls, parties, fashion, theatre and worldly entertainments. It happened that her little sister secured a most advantageous marriage, and the elder sister was envious and full of jealousy, she decided to become a nun out of spite. Without a vocation she entered the convent of St. Claire in Viterbo and there she behaved very badly. She was proud, vain and unrestrained, she secretly read evil novels and made fun of the other nuns. She was chided by her superiors many times, but to no avail. In the meantime, the Sacred Heart of Jesus had chosen her for Himself, and then called her in a terrifying and most effective way. She was taken gravely ill. All scientific methods of making her better failed and she seemed doomed to die. She was in great fear because death was near and she had a frightening vision. It seems she saw the highest judge in the act of

firmly sentencing her and threatening her with eternal damnation. Shaking with fear, she promised that if she got better, she would change her whole life. By a special grace, she was completely healed, she put a rope around her neck and she contritely prostrated herself and humiliated herself before the other sisters, kissing the feet of each one and asking for forgiveness, in the midst of tears and sighs, for all the wrong she had done. The great vision of death, judgement and hell, had moved her profoundly, it illuminated her and she became a fervent lover of the most loving Heart of Jesus. What dolorous confessions! what fervent communion! what rigorous penance! What long contemplations! What rigorous observance of her vows and the Rule of her order! What great advances in all virtues, and what heavenly treasures and graces she received from that divine Heart. She is the dear St. Giancinta Marescotti.

HOMAGE: Honour the Sacred Heart by an act of trust and hope in its goodness, and if thinking of the four last things makes you afraid, repeat with St. Margaret, “The Heart of my Jesus wishes me to fear nothing.”

PRAYER: *Laetabitur in te, memores cordis tui.*

Death, judgement, heaven and hell, call me to you O eternal God.

ELEVENTH DAY

MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS AND CHRISTIAN PERFECTION*

I. The Heart of Jesus calls us all to Christian perfection. Jesus said, “Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” With these words, He encouraged us to persevere in virtue, to begin to be like no less than an infinite God, who is infinitely perfect. No, we were not created just to have fun or to go vainly hither and thither, we were not put in the world in order to look nice and then disappear into a tomb, we were put here to improve, and become worthy of one day sharing heaven with the angels and the saints before the throne of God. Therefore Christian, onward! Everyday you do not work to become more perfect is a wasted day, how many have you already wasted? How many months and years? Onwards! The smallest part of perfection is worth more than all the joys and treasures of the universe, onward! That Heart that is ablaze with love for you is unhappy to see you tepid, and you should be horrified by the risk you are running by living so languidly. Hurry! Arm yourself with holy fervour, do your duty with ever increasing love, become ever more beautiful and acceptable before God, and do not ever think you can stop, for in the way of perfection you either go forwards or backwards. Onward then! The moment of death is drawing near, and with so many faults, even if by divine mercy you escape hell, who knows how many years and centuries you will have to spend in purgatory.

* These next ten meditations are of the illuminative way.

II. Not only does the Heart of Jesus call us to perfection but it is itself the model of perfection. The eternal Father wanted the human heart to become His temple and so He gave us the model of the Heart of His divine Son. There is no virtue that is not contained within his Heart, it being a perfect one, one that belongs to the God of all virtues. All the virtues of the saints and even those of the Queen of Saints, are naught but a reflection of the light of this most brilliant sun, they are naught but waves coming from this immense see of perfection. Here is the school all must attend if they wish to leave earth and arrive in heaven, He is the master of and example to all hearts, and will be their reward for eternity. Therefore, O Christian, learn to read in that most eloquent book, there you will learn the science of holiness, and a single glance at that book, will teach you more then all the other books in the world. Take the opportunity to look in this clearest of mirrors, there you will see what you are in need of before you can be called perfect, and the more you look in it, the more holy and virtuous you will become. Look always towards this divine Heart, contemplate in its beauty the ugliness of your own heart, and removing every defect and acquiring every virtue, try to make yours become a truly Christian heart.

III. The Heart of Jesus not only calls us to perfection and is the model thereof, but also gives it to us. It is the Heart of a God-man, which as a man, shows us what virtue is, and as God, gives us the grace we need to emulate Him. This Heart is not only pure, but is itself infinite purity that purifies all hearts, it is not only just, but is itself infinite justice that justifies all hearts, it is not only holy, but is itself infinite holiness that sanctifies all hearts. Therefore courage O Christian! Desire truly to imitate that Heart, even if your own part is small, do it lovingly, He, seeing your decision, will do the rest Himself. Courage! If you do not have the strength, if the way is arduous, and

the obstacles and dangers you encounter are great, you will win through by virtue of that omnipotent and divine Heart! Courage! You will receive everything you need to overcome your passions, the besting of your spiritual enemies and for making great advances in evangelical perfection. Courage! The Heart of the Saint of saints is with you, and it has formed numberless saints.

EXAMPLE: Ippolito Galantini, a most pious man from Florence, kept in his room a beautiful and magnificent painting of the Ecce Homo, and he prayed before it for a long time each day. One day, a worldly noblewoman came to visit him, they began to talk of furnishings and mirrors, and so he said to her, "I have a most singular mirror which is different from all others." "How?" the woman asked, "Other mirrors reflect the image before them, but mine makes it more beautiful." "How can this happen?" she queried. "Mine not only removes wrinkles and ugliness, but adds new beauty." "It seems impossible and paradoxical," his guest commented. "No, it is really so. Whenever anyone looks at themselves in this mirror, they become more beautiful and gain more graces." "Really?" "Yes, this mirror is a treasure for those who appreciate it." The woman was intrigued and said she had a great desire to see this mirror. He took her into his room and showed her the painting of the Ecce Homo saying, "Here is the mirror that makes us beautiful, not for earth but for heaven, not for time but for eternity, it gives beauty that does not fade with years, but will last forever in our heavenly home. She was confused, mortified and ashamed of her vain life and changed it. Ecce Homo, here is God lowering Himself to man, in order to raise him to God, here is the perfect model for all humanity, and here is the Heart that is the clearest mirror of all hearts, in which we must look at ourselves, in order to receive the eternal beauty that the blessed have in heaven.

HOMAGE: When going out or coming home, kiss the image of the Sacred Heart and recite on your knees with faith, five *Glory Bes*, asking finally for a blessing by which you may act virtuously.

PRAYER: *Cor Jesu virtutum omnium exemplar, da mihi cor novum.*

O holiest Heart, mirror of God, I ask you, through the gifts of holiness and fervour, give me a heart that is new.

TWELFTH DAY

MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS MODEL OF LOVE FOR GOD

I. The love of God! This is the supreme object of the sentiments and desires of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This is the sublime fire that He came down from heaven to light all over the world. This is the most precious treasure that He wants to give to all hearts. What does this loving Heart do now in its heavenly kingdom? What does it do down here in the sacrament of the altar? He flames and burns with love for His heavenly Father, and delights in His perfections and His gifts, detesting offences against Him and building up His glory. This is that Heart's ongoing work in heaven and on earth. Christian, look at the Heart of Jesus, alight with love for his divine Father, and loving Him just as the Father loves the Son. You too ought to love God with all your heart, without reserve, with all your soul, without division, with all your strength, without trepidation, the true measure of loving God, means to love Him without measure. To love God is the first precept, whoever fulfils it fulfils all laws and duties, who does not love Him is in need of everything. The love of God is the first virtue that encompasses all others. So whoever does love Him has found real holiness. Loving God is also the greatest good, because it gives light to the mind, joy to the heart, peace to the conscience, and nobility, it perfects and makes divine all of the human being. What is heaven? Heaven is an eternal and perfect love of God. Therefore really loving God brings heaven down even to earth.

II. Real love is always working, like fire, otherwise it is not real. Therefore whoever really loves God cannot but work for Him. Look at the Heart of Jesus, O, how zealously it worked to procure honour for God! O, how it always profoundly adored Him! O, with what respect it has spoken of His name! O, how exactly it has fulfilled all his precepts! May your love also become action, as that of the Sacred Heart is. Love God follow His law out of love, without caring what the world thinks, or about flesh and blood. Out of love, consider His graces to be worth more than gold, gems and every other beautiful thing. Out of love, keep alive in youself, the idea of His divine presence, walking in the right path before Him. Out of love, honour Him with prayer, treat His name with respect, hold His holy days holy, and behave with reverence in His churches. Out of love, do what is right, work for His glory, and be ready to lose everything you hold dear and your life too, for Him. Honour Him by living a holy life. Searching always for God, everywhere God, and naught else but God. Every other love is a love in words, or an appearance of love, that does not lead either to perfection on earth or to blessedness in heaven.

III. Love is a triumphal power that unites the will of the lover with that of the beloved, and the two become as one single will. If then, you love God with all the perfection of love, you must conform your will to His. Look at the Heart of Jesus. The first expression of His unity to the will of the Father was in coming down to earth saying, "Here I am send me, O Father." His last act on the cross was an act of conformity to the will of the Father saying, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit." So, all His life, from His conception to His death was one continuous act of conforming to the divine will. That Heart was so enamoured of doing the Father's will He called it His food and His hope. Do you want to know whether you really loved God as Christ

loved Him? See if you faithfully carry out His will. That is the infallible rule He Himself gave. If your will is the same as God's, even in the most difficult situations, it is a sure sign that you love Him. So, out of love, always do what God wants, as and because God wants it, and do not worry about any reason other than that that is what pleases Him. O if only you were able to fully do God's will! What a clear proof of love you would show Him! How pleased the Heart of Jesus would be! And what peace would reign in your heart! What precious advantages you would gain, because even the most contrary circumstances turn to good for those who love God! O how you would become holy!

EXAMPLE: O, what a beautiful bride of the Heart of Jesus St Magdalene De Pazzi was! While she was still too young to receive Holy Communion, she stayed close by her mother as she received the sacrament, and tasted the sweetness of paradise. At twelve, she made herself a crown of long sharp thorns and put it firmly on her head, passing the night in great pain. She left the house and entered the Carmelite convent on the same day St. Teresa of Avila went to heaven, and perhaps this holy mother left to her daughter her spirit, that was the love of Jesus and the love of suffering. She loved Jesus greatly, and in her the fire of that love grew day after day. She loved Him, and so made every effort to increase in virtue so as to please Him. She loved Him generously, and so spared no effort or sacrifice in glorifying Him or helping others to do so. She loved the child Jesus and marvellously imitated His simplicity. She loved Jesus crucified and wept long over His passion and death. She loved Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and she found delight in spending long hours, and even whole nights before the tabernacle. She was so on fire with love, that if she met another sister, she would take her by the hand and ask, "Do you love love more than your own

life?" Such was her feeling, when considering the love of Jesus and the indifference of men that she would say, "O love not loved! O love not loved!" She had wanted a voice that was loud enough to be heard from east to west and from north to south, to encourage all men to love God. She would ring the bells and shout to the people, "Love God, love God." She suffered much, and while St. Teresa had said, "O suffering, O death." She more heroically said, "O suffering and not death," meaning that she was happy to stay alive in order to suffer for the one she loved. She died a most holy death, and at the last moment she said, "I have never understood how someone with faith could possibly consent to a mortal sin and can live without that love that is the life of life."

HOMAGE: Recite one *Our Father*, one *Hail Mary*, and one *Credo*, before the Sacred Heart, finally repeating five times, "Most holy Heart, inflame my heart with the fire of divine love."

PRAYER: O cor, amoris victima!

Of love, You, O loving Heart, are victim sore, grant that your love may be all I too live for.

THIRTEENTH DAY

MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS MODEL OF LOVE FOR ONE'S NEIGHBOUR

I. Love your neighbour. O, what a high concept. The Heart of Jesus gave us this love putting it in the same category as the love for God! He said, “The second commandment is like the first, love your neighbour as yourself.” And He said more, “I give you a new commandment, love one another, as I have loved you, so you should love one another. By this, all will know that you are my disciples.” He also added, “This is the command I give to you, love one another as I have loved you. A man can have no greater love than to lay down his life for his friends.” Did you hear? He speaks of men and God with the same love, so we must love God in our neighbour and our neighbour for God. He gives us love for our neighbour as a seal of our union with Him, as His own command and imprint, so that we may be known as His disciples. How can you presume, O Christian, to be devoted to God, without having a great love towards your brothers? Come closer to the furnace of love and your cold heart will be ignited, from being hard, it will become soft, from being evil, it will become good, and you will be able to embrace all those around you and bring them into the Heart of Jesus.

II. Love everyone, but not with words and lip service, but with works and with truth. Look at the Heart of Jesus Christ. O, what active charity! In the incarnation, He became our neighbour and we His, He came close to us and became our brother, bringing His wise love to help us and be with us. In all His words, works, struggles,

prayers, miracles and sufferings, He had no intention except love. O, what beneficent charity! He went through the countryside of Judea doing good works. The poor, the afflicted, the sick, blind, dumb, paralytic, the lepers and sinners all gathered around Him, and they all returned consoled by His gifts. O, what generous charity! For love of us, sinful wayward children of Adam, He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, shedding all His blood, He filled us with blessings and graces, He left us all of Himself. O, what universal charity! He embraces with this love, the noble and the plebeian, the just and the sinners, the faithful and the unfaithful, O, what constant charity! In the face of many offences and much ingratitude, He has never stopped loving us and blessing us. This has always been the love contained within that divine Heart, and it should be your love too. With your eyes on that Heart, you too should love always, love everyone. Go through this life of earthly pilgrimage doing your neighbour as much good as you can. May it be for you a joy to help comfort and raise up those around you who are unhappy. In this cause do not shy away from sacrifice and toil. In the poor, the afflicted, the wayward, see always the Heart of Jesus, and for Him and through Him, help everyone. To love and to love well, that is perfection on earth, as well as future blessedness in heaven.

III. Love everyone and especially your enemies. Indeed so! For that is the true characteristic of the Christian, it is the true sign of devotion to the Heart of Jesus. Love your enemy, this is what that most loving Heart expressly commands you to do. Do good to those who offend you. That Heart has ever been tender and merciful to its cruellest enemies. That Heart came to give life to those who gave it death. Therefore, with your eyes on that Heart so full of charity, forgive those who offend you, love those that hate you, pray for those who persecute you and do good to those who do

evil to you. Hate, disdain, a vengeful spirit in the heart of a Christian, what a horrid monstrosity! Do not usurp the holy name of Christian, if you feel any kind of aversion to those who have offended you. Do not expect forgiveness of your sins from God when you do not forgive those who have done you wrong. Do not dare to present yourself before the altar of Jesus Christ if you still carry hate in your heart. Do not make excuses or be slow in forgiving, for the infinite charity of the Heart of Jesus confounds any vengeful spirit. O, you are full of hatred for your enemies, but that Heart waits for them and calls them, and perhaps the day is near when they will return penitently to that divine Heart, that will lovingly receive them, filling them with its paternal mercy. Enter therefore into His generous sentiments and give love for hatred, sweetness for bitterness, good for evil.

