
Spiritual Writings of St. Gaspar: Vol. I

(Selections chosen by Fr. Barry Fischer, C.PP.S. and translated by Fr. Ray Cera, C.PP.S.)

Christ's Agony

Mount Calvary is the Bitterness Mount, it is the Incense Hill. The Bitterness Mount because etc. The Incense Hill because incense is a symbol of prayer, the spirit in which we must strive to maintain ourselves during these Three Hours; for just as incense rises up from burning coals, so also must the heart inflamed with love rise up this day etc.

“Oh holy mount of redemption and of peace! Oh earth purpled with the Blood of my Lord! Grant that I may ascend this mount with veneration, etc.

“When Moses was summoned to ascend the mountain to hear the voice of God, he was required to remove his footwear. Locus enim in quo stas terra sancta est. Oh my people, locus in quo stamus terra sancta est. Hence, let us remove from ourselves the worldly dust etc. Having turned to Christ, let us say to him: Speak, Lord, for your children are ready etc.

(Three Hours of Agony, Volume 9, No. 62, p. 210)

My! What great things can be accomplished through good example. The good thief, filled with lessons of charity, which we have spoken of expressly, recognized the dignity of the one who was dying. With a holy liberty, while the executioners were deriding Jesus, he said to him: Memento mei, Domine. He recognized him for what he truly was, namely, Domine. What a beautiful victory for human respect which causes one etc. to say Oh memento. What humility from a truly penitent heart. Hodie mecum eris in Paradiso. Oh the love of the Lord. All that was needed for Jesus Christ to show his love was trust and repentance. On this very day, when you applied my blood to yourself, you resumed your right to Paradise etc. Sinners! Take courage, etc. After doing this spiritual exercise, glory only in Jesus.”

(Three Hours of Agony, Volume 9, No. 62/2.2., p. 211)

“I thirst. 1. To suffer more, if there is time. 2. For souls. 3. A thirst caused by the great shedding of blood.”

(Three Hours of Agony, Volume 9, No. 62/5.5., p. 212)

“Consummatum est. Blessed is he who, in the final moments of his life, keeps in mind the plan laid out by God and is able to exclaim: “Consummatum est.”

Love

“The first sign of one’s love for the Lord is to think about him voluntarily, since ubi est thesaurus tuus, ibi est et cor tuum (Mat.6.21). Bees feed on nothing other than honey, they seek only honey, they work for nothing else but honey. Likewise, holy souls find nourishment in no other object than in love for their Lord; they seek nothing else than to grow in that love; they direct their activities to no other end. This means that they love God with all of their mind in *tota mente tua* (Mat. 22.) This is placing, as it were, a seal on one’s heart: *pone me ut signaculum super cor tuum* (Cant. 8.6). This is keeping the flame always enkindled within oneself: *ignis in altari semper ardebit* (Lev. 6.12).

The second sign is: libenter Deo dare. But what is there that we can give to the Lord when everything is his. Tua sunt omnia! (1 Paralip. 29.14). This is what is meant. The enjoyment of the good that he possesses; furthermore, yearning for greater external glory to be given him while desiring with the fullest impetus of one’s heart not to be the only creature loving its Creator, but that he be praised by all creatures and deeply wounded in seeing him offended. Let us surrender our hearts to him and let us subject our wills to him etc. Finally, non diligamus lingua sed opere et veritate (1. Jo.3.18).

The third sign is: libenter pro Deo pati. Only by sharing in the sufferings of others is there a conclusive proof of loving the one suffering. Thus, upon seeing Jesus Christ shedding tears for the death of Lazarus, the bystanders realized the depth of his love for him. Ecce quomodo amabit eum. (Jo: 11.36). How much more conclusive is the proof of the one who is willing to be miserable with his friend to show him his compassion. Certainly, our Redeemer, in order to show the world the greatness of his love toward his Father, made use of no other way than to indicate that he was generously accepting the approaching Passion. Ut cognoscat mundus quia diligo patrem surgite eamus; (Jo: 14.31. Thus, true love can be born from the delights of the spirit but cannot mature except through sufferings; nor can it make itself better known than through crosses. In conclusion, if these three signs are applied to charity toward one’s neighbor, they will become a most sure touchstone of divine love.”

(Signs of true love, Volume 7, No. 53/2, pp. 170-172)

The Souls in Purgatory

“Oh great God! In creating us in your image and likeness, you gave us a heart like yours, one entirely compassionate for the good of our neighbors. In your kindness and in accordance with the need, grant that each one of us may have a tender love for the souls in Purgatory. They are awaiting our suffrages, they are deserving of our assistance, they earnestly ask us for our help. Miserimini mei etc. miserimini mei. Oh persistent voices expressing feelings of commiseration. Oh hard-working Church who reminds us to pay heed to the laments of these daughters of Zion. Oh happy bonds that our hearts experience in supplying succor to their needs. Oh Lord! Listen to our prayers, accept the desires of our hearts. May they be thankful for the good

which, with your help, so many sons and daughters provide for their parents, so many parents for their relatives, so many friends for their friends. May your charity be triumphant, my Lord, and in every way may your will be fulfilled through the sacred duties to which religion beckons us. Pater noster.

(Prayers in suffrage for the Souls in Purgatory, Volume 13, No. 68, pp. 256-257)

“Oh how your divine heart burns with the desire that they come forth to enjoy you in that inviting vision! How generous indeed is the ordering of your sovereign conduct. Is it possible that so many of the faithful can be insensitive to so many words of encouragement? Is it possible that they can refuse things that are advantageous for them, and that they do not respond to the calls of God who, for us, is the fullness of love itself?”

(Prayers in suffrage for the Souls in Purgatory, Volume 13, No. 68, p.261)

“Oh beloved bonds, the concern of our hearts for providing help to them in their need! Lord, hear our prayers; accept the desires of our hearts; may the good we do be pleasing to you, through your mercy, the good that so many sons and daughters offer for their parents; that so many relatives offer for those near to them; that so many friends offer for their friends. May your charity be triumphant, oh my Lord; and through these offerings may the sacred duties be fulfilled to which Religion beckons us.”

(Prayers for the Souls in Purgatory. Volume 13, No. 68bis., p.261)

“Jesus, my Redeemer. Our Father and Consoler, remember that these souls cost you the inestimable price of your most Precious Blood.”

(Prayers for the Souls in Purgatory, Volume 13, No. 68bis., p. 262)

Our good wishes

“I wish you the faith of an Abraham who left all things for his God and with his actions demonstrated the interior truth of his sentiments. I wish you the courage of a David fighting Goliath, and, speaking of the New Testament, I wish you the constancy of the Apostles when they received the Holy Spirit.”

(At the conclusion of a Mission, Volume 9, No. 61, pp. 208-209)

The Goodness of God

“This is in examination of that ardent zeal with which the Evangelical Shepherd goes in search of the lost sheep, the sorrow that he experiences in realizing that it is lost, the overwhelming joy that he shows in finding it. All of this is meant to explain what was said on the Cross when he cried out: Sitio – not so much to demonstrate the thirst that he felt in his body but rather the burning love that he wished to have from

mankind.”

Finally, everything that he proposes, everything that he produces in the order of nature and of grace tends to no other end than to oblige mankind to love him.”

To understand, in some way or other, the number, it is sufficient to say that we are debtors to Jesus for all the gifts of nature, of grace and of glory; that we are debtors to Jesus for the ineffable benefits of the Redemption, for our vocation, for justification and for what will be the crown of glorification for all the others. He has thought of no one else but of us, he has not acted nor has he suffered nor lived for anyone else but us. In omnibus divites etc.”

“God is good; good in everything that he is, that he knows, that he thinks, that he desires, that he orders and that he wishes; he is goodness itself. His goodness is seen in what he provides, in what he commands, in what he loves. It is also what makes him abhor things, accept things, as well as refuse things. Simply for the sake of goodness, he rejoices in accordance with the sacred word, he weeps, he sets things straight, he repents, he remembers and forgets (all these things as we speak of them). Out of goodness he created the universe and out of goodness he preserves it. In this entire universe, there isn't the slightest particle of goodness which is not his.”

“God is the good and the incomprehensibility of goodness.”

The Divine Word who assumes flesh – is he not perhaps the living and substantial image of divine goodness: imago bonitatis illius. Listeners, it is fortunate that I find you still warmed by the well-known birth of the Redeemer. Recently you have been freed from that dangerous cave which, at another time, might have been the source of fear and you are relieved of its squallor. But, seeing it inhabited by him, you must have been filled with an inexplicable tenderness. You have likewise seen his serene glance. The band of angels, some of them bringing the blessed news to the drowsy shacks, others filling the mountains and plains with their joyous songs, and still others who just remain there astounded and overwhelmed by the immense goodness. Humiliavit etc...ut ad deum etc. Apparuit benignitas ed humanitas Salvatoris nostri Dei.”

(On the Divine Goodness, Volume 7, No. 19, p. 59-63)

Charity

Faith, religion, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ are one. Let charity be the bond of fraternal love, the scale for the actions of mankind, the guide to the blessed possession of heaven. Even more so because in your offering of suffrages for the holy souls in Purgatory, religion will make known to you the great benefits that will accrue to you. We will say more about this at a later time.”

(Sermon on Purgatory, Volume 7, No. 27, pp. 82-87)

He is certain that faith, fear, and hope are those characteristics which accompany us in this mortal life and urge us to live justly; charity, however, is what we will possess fully when our desires are fulfilled entirely upon our arrival in that most happy place of sojourn. Now, listeners, pay close attention for here is the particular basis for my reasoning. Once we have reached Paradise, our faith will be rewarded with the very clear and unveiled vision; our fear with the possession of the beatific vision, free of suffering; our hope with perfect and limitless enjoyment of that immense good; and thus we will have within ourselves Love which will consist in our loving God through our vision of him, through our possessing him, through the enjoyment, the joy which will fill our hearts. I mean to say that in seeing God, we will possess him, in possessing him we will enjoy him, in enjoying him, we will love him.”

(Sermon on Paradise, Volume 7, No. 33, p. 112)

“Man is made in the image of God; God is of the same order; but, love is the distinctive character of the docile children of God”.

A charity that is thoroughly industrious in seeking the means is also most courageous in overcoming obstacles. Oh! These miserable times of ours in which egoism, audacity etc. etc. have chilled the spirit of love in so many people.”

(Charity, Volume 16, pp. 435-436)

Conversion

“Oh my people! A Mission is such a great good! It deals with the most important matter of salvation. That is the only reason why God created the heavens and the earth; the purpose for the Redemption, namely, the salvation of souls. My Lord, you have thought of us even to the point of eternity. When will we ourselves be thoughtful of you? Ah! I give you thanks for allowing me this time for repentance.”

(Pep talk, Volume 18, p. 493)

The Cross

“Oh most beloved Cross (as the Cross enters) of my Lord, I bless you, I adore you. Many tears would I like to shed upon you arbor decora et fulgida ornata regis purpura. You are the ladder to Paradise, the shield of defense against our enemies, the reminder of the triumphs of Religion, domuit orbem non ferro, sed ligno. You are our consolation here on this earth and the motivation for our joy in heaven. O Crux ave spes unica, etc.”