EXAMPLE: Most fervently devoted to the Heart of Jesus was the celebrated St. John Bosco, founder of the Salesians and the apostolate to young people, the great and providential man of our time. His parents were pious farmers and lived in a small village called Castelnuovo. It was immediately apparent that he had a good and virtuous character. While still young, his father died and his mother said to him through her tears, "Now you can really say, our Father who art in heaven." And he, full of love, gave himself into the hands of the heavenly Father, who meant him to be a great benefactor of mankind. His mother brought him up as a Christian, saying to him time and again, "I love you very much, but I would rather see you dead than a sinner." Therefore he was always horrified by sin. Once, he accidentally broke a jar containing oil, and he himself brought the cane to his mother, so that she would punish and correct him. He began to learn to be a tailor but he remained a little apostle who gathered others of his age around him and preached to them, telling them to fall

in love with God, even a young Jew called Jonah converted and was baptised after he had listened to St. John. The Sacred Heart called John to be a priest, and even though he had almost nothing, he studied hard and became an exemplary one. He had a disposition prone to fighting and disagreements, but he was able to overcome these things and become incredibly humble. The fire of love produced in him a flame of generous, apostolic and hard working zeal. Putting into practice the imitation and glorification of the Heart of Jesus, he worked in hospitals and prisons in times of epidemic! Overcoming every obstacle and difficulty, he instituted in Turin the oratory of St. Francis De Sales, where thousands of young people, especially orphans, were fed, educated and taught the faith, all in the name of loving divine providence. He had the magnificent Church of the Sacred Heart built in Rome and the Church of Our Lady Help of Christians in Turin. He used to say with holy wit, "Let's pick three numbers to play the lottery, and these numbers are faith, hope and charity." And with these three numbers, he saw his houses multiply all over Europe, cross to America and expand everywhere in an incredible way. They are lasting trophies dedicated to the Heart of Jesus that St John Bosco so loved and imitated.

HOMAGE: Honour the Sacred Heart of Jesus by doing an act of love in order to obtain the grace needed to be able to imitate its virtue.

PRAYER: *Cordis tui, aemulabor corde flammas amoris indices.*

O beneficent Heart, Heart so loving, with Your love and Your favour may I always love my neighbour.

FOURTEENTH DAY

MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS THE MODEL OF HUMILITY

I. Learn from the Heart of Jesus to always humiliate yourself before God. See how the eternal Word lowered himself before his eternal Parent, even though the Son is equal and co-substantial! He, the King of Kings, humbled himself to take on human nature, though there exists between God and man an infinite distance. He, the Lord of Lords took the form of a servant, while the entire universe and all heaven serve Him. What an achievement of inconceivable humility! But He was humbler yet, and from being the Saint of saints, He took the form of a sinner, dying on the cross between two thieves while there is nothing more humiliating or abominable in God's eyes than sin. Therefore O Christian, looking at the Heart of Jesus, remember to be humble before God, keeping one eye on His greatness and the other on your nothingness. Recognise every good in God and every evil in yourself, in Him immeasurable perfection, in you immeasurable misery. Admire His qualities, His beauty, His grace and love Him, Look at your faults, defects and ingratitude and humiliate yourself. So that that humiliation can stimulate you to love, and love will increase your desire to be humble. Humility and love will be like two legs on which to run, nay, two wings with which to fly into the sublime path of holiness.

II. Learn from the Heart of Jesus to humiliate yourself in the sight of the world. See, He practiced this humility by being born in a stable, by appearing to be the son of a carpenter and working for years in a humble village. He practiced humility when the

crowds wanted to make Him King and He fled, when He told those He healed to say nothing to anyone, when He entered into festive Jerusalem on a donkey and when He washed the feet of His disciples in the Cenacle. He put it particularly into practice during His passion, letting Himself be tied up, lashed, mocked and made fun of as a King, and finally by letting Himself be crucified as a malefactor. Look to the Sacred Heart therefore, and be always modest, fleeing any honour, avoiding any vanity, never seeking the approval of men, that fatal poison that can infect and corrupt your best actions. The saints have always hidden their qualities, would you like to show off qualities you do not have? You will never find the Heart of Jesus in the things the world applauds or considers important, take the last place and there you will find Him. A little humility is worth more than all the greatness and glory in the universe, and a single humiliation accepted for love of Jesus Christ is worth more to His Heart than the longest prayers, the hardest penance and the most splendid initiatives.

III. Learn from the Heart of Jesus to be humble within yourself. This is the humility He asks of you when he says, "Learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart." Did you hear? You must learn from Him not how to create worlds, or how to work signs and miracles, but how to be humble within yourself. He who possesses infinite greatness called Himself, "A worm and no man, disgraced among men, rejection of my people." He was humiliated and struck down by God. In the light of all this, you too are called to humility in your heart! Without it, you will not go forward on the way of perfection, you will never know peace in your soul, and never set foot in paradise. Be humble of heart! Beat down every secret pride, saying always to yourself, "I know nothing, can do nothing, am worth nothing, have nothing, deserve nothing and am nothing." How will you raise your tower of pride based on all this

nothingness? Be humble in heart! That is a most precious stone, hidden but able to make you dear to the Heart of Jesus Christ. O, what great glory is reserved for you if you learn to be humble in every moment until death!

EXAMPLE: Louis XI King of France, had a daughter called Joan who was deformed and he treated her horribly because of it. He was ashamed that she should be seen in public and so kept her in a secluded part of his palace. This unhappy princess had an angelic heart that knew how to imitate the Heart of Jesus, she always said, "I am ugly in body but I want a beautiful soul." It happened that for reasons of state, her father made her marry Louis, duke of Orleans. Her husband also hated her unmercifully, he treated her badly and accused her of many things, while she, ever devoted to the Heart of Jesus, said, "It does not matter, I am ugly in body but I want a beautiful soul." She became ever more determined to live a holy and saintly life. Her father died and so her husband ascended to the throne as Louis XII. Having become King, he was even more ashamed of having an ugly and deformed queen, he trampled on every law, both human and divine and repudiated her, in order to marry another woman called Anne of Burgundy, and obliged Joan to be present at that illegal wedding. She bore it all for love of the Sacred Heart, saying, "It does not matter, I am ugly in body but I want a beautiful soul." With cruelty and pride, the new queen threw her out of the palace, so she began a private life of penance and good works, she founded a religious order of nuns. She gave up her earthly throne with pleasure, in exchange for a most high and glorious heavenly one, she is Saint Joan of Valois.

HOMAGE: Prostrate yourself before the image of the Sacred Heart, adore it deeply and kissing the ground three times, say to yourself, “A God so humble, how can a worm be proud?

PRAYER: *Iesu mitis et humilis corde, fac cor meum secundum cor tuum.*

Most humble Heart, before you I must debase myself, for before God I am but mud and dust.

FIFTEENTH DAY

MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS MODEL OF DETACHMENT

I. The Heart of Jesus calls you to a perfect detachment from all things. Look at the example He gave. How was He born? As the poorest of the poor, in a humble stable. How did He live? Birds have their nests and foxes have holes, but He, the Lord of all, has nowhere to lay His head. How did He die? Naked on a naked wooden cross, while others gambled for His clothes. Even after death He showed his poverty, He was wrapped in a linen cloth not His own and buried in a grave not his own but belonging to Joseph of Arimathea. After such examples O Christian, are you not embarrassed by your attachment to things of this earth? Detach yourself therefore from honour, pleasure, greatness and possessions, and see the things of this world as that divine Heart saw them, as a mass of dust and vanity. If you have goods on earth, do not become attached to them, if you do not have any, do not look for them or desire them, keep your eyes on the eternal riches of heaven. You must see as though you saw nothing, hear as though you heard nothing, use the things of this earth as though you did not need them, because this world will pass away. O, what folly to love those things that you will so soon be parted from! O, what foolishness to be lost chasing shadows and gain nothing but falsehood and ruin! Leave the world and you will find God, Leave everything and you will find everything.

II. The Heart of Jesus calls you to a perfect detachment from every person. He clearly said that whoever does not leave those around him cannot be His disciple. Once He heard His relatives were waiting for Him and answered, "Who is my mother and who

are my brothers? Those who do the will of my father.” What does this mean? Should we renounce every tie of blood and nature that God himself puts in our hearts? No, the love of Jesus Christ does not remove, but sanctifies and strengthens these natural ties. Love, then your family and friends, only be aware of every attachment of the flesh, every disordered affection, and every profane interest and end! Love them, but with a holy detachment, be joined to them by ties of grace, rather than natural ones. Love them, but make sure that the Heart of Jesus is always the centre of your relationship or friendship. Cannot you see that many of those you held dear have passed to eternity and you too must soon follow them? Therefore, do not love anyone other than through Jesus Christ and for Jesus Christ, with that pure and just love that begins on earth, and will become eternal in heaven. Your real family should be that of the saints, your real home paradise.

III. The Heart of Jesus calls you to a perfect detachment from yourself. He Himself said, “Whoever wants to follow me, let him renounce himself, take up his cross and come after me.” It is therefore, not enough to leave what one has, but one must also leave who one is. You must generously renounce your tastes, your passions, the things you like, the love you have for yourself, and your own will. This is the first step for anyone who wants to love and follow Jesus Christ. O, how happy those who live free of themselves! What a noble sacrifice and sublime martyrdom a thousand times repeated and dear to the Lord! O what a great secret that leads to inner peace, calls down the blessing of God, and helps to set us on the way to sainthood! Hurry to remove anything that halts your steps, and stops you running towards Jesus, who comes to meet you with His Sacred Heart full of goodness and tenderness. When you are detached from everything, everyone and yourself, then you will see how sweet

that Heart is, then, the Kingdom of that divine Heart will be established in your heart, then, in your perfect poverty of spirit, you will find yourself richer than the rich, rich in real treasures, rich enough for heaven.

EXAMPLE: In Foligno, there was a very worldly young woman. Angela, her conduct however was anything but angelic, and it was even entirely opposite to her lovely name. She was beautiful, noble and rich, but she used these gifts only to stain her soul and to offend God. Thinking only of having fun and attending parties, she never considered how wayward her manner of living was. She married a rich gentleman, and after her marriage, lived a life yet more full of frivolities and sin. She became the mother of four children, yet the cares of motherhood did not take away from her the habits of excess, vanity or any other sin. The Heart of Him that is infinite wisdom, and who allows evil in order to bring good out of it, called her by means of serious events, which are often an effective way His providence works to free people and lead them to change their ways. Her husband died, but after the time of mourning was over she returned to a life full of love for the world. So the Lord continued to punish her in order to save her. One of her children died, and she wept but did not change, her second, third and fourth child then died. Then she felt completely isolated, the world seemed to her a dry desert, she found in her heart an emptiness and death like that of the grave, and a mysterious need of a heart that could console her, calm her and make her happy. This heart was the Heart of Jesus, that offered itself to her generously, and that most giving Heart that is never vanquished by meanness, instantly filled her with graces and blessings. So she found that real peace that surpasses all earthly joy, which she had never known while in the midst of the world's illusions. She became a nun, began a life of hard penance and high contemplation, and she was gifted with visions

and ecstasies. Once the baby Jesus, held by His immaculate Mother, appeared to her and said, “They will be unworthy to see me great and glorious in heaven, those who do not honour me, small and humble on earth.” She is the blessed Angela of Foligno.

HOMAGE: Throughout the day when you hear a clock strike the hour, salute the Heart of Jesus with a *Glory Be*, and finally say fervently, “Jesus, my Jesus You alone are enough for me.”

PRAYER: Iesu cordis mei, et pars mea in aeternum.

Far from the cries of a blind world, with you I love to live O Lord, may I too die with Thee.

SIXTEENTH DAY

MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS MODEL OF PURITY

I. O, how pure is the Heart of Jesus! It is the stainless mirror of the majesties of God, its inestimable purity is as inseparable from it as its divinity. O, how beautiful it is because of its purity! If a pure heart is like a calm sea, a cloudless sky, a crystal, which reflects the rays of the divine Sun, what could we say of that Heart that is as pure as God? O, how His presence brings love! If it is true that in the case of many saints, their faces alone were enough to inspire purity and love, what can we say about HIM who is the saint of saints? Christian, that most pure Heart wants you to be wholly and forever pure. You are a child of God the Father, member of Jesus His divine Son, temple of the Holy Spirit and image of the Holy Trinity. God joined Himself to your fallen nature in the Incarnation, God unites Himself with you in the Eucharistic sacrament, then O, how pure you must be, to come in contact with God who is infinite purity! May no soul redeemed by Jesus Christ's blood, fall into the mire of carnal sins! Whoever is not chaste is not a true Christian, and even if you do many good works, without this quality of chastity, you will remain distant from the heavenly bridegroom.

II. O, how dear the virtue of purity is to the Heart of Jesus. Coming on earth He wanted His mother to be the virgin of virgins, He wanted His foster father St. Joseph to be a virgin too, as well as St. John the Baptist, His chosen disciple. He Himself was the victim of terrible calumny, people even said He was possessed, but they never said He was impure. Know that as the Sacred Heart loves this virtue, so it hates the

corresponding vice. O, how quickly it withdraws from the heart that is contaminated with it! O, how immediately It denies that person Its light and love! O, how It punishes that one with the most terrible punishments! You too therefore, must hold this virtue very dear. In the midst of corruption, it will give you nobility and true greatness. A truly pure soul already resides with the angels, it is a jewel for humanity and the object of admiration from earth to heaven. But remember that this virtue is like a heavenly flower that can be disturbed by the smallest breath of wind. Therefore, look after it and give it all the necessary care. Learn to love solitude, avoid the occasions of sin, be vigilant as regards yourself and never lose sight of the presence of God. Never cease to ask for help from heaven, and in order to be free from all danger, ask to be like a pure dove, whose hiding place is within the Heart of Jesus, your divine lover.

III. O, how the Heart of Jesus generously rewards the virtue of purity! He is the immaculate angel that delights in pure souls. He calls these His bride and loves to talk with them, to these He gives His graces, His favour and His heavenly blessings, and He becomes their eternal crown in paradise. Therefore love this angelic virtue, which is the fount of a thousand blessings, do not shy away from battle, sacrifices and fights in order to keep that purity. Love this most precious jewel, and the Heart of Jesus, enamoured of its beauty, will draw near to you and enrich you with divine favour. Love this sweet lily, and the Heart of Jesus, enamoured of its perfume will be always near to you, filling you with His love. Be most pure in all your thoughts, affections, imagination, looks, words and actions and the Heart of Jesus will prepare for you the most magnificent recompense. The more pure you are, the better you will be able to pray and meditate, the more you will have the sense of how precious Jesus Christ is,

and so you will fly faster towards heaven. You will then be in the company of those who follow their divine husband and court Him eternally in paradise.

EXAMPLE: There was a pious sixteen year old girl called Rose, who lived at Viterbo. Filled with sublime divine love, she wanted to join the Franciscan sisters of her town and shut herself in the convent, but the nuns would not listen, since she did not have the necessary dowry. Resigning herself to the will of God, she said prophetically to the nuns, “I could not come among you while I was alive, but I will do so when I am dead.” Then she said to herself: “Though some can stop me becoming a nun, nobody can stop me from becoming a saint. It is better to be a saint than a nun. I am called Rose, and I want to be a beloved rose in the Heart of Jesus, as the rose is a beautiful flower, so I want to be an evermore lovely soul. As the rose gives off a beautiful fragrance, so I want to effuse perfect virtue. As the white rose represents purity, and the red one love, I want a life full of the purity of the divine love. As butterflies gather around the rose, I want to do as much good as I possibly can to my neighbour. As the rose grows in the midst of thorns, so I want to stay in the midst of penance and Christian mortification. As the rose is an ornament to a garden, so, with the grace of God, I want to be able to adorn the eternal gardens of paradise. Seeing that Our Lady is the mystical rose, the rose of Jericho, I wish to be most devoted to her.” She followed all these points and soon became a saintly woman. She also did great good to the Church and the people, in the time of impious Frederick II. She died at the age of eighteen and her body glowed with a marvellous light, and she was buried in the cemetery of the convent, thereby fulfilling her prophecy that she would come among them when she had died. She is St. Rose of Viterbo, beloved rose of the Sacred Heart.

HOMAGE: Honour the Heart of Jesus by devoutly reciting thirty-three *Glory Bes*, kneeling before an image of Him.

PRAYER: *Cor mundum crea in me, Iesu, in virtute Cordis tui.*

O pure Heart, of my heart I pray You forge a lily agreeable to the Lord.

SEVENTEENTH DAY

MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS MODEL OF OBEDIENCE

I. O, what a most obedient Heart! Jesus came into our world and said, “I am come to do the will of my Father and His law is written on my Heart.” He was born into the care of Mary and Joseph and He did nothing but obey them. He said, “I came not to be served but to serve.” And though He was the Lord of Lords, He was happy to be the servant of servants. But why was He so obedient? To rebuild the glory of God, diminished by our first parents, to give us the best example of submission and to raise and conserve in His person any merit there is in our obedience. Think therefore O Christian, how dear you should hold this virtue that is so close to the Heart of your Jesus. Obedience! To all your superiors, especially your spiritual director as the representative of God, obey him or her as you would obey God Himself. Obedience! All the saints have taken this path, as the surest and most acceptable one to the Lord, and they have shown that walking in this path leads to happiness, and God for His part, has led them by the hand to perfection and glory.

II. O, what a most obedient Heart! Consider who and what is obeying? God, who sustains the heavens and the whole universe and who does He obey? Simple creatures, the work of His own hands, and how does He obey? With love and joy, with the same promptness that angels show in obeying Him in heaven and in what does He obey? In everything, even the most humiliating things, and it could be that He did not move hand or foot without first being told to, and how long did He obey for? Not just for a day, a month, a year or just during His childhood, but continuously, all through His

life. Until when was He obedient? Until death, death on a cross. O, how incredible! His miracles were not marvellous because He was almighty God, His obedience was the miracle of miracles. So, learn from the Sacred Heart how to obey. You must learn, seeing that you are often slow even in obeying those you are obliged to obey, you are always searching for an excuse not to obey, you do not obey, or do so with disrespect and irritation, you must, or you may lose all reward in the sight of God. Learn, you who rarely obey without some form of repugnance, whether through judgement or unwillingness. Learn, you who even obey for your own good and your own self-satisfaction. The submission of the divine Heart is a reprove to your pride and your love of independence.

III. O what a most obedient Heart! And this is one of the principle virtues, which He desires you to possess. Without it, you will never have a heart like His and never be acceptable to Him. Obey in all things and to all, just as He continuously obeyed; obedience is worth more than sacrifice. He does not prefer your judgements to anyone else's; do not think yourself more illumined or prudent than others, and recognise in the will of others the will of God. O, how meritorious it is to sacrifice our own will for someone else! O how many treasures of virtue and graces you can amass, even by living a life that seems ordinary, if you are really obedient! O, in how little time you will cover much ground towards sainthood by simply obeying! By doing so, the loving Heart of Jesus will incline towards you, and teach you to listen to His commands in all things. In adhering to His designs, every obstacle blocking your path to perfection will be removed, you will experience a profound peace, and you will see the numberless advantages to being His, on earth and in heaven. Work then, towards

perfect obedience, accept the loving invitations of His grace, for God has said that the obedient man will have the victory.

EXAMPLE: A young girl called Anna Maria Nicoletta was born in Naples. When she was six years old she already had an ardent love for the Heart of Jesus, O, how happy she would have been to receive First Holy Communion but she had to wait till she was nine, as was habitual at the time. In those three years, she did innumerable acts of love, inviting the divine lover to live in her heart. She finally received Him and remained devoted to Him all her life. When her earthly mother died she put herself into hands of her heavenly mother, Mary, calling Her the Divine Shepherd, and Anna was a faithful sheep to Her. Anna had several interesting proposals of marriage made to her but she wanted to be a religious at all cost. Her heavenly spouse often appeared to her and she called Him her good husband and saviour. She suffered much on account of her father, who because of his ferocious temper, treated her horribly badly! O, how she suffered because of her stepmother, who persecuted her in a thousand ways! O, how she suffered because of a gossip, who spread calumnies and accused her mercilessly! O, how she suffered by the hand of her confessors, who by the will of God, did not understand her, and treated as someone who was deluded and unclear about her own spiritual state! O, how she suffered on account of the devil, who disturbed her with terrible apparitions. O, how she suffered by the very hand of God Himself, who wanted her to be patient and a model of obedience, so He sent her spiritual tragedies and painful bodily illnesses! But she, her heart united to that of her Jesus reached the heights of perfection, and is dear St. Mary Frances of the Five Wounds of Jesus.

HOMAGE: Devoutly adore the Heart of Jesus, kiss the earth three times and say within yourself, as St. Bernard did, *Disce terra subdi, disce pulvis optemperare*. Learn from that obedient Heart, you who are dust, to obey.

PRAYER: *Cor Iesu, usque ad mortem crucis oboediens factum, miserere mei.*

Jesus, for your glory I wish to be submissive and docile so that You may extinguish all my pride.

EIGHTEENTH DAY

MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS MODEL OF MEEKNESS

I. You must come to school again, to the school of the Heart of Jesus, to learn the lesson of meekness. It is a beautiful virtue and is characteristic of the divine Heart. Look! Jesus, the King of peace came to establish His kingdom in peace and love. Jesus is the meek angel, and He showed this with Joseph and Mary who loved Him, and with His executioners who tormented Him, He was like a lamb on the straw of Bethlehem and on the cross of Calvary. O, what sweetness there was in all His actions, words and ways! Sweetness towards the Jews, who maltreated Him, towards the Pharisees who calumniated Him, towards the Samaritans, who expelled Him, sweetness towards Judas, who betrayed Him, and even towards Caiaphas, Pilate and Herod! He was meek in the face of the insolent soldiers who struck Him, and towards those who derided Him, towards those who spat in His face and who whipped Him, or crowned Him with thorns, or crucified Him, or insulted Him when He hung on the cross. In vain they armed to defend themselves against Him, for He said naught, no cry or curse came from His lips, He only speaks to teach and console, only raises His hands to absolve and bless. And O, how the divine sweetness of the Heart of Jesus shines in the serenity of His countenance, the smile on His lips, the amiability of His words, in the meekness of His manner, it shines in all He does, and most especially in the moment of His death!

II. O, Christian, you must therefore imitate the divine Heart, in this beautiful virtue, that is the daughter of charity, the sister of humility and must be the true characteristic

of Jesus Christ's followers. O, how easily your heart is indignant, disturbed or agitated, by every tiny offence, for every little word, every shadow, every nothing! You accept nothing and yet expect everyone to accept you. Look at the Heart of Jesus and restrain your anger and resentment, remove every bad feeling and begin to answer prejudice with prayer, offences with good and bitterness with love. Look at that Heart and suffer violence meekly. Respond kindly to it in your words, looks and ways, be a sign of the heavenly honey of Christian sweetness both inside and out. Look at that Heart, and always exercise moderation, peace, gentleness and mercy with your neighbour. There will be things in life that will disquiet and disturb you, but have the charity of Jesus Christ that can absorb and nullify every bitterness. People will treat you badly, but have the charity of Jesus Christ in which every maltreatment goes out as quickly as a spark in the sea. People will speak to you badly and falsely accuse you, but have the charity of Jesus Christ, the most beautiful ability of which is to forgive and forget. O, how much good you can do to yourself and others, by practising at every opportunity, this precious virtue! Think that by treating others with love you will be guided by God.

III. Do you want real meekness? Then get as near as you can to the Heart of Jesus and accustom yourself to be enclosed within it. Whenever someone offends you, remember that you are both contained within the Heart of Jesus and that charitable Heart loves the offender, and was pierced for them, and you too must love them. This Heart is aflame with love and loves everyone, tolerating peoples' vices, shortcomings, defects and excuses, suffer therefore all the offences people heap upon you. That Heart is full of mercy and patience, goodness and compassion, tenderness and trust, It is forever calm, even in the face of its most ardent enemies. With the help of this

meek and gentle Heart, be ready to surrender, to forgive, giving good for evil; accordingly, let peace be in all your actions, and do them all with the meek spirit that is the true spirit of the Lord. So you will be held dear by God and men, you will be victorious over the world and possess forever a holy home in paradise.

EXAMPLE: A holy child was born in Cascia, a small town in Umbria. When she was in her cradle bees circled her cot, showing that she was no ordinary child. She soon heard in her heart the voice of the loving Heart of Jesus that called her to Him, to solitude and to prayer. As an innocent young girl of twelve she felt abhorrence for the world, and she offered to the Heart of Jesus her perpetual virginity, but she had to obey the will of her parents and they married her to a brutal man. She became the mother of two children and gave them a pious Christian upbringing. Her husband meanwhile, ferocious and uncontrollable, treated her badly in a thousand different ways, making her patient as a martyr. After eighteen years of marriage, her husband was treacherously slain, and her sons swore to avenge their murdered father. She not only prayed for the murderer, but tried to bring her children round to forgiving him. Seeing they would not listen to her, she told the Lord she would rather see them dead than guilty of such a crime. And so, they fell ill, and with her help, died a holy death. She was then free, and joined the Augustinian order, living a life of austere penitence and high contemplation, as wife and lover of the Heart of Jesus. She often contemplated the passion of Christ, with floods of tears, and once a thorn from the head of the crucified One wounded her head giving her a painful hurt that she carried all her life. She was a perfect imitator of the divine Heart and she received many celestial graces from It. She died a holy death and after four centuries, her body was

still found to be incorrupt. She is St. Rita of Cascia, called the saint of the impossible because of the prodigious things she did.

HOMAGE: Bow five times before the image of the Sacred Heart, and after each bow, giving it an affectionate kiss, say, “Jesus, so meek and humble of heart, make my heart similar to yours.”

PRAYER: *Iesu, mitissime, Miserere mei.*

Because You are my meek and humble lover, I will consider every man my brother.

NINETEENTH DAY

MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS IN RELATION TO MARY

I. Consider the immense love of the Heart of Jesus for Mary. It chose her as its mother from all women, and in her immaculate womb, took on our human nature. His first look and first smile were to her, her name was the first to issue from His sweet lips, on her loving breast He slept, her milk was His first gentle nourishment, by her intercession He worked His first miracle, and even when hanging on the cross, He showed Mary His affection for her, by leaving her in the care of John, the disciple He loved. Those gifts that make Mary the most privileged of all creatures, all came from the Heart of Jesus, from that Heart she received that fullness of grace that raises her above all the angels and saints, from that Heart she received the abundance of glory that makes her the Queen of all heaven, from that Heart, she received the strength which makes her the benefactress of the whole universe. On earth and in heaven, in time and in eternity, that divine Heart has given and will give Mary all its treasures of wisdom, power and infinite goodness. O, Christian, how can you say you love the Heart of Jesus if you do not nurture a tender affection for Mary? Love, honour, invoke and imitate her, so you will possess the golden key to the loving Heart of Jesus Christ.

II. Consider the loving relationship between the Heart of Jesus and that of Mary. The Heart of Jesus loves her as the most beautiful of all created things, immeasurably more than He loves all other beings on earth or in heaven. The Heart of Mary loves Jesus as its creator immeasurably more than all the angels and saints put together. The Heart of Jesus has an affection for Mary which is so much greater than the affection

all children have for their mothers! And the Heart of Mary is more loving towards Jesus than any mother has ever been towards their child! The Heart of Jesus holds Mary dear, as the companion of all its sufferings, and the Heart of Mary holds Jesus dear, because she saw Him die in the midst of a thousand torments. The Heart of Jesus sees Mary as the dearest of its joys and the Heart of Mary sees Jesus as its beginning, its end and its everything. The Heart of Jesus finds in the Heart of Mary, a garden of delights, where it walks among the flowers that are heroic virtues, and the Heart of Mary finds in the Heart of Jesus, the centre of all its glory and happiness. Therefore, Jesus is never far from Mary and Mary is never far from Jesus. Speak then to the Son through the Heart of the mother, and to the mother through the Heart of the Son, and paradise will be yours.

III. Consider the great gift the Heart of Jesus has given us, by giving us His mother to be our own. He loved Mary enormously! Mary's Heart gave Jesus the only earthly joy while He was amongst us, because the joy was worthy of Him for it came from such a pure source. And yet, from the cross, with inestimable mercy and charity, He gave us His mother as a gift. He gave her a Heart full of maternal affection for us, and we have in her a comforter in the face of all misfortunes, a refuge from all dangers, an inexhaustible fountain of grace and a sea of heavenly blessings. O, Christian, what do you give back to that Heart in exchange for such a gift? If your faith were alive, you would appreciate such an incredible gift! O, how full of gratitude you would be towards the One who gave you such a present! What marvellous advantages you would try and gain from it! If Mary is your mother, then Jesus is your brother and God your Father, the Kingdom and inheritance of Christ are both yours, and the favour Mary found with God is also for you. In gratitude to the Heart of Jesus

therefore, love Mary, and think that in loving her, you will join the company of the angels and saints. Love her, and that love will occupy the second place in your heart, after your love for Jesus. Love her, and in so doing you will make yourself worthy to be called her child. Love her, and it will be the clearest sign that you are destined for heaven. Mary is the way that leads to Jesus, the door that opens on to life.