“Love, only love caused that vivid sweating of blood while all interior consolations were withdrawn and the soul of Jesus Christ was abandoned into a sea of grief..”

“Oh my people! Who is able to withhold tears... Jesus is pouring out blood everywhere;

please, allow your spirit to collect it and with many tears in your eyes, present it to the divine Father, bless it, adore it. Maerentes oculi may the Church be delighted with its hymn for the passion of Jesus Christ: Spargite lacrymas ...Shed tears, oh faithful...Jesus is suffering for us...Oh what a hard-hearted sinner is one who does not grow tender nor is moved! Lord, show pity toward the obstinate soul who up to now has not converted. Your wounds are the many mouths that shout for conversion. Yes, my people come, please come, and on this very night so sacred to our memory, recalling the agony of Jesus Christ, apply the merits of the divine Blood. Adstate maerentes cruci, pedes beatos ungitte. Lavate fletu, tergite, et ore lambite/”

“They fix the thorns against his temples; from every angle, they are seen penetrating his head: and Jesus? Jesus remains silent and suffers; he prays and is patient; and his Blood is the price of his love.”

“Those wounds cry out in love, those thorns do so too as does the Blood that he sheds...Oh Jesus, our most merciful Jesus, here we are at your feet, humbled and sorrowful. Deign to give us pardon, oh Father, for having so often re-opened your adorable wounds through our sins.”

“They crucify an innocent, unstained one, one segregated from sinners. Crucifigatur... Accompany that meek lamb who is going to consummate the sacrifice of love; that priest who at the same time is going to die on the altar of the Cross.”

“The Cross is lifted up, a pitiful sight. Jesus is placed on it, the thorns digging deeper into his head. He is raised above the earth and he sees his sorrowful mother Mary ... and oh what loving looks he shows toward his Mother ... the glances of a son.”

“Oh Mary, abductor of hearts! Take hold of our hearts and bring them to a love of Jesus Christ. He, out of love, has given his life for me. Dilectus meus mihi, et ego illi.”

“Let us return to our homes, yes, but deploring our failings, while exclaiming: Hail to the Blood of Jesus Christ by whom we have been saved!
The Blood of Jesus was my very life, blessed indeed. Let us say this together, blessed is his infinite goodness, etc. Amen.”

(On the Passion and Death of Jesus Christ, Volume 7, No. 30, pp. 91-100)

“Oh beloved people, one glance at the Crucified Lord and those wounds, those thorns etc. will only cause you to repeat in your hearts = love for your soul. Ab aeterno, the Lord has thought about our souls; in the fullness of time, he became our Redeemer; he sacrificed everything for our salvation. May it increase in us a bit of prayer, a frequent visit to an Oratory etc.”

(Recollections, Volume 7, No. 32, p. 107)

“Let us imagine that we are all out in an open field of battle. Jesus lifts up his standard of

the Cross and with his own pleasant and lovable appearance, and with his gentle voice says to us: Venite ad me omnes etc. Even though the way that I point out to you may be narrow, rough and filled with impediments, still trust in me and follow me: gaudebit cor vestrum.”

(Standards, Volume 7, No. 54, p. 173)

“Your wounds give me courage; the thorns, the nails, your divine Blood fill me with fervor. Probitaberis peccato me multum es enim.”

(Pep talk, Volume 18, p. 493)

The Crosses

“Oh how few people know how to suffer. A bundle of wood tidily arranged and carefully piled together is carried with ease, while that same amount of wood, arranged haphazardly or loosely tied together here and there, is carried with difficulty, and is pulled along with twice as much pain. The same can be said about Crosses etc.”

“A man who has no Crosses – Oh! In how many dangers does he not find himself. What does God do? He permits calumnies etc. etc. The humbled man looks more deeply into his own nothingness etc. In the delight of his courtly life, David sinned etc. But later, with God permitting, Absalom rebelled against him and David then exclaimed: bonum mihi quia humiliasti me etc.
etc.

“Tell me, oh Christians: does the press harm the grapes? Not really. Even though it crushes the grapes, it nevertheless dissolves them into a very sweet wine. Tell me: does the file harm the metal? Not really. Even though it roughly scrapes it, it makes it shinier. Does fire harm gold? Not really, for even though it burns it and attacks it, it nevertheless cleanses it etc. Look there at that wood destined for the fire; an artist sees it, he is attracted to it, and with his own instruments, he shapes it and converts it into a work that is worthy of admiration. So, if I were to question the wood to see whether it would have been happier etc.: Fabri polita malleo hanc saxa molem construunt, aptisque juncta nexibus locantur in fastigio.”

(Reform 5., Volume 7, No. 13, p. 34-36)

“Even though our lives have endured tribulations and suffering for thousands of years, nevertheless the merit of glory which is immense, eternal and infinite would still be proportionate. Yet, with our lives being so brief, so truly brief and fleeting, what value does any of our suffering have? In comparison to our beautiful thoughts of Paradise, what worth, either internal or external, does a cross have which we might consider quite heavy? And, after a short period of suffering, will an eternal enjoyment be granted you? What joy will it be for a blessed one to say: here I am at the gate, finally at the point of salvation! Oh! How many storms I have weathered.! Through how many perils, through

how many tests have I gone. How many enemies I have had to conquer! Thanks be to heaven, all has been overcome, all has been conquered...Let us now enjoy the fruits for all eternity.”