EXAMPLE: A pious farmer lived an innocent and pure life in the country. The sky, the fields, the trees, the flowers, the birds, all created things made her think continuously of the Creator. The Heart of Jesus wanted her all for Himself, and she, in order to love Him, went to St. Martha's convent in Milan. There she behaved perfectly in order to come closer to the Heart of Jesus through observance of her order's Rule and by practising all virtues. Not being able read, she looked with a holy envy on the other sisters reciting the Divine Office together, and she too wished to take part in order to augment the glory of her heavenly spouse. Once, while in fervent prayer, the heavenly mother and Queen appeared to her and said, "Daughter, be glad! It does not matter that you cannot read, many people the world considers to be intelligent are in hell, and many the world considers ignorant are in heaven! You only need to know three letters, one white, one black and the other red. The white one means you must remain pure and unstained, the black one signifies that you are dead to the world and the world must be dead to you. The red one symbolizes the life of love you are to lead, loving my divine Son, your great husband, and loving all things in Him, for Him and with Him." She put into practice the instructions she received from the Seat of Wisdom, so she was pure in mind, heart body and soul; she was perfectly detached from the world and all earthly things, being full of tender and

ardent love for the Heart of Jesus, loving everyone with true evangelic charity, so she reached perfection on earth and glory in heaven. She is the blessed Veronica of Milan.

HOMAGE: Make three offerings from the Heart of Mary to the Heart of Jesus. First, offer Him the purity of her Heart, so that He may pass over the ugliness of yours. Secondly offer Him her love, so that He may pass over the coldness you show Him. Thirdly, offer Him her sufferings that He may give your Heart true, perfect and lasting contrition.

PRAYER: *Iesu et Maria, amores mei dulcissimi...sim totus vester, sim nihil meus.*

My life, my joy and glory are the same as the angels, to love Jesus and Mary.

TWENTIETH DAY

MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS IN RELATION TO ST JOSEPH

I. Enter into the feeling the Heart of Jesus has for His earthly father St. Joseph, and love him tenderly. Look who Jesus chose for His foster father and the husband of most holy Mary, and He was pleased to be a child in Joseph's arms, to receive his kisses and caresses, to be entrusted to him as they fled to Egypt and to live subject to him for many years in Nazareth. When Joseph was dying, Jesus and his holy mother consoled him, assisted him and smiled at him right up to his last breath. See Jesus' most holy soul go to Limbo and present itself to Joseph filling him with heavenly consolation, and on the great day of the Ascension of the Saviour, he is the first of the patriarchs to enter heaven: Jesus who so loved him on earth, gives him a limitless share in the splendour of His glory. O, with incomparable love has the Heart of Jesus always loved St. Joseph! And O, with what love has the heart of St. Joseph always loved Jesus! How can you then, O Christian, love Jesus without greatly loving St. Joseph? May the love you have for him, only surpassed by your love for Mary and Jesus, be a witness of your affection for the divine Heart.

II. Enter into the love the Heart of Jesus has for the glorious St. Joseph, and honour him with every kind of veneration. O, how high is the honour due to the foster father of the Incarnate Word! He had nothing less than the rights of the eternal Father over the eternal Son. O, how high was his office as virgin husband of the virgin mother! He was nothing less than the personification of the Holy Spirit, the divine spouse of that

heavenly creature. O, how eminent his virtue was! He was the perfect example of the just man, because of his double characteristic as father of Jesus and husband of Mary. O, how he is glorified in paradise! His great throne of light is set above all the angels and saints. As high even as a high mountain, that rises above all the other mountains and cliffs that surround it, so is Joseph, because of his dignity, his eminence in perfection, because of the richness of the gifts and graces he received, he is higher than every other just man who was, is or will be. All these gifts have been given to him in heaven and on earth from the Heart of Jesus, and do you think you can be devoted to that Heart without greatly honouring St. Joseph? Think that if he is so dear to the Heart of Jesus, devotion to him should be a large part of Christian life.

III. Enter into the love the Heart of Jesus has for the glorious St. Joseph, and trust him fully. Jesus was always ready to abandon Himself into the cares of St. Joseph. O, with what surety was He carried in St. Joseph's arms! With what tranquillity did Jesus sleep lovingly on his breast! With submission and docility Jesus allowed Himself to be directed and commanded by His foster father! And now that He is in heaven, there is no limit to His love for St. Joseph. Not only does He say, "Ask, O Joseph, and everything will be given you." But He adds, "Remember that here you are the sovereign, and you may request anything of my Heart." The Heart of Jesus made Joseph head of the Christian family, and made him the special intercessor for a holy death. The Heart of Jesus inspired the Popes to declare him supreme patron of the Catholic Church and model for all workers. And in order that he may accomplish all this, the Heart of Jesus gave him all His divine treasures so that they might be given to the whole world. He gave Saint Joseph a limitless mercy and an incomparable power, so that he might be able to protect and help the immense family of the faithful. How

the divine Heart would be overjoyed if you put yourself fully under the most holy protection of St. Joseph. Therefore, out of love for that Heart, as well as for your own good, always love, honour and invoke this supreme patriarch, this great martyr to love, this unequalled saint. Bring all your needs before him and trust him in times of trouble, take him as your guide in your great journey through time and eternity. And devotion to St. Joseph will see you grow, day by day in devotion to the most holy Heart of Jesus.

EXAMPLE: Blessed Osanna of Mantova, tertiary Dominican, was a true saint because of her innocence, her continual mortification, her detachment from all worldly things and for the beautiful virtues she practiced. Her love for the Heart of Jesus was passionate and strong, at the age of seven she consecrated herself with a vow of perpetual virginity and refused various offers of marriage and with them riches. The divine spouse gave her many gifts. Here is one of them. When she was young, she desperately wanted to learn to read in order to enjoy the lives of the saints and receive the spirit that can be gleaned from sacred texts. She once prayed with beautiful simplicity and intensity, and she went into ecstasy. She received a paper with three names written in beautiful gold letters on it. Jesus, Joseph and Mary were the names on the paper, and although she could not read, she easily understood the three holy words, and the paper disappeared. Meanwhile she heard a secret voice within herself that said, "These are the three names it is most important to read, these are the three hearts it is most important to love if you want to reign in heaven. She greatly loved Jesus already, and tenderly loved Mary, and to that love she added fervent devotion to St. Joseph, she chose him as her protector and made wonderful progress in the way of perfection. Let us go then to Jesus, Mary and Joseph as she did.

God has united these three with unbreakable ties, and has made of them a created trinity, an inestimable treasure for heaven and earth, and nothing can separate them.

HOMAGE: Say five *Glory Bes*, to the Sacred Heart, and offer to it the immaculate Heart of Mary, in thanks that He has given so many treasures to mankind through the Heart of St. Joseph.

PRAYER: *Iesu, Maria, Ioseph!*

Joseph, love for you lives in this heart of mine, because you are so dear to that divine Heart.

TWENTY-FIRST DAY

MEDITATION: UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS*

I. O, Christian do you want to be truly holy and perfect? You must intimately unite your heart to the Heart of Jesus. For all perfection consists in the union between man and God, and the most perfect union is that between hearts. This union is greatly desired by the Heart of Jesus, who redeemed you with His blood and wants you for Himself in both time and eternity, and this must also be the desire of your heart and your every care. United to this Heart, O, how much glory you will give to God, your every smallest action will add to the glory of Jesus Christ, and be directed to add to His greatness. And a host of advantages would come to you too! Because without this Heart, who are you? What can you do? What do you possess? Nothing, and united to Him who are you? What can you do? What do you possess? Everything. O, how much good you will do to everyone around you! A soul loved by God, can do in an hour of prayer what others cannot accomplish with a year of labouring. If you are united to this Heart the angels and the saints will be with you, Mary and all of paradise will lovingly and gladly watch over you, no created thing will do you harm, and even the worst misfortunes will be turned to your good, not even the devil will be able to take you away from Jesus. Unity with this Heart will mean joy even in unhappiness, tranquillity even in the midst of storms, hope in misfortune, and you will lack nothing even if everyone abandons you. By this union, the actions you do that the world considers unimportant will be, thanks to the merits of Jesus Christ, transformed into the precious stones that will form part of your heavenly crown. By this union, all

* These last ten meditations are about the way of unity

your works, prayers and sufferings, will serve to continuously elevate your throne, which you will one day sit on in your heavenly home.

II. So, how can this union come about? Here are the main ways. Total detachment, inviolable fidelity, interior sacrifice, perfect self control, constant generosity and complete abandon, these are the signs the divine Heart wants to see in a heart united to him. Living faith is needed, you must also see and listen to the One who is near to you, you must see all things through the Heart of Jesus, and the Heart of Jesus in all things, and remember, that Heart is King of all, watches all hearts and counts the number of beats yours makes. Trust in Him then, entrust Him with your heart, your hopes, the success of your endeavours, your health, your life and your death. Believe that He takes as much care of you as He does of the whole universe, and He wants good things for you, even more than you do yourself. With fervent love, that Heart is constantly telling you, "I love you," and you ought to respond by saying at every moment, "I love you." As a result, acts of love done for Him will become as natural to you as breathing is. Think that He is love, and lives for love, and He is always searching for love. He really knows how to love, in every situation, and so it is by learning to love that we come to know Jesus, and the more we love Him, the more we will possess Him. Therefore, give yourself to Him without reservation and He will give Himself to you completely. May your heart be completely transformed by His, that you may share in an ever deeper union with Him, both on earth and in eternity.

III. But where can this union take place? Exactly within the Heart of Jesus, here is where you must fly to and remain like the loving dove. Within that Heart that is so contrite on your behalf because of your faults, you must weep for your sins and ask

forgiveness of God. Within that Heart that is horrified by the smallest offence to his divine majesty, you must hate and flee from your smallest venial sins and faults. Within that Heart that was so mortified and afflicted for love of you, you must bear all your pains and mortify yourself. Within that Heart, so incomparable and incredible in its generosity, you must fight against all your vices and quell all your passions, and resist at all times the urgings of your corrupt nature. Within that infinitely holy Heart you must practice all virtue and good works, all your acts, both internal and external, always doing them in conformity with His holy actions. Within that Heart you will find the peace, rest and joy that comes from God, and it can become the centre of your life. So, what are you waiting for? Break every other tie and unite yourself to his Heart, enter into it and never leave it again. Remember that the greatest good to be had in heaven or on earth is to be united with the Heart of Jesus Christ, just as the greatest evil on earth or in hell is to be separated from it.

EXAMPLE: A dear child was born to some farmers who lived in Spain and they called him Isidore. Throughout his early life in the country, Isidore retained his baptismal innocence, flying with horror from sin and vice. The Heart of Jesus spoke clearly to his heart, calling him to observe all God's laws, to always surrender to the will of God and to work for the glory of God in all he did. He responded eagerly to the Grace of God, and though he was a country boy of small means he was of great virtue. The sky, the fields, the trees, the flowers, the breezes and the song of birds all reminded him of God, who was the centre of his life and the purveyor of all that was good. By divine will, he married an honest woman called Maria Torribia, and he became the model of the Christian husband. How pure were his habits and how faithful to each other they both were. Isidore became the father of one son, and with

diligent care, wise words and perfect example, he taught him to be Christian. Isidore loved peace and quiet and never wasted words, and he only spoke to say useful things in praise of God or for the edification of his neighbour. So, the Heart of Jesus was for him a mirror, which he looked into to make sure he was doing the right thing. He went to Mass every morning before beginning his work and took part with devotion in the holy mysteries. Providence made him prosper and blessed him, so that he gave much to the poor. His virtuous life was crowned by a marvellous death and prodigious miracles. This is St. Isidore. How beautiful that a simple farmer was canonized together with four other celebrated saints, St. Ignatius of Loyola, St. Francis Xavier, St. Phillip Neri and St. Teresa of Avila. O, how wonderful, a humble farmworker was so glorified that Kings and Queens travelled to kiss his feet after he died, and the great city of Madrid chose him as its heavenly protector. This is the work of the Heart of Jesus, the most perfect model of all sainthood.

HOMAGE: Honour the most sacred Heart by professing your love for It in front of a picture of that Heart or of the Blessed Sacrament.

PRAYER: *Adhaereat tibi cor meum, Domine!*

O, beautiful Heart, may my heart be joined to yours, and to flaming and holy love open its doors.

TWENTY-SECOND DAY

MEDITATION: UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS IN YOUR LIFE

I. Contemplate the child Jesus in the stable in Bethlehem. O, what a marvel of love for the entire world and all heaven to see, to witness the infinite God in the form of a humble child, crying, weeping and shivering with cold in a lowly manger! O, how that beautiful child wins the love of men and angels! O, how powerfully He draws all souls towards His love! By virtue of love then, unite your heart to the Heart of the child Jesus, and live with Him always; but how? you ask. By practicing beautiful Christian simplicity, for Jesus said, “Unless you become like a little child you cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven.” And so He Himself, O, infinite condescension, became a child, giving us an example of that simplicity that He asks of us, if we are to have paradise. Therefore O, Christian, be simple, become a child together with that heavenly child. May your heart be far from all worldly worries and all desires of the flesh and may you not fall back into them. May your mind be pure in its thoughts, always just and right in its ideas and always holy in its intentions. May you always speak sincerely, never lying or being duplicitous, and with the correct Christian prudence, so that your heart may be in your speech and sincerity in your heart. May you seek to do nothing other than what God wishes, what pleases Him and what gives Him glory. May your behaviour be far from all worldly affectation, may it be honest and good. So, in the words of St. Paul, you will be a child of God in the midst of a corrupt and depraved generation, and God who loves to be one with simple souls, will enrich you with His light and blessings!

II. Contemplate Jesus, who lived a hidden life for thirty years in the village of Nazareth. Where were His infinite majesty and greatness? Where His wisdom, light and infinite glory? All was hidden in the shadows and silence of that tiny hamlet. The omnipotent hands that made the heavens and the earth were occupied by simple work, and the world saw Him as just the son of a carpenter. Become one with the young Jesus then and begin an inner life hidden in God. Do not allow yourself to be enticed or trapped by any exterior thing, stay close to that infinite goodness that is the divine Heart, determined to live quietly united to Jesus, until living without Him seems impossible as impossible as to live without light or air. Always have Jesus Christ in your mind, Jesus Christ in your heart and Jesus Christ before your eyes, for He is your beginning, your middle and your end, and so your life must be in Him. Be happy only with Him, thinking nothing of the greatness and honour the world offers, which all passes away. What a blessing for you, if you are able to live hidden with the heart of Jesus! Even were you poor, despised and suffering in the eyes of the world, before God you would be a royal bride, ineffably glorious and beautiful.