(Crosses, Volume 18, p. 494)

The Open Heart

Within that heart, I am resolved to make my continuous sojourn so as to adore in it those precious drops of blood and water which were poured out for love of me, as well as to give thanks for having left your adorable side open for sinners as a secure haven of salvation, a warm refuge for miserable souls that go floundering about on the treacherous sea of life.”

(Novena of the Blood and Aqua Opuscolo, Volume 13, pp. 265-266)

“Oh beloved Lord, I adore your most lovable bosom, my safe refuge in this valley of tears, and through the merits of the Blood and the water that flows from it, I beg you to allow me to die to my very self and to live my eternal life only with you.”

(Novena of the Blood and Aqua-Opuscolo, Volume 13, pp. 267)

“Oh eternal Glorifier, I adore your beautiful Heart which is always burning with love and through the merits of the Blood and water that flowed from it, I beg you to give me the final and best of gifts, that is to say, the gift of perseverance so that I will be able to come with you to sing of your infinite mercy per infinita saecula saeculorum. Amen.

(Novena of the Blood and Aqua-Opuscolo, Volume 13, pp. 258)

Spiritual Direction

“However, this science of the saints is not achieved without applying oneself. Nor is it the work of a single day, but of one’s entire life. So, dear souls, who yearn sincerely for sanctity, come to the school of the crucifix. There you will acquire that celestial knowledge of God which will make you sickened by things of the world and zealous for the glory of the highest Good.”

(Directory, Volume 13, p. 359)

“Whoever is going to build must first remove the obstacles and impediments to the building. Thus, he will opportunely dig away the earth so as to be able to set deeply the foundation stones for the building itself and on them to erect the structure that has been designed.”

(Directory, Volume 13, p. 361)

“There is no doubt that the body influences the soul, even though one may not know to

what extent it does. And, just as the make-up of the body is different in each person, so also is the influence that that body has on the soul. From this diversity of influence likewise arises the diversity of natural qualities, that is to say, the individual's temperaments. The Director must have full knowledge of them so that the soul is not given over to vain fears or be lost in excessive trust...

"...but we are speaking here of the necessity of knowing what this influence is from an ascetical aspect which consists in studying all the diversity of temperaments, checking the flow of the development of the spirit, relative to the operation of grace."

"Even though there is a diversity of ways by which the Lord summons a soul to walk in the path leading to perfection, we are restricted to a consideration of these two: reprobare malum, et eligere bonum -- which is tantamount to saying that the two of them, in the final analysis, are the same as the aforementioned fear and trust."

(Directory, Volume 13, pp. 362-363)

"I know that grace must, along with docility in corresponding, refine and ennoble nature; I know that in this there is hidden, in a manner of expressing myself, the marrow of substantive sanctity. I am not ignorant of the situation that the respective natural qualities are to be subjected to the rule of faith and that they open up the great field to be traversed down the avenues of virtue: however, this is not an operation done in a single day's time; but, it is the lengthy work of perfection continued throughout one's life. The Spiritual Director will not be able to require of a beginner something that is proper to one who is proficient. Thus, his care and diligence must be aimed toward an illuminating of the intellect of the soul that he is directing. He is to lead that soul to appreciate the necessity that exists of overcoming ourselves, providing that soul with the appropriate means, by warning that soul about the difficulties, by encouraging that soul in times of unsettlement or of huge fears. He is not to make that soul feel discouraged if, at times, it is not prompt in fighting this battle. Rather, with a compassionate hand, he is to lift it up, animate it and fill it again with religious sentiments of trust in God qui cognovit figmentum nostrum, as the Prophet states.

"...and since nature is not conquered, as was said previously, in a day's time, so the Director should require of his penitent only what is proportionate to the forces of his spirit developed up to that point. Then, the means that are to be used for achieving victory and not delaying the operations of grace will be the type and measure adaptable to the particular individual who is to use them. Generally, however, they can be reduced to pointing out that man is not to abandon himself to physical nature but that the moral order must prevail; it would be helpful, likewise, to make reference to the examples of the Saints.

(Directory, Volume 13, pp. 365-367)

"Anyone who takes a sea voyage, and the sea is tranquil, enjoys in a singular way the calmness that is there. But in calm weather, it is good to be alert and foresee the

possibility of storms which might arise all of a sudden. The attentive pilot must not overlook those means which make it possible for him to sail the ship to a haven of salvation despite the beatings of the tempest. So, too, a Spiritual Director, in times of consolations, must not cease to prepare that soul for opposition, for combat, just as the pilot conducts himself during a tempest, distinguishing himself in a notable fashion. Thus, we too must distinguish ourselves with zealous virtue at the time when that virtue is being called to prove itself.

“The soul takes one glance at the Crucified Lord and sees its beloved sacrificed out of love.”

(Directory, Volume 13, p. 375)

“Yes, indeed, let the Cross reign in our hearts, let it manifest itself in our actions. If one flees from the Cross and abandons oneself to unrestrained appetites, one becomes miserable and unhappy and one suffers without comfort. On the Cross, one will find peace and salvation.”

(Directory, Volume 13, p. 377)

“...the selection of a Spiritual Director is the fruit of prayer and advice; then, once the guide has been found, a guide in whom one finds the three characteristics and prerogatives mentioned in the words of the Psalmist: Bonitatem, disciplinam, et scientiam, one is not to vary from him and thus fall eventually in a state of agitation and loss of peace.”

“Oh soul, be sincere and realize that sincerity of heart is the basis of your sanctification.”

“There is no doubt that Jacob’s ladder is an image of methodical direction since it , by steps, causes the soul to climb toward perfection. We shall make use of this image in the following paragraph to assist the Spiritual Director through the ways of sanctity. Please note that this scriptural image is very helpful both for beginners as well as for those proficient, those who are perfected, those who are eager to take ever greater strides on the road to perfection. Hence it is useful to recall to one’s memory this divine allocution through which, as the Lord says, a just man proposes an ascent toward an even higher level of sanctity.”

(Directory, Volume 13, pp. 382-384)

“The Spiritual Director who is the guide of a soul must recognize that the soul wants to be guided, may I say, by the hand, toward the fulfillment of the will of the Lord... He is a sacred minister to whom God has entrusted the tenderest objects of his love. Oh! How he should exert himself in procuring the true good and factus omnia omnibus, omnes Christo lucrifacere. So, consider well the ladder with its rungs which we are now suggesting.”

(Directory, Volume 13, pp. 384-385)

“The first step on that mystical ladder may be called the step of separation; the Spiritual Director, attempts to root firmly in a soul, for example, the need for the soul to separate itself from something that may be for it an obstruction or an impediment. A doctor who is treating a sick person who is assailed by his first attack is aware of the need for that person to be separated from whatever is the cause of the serious weakening condition...In all things, however, one is to use charity and good judgment, as much as is needed, to form a proper diagnosis of that sick person’s condition.”

“Closely related to this first step is the second which might be called suggestions. For the sick person, the doctor is able to suggest one remedy which is rather better than another one and he adapts the dosage to this case, limiting its use, more or less, and, if necessary, varying its application. So, too, does the Spiritual Director when he proposes the use of those means which will bring about a cure more easily. And, like the doctor who continues to examine and watch over his patient, the spiritual doctor will not cease speaking often of holy things with his patient, urging him to develop a hatred for evil and providing him with opportune examples. He will be careful about prayer so that he will succeed in his intent. He will know how to suggest to his client those directions which will uncover the deceitful actions of the devil, the enemy of the conversion of souls. Just as the doctor himself does in seeking a cure, he will provide a method that balances the spiritual forces with which the soul is now endowed with a proportionate state of life so that they corroborate... the Spiritual Director will lead him to place his hopes in that God who, in our miserable condition, constitutes the footstool of the throne of his mercy.”

By following those directions, the soul will realize, in keeping with the pronouncement of De Sales, that this will be sufficient to patiently search for the cure and to do good work. This constitutes the third degree of that ladder, namely, Christ-like suffering in the use of the means suggested.”

“Thus, when the soul is found at this level, attained by the grace of God and our own respective cooperation, the Spiritual Director will prepare it to move on to the fourth level which consists in action. The soul is to make use of the means proposed not only patienter but even libenter. Be careful, however, not to demand more than what can be expected of that soul in this present state. Little by little one will reach the point of the cure... In the meantime, the sick soul will be experiencing the effects of heartfelt peace, it will delight in mental prayer, it will gain in spiritual strength, noble desires will be awakened which the Spiritual Director can then regulate and direct. Hence, more and more will it be attentive to the voice of the soul’s beloved, be comforted indeed by the external ministry of the fourth degree of this ladder and then move on to the fifth step which is identified by the word gaudenter. So, not only does it do good voluntarily, but it does it also with joy, with exultation... Out of love, it will weep over its past life, it will increase its displeasure for having disgusted a most lovable God. These tears, however, will not shrink the heart but rather broaden it marvelously. Already will it be lifted to lofty consideration of Religion and, by meditating, the soul will continue following in the way that will lead to its more intimate union with God. But, all of this will not occur

except by the practice of the virtues, by the study of the Crucified Lord, following in the path of the palms and of the triumphs. Consequently, comforted already by the grace of God, the soul moves upward to the sixth level which is identified by the words fearlessness in acting... Like a mountain with a stable basis, such is the firmness which the soul acquires that is directed well in the service of God. The sick person, of whom we have spoken, has arrived at the point of a cure, has recovered health, and assumes not only an appearance of joyfulness but also of a fearlessness, achieved through that prescription of life which preserves it from further relapses...The flame of the love of God brings forth wonderful works and from that fearlessness, the soul moves on to the seventh level which is simply the zeal that is acquired along with one's gaining perfection, together with God being loved by mankind...that zeal is the ardor of charity. But, then, who is there that can explain sufficiently the increase of that ardor in a soul that looks to a God, to a God in whom he finds delight, a thirsting for God, as he drinks of that inexhaustible fountain of every good, as he has an even greater thirst for the one who is most worthy of being loved. The curing of the sick person produces this zeal when proper cautions are given, thanks to the many words of advice of his Director as well as those given by his neighbors, so that further relapses into the sickness that was endured does not return. Zeal for God's honor endows the soul with a holy urging to verify that text of David: Docebo iniquos vias tuas et impii ad te convertentur. Never does the soul leave or set aside prayer in the interim; it acknowledges human weakness and does not trust in its own powers. Cautiously and with vigilance it fulfills everything that is necessary to be numbered among those of whom it is written: Beatus servus, quem cum venerit Dominus ejus, invenerit sic facientem."