III. Contemplate Jesus, who for three years walked the paths of Palestine showering blessings and working miracles, illuminating and consoling the people. He, infinite wisdom and truth, teaches you through His public ministry, the way to conduct all your actions. He did all things well, *bene omnia fecit*, these words are the praise of the Holy Spirit for Him. And you too, unite your heart to His Heart and seek to do all things well. And do them well as a reflection of Jesus Christ. He was a man, he worked, walked, rested, ate, slept and talked, and in all these ordinary actions there was perfect love devotion and sacrifice, and so He became the example to you and the source of all good. Do all things well, think like Jesus Christ, love like Jesus Christ,

speak with the language of Jesus Christ, see all things with the eyes of Jesus Christ, and put Jesus Christ first, allowing yourself to be led by Him in all things and behave in all things as He would. Do all things well, and take Him as a father who watches over you, as a friend who goes with you, as a teacher who corrects you, as a benefactor who favours you, and as God who judges you. Do all things well, with order, tranquillity, diligence and good intentions. Have within you that mixture of serenity and certainty, modesty, humility and sweetness that can be called Christian goodness, so that you will be able to say, as St. Paul did, "I live, but it is not I who live, but Christ who lives in me, and I live in Him."

EXAMPLE: Louise de Marillac was influenced by St. Vincent De Paul and wanted to look after the sick in Paris' biggest hospital, and there she poured out the zeal and love she received from the heart of Jesus to which she was very devoted. She would sit as a consoling angel at the bedside of the sick, helping them, assisting them, doing them good in a thousand ways. Among those who were very ill there happened to be a Turk, he was hard and intolerant in all things, he wriggled and writhed like a serpent and he swore constantly. This pious nurse, O, how she worked to calm and console him, showering him with gentleness and courtesy, but in vain! He began to mend and the doctors prescribed him eggs. She kindly brought one to the Turk, but he raged that it was not enough for him to eat and threw it in her face. Without losing patience, she cleaned herself up, went to the kitchen and fetched him another egg, telling him he would soon have better things to eat. But again, he became angry and threw the egg at her. With heroic tranquillity and sweetness, she got a third egg and presented it to him, begging him on her knees to accept it. The Turk was astonished by such charity and opening his eyes wide he exclaimed, "Who taught you to treat a devil like me so

kindly?" That holy nurse took a cross and showed it to him, saying, "Here is He that has taught me to treat you as I do, here is God, who out of an excess of love, died on the cross for me, for you and for everybody." The Turk was moved and saw the light, wishing to learn all the truths of Christianity. He was baptised and became a faithful Catholic. O, how good it is to imitate the love and humility of the Heart of Jesus.

HOMAGE: Raise your hearts towards that sweet Heart at least three times a day. In the morning adore Him, in the afternoon love Him and in the evening thank Him and be grateful for all His blessings.

PRAYER: *Oculi mei et cor meum tibi cunctis diebus.*

O loving Heart, I ask unity with you, that I might live all my life in humility with you.

TWENTY-THIRD DAY

MEDITATION: UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS THROUGH HIS DOCTRINE

I. Do you want perfect unity with Jesus? Then you must renounce the world. Reading the Gospels, it is clear that He launched many an attack on the world through His words and actions. He condemned it, and even excluded it from His divine prayers. The world then must be seen as a great enemy that you, O Christian, must wholly hate, seeing that it was so hated by the Heart of Jesus, eternal truth and infinite wisdom. Despise the goods of the world, they contain nothing but seductions and the poison of death. Despise the maxims of the world, they are all false, hollow and contrary to divine law. Think nothing of the hatred of the world, if Jesus Christ was treated as a madman, it is no surprise that His followers are likewise treated. The world is mired in malice, friendship with it means enmity with God, and if you follow the world, you too will become worldly with the worldly, corrupt with the corrupt and damned with the damned. Therefore despise it all, so as to be able to say with St. Paul, the world is dead to me and I am dead to the world.

II. Scorn the world with all your soul, live according to the true doctrine of the Heart of Jesus. And what is that doctrine? It can be wholly understood through the eight beatitudes. Blessed are the poor in spirit, meaning those detached from all worldly things, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the meek, meaning those who accept all out of love for God, for they shall inherit the earth, the promised land of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, meaning those who, in this vale of tears, know

the holy sadness of the cross, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for what is right, meaning those who desire virtue and perfection, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, meaning those who know how to love their neighbours and live in communion with them, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, meaning those who are pure, far from every sin and whose intentions are right, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, meaning those who know how to live in peace with God, with themselves and with others, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted in the cause of right, meaning through no faults of their own but because they uphold God's truth, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. This is Jesus Christ's true doctrine, and the rewards in store for those who follow it, heaven and earth will pass away, but His word will not. These beatitudes will be like eight precious cords that fasten your heart to that of Jesus, eight springs of peace, joy and blessings, eight golden steps that will lead you to the blessedness of eternal paradise! Foolish is he who is wise according to the world! Knowledgeable is he who is foolish according to Jesus Christ! At the moment of your death, you will see the light of this truth.

III. So, all celestial wisdom has its beginning and fulfilment within the Heart of Jesus. From this Heart, like the many rays issuing from a shining sun, this wisdom is given to the hearts of His chosen ones. Here the innumerable saints have found every happiness in time and an immense fountain of glory in eternity. Therefore, O Christian, learn to see everything as the divine Heart sees it, loving what He loves and hating what He hates, judging things as He judges them. He is the sure Way, the infallible Truth and the everlasting Life, and following Him you will not walk in darkness but in continuous light, until you walk into the light of the glory of paradise.

What would you gain by understanding everything, by speaking all the languages of men and angels and not following the teachings of Jesus? May the doctrine of the Sacred Heart, that is often rejected, be the source of your every honour, greatness and wisdom. If you imitate it and find joy in suffering, glory in rejection and riches in poverty, O, what a secret of happiness you will have uncovered! O what an immense and eternal treasure!

EXAMPLE: An ambitious Neapolitan captain went towards the royal palace carrying papers bearing proof of his skills, to present himself to the King and obtain a commission. Passing by the Church of the Regina Coeli, where at that time there was a convent of pious nuns, he heard beautiful music and a loving song. He entered the Church and was greatly moved and he wept for sadness, contrition and love. It was the loving Heart of Jesus that worked and spoke through His grace to the heart of that young man. He said to himself, "If an earthly song or music can move me so, what must the eternal music or song of heaven be like? How can I be so tied to the worthless goods of this worthless world, when I can see here infinite and supreme riches?" He found in his heart a marvellous and mysterious desire to give himself to God. Rather than going to the palace, he returned home. He saw his sword hanging on the wall, and ashamed, he said, "I will use a noble sword against the world, the flesh, the devil, my passions, my vices and my self-love and I will win a noble victory." He fulfilled his word, he left everything and took Holy Orders, becoming a fervent friend, faithful imitator and zealous glorifier of the Heart of Jesus, and reaching the heights of perfection, he gained riches for eternity. He is the venerable Carlo Carfa, founder of the Holy Workers.

HOMAGE: Honour the heart of Jesus by reciting five *Our Fathers* with your arms outstretched in the form of a cross, repeating with special devotion and feeling, *Thy Kingdom Come.*

PRAYER: *Mihi mundum crucifixus est, et ego mundo.*

Wise, holy Heart, I do not deserve to live, unless I serve you with all my life.

TWENTY-FOURTH DAY

MEDITATION: UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS IN PRAYER

I. Prayer was, and will always be the favoured occupation of the Heart of Jesus. He did not always work miracles but He always prayed. He began doing so while in the womb of Mary, and did so unceasingly from Bethlehem to Calvary, He has been praying for over twenty-one centuries in heaven and in tabernacles, and He will not stop until time itself stops. While there is even one soul in danger that still has the hope of being saved that Heart will spend itself in prayer. Say O Christian, if you know of anything more beautiful, moving or sublime, than seeing God Himself that humbles Himself and prays. And after this solemn example, how can you, creature of dust, so full of sufferings, needs and sins, refuse to pray? Look at that Heart, which from its open wound raises an unceasing prayer, and know that you too must, in all circumstances and in every place pray, pray incessantly. And even if you are not able to pray using words, pray with your spirit. Grace is a necessity, therefore prayer is a duty. So a soul without prayer, is like a soldier without weapons, a fish without water or a plant without water. Whoever prays will be saved, whoever does not will be damned.

II. Therefore you must pray, but always in union with the Heart of Jesus. This Heart is the only and supreme mediator between God and man, this Heart lives for interceding on all men's behalf, it inspires the prayers of every other heart and makes them worthy of being answered. This Heart that always prays for you, is also always ready to pray with you. Pray united to Him, for if you present yourself alone before God, He

will see your sins and your ingratitude and will reject your prayer. But if you present yourself together with that Heart, your faults will vanish and His goodness will be seen, and God, seeing in your heart the Heart of Jesus, so pure, so loving and so worthy to be heard, will surely listen to you. Pray united to Him; before praying consult the spirit of Jesus Christ that is in you, and having made sure that your request conforms to the divine Heart, make your prayer, and it will be right and fruitful. Pray united to Him, do not ask anything that you have not already put into His Heart, do not take a breath to pray, if it has not passed through His Heart, and is therefore joined to His infallible breath that He draws for the glory of God and for your salvation. So your prayer will be the great cry of a heart perfectly united to the Heart of Jesus, O, how quickly it will be fulfilled! O how it will bring divine blessings down upon you.

III. Do you want to improve the unity you have with Jesus when you pray? Follow His example and pray with humility. Jesus prayed with His head touching the ground, humbling himself before the majesty of His Father. Jesus rose during the night and went to lonely places to pray and He prayed simply, in a garden or a desert. Pray with His devotion of spirit: Jesus prayed raising His hands and eyes to heaven, showing that His mind and Heart were raised towards, and one with, God. Pray with His fervour: Jesus in prayer was aflame with love and fervour, and He prayed till He wept and sweated blood. Pray with His trust: He taught us to call God by the sweet name of Father. Pray with His constancy: Jesus prayed all His life and ended it with a prayer, to teach you that you must live praying and die praying.

EXAMPLE: A young princess began to ask herself some important questions saying, I am beautiful but so what? I am noble but so what? I am very rich, I have gold, silver,

jewels, palaces, villas and gardens but so what? I have valets and servants who wait on me, I am courted by many and receive honour and homage but so what? All this will end in a moment with death. She prostrated herself before a crucifix and the Heart of Jesus spoke lovingly to her heart and she knew the vanity of all these things and became a Benedictine nun, beginning a life of holiness and perfection. She was most faithful to the divine Heart and received from it graces and blessings. Once, Jesus appeared to her saying, “I give you my Heart as your refuge, your mirror, your centre, your treasure and your everything.” Another time, while in ecstasy, she saw the young Jesus holding His Heart in His hand shining brighter than the sun, that shot rays in every direction, and the loving saviour showed her that all the graces given to men, according to their capacity and desire, came from His Heart. And speaking of herself before she died, she said, “If I wanted to write down all the graces the Heart of my Jesus has given me, I would have to write a book larger than the breviary.” She is the dear St. Matilda.

HOMAGE: In union with the Heart of Jesus and to build your love for this adorable Heart, recite the *Our Father*, devoutly and take time to think about the words you are saying.

PRAYER: *Inveni Cor meum, ut orem Deum.*

Jesus, may You find my prayer, the gift of my soul, beautiful and fair.

TWENTY-FIFTH DAY

MEDITATION: UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS IN SUFFERING

I. The Heart of Jesus teaches us how to suffer. Look with what unalterable calm He suffers His first crib, circumcision, poverty, exile and the work of a humble trade. Look at the sublime placidity with which He took the persecution, calumny, infamy, and all the torments of His passion. All evil was launched against Him and yet He said nothing, He never raised a hand to defend Himself. He ardently desired suffering, and accepted it courageously, and He suffered with trust in His Heart. Christian, Jesus was innocent and suffered so much for love of you, so how can you, who have sinned so many times, have no desire to suffer for Him? Do you think Jesus suffered to save you from suffering? No, He did not. It was in order to give you the example and the strength to suffer well. Do you claim His glory in heaven when you have not shared in His cross on earth? It is an unworthy thought. Be one with His most patient Heart and love suffering. Have patience in trials that come from God, in misfortunes, losses and illnesses. Have patience in trials that come from God via the hands of men, in injustices, calumnies or betrayals. Have patience in trials that come from God via the devil, in temptations or disturbances. Have patience in trials that you yourself cause by mistakes, negligence or weakness. Humble yourself before God in all things, and with the Heart of Jesus, surrender to His will. The earth is a vale of tears and life is a hard pilgrimage, but Christian patience is the remedy to all evil.

II. The Heart of Jesus makes suffering sweet. He said, "Blessed are you when people persecute you and speak all kinds of calumny against you on my account, rejoice and

be glad." Remember that Christ sends you tribulations so that you may know your faults; to help you to detach yourself from the world, to know your plight so that you may no longer trust in yourself but in Him; to purify you, to make you holy and make you like Him in this life so that you may also be like Him in glory. Think that whatever the reason for which He afflicts you, whether it is punishment or to make you more perfect, He always does it out of love for you and for your good. If it were not good for you to suffer, Jesus, who loves you, would surely spare you the experience. The clearest sign of love is to suffer for the beloved, and so, if God suffered so much pain for love of you, the pain became for Him as lovable as love itself. Learn that the higher Jesus wants to raise a soul to perfection, the more He will give it suffering, and this is the fate of all those that are dear to Him. It is in the fire of tribulations that you will become like fine gold, worthy to be displayed in the heavenly palace. The suffering of this life is not only negligible when compared to blessed eternity, but also compared to divine grace which gives such sweetness and comfort that it is worthier than all worldly joys. That is why martyrs were full of joy when they were going through torment. Do not all these considerations alleviate every pain? Yes, all sufferings, when looked at through the Heart of Jesus, become worthy of respect and love. Love that Heart and even the bitterest things will become sweet to you.