(Directory, Volume 13, pp. 385-389)

"Oh soul, the Lord loves to lead you into the wine cellar and there perfect you in your love for him until you are thoroughly inebriated with his love. He assumes this image of a wine cellar to show you how much you are to love recollection of spirit so as to be able to enjoy that mysterious wine which symbolizes holy and divine love. Temporal wine removes languidness in the stomach and revives the body's forces. Mystical wine of the spirit removes languidness in devout life and restores its forces to maintain its powers of doing good. However, temporal wine calls for moderation and sobriety, but heavenly wine arouses in us a salutary yearning to become inebriated with it. Blessed is the one who in every instant of life retains that interior withdrawal into the mystical wine cellar and thus strengthens the powers to work zealously, as we mentioned previously, for the glory of God. Never should the soul forget this holy place, this celestial mansion, this blessed wine cellar which is the most lovable heart of God".

(Directory, Volume 13, p. 390)

"I know very well that one does not reach this maturity of virtue in a single day. But that is precisely the thing that urges our hearts to desire it with alacrity and to acquire it with zeal. Once we have taken possession of it one notices how much vigilance is required to maintain that wine cellar in good order, perfecting it, embellishing it by seeking one's own sanctification as well as that of others, for therein lies the holy law of charity."

(Directory, Volume 13, p. 391)

With the soul enclosed in the mystical wine cellar, it becomes well-founded in the system of peace. In this holy period of recollection, God continues to feed the soul with the heavenly bread of eternal life, the substantial bread which dilates the spirit and makes it capable of even greater perfection. It meditates on divine things and finds in that its happiness.”

(Directory, Volume 13, p. 392)

Almsgiving

The Holy Spirit spoke thus of a pious lady who was dispensing generous alms – She opened her hands to the needy and extended to the poor her own arms. What recompense did she receive? Truly, many blessings which can be read in the Sacred Text. Among the others, one is: Et ridebit in die novissimo. And she will rejoice on the last day, that is to say, when others will be weeping or will be afflicted on the day of their death then she will be rejoicing and be content.”

(Almsgiving, Volume 7, No. 25, p. 78)

Retreats: Reminders

On the last day of Retreats, the Christian is to be resolved to carry out his resolutions etc. The reminders are:

1. Do not scorn small things
2. Devotion to Mary
3. Frequent meditations on the Passion of Jesus Christ

(Reminders, Volume 7, No. 11/2, p. 27)

The Eucharist

“Just as a furnace makes one feel heat which is contained in the flames that it emits, so also does this immense charity make one become somewhat acquainted with the time when Christ instituted this Sacrament, how he instituted it, and the difficulties that he overcame for its institution. The time was that very same time when men were planning his most cruel death. It was at that time that he was ready to give this food of life by finding a way to remain with us; it was at that time when his enemies, more than ever, were attempting to rid the world of him pridie quam pateretur.

The manner in which this is done is under the species of food in order that he might become ours so truly that there would be no crafty way of separating that nourishment from ourselves, just as there would be no crafty way or power that could separate us from him.

He overcame the difficulties, and even foreseeing a number of irreverent abuses etc., still he was disposed to tolerate everything in order to be able to be joined to our souls. What is even more astounding with regard to this same tolerance was that he added strong and indeed vehement desires to become incarnate. He made himself yearned for and awaited through so many centuries, so that now he would be able to come to your heart, desiring him earnestly, the worthy sun of your heart.”

(On the most holy Eucharist, Volume 7, No. 52, p. 166)

“The other office that a member of the faithful has is that of being one who makes an offering when present at Mass. Oh how much must a child of God be loved when that person is made capable of presenting to the Father the Precious Blood poured out for us.”

“Unus panis, unum corpus multi sumus, omnes qui de uno pane participamos (St. Paul, 2 Cor: 10). We are all one bread and one body, all of us who share in one and the same bread. St. Augustine says that Jesus Christ instituted this Sacrament under the species of bread and wine to denote that just as bread is made up of many kernels of grain which are blended together into one thing and the wine from many bunches of grapes, so also many faithful who receive communion and share in this Sacrament make up the mystical body.”

“Here is Jesus, the mystical vine and we are the branches...The Eucharist gives strength, it gives vigor etc.”

“In the cave of Bethlehem, he became the master of scorn for the world; but in this selection of the Gospel story he becomes the master of what we must do to show proper gratitude to the Lord. Our hearts are the cenacles and anyone who partakes of this table shows forth more than ever this fullness of heart and embellishes this cenacle etc.”

Even in spiritual communion my heart is broadened, becomes fervent, is encouraged. The most sublime virtues are learned, for under the Eucharistic species the Lord makes us realize how much we are to love the interior life, etc. Humility, patience, charity. He shows us how much he did for us as he prayed etc. Here, consequently, are the great benefits that we gain no matter from what angle we approach...”

“Redemisti nos Domine in sanguine tuo, et fecisti nos Deo nostro regnum. Jesus, glorious in heaven, when one kisses your wounds, so luminous with glory, oh what a delight it will be for us to place upon them our most tender kisses. Oh my Lord, who is it that will not love you? Who will not become enraptured with your infinite love. Ah! Change our hearts so that they become like wax which melts when it is drawn close to the hearth...From your holy altar, send out rays of love to my heart so that I never tire of crying out to you.”

(Mass – Participation in the Holy Mass, Volume 16, p. 480-483)

“Furthermore a well-prepared cenacle is needed: Coenaculum magnum, et bene stratum. But, as you may say, Jesus was born on a bed of straw etc. and now is going to die on Golgotha. Still, he asks for a large, well-prepared cenacle. Here, then, is the mystery. The Lord was acting as our master, and willed therefore to indicate to us that our hearts must be broad and well-prepared. And oh! If only one knew the gift of God etc.”