III. The Heart of Jesus makes suffering precious and important. By subjecting Himself to all our pains, He has given them inestimable worth and infinite value. O, blessed be the thorns of Jesus, which produce flowers of glory! Blessed be the cross of Jesus, from which we can climb to the highest thrones of paradise! Recognise then, via the sufferings of Jesus, the necessity, nobility and greatness of Christian suffering. After Jesus Christ, through His suffering, gave it such merit, there is nothing greater on

earth for a Christian, than suffering with Jesus Christ and for Jesus Christ. After such an adorable God made pain holy, refusing suffering means not to understand the things of God. Become one with the Heart of Jesus and suffer all things for love of Him. United to Him, even if you suffer lightly, you will have a great reward in heaven, but far from Him, even were you to suffer the pain of all the martyrs, it would not avail you. Become one with the Heart of your Jesus, and see suffering as a treasure or a medicine, given to you out of love, treat each trial like a relic of His most holy passion. If you were truly united to Jesus, O, how you would prefer humiliation to honour and suffering to joy! You would no longer want to be without suffering for the God of love and your heart too would sublimely cry, O suffering, O death!

EXAMPLE: In 1579 in Pibrac, a village not far from Toulouse, a girl called Germaine was born to poor farming parents. While she was still in her cradle, she lost her mother. Poor little one! She was also physically sick. Her father decided to marry again, but made a bad choice. As soon as his new wife began to have children of her own, she forced her step-daughter to leave the house. Germaine managed to make enough to eat by spinning and weaving, and would often go, leaning on a stick, to watch the sheep in the countryside, O, with what effective grace and love did the Heart of Jesus work within the heart of that poor labourer! O, with what fervour did she pray and with what resignation did she accept suffering. Being out in the country made her able to think about all created things and their Creator. She would plant her stick in the ground and the sheep would gather around her, then she would go happily to Mass, where she devoutly fed on the bread of the angels, and when she returned, the sheep would still be there. Her horrid stepmother continued to persecute her, even inducing her father to treat her mercilessly. What bread Germaine had she often gave

to the poor, and it was almost as if the bread multiplied itself by miracle so that it could be a sign of her love. Her stepmother suspected her of robbing the house and she once saw her with something in her apron and took a stick to beat her. When Germaine let the contents of her apron fall, what had been meant for the poor was changed into flowers, despite it being winter. In spite of such marvels, she was always persecuted and treated badly. At the age of 22, she was found dead with a smile on her face, and from her body there came a heavenly smell. Two devout people saw a host of virgins dressed in white come down from heaven and take that soul with them back to paradise. She is St. Germaine Cousin, who was canonised by Pius IX.

HOMAGE: Recite the little Office of the Sacred Heart and invite others to do it with you, or say the Litany of the Sacred Heart. (See the Appendix)

PRAYER: *Domine, pati et contemni pro te!*

O patient Heart of God my lover, with You I want to weep, with you I want to suffer.

TWENTY-SIXTH DAY

MEDITATION: ZEALOUS UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS

I. In union with the Heart of Jesus, may you have a living zeal for the glory of God.

O, many Christians do not even know the meaning of the word zeal. They do not know that it is a virtue, and that it is furthermore a duty of all those who follow Christ. As fire naturally produces flames, so love brings zeal with it, and where zeal is missing love is certainly not present. The glory of the Father was always the strongest desire of that divine Heart. To that end He gave all His energy, and every moment of His life, and all His blood. And on a Sunday, what is the first prayer on everyone's lips? One for the glory of God, blessed be His name. So far what have you done for God? In numberless thousands, the martyrs went to meet torment and death for His glory, and yet you are inert and cold. Still you think you love Him: how can love subsist without zeal? If you saw someone commit an offence against your father, would you not work to re-establish his honour? And as for your heavenly Father you see him despised, you hear His name taken in vain, and His law trampled on, and yet you remain indifferent? Up now, unite yourself to the Heart of Jesus, and work in every way you can for the glory of God! Do so by putting an end to your offences, though to wipe out a single sin it would not be enough if you sacrificed your life a thousand times! Do not look for your own pleasure, your own interest or your own glory in anything you do, look only for His glory. Work for it through being a perfect example, through practising holiness and virtue, being always generous in your service to the Lord, be ready at all times to shed your blood to make Him known and loved, to glorify Him and move others to do the same.

II. Together with the Heart of Jesus may you always be full of zeal for the salvation of souls. The souls for which He suffered and worked are very dear to Him and He thirsts for them and would see them all happy, with Him in paradise. So far, what have you ever done for them? How can you rest while many disciples work to bring people to heaven? Tell me, if you saw your brother about to fall into a furnace, would you not up and save him? Many of your brothers are falling headlong into the fires of Hell! Do you not care? How can you love Jesus without loving those He so loved? Up now, unite with His Heart, even for the good of a single soul. With fine example, advice, and with loving exhortation, work to save your brothers. May your zeal, like His, extend to embrace the whole universe, may you become all things to all men so as to win them for God. And when you can do nothing else, pray, pray ardently, for Jesus redeemed the world as much by prayer, as by shedding His blood. Think how anxious that Heart is for the good of souls to be accomplished, think of the efforts of the devil, who wishes them to be lost and ruined; be ready to give your life to save just one soul to be eternally happy. See every soul by the light of that Heart and even the guiltiest will seem noble and precious. Love all souls as that Heart loves them, and you will find a thousand different ways to procure their eternal happiness.

III. Together with Jesus Christ, may you have a living zeal for the Church. She is the beloved bride, sprung from His rib, as Eve did from Adam's. The Church is the tenderest object of His care, His solicitude and His love. She is the real depository of His eternal truth, the noble distributor of His infinites gifts, the faithful minister of His will and the beautiful image of the heavenly Jerusalem. Love for the Church is inseparable from love for Jesus Christ because it is His mystical body and lives in

Him, just as He truly lives in her. How can you think therefore of loving Jesus, without seeing that you must love His Church? Furthermore, the Church is your mother, she opened her arms to you when you were born and took you into her womb via your Baptism, as a mother she watches over you, guides you and helps you through the Sacraments and other spiritual gifts. As a mother she will assist you in the hour of your death with her heavenly comforts and blessings. How long will you be so indifferent to such a tender mother? How long will she be persecuted and afflicted before you rise up to defend her? Up now, unite yourself to the divine Heart, and put all pious efforts, suggested to you by an industrious and prudent zeal, towards the good of the Church. Generously forgo any human importance or regard in order to defend her cause, even before fierce enemies. Love the Church with the same love the Heart of Jesus has, and O, how you will help her to triumph!

EXAMPLE: A noble young man at the court of the Holy Roman Emperor Henry V, was riding through the country, he was travelling to a little house where he had arranged to meet a group of friends. A storm rose up, with lightening and thunder. Lightening struck just in front of his horse, which backed away and bolted out of fear. The young man lost his seat and was left in the rain, for there was no shelter. Listening, he heard a voice saying, "I want you all for myself." It was the most loving Heart of Jesus that spoke to his heart, calling him to a perfect and holy life. When the storm ended he, instead of going on to his appointment, went back to town and into a Church, and he promised to be a faithful follower and imitator of Jesus Christ. He retired to a monastery for forty days, and came out renewed, full of apostolic spirit. People were amazed by the change in him, but some cruel persons were jealous, despising him, and seeing they could not corrupt his virtue with calumny, induced a

common man to publicly insult him. The man spat at him and threw mud in his face, all of which the victim suffered without an outcry and with a sweetness similar to that of the Saviour, who never returned one insult for another. He took Holy Orders and continued to imitate Jesus, he sold all he had and gave the money to the poor. With the encouragement and blessing of Pope Gelasius II, he and twelve followers went from town to town preaching the Gospel, for the good of all souls. Pope Honorius II made him bishop of Magdeburg, and he received from the Heart of Jesus a fire of love, flaming with zeal for divine glory and the good of his neighbour. He was a careful and benevolent shepherd of his flock, avoiding scandal, battling against heresy and propagating the faith far and wide. Finally, he crowned his life with a most holy death, and when he died some pious people saw a beautiful lily rising towards heaven, it was his pure and blessed soul that went to claim the eternal prize. He is St. Norbert, the founder of the Premonstratensians.

HOMAGE: Five times during the day, offer the Heart of Jesus to His eternal Father, asking that by Jesus' merit, a sinner may convert, or a soul be saved.

PRAYER: *Amor meus Iesu, da mihi ad te amorem ferventem...et continuum sensum te laudandi.*

O loving Heart, I am worth nothing, unless I give you glory, both in heaven and on earth.

TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY

MEDITATION: UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS IN HIS PASSION

Unite your heart to the passionate love of Jesus and remember Him always, this is His ardent desire. For this reason He instituted the Eucharist. He wanted everyone who saw Him in the Sacrament to see Him crucified. This is why, through St. Paul, He tells us that each time we receive Him we are proclaiming His death. Be with Him in the garden of Gethsemany, and in His mortal sadness, comfort Him with your love. Keep Him company while He is on trial, and when He is disgraced, scourged and crowned with thorns, show Him merciful love. Go with Him on His painful journey to Calvary, and take into your heart the cross his shoulders carry for you. Be with Him as He expires and dies, and to His sublime sacrifice, generously add the sacrifice of all of yourself. After God suffered and died for you, what could you ever do to repay the debt? At least you can, out of gratitude, preserve a continuous and loving remembrance of His passion. Millions of Christians have fervently given Him their love for His love, their blood for His blood, their life for His life, and what have you given Him? At least you can weep and weep long. O, how sweet, precious and powerful are the tears shed at the foot of the cross!

II. Unite your heart to the Heart of Jesus in His passion so that His passion may change you. See in His overwhelming pain His immense love, and return that love with all your strength. See in His wounds the seriousness of your sins, so that you may be deeply contrite and sorry for them, as well as horrified by them. See in His blood the inestimable value of your soul, and put your every effort and care towards

saving it. See in His self-abandonment and death the terrible implications of divine justice, and live in Holy fear of God. See in His open arms the generosity of divine mercy and trust in it. See in His pains the greatness of divine wisdom, and learn to love and glorify it. See in His suffering the incalculability of His virtue that shines like the stars and imitate it. In all these considerations remember the Heart of Jesus, the pain and suffering of which was far greater than the torments He went through in His body! Looking at His Heart, try and take for yourself His feelings, His affections, His desires and His holy intentions, so that the story of His suffering may be a source of light, grace, comfort and good for you. In doing so, the cross, which for many is a piece of furniture they have in their house, may become your book, your mirror, your painting, your treasure and your everything. In this way His passion will mean your good and His death your life.

III. Unite yourself to the Heart of Jesus in His passion, and never leave Him. Calvary must become your favourite and constant resting place, it is here that souls can be clothed in light, inflamed with love and find wings to fly to the highest heaven. The Cross must be your bed of repose, your school of perfection, the inheritance you long for. Never try and separate the Heart of Jesus from the cross, for the Heart of Jesus without the cross would be nothing but an illusion and the cross without the Heart of Jesus an unbearable weight for you, weak as you are. The cross strikes at the Heart of Jesus, but His Heart makes the cross sweet and precious, and together they will speed you on the road to heaven. God died for men! This is the thought that forever torments the damned and is the joy of the chosen ones, so should it be the thought that goes with you all your life. Have this thought at the forefront of your mind when you love, pray, when you are humiliated, work, weep, suffer or do a good deed.

Remember that when you are on the point of death and the whole world will pass like a shadow from before your eyes, nothing will be left to you but the naked cross in your hand. O, how blessed you will be if your last sight, your last breath, is a sight of or a sigh of love for, the crucified Heart of Jesus! If you are patient with Jesus, humble with Jesus, crucified with Jesus, then you will also be glorified with Him.

EXAMPLE: A dear orphaned young man of 14 lived with his uncle working in his shop as an ironmonger: his uncle gave him the most humble job of turning the bellows. The Heart of Jesus worked in him marvellously, calling him to be as patient as a martyr. His companions in the smithy treated him badly and persecuted him, turning his uncle against him so that even he dealt with the young boy horribly. One snowy day in winter, he was obliged to carry some metals to the top of a hill. Obeying without reply, he went struggling and falling constantly. With the contrast between sweating and the cold he hurt his leg which was subject to serious spasms, so much so that once when he was not thinking of the pain in his damaged limb anymore, while turning the bellows, it gave way and everything fell. His uncle reproached him with a kick that landed just where the pain was most intense, opening a wound. Out of love for Jesus, the youngster never complained. His uncle, taken aback, not wishing to take care of him at home sent him to hospital. He was there for a long time, but at last the wound was declared incurable and he was sent away. A colonel in of Naples' royal house named Wochinger took care of him out of compassion and saw immediately that he had a saint in his house. He saw the young man spend nights in ecstatic prayer and was moved. The boy's wound became gangrenous and the bone in his leg splintered. The doctor who operated on him once, seeing so much pain asked, "What is this?" Are you made of iron? Do you feel nothing?" He replied, "What is this when

compared to how Jesus suffered on the cross?" At last he died smiling and from the wound, which had given off a horrid smell, came a sweet fragrance that filled the whole palace, while all through Naples the news spread, "A saint has died." He is the nineteen year-old blessed Nunzio Sulprizio.

HOMAGE: Hear a mass devoutly, in order to honour the Heart of Jesus, which on the altar as on the cross, is offered in pain and love as the victim for our sins.

PRAYER: *Amor meus crucifixus est!*

May the pious remembrance of your pain help my soul to reach holiness.

TWENTY-EIGHTH DAY

MEDITATION: UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS IN THE RESSURRECTION

I. O Christian, in order to be united with the Heart of Jesus risen from the dead, you must first have mortified yourself in body and spirit to such a degree that you have really died and been buried with Jesus Christ, died to the world, to vanity, to yourself and to your passions, buried in holy meditation and quiet. Throw yourself into a life of Christian mortification. Mortify your eyes, which will one day have to look on the unveiled face of God in heaven, your ears, which will one day hear the music of the angels in glory, your tongue, which may one day sing the praises of God together with the other elect. Mortify your mind, that has been made to be overwhelmed by eternal truth, your imagination, that was made to be blessed with the vision of eternal beauty, your heart, which was made to be happy forever with the eternal good, your flesh, which was made to be resurrected and glorified along with your soul in the heavenly kingdom. Mortify your temperament, your desires, inclinations, tastes and will. Practice mortification, with prudence and discretion, in everything, in every time and every place! The greatest grace and most sublime holiness depend on the generosity with which you practice this virtue, even on the most seemingly unimportant occasions. When you have truly understood mortification you will be truly holy. Nor should you imagine that the life of mortification is one of sadness and bitterness, Jesus' yoke is easy and His burden is light, O, what consolation and sweetness will be reserved for you, if you really learn to mortify yourself, in order to die and be buried with Jesus.