(Thoughts on the most Holy Eucharist, Volume 16, p. 505)

“At the time when the glorious St. Philip Neri received holy Viaticum and he saw the Blessed Sacrament being carried into his room, he exclaimed, with great joy and festivity: “Behold! Here is my love, here is my love, here is my love. Oh! If only we would truly love Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, each time we see this most Blessed Sacrament, that is, when we see it exposed on the altar for public veneration or when we receive it in holy communion, we too ought to exclaim: here is my love.”

In knowing that on this day so many honors are being paid to the most Blessed Sacrament, in knowing that it is being carried with so much ceremony and with such solemn accompaniment through public streets in processional fashion throughout the entire Catholic world, we still must exclaim out of joy: Here is my love who in our day is being honored, is being shown honor, glory and veneration everywhere. May the most blessed and divine Sacrament be praised forever and forever into eternity. May my Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament be praised forever.”

“Why, then, do we not love with total affection of our hearts the sacramental Jesus? Why, then, do we not form these sentiment of tenderness, this devout love toward Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament? Oh God! How long are we going to be so blind, so insensitive? How long are we going to live in this state of tepidity and coldness? When will it be that our hearts will be entirely given to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament? When will it happen that everyone will be consumed with love toward a God who has loved us so much, who wished to leave his entire self in this admirable Sacrament and reach this point of excess in making himself become even the food of our souls? May this day be for us the day that the love for Jesus wins over all of our hearts triumphantly. May this day be the day on which we give ourselves entirely to Jesus just as he gives himself entirely to us. So, right at this very moment before you approach Holy Communion, offer your hearts entirely to Jesus, give yourselves wholly to Jesus and when the Holy Particle is before your eyes, in a transport of love repeat with St. Philip Neri: Here is my love, here is my love. Hail, hail etc. Behold he comes into me to bring consolation to my soul, to endow me with all the heavenly riches, to become one and the same thing with me. Here is my love. Oh day of such happiness for me, oh heavenly visitor, oh how happy and fortunate am I.”

“But how can I dare to eagerly present myself before you, to receive within myself you who are a God of infinite grandeur and I a miserable, lowly creature, seeing myself filled with so many imperfections? Ah! Since you are willing to deign to come to me, then you must first purify my soul; cleanse it from so many stains of sin, so many defects – a peccato meo munda me.”

(Ferverino for Communion on the Feast of Corpus Domini, Volume 19,
p.521-522)

Christian Youth

“Duty requires that those of youthful age, most adaptable for undertaking great enterprises for the glory of God, should give themselves entirely to him.”

“Oh! How many graces does God grant in a special way to the young, so as to give a firm foundation to his spiritual house etc.”

(Devotion in Christian Youth, Volume 7, No. 20, p.64-65)

Justice

- “1. To pay workers, and servants are to carry out their duties exactly.
2. To use a bit of charity, since dependents are among the primary poor; and servants are to use benevolence of heart.
3. Counsel and moral instructions are to be given to servants. They are to show docility in using them to their advantage and fortitude in not ever obeying what is sinful.

Imprudence

“To build without taking measurements, to embark without a single biscuit – these are defects of providence which draw attention to the stupid working of those individuals who undertake something, either by necessity or by choice, without providing the proper means of attaining their objective. Among the aims that one proposes for oneself are those that are particular ones; only one is universal. Particular ones are: one’s chosen state of life, the efforts that one makes, good government of one’s house and family, any undertaking that is worthy of consideration. The universal and principle aim is that blessed happiness for which we all have been created. Now, we get down to the basic point. To embark without a single biscuit and building without proper preparations is nothing more than proposing for oneself objectives without making use of the means that are needed. So, it is a good thing now to remind ourselves that nisi dominus aedificaverit domum, in vanum laboraverunt qui aedificant eam.”

(Reform 6, Volume 7, No. 14, p. 37-38)

Mary

A twofold love brings anguish and sorrow to the Heart of Mary. Love for her innocent son, who was crucified, brings her an unspeakable martyrdom. Love for sinful man who was redeemed causes her a martyrdom that has no equal. It is like a ship caught in a storm between two opposing winds, hence exposed to both at the same time; it tosses and turns and must be controlled to remain steady.”

“1. Desolate mother.

2. Merciful mother, that same twofold love for Jesus and for us is truly the sword etc. This makes her the Queen of Martyrs.”

“You will continue to be persuaded by reflecting that just as John saw the two-edged sword in the mouth of the Lamb cause a wound (Apoc. 1), so too the cruel sword predicted by Simeon transfixed Mary. Besides transfixing her spirit with an acute pain by just thinking about the sufferings of Jesus, her heart was pierced with a tender grief upon seeing them. After spending a lengthy time following the path of his blood, her mind was overwhelmed by thoughts of his bitter wounds. A pathway through her enemies is opened up. She assumes her position right there alongside him and she becomes in that most cruel scene both a spectator and a spectacle.”

“And Oh! How this perseverance causes me to call to mind the strong woman etc. Mulierem fortem quis inveniet? It is as though strength were the patrimony only of men. But with Mary etc. With difficulty will we ever find among intrepid men in varied stations of human life examples of strength equal in fortitude as those shown by this great lady.” ...

“With ever greater strength does Mary stand motionless at the foot of the Cross. You angelic choirs of peace wept and she, intrepidly, kept the sight of her son in her pitying eyes, but eyes nevertheless full of majesty. She was in sorrow but her lashes were without tears, so that the great evil of our offenses would be balanced out by the immensity of her sufferings, her pure sorrow. Yet, out of compassion for Jesus the Redeemer, minute drops appeared in her eyes, heralds of her sufferings. Because of her love for man redeemed, she quickly tried to hold back the tears from escaping her pupils. Her love for Jesus aroused tenderness of heart; her love for mankind held back her weeping. The former was the cause of her suffering, the latter that she should not give in to sorrow because this was the redemption of all beloved mankind. Stantem non flentem (St. Ambrose). With excessive charity, the eternal Father gave us his son; With an outpouring of tender love, Mary gave her own son to us.”