II. If you want to be united with the Heart of Jesus risen from the dead, you must learn to live in a holy and unalterable peace! This was the word, greeting and wish that the risen Jesus had on His lips during the forty days He remained on earth after His resurrection. It is also the characteristic of those who have risen with Jesus. Peace, as St Augustine says, is simplicity of spirit, serenity of mind, tranquillity of soul, the bond of love. Peace means order and harmony between all mankind, and is the greatest good, after the grace of God. It is the ongoing joy that is born out of a clear conscience, it is the holy happiness of a heart in which God reigns. Peace is the way of perfection or rather perfection is to be found in peace. Find peace with God then! You will achieve it by avoiding every sin, by submitting to His desires and by making Him the centre of your life. Find peace with yourself! You will achieve it by dominating your passions, keeping your desires under control, by moderating your words and actions and directing all your efforts and affections towards the true good. Find peace with your neighbour! You will achieve it with patience, humility and love, by seeing God in all your brothers. The devil makes every effort to take peace away from you, for without it, nothing for eternal life can be achieved. You must be on your guard, so as not to lose it, even in the many problems that life throws up.

III. If you want to be united with the Heart of Jesus risen from the dead, you must live a new life of grace, holiness and love. Just as Jesus lived a new life after the resurrection, a life above human misery, a heavenly, glorious and immortal life. Live always therefore, with the risen Christ, risen from darkness to light, from error to truth, from sin to grace, from death to life. If you have risen with Jesus you will be free of all chains, free from earthly affection, you will live not for earth but for heaven. Having risen from the dead with Jesus, your heart must always live subject to

your reason and your reason must be subject to faith; you must live with your body subject to your soul and your soul turned towards God. Risen with Jesus you must hate every type of profanity, think nothing of the good opinion of men, think nothing of the world and have no desire for earthly things, but only for the things of heaven. Having risen with Jesus you must work without fear, provide for your needs, but without anxiety, suffer, but without complaining, fight, but without dread. Having risen with Jesus you must have a holy perseverance, without which the other virtues will not be worthy of an eternal reward. You will live a divine and supernatural life, full of celestial delights and of light, you will be a brother to the angels, a dove of paradise, a resplendent image of God himself.

EXAMPLE: A King of France took his knights, barons and dogs into the countryside hunting one day. On his return he saw, sitting under a tree a humble shepherdess darning her stockings, while the sheep pastured in the field. Seeing the King and his noble entourage, she rose, greeted them and sat back down to resume her work. The King, admiring her modesty and simplicity, drew near to her and said, "Tell me, good country girl, how much money do you make with your sewing?" "Sire," she replied, "I make as much as you do by being king." "How?" rejoined the other, "I am a mighty sovereign, I have a vast kingdom and immeasurable honour and riches, while you are just a country labourer. How can you say we make the same amount?" She explained, "Sire, we are both building our home for eternity, the difference being that I am doing it in a better way by sewing than you are by being a king, I know how to build my eternal home better than you." The King marvelled at the reply and took it as an instruction for himself, he offered her a large amount of gold coins, but she refused saying, "I want nothing of the world, God is enough for me." This labourer

lived always united to the Heart of Jesus. She had reached the age of reason, and was at the village of Nanterre near Paris, when the Divine Heart took possession of her heart, lighting such living flames of love in her that no trial was able to extinguish them all her life long. Once, her mother gave her an unjustified savage blow that blinded her, but the daughter forgave the offence immediately, prayed for her mother and regained her sight. This honest girl was accused of being deluded, a hypocrite and a witch but she bore it all out of love for her Jesus. Through her prayers, this simple soul freed Paris from the Huns lead by Attila, practiced every virtue and was the beloved bride of the divine Heart. She is St Genevieve, patron saint of Paris. Let us, imitating and loving Jesus, build a house for heaven together with her.

HOMAGE: Honour the divine Heart by saying an act of faith and of love devoutly before His image.

PRAYER: *O Iesu, amor dulcissime, quando tibi sic conjungar, ut a te separari con valeam ?*

Beautiful Heart may I to this world in death be given, that I may for God and with you be risen.

TWENTY-NINTH DAY

MEDITATION: UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS IN GLORY

I. O, how beautiful is the Heart of Jesus in the glory of paradise! It shines brighter than the sun, even than millions of suns. From His wounds come forth torrents of light, glory, blessedness and illumination, as a reward for His chosen ones. O, how the Heart of Jesus loves us from heaven! Up there, living a life in love for all eternity, He shines before the face of His divine Father, and out of love for us, He offers Himself, prays for us and intercedes for us. He withholds the lightening strikes of divine justice, and makes divine mercy rain down upon us. He loves us so much that He would gladly take a thousand more wounds for us. O, with what expectation does the Heart of Jesus await us in paradise! No eye has ever seen, no ear has ever heard, nor is any mind able to imagine all the joys and good things that He has prepared for those who love Him, in heaven. Be joyful O Christian! Unite your heart, in exile on this earth, to the glorified Heart of Jesus in the heavenly homeland. Your union with Him, which began with your baptism and continued through the other sacraments, cemented and solidified by the trials and sufferings of this life, and sealed by your death, will be completed in heaven. There, surrounded by His light, you will become like Him, like crystal that when struck by light, becomes translucent and shines, so you will be when you live in that Heart that is the source of all good. This will be the culmination of your journey towards perfection.

II. So, in order to be united with the Heart of Jesus, you must ardently desire paradise. Up there, there is the Heart of your loving Father, your sweet spouse, your heavenly

friend and your divine brother. It is the height to which your heart must aim. In this life, you cannot see His sovereign beauty, you cannot contemplate His sweet smile, you are always tormented by a great need for love which you can never quiet satisfy, but in heaven you will clearly see Him, you will perfectly love Him, you will eternally possess Him without fear of losing Him! There, your heart eternally loved by that Heart, will love Him forever with a love that is always new, always fulfilling, a fire of love, an abyss of love, in other words heaven! There, through the Heart of Jesus, you will be united with all the angels and the saints, with Mary and the Holy Trinity so that their light, their joy and their glory will be yours, which must mean heaven! You should at every moment say with St Paul, "I want to be free of my chains and be with Jesus Christ." You should say with St Therese, "I am dying because I am not dead." O, how many souls are in the fires of hell because they never desired paradise! O, how many souls are in the fires of purgatory because they did not desire paradise quite enough! The desires for heaven are like wings on which the soul can ascend to paradise.

EXAMPLE: During the terrifying times of the French revolution, in the Orange prison there were 14 nuns who were sentenced to death. Barbarously ejected from their convents, persecuted and dishonoured horribly in a hundred different ways, they awaited peacefully, their final torture. They were all faithful and consecrated to Jesus Christ, and O how the Heart of Him who was their beloved spouse worked marvellously through His divine grace in their hearts, giving them true faith, ardent love, heroic strength and superhuman courage to suffer and die well. Furthermore, they encouraged each other, so they were all calm and happy because they loved the Heart of Jesus. One day, they were put into a cart and taken to be killed while the

people insulted them and shouted at them. One of their number, Sister Magdalene Luttamond, a Sacramentine nun, when giving her hand to the executioner in order to ascend the platform, smiled at him and said, "I love you like I love my parents, for they brought me into this world and you will send me into the next." Another Sacramentine, Sister Anne Bas removed a little box of flowers from her pocket and giving it to the hangman with a beautiful smile, told him, "Take these as a remembrance of the day I go boldly to be married to Jesus Christ, I leave them to you, for I am going to be married to Him eternally and other flowers await me in heaven." The people were moved and asked that the pious sisters be spared, but they became victims of the guillotine, and their souls flew straight to heaven, where the divine Heart fills them with eternal joy.

HOMAGE: Devoutly recite before an image of the Sacred Heart, an act of desire.

PRAYER: *Eja, Domine, moriar, ut te videam!*

Glorious Heart, how I yearn for unity with you and paradise forevermore.

THIRTIETH DAY

MEDITATION: UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS IN THE EUCARIST

I. The Eucharist! This is the greatest gift of the most generous Heart of Jesus. It is a gift of such magnitude, that though He is omnipotent, He could not have given us a greater one; though He is infinitely rich, He could not have given us more, since He has given us all of Himself. This is the most prestigious invention of His sagacious love and of His loving wisdom. It is the miracle of miracles, the mystery of mysteries, through which He who is forever in heaven, is also with us forever on earth, becoming the true life in life, the true soul in souls and the true heart in hearts. It is the sign of the love of Jesus, which the Church tells us was born and became man's companion; in the Blessed Sacrament He became our food, on the cross became man's redeemer and in heaven becomes his prize! Christian, learn to appreciate this immense treasure, whose holiness all the saints have loved; this sea of all that is good, this heaven on earth. Through the Eucharist the Heart of Jesus is present like a loving father in the midst of his children, like an amorous bridegroom drawing near to his bride and like a faithful friend walking with his friends. Herein is contained the Heart of Jesus, with all its flames of love, with all the graces of its mercy, with all the infinity of its merits. By this method He sends to His chosen ones heavenly light, divine inspiration, holy ardour and gentle comfort. Herein the marvels of His infinite charity are worked in the most secret and intimate places. Herein He speaks to, works with, teaches and forms the saints. Days, months, years and centuries pass, but in the

Eucharist the Sacred Heart, despite all the immeasurable ingratitude, has never stopped beating for us. Come, unite yourself to the Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, stop often and long to visit Him. Make it a habit to keep Him company, talking to Him while He stands among the angels who bowing, surround His altar. If He is a prisoner out of love for you, so you should be a prisoner out of love for Him, and in this sweet prison of love, you will find the freedom of the children of God.

II. The Heart of Jesus not only deigns to be with us always through the divine Eucharist, but He offers and sacrifices Himself repeatedly, a thousand times a day in the great sacrifice of the altar, the great sacrifice of the cross. And He does so to satisfy divine justice, to justly honour the majesty of His Father, to thank Him for the graces He has given us and to obtain more. Christian, understand what the Mass is, in which the Heart of Jesus, with so much love, gives itself up on the altar. The health of the world depends on the Eucharist, which is a gift of God no less than the one He bestowed on us when He became man; it is as efficacious a good as the passion and death of Jesus. Unite your heart therefore to the Heart of Jesus that is sacrificed for you in the Mass, and when you take part in it, have the same devotion and emotions you would have had if you had been present with Mary and St. John watching the agonies of Jesus Christ on Calvary. But this sublime and generous giving goes on, so that at any point of the day or night, you can say, "Somewhere in the world, the Heart of Jesus is giving itself up for me." Unite yourself to Jesus then, and when He asks a sacrifice of you, be sure that He will give you the strength to do it, remembering that at that very moment He is giving Himself entirely, out of love for you. Blessed are you, if in union with the continuous sacrifice of the Heart of Jesus, you can make your life a continuous sacrifice of love.

III. Not only is the Heart of Jesus sacrificed and present in the divine Eucharist, but He also gives Himself to everyone out of an excess of love, becoming all things to all men. O how many heavenly treasures are contained within the Holy Communion! O what a spring of grace and holiness! When you see Him in the Holy Communion, see His ardent desire to be united with all men. Take your place as often as possible at this table of love which the Heart of Jesus sets and prepares. Here He unites Himself to you in a sacramental way in order to be joined to you in a mystical and spiritual way. Here He carries the guilt of your flesh, along with grace, life and the possibility of your glorious resurrection. And it is here that the true and beautiful interaction between your heart and the Heart of Jesus must take place, until you become one with Him. He gives Himself to you without reserve, and so you without reserve should give yourself to Him, and that is what every Holy Communion is, and it will help your humility, patience, charity and perfection to grow and it will confirm and solidify your union with that loving Heart. May your life united with the Heart of Jesus and be the same as his life in the Eucharist. One day, He Himself will come and see you lie on your bed of pain and death, and just as He was your guide through the pilgrimage of life, so He will be your guide on the great and terrible journey into eternity. O, how beautiful this last communion will be! This, your last meeting with your Jesus will be the beginning of the eternal union that you will have with Him in heaven. Aflame with love for Jesus, you will fall asleep on His breast and wake an instant later in paradise.

EXAMPLE: A dear young man was born in Florence. Because of his behaviour he came to be called "Philip the good." The Heart of Jesus had chosen him for Himself,

and Philip responded marvellously to the grace and love of the divine Heart. An uncle of his died and left him a large estate but he refused it, saying that God was his only and ultimate good and was enough for him. He went to Rome, where he dedicated Himself to study and prayer, spending whole nights in contemplation at St Callixtus' catacomb. Once a priest, he served everyone and was obedient in everything, loving God and doing good to his neighbour. In order to better succeed in fulfilling these laudable precepts, he founded the Oratorians. He was so pure that he could tell by scent, who practiced the virtue of purity. He practiced the hardest penances with joy, for he understood mortification, he was so detached from the world that he could truly say he was dead to it, dead to passions and to himself. He was so alight and aflame with divine love that in an impetuous and uncontrollable moment his heart grew and broke two of his ribs. From the Heart of Jesus, present in the Blessed Sacrament, to which Philip was very attached, he received a fire of love and much peace and joy of spirit that he passed it on to others. While he was showered with many charisms and gifts he remained profoundly humble, and thought little of himself and when he received some injustice, he was full of joy and was greatly pleased. He even refused to be made a cardinal by two Popes, but being advised that for the good of his congregation, he should accept, he took off his hat, threw it in the air and shouted, "Paradise! Paradise!" And how glorious and great he is in paradise now, he is the dear St Philip Neri.

HOMAGE: Visit the Heart of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament five times with five intentions to present to Him. 1. To thank Him for the infinite love He has shown by instituting this devotion. 2. To thank Him for having come to you so many times in Holy Communion. 3. To make restitution for all the offences He receives from

unfaithful and heretical people. 4. To compensate Him for the irreverence and sacrilege of Christian themselves. 5. To adore His presence through the Spirit, in every church where is less revered and most abandoned.

PRAYER: *Vere tu es Deus absconditus, Deus Salvator!*

Loving Heart I know you are present mysteriously veiled in the Sacrament.

APPENDIX

ACTS OF DEVOTION

ACT OF CONSECRATION OF THE HUMAN RACE TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS¹

Most sweet Jesus, redeemer of the human race, look down upon us humbly prostrate before Your Altar.² We are Yours, and Yours we wish to be; but to be more surely united to You, behold, each one of us this day freely dedicates himself to Your Most Sacred Heart. Many, indeed, have never known You, many, too, despising Your precepts have rejected You. Have mercy on them all, most merciful Jesus, and draw them to Your Sacred Heart. Be King, O Lord not only of the faithful who have never forsaken You, but also of the prodigal sons who have abandoned you, grant that they may quickly return to their Father's house, before they perish of wretchedness and hunger. Be King of those whom heresy holds in error or discord keeps far away, call them back to the harbour of truth and the unity of faith, so that soon there may be but one fold and one Shepherd. Be King of all those who even now sit in the shadow of idolatry or Islam, and do not refuse to bring them into the light of Your kingdom. Look, finally, with eyes of pity upon the children of that race, which was for so long a time Your chosen people, and let Your blood, which was once invoked upon them in vengeance, now descend upon them also in a cleansing flood of redemption and eternal life.

¹ The Holy Father Pope Pius XI wanted the whole human race to be consecrated to Jesus – the universal King – on the last day of the year 1925, with this prayer. He then ordered that the last Sunday of October should be dedicated with solemnity and special ceremony by the whole Church to the eternal Lord of all time, and that this consecration should be said, which is the same as that of Leo XIII, with a few changes.

² If not being said in a Church, the word *altar* should be replaced with *presence*.

Grant, O Lord, to Your Church assurance of freedom and immunity from harm, unto all nations give an ordered tranquillity; bring it to pass that from pole to pole the earth may resound with one cry: Praise to the divine Heart that wrought our salvation; to it be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

ACT OF REPARATION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

**To be said in every church in the world on the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus by order of the
His Holiness Pius XI**

(Encyclical Miserentissimus Redemptor, die VIII maji 1928)

It can also be said on the 1st Friday of the month

O sweetest Jesus, whose overflowing charity towards men is most ungratefully repaid by such great forgetfulness, neglect and contempt, see, prostrate before Your altars³, we strive by special honour to make amends for the wicked coldness of men and the contumely with which Your most loving Heart is everywhere treated. At the same time, mindful of the fact that we too have sometimes not been free from unworthiness, and moved therefore with most vehement sorrow, in the first place we implore Your mercy on us, being prepared by voluntary expiation to make amends for the sins we have ourselves committed, and also for the sins of those who wander far from the way of salvation, whether because, being obstinate in their unbelief, they refuse to follow You as their shepherd and leader, or because, spurning the promises of their baptism, they have cast off the most sweet yoke of Your law. We now endeavour to expiate all these lamentable crimes together, and it is also our purpose to make amends for each one of them severally, for the want of modesty in life and dress, for impurities, for so many snares set for the minds of the innocent, for the violation of feast days, for the horrid blasphemies against You and Your saints, for the insults offered to Your Vicar and to the priestly order, for the neglect of the Sacrament of Divine love or its profanation by horrible sacrileges, and lastly for the public sins of nations which resist the rights and the teaching authority of the Church which You have instituted. Would

³ If not being said in a Church, the word *altar* should be replaced with *presence*.

that we could wash away these crimes with our own blood! And now, to make amends for the outrage offered to the Divine honour, we offer to You the same satisfaction which You once offered to Your Father on the Cross and which You continually renew on our altars, we offer this conjoined with the expiations of the Virgin Mother and of all the Saints, and of all pious Christians, promising from our heart that so far as in us lies, with the help of Your grace, we will make amends for our own past sins, and for the sins of others, and for the neglect of Your boundless love, by firm faith, by a pure way of life, and by a perfect observance of the Gospel law, especially that of charity, we will also strive with all our strength to prevent injuries being offered to You, and gather as many as we can to become Your followers. Receive, we beseech You, O most benign Jesus, by the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Reparatrix, the voluntary homage of this expiation, and vouchsafe, by that great gift of final perseverance, to keep us most faithful until death in our duty and in Your service, so that at length we may all come to that homeland, where You with the Father and the Holy Ghost live and reign God for ever and ever.

Amen.

CONSECRATION OF THE FAMILY TO THE SACRED HEART

O most Sacred Heart of Jesus, You revealed to the blessed Margaret Mary Your desire to rule over Christian families, behold, in order to please You, we stand before You this day, to proclaim Your full sovereignty over our family. We desire henceforth to live Your life, we desire that the virtues, to which You have promised peace on earth, may flower in the bosom of our family, we desire to keep far from us the spirit of the world, which You have condemned. You are King of our hearts by our love of You alone, with which our hearts are on fire and whose flame we shall nourish by frequent reception of the Holy Eucharist. Be pleased, O Sacred Heart, to preside over our gathering together, to bless our spiritual and temporal affairs, to ward off all annoyance from us, to bless our joys and comfort our sorrows. If any of us has ever been so unhappy as to fall into the misery of displeasing You, grant that he may remember, O Heart of Jesus, that You are full of goodness and mercy toward the repentant sinner. And when the hour of separation strikes and death enters our family circle, whether we go or whether we stay, we shall all bow meekly before Your eternal decrees. This shall be our consolation, to remember that the day will come, when our entire family, once more united in heaven, shall be able to sing of Your glory and Your goodness forever. May the immaculate Heart of Mary and the glorious Patriarch Saint Joseph vouchsafe to offer You this our act of consecration, and to keep the memory of it alive in us all the days of our lives.

Glory to the Heart of Jesus, our King and our Father! Amen.

LITANIAE DE SACRATISSIMO CORDE IESU

Kyrie, eleison.

Christe, eleison.

Kyrie, eleison.

Christe, audi nos.

Christe, exaudi nos.

Pater de caelis, Deus,

Fili, Redemptor mundi, Deus,

Spiritus Sancte, Deus,

Sancta Trinitas, unus Deus,

R. miserere nobis

Cor Iesu, Filii Patris aeterni,

(Unless otherwise stated)

Cor Iesu, in sinu Virginis Matris a Spiritu Sancto formatum,

Cor Iesu, Verbo Dei substantialiter unitum,

Cor Iesu, maiestatis infinitae,

Cor Iesu, templum Dei sanctum,

Cor Iesu, tabernaculum Altissimi,

Cor Iesu, domus Dei et porta caeli,

Cor Iesu, fornax ardens caritatis,

Cor Iesu, iustitiae et amoris receptaculum,

Cor Iesu, bonitate et amore plenum,

Cor Iesu, virtutum omnium abyssus,

Cor Iesu, omni laude dignissimum,

Cor Iesu, rex et centrum omnium cordium,

Cor Iesu, in quo sunt omnes thesauri sapientiae et scientiae,
Cor Iesu, in quo habitat omnis plenitudo divinitatis,
Cor Iesu, in quo Pater sibi bene complacuit,
Cor Iesu, de cuius plenitudine omnes nos accepimus,
Cor Iesu, desiderium collium aeternorum,
Cor Iesu, patiens et multae misericordiae,
Cor Iesu, dives in omnes qui invocant te,
Cor Iesu, fons vitae et sanctitatis,
Cor Iesu, propitiatio pro peccatis nostris,
Cor Iesu, saturatum opprobriis,
Cor Iesu, attritum propter scelera nostra,
Cor Iesu, usque ad mortem oboediens factum,
Cor Iesu, lancea perforatum,
Cor Iesu, fons totius consolationis,
Cor Iesu, vita et resurrectio nostra,
Cor Iesu, pax et reconciliatio nostra,
Cor Iesu, victima peccatorum,
Cor Iesu, salus in te sperantium,
Cor Iesu, spes in te morientium,
Cor Iesu, deliciae Sanctorum omnium,

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, **R. parce nobis, Domine.**
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, **R. exaudi nos, Domine.**
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, **R. miserere nobis, Domine.**
Iesu, mitis et humilis Corde, **R. Fac cor nostrum secundum Cor tuum.**

Oremus

Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, respice in Cor dilectissimi Filii tui et in laudes et satisfactiones, quas in nomine peccatorum tibi persolvit, iisque misericordiam tuam pententibus, tu veniam concede placatus in nomine eiusdem Filii tui Iesu Christi: Qui tecum vivit et regnat in saecula saeculorum. *Amen.*

The Holy Father Leo XIII, with the approval of the Holy Congregation for Sacred Rites and Ceremonies, given 2nd April 1899, and the Holy Apostolic Penitentiary given 10th March 1933, gives an indulgence of seven years, which is a plenary one subject to the usual conditions, as long as the litanies verses and prayers are piously repeated.

Index

Introduction	p2
ACTS OF VIRTUE	
To be done everyday in the order in which they are set out	6
NOTE	12
1 ST JUNE	
MEDITATION ON THE DEVOTION TO THE HEART OF JESUS	13
2 ND JUNE	
MEDITATION ON THE SYMBOLS OF THE HEART OF JESUS	17
3 RD JUNE	
MEDITATION ON THE WOUND OF JESUS' HEART	21
4 TH JUNE	
MEDITATION ON THE LOVE OF THE HEART OF JEUS	25
5 TH JUNE	
MEDIATION ON HOW WORTHY THE HEART OF JESUS IS OF LOVE	29
6 TH JUNE	
MEDITATION ON THE GOODNESS OF THE HEART OF JESUS	33
7 TH JUNE	
MEDITATION ON THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE HEART OF JESUS	37
8 TH JUNE	
MEDITATION ON THE AFFLICTIONS OF THE HEART OF JESUS	41
9 TH JUNE	
MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS AND PENANCE	45
10 TH JUNE	
MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS AND THE FOUR LAST THINGS	49
11 TH JUNE	
MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS AND CHRISTIAN PERFECTION	53
12 TH JUNE	
MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS MODEL OF LOVE FOR GOD	57
13 TH JUNE	
MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS MODEL OF LOVE FOR ONE'S NEIGHBOUR	61

14 TH JUNE		
MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS THE MODEL OF HUMILITY		65
15 TH JUNE		
MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS MODEL OF DETACHMENT		69
16 TH JUNE		
MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS MODEL OF PURITY		73
17 TH JUNE		
MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS MODEL OF OBEDIENCE		77
18 TH JUNE		
MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS MODEL OF MEEKNESS		81
19 TH JUNE		
MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS IN RELATION TO MARY		85
20 TH JUNE		
MEDITATION: THE HEART OF JESUS IN RELATION TO ST JOSEPH		89
21 ST JUNE		
MEDITATION: UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS		93
22 ND JUNE		
MEDITATION: UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS IN YOUR LIFE		97
23 RD JUNE		
MEDITATION: UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS THROUGH HIS DOCTRINE		101
24 TH JUNE		
MEDITATION: UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS IN PRAYER		105
25 TH JUNE		
MEDITATION: UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS IN SUFFERING		108
26 TH JUNE		
MEDITATION: ZEALOUS UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS		112
27 TH JUNE		
MEDITATION: UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS IN HIS PASSION		116
28 TH JUNE		
MEDITATION: UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS IN THE RESSURECTION		120
29 TH JUNE		
MEDITATION: UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS IN GLORY		124

30TH JUNE

MEDITATION: UNION WITH THE HEART OF JESUS IN THE
EUCHARIST

127

APPENDIX ACTS OF DEVOTION

ACT OF CONSECRATION OF THE HUMAN RACE TO THE SACRED
HEART OF JESUS

132

ACT OF REPARATION TO THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS

134

CONSECRATION OF THE FAMILY TO THE SACRED HEART

136

LITANIAE DE SACRATISSIMO CORDE IESU

137

Nihil obstat

Die XV Aprilis 1957

SEBASTIANUS TRIGILLO

Cens. Theol.

Imprimatur.

Can. HERIBRTUS D'AGNESE Vic. Gen

THE PROMISES OF THE SACRED HEART

What are they?

They are the words spoken by Our Lord Jesus Christ on the faith of His love towards those devoted to the Sacred Heart.

Where are they to be found?

They are found in letters of St. Margaret Mary (who died in 1690) in which she recounted what the Sacred Heart accomplished in her and through her, asked of others.

What value do they have?

They have the value of private revelations, in which the Church, after rigorous examination, has found nothing contrary, and for the increase of Christian piety, has approved them, as happen with St. Matilda (died 1160) St. Gertrude (died 1334), St. Bridget (died 1373), and so on.

How many are there?

Many, but the most general ones which are known under the title *Promises of the Sacred Heart* are the twelve following.

- 1. To those devoted to my Heart I will give them all the graces necessary for their state in life.**

Along with the commandments of God and the precepts of the Church, everyone is obliged to carry out the duties of his or her own state, (wedded, priestly, religious and professional, e.g. manual labourer, worker, soldier, lawyer teacher doctor and so on).

The Sacred Heart promises the indispensable graces for the needs of each.

2. I will give peace in their families.

I will give it if it is not present. I will preserve it if it is already to be found. Unity and harmony are the basis of domestic felicity.

3. I will console them in all their troubles.

Pain will never be lacking. To have them sweetened or lightened by the Sacred Heart is a comfort to all.

4. They shall find in My Heart an assured refuge during life and especially at the hour of death.

In life and in death, the Sacred Heart will be always open and ready to welcome you. Living and dying in that Heart is something so great, you could not have asked for it.

5. I will pour abundant blessings on all their undertakings.

Have you ever met any of those fortunate people who clearly walk in the presence of God? For whom all is well, even when the contrary seems true? If you are devoted to

the Sacred Heart you will also become part of that group.

6. Sinners shall find in My Heart the source and infinite ocean of mercy.

If they sincerely wish to abandon sin, that Heart will forget all past offences, however serious they may be, and will make of Itself a river of merciful forgiveness that will become a sea of consolation and magnanimous pardon.

7. Tepid souls shall become fervent.

Tepidity is the enemy of the spiritual life. The problem of being neither good nor evil, nor one thing nor the other, neither hot nor cold but insensible and indifferent, sleepy or without desire, can be effectually cured by the Sacred Heart.

8. Fervent souls shall speedily rise to great perfection.

Fire will be added to the flames, virtue strengthened by virtue in a real spiritual climb, watching the horizon that is the Sacred Heart and the heights of generosity reserved for those who seriously undertake it.

9. I will bless the homes in which the image of My Sacred Heart shall be exposed and honoured.

Whoever has consecrated their family to the Sacred Heart, whoever has promised to consecrate schools, colleges, clubs, or the offices, hospitals, parishes and other places of good moral standing of the city, will gain for themselves and others divine gifts.

10. I will give to priests the power to touch the most hardened hearts.

Whoever has care of souls (bishops, priests, chaplains, confessors, scribes and missionaries) love, honour and spread the devotion to the Sacred Heart and you will see the marvels of God in your ministry.

11. Those who propagate this devotion shall have their name written in My Heart, and it shall never be effaced.

Being zealous in this devotion is equivalent to seeing your name written in gold somewhere even better than the book of life, for the Heart of the divine redeemer is life itself.

12. The all-powerful love of My Heart 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 their Sacraments; My Heart shall be their assured refuge at the last hour.

Final perseverance will be the crown of all graces. The point of your whole life is to die close to God. And having honoured the Heart of the redeemer is one clear sign and token (not the only one however, as divine goodness puts others before us, like for example the devotion to Our Lady) of your destiny in relation to this, *the great promise.*

THE END

Let us meditate on and make known these beautiful promises of the sacred Heart. It will be an act we will be eternally recompensed for. It will be an effective way of doing great good to many people.