(Sorrows of most holy Mary, Volume 7, No. 3, p. 7-12)

“Mary prays, Mary intercedes. What else are we to do in our times if not to apply to ourselves the merits of the Divine Blood? Oh would, that in assisting at the Divine Sacrifice, you would think about the great benefits of the redemption. Its fruits will be of great advantage to you. Oh Mary! Assist us in life and in death and be our joy in paradise.”

(Fervorino on Mary at the Mission in Supino, Volume 7, No. 36, p. 151)

“Mary makes us dear to God and to our neighbor. Dear to God by reminding us of the covenant and confirming it etc. if we possess it. Foedereis arca; dear to our neighbor by promoting peace everywhere, instilling the spirit of compassion, the spirit of discretion, the spirit of true liberality toward one’s neighbor.

(Month of most holy Mary, Volume 8, No. 55/11, p. 184)

Mary, mystical house of gold and hence a worthy place of habitation for the Divine Word in the great mystery etc. In her are the treasures of heavenly operations and therefore Mary dispenses the graces that we seek.

“So now you must have recourse to her. Who is it that can describe how our hearts become a mystical mine through prayer that prepares for us that mystical gold, the graces given for our benefit.”

“Mary desires that Jesus be known, loved and glorified.”

(Month of most holy Mary, Volume 6, No. 55/13, p. 185)

“Mary was the first one to adore the great mystery of the Incarnation of the Word, brought about within her womb. She believed it was the work of the Holy Spirit. etc.”

“St. Irenaeus says that the harm wrought by Eve with her lack of credence, Mary repaired with her faith.”

“Tertullian says that Eve wanted to believe the serpent rather than heed what God had said to her and thus produced death. But our Queen, believing in the words of the angel that she was to be a Virgin-Mother, brought salvation to the world.”

(Month of most holy Mary, Volume 8, No. 55/15, p. 186)

“Hence, for every soul she is the cause of joy because she shows us Jesus; she repairs the losses caused by Eve; she intercedes for everyone; she is propitiation for all.”

(Month of the most holy Mary, Volume 8, No. 55/16, p. 187)

“Mary, most lovable, most loving. That is what she wishes for her children. Lovable through the practice of the virtues and thus be loved more; and most loving when they themselves are doing good.”

(Month of the most holy Mary, Volume 8, No. 55/18, p. 188)

“In wanting to do good, it is necessary to suffer. Necessity, utility, glory of sufferings. Mary is our consoler for she offers us her example, assures us of her assistance, encourages us through her triumphs as well as the remembrance of Paradise.”

(Month of the most holy Mary, Volume 8, No. 55/19, p. 188)

“Mary wants us to derive the benefits of the price of Redemption.”

(Month of the most holy Mary, Volume 8, No. 55/25, p. 190)

“The letters in the name: Maria

M - mercy

A - (amor) Love of God

R - remission of sins

I - illumination of the mind

A - acquisition of grace and glory

(Month of the most holy Mary, Volume 8, No. 55/26, p. 191)

“In hac mansione, there are seven reasons for devotion to most holy Mary (in the application of the seven pillars)

1. The most beloved creature

2. The Mother of Jesus Christ

3. The creature that has the most merits etc.

4. The creature who is given to us as Mother

5. The creature who is terrifying to the demon

6. The creature who is highly venerated in the order of providence

7. The offices that she exercises for us, that of Advocate, of Shepherdess etc.

(Month of the most holy Mary, Volume 8, No. 55/27, pp. 191-192)

Oh my Mother Mary! Grant that I may see you one day in paradise. May our souls, which we place beneath the mantle of your benevolent patronage, be dear to you as we invoke your name.”

(Fervorino for the Madonna of Grace, Volume 18, p. 492)

“My people! Here is what one must do who realizes the guilt of impure vice, of incontinence, of dishonesty. Have recourse to Mary; hope that through her help you will be moved deeply within yourself with that interior sorrow that will be your salvation for eternity.”

(An example for Marian meditation, Volume 18, p. 500)

“Most loving Mother, mirror of justice and holiness, Mother advocate for sinners also, ladder to and gate of heaven, walled tower of defense, ark of the covenant, consolation of the afflicted, comfort of the tepid, mistress of those who love and the subject of our talks during this month which we consecrate to your honor. Spring is the season for the flowers and the earth is covered once again with the vari-colored plants resplendent with leaves and fruit. Nature presents itself in a way that is not definite and yet in such a charming way that we cannot help but exclaim: quam magnificata sunt opera tua Domine.”

“Far removed from us is sin, far removed from us is the insidious enemy of all good

things... heaven and earth are resounding with the praises for Mary and from this moment on we exclaim that we are children of Mary. Hail to Mary etc.”

(Fervorino for the beginning of the Marian Month, pp. 501-502)

- “1. Great in gifts and prerogatives
2. Great in virtues and merits
3. Great in authority and patronage.”

(Most holy Mary, Volume 19, p. 531)

“The Divine Word, made man, had positioned his most holy Mother over all creatures; hence it was necessary that over them all she should be protected in soul and body. However, on Calvary there was no Apostle present except John as a sorrowing witness of the bloody scornful acts, the bitter expressions of hate and the insults hurled at the Cross. It was to him that the Redeemer in agony entrusted his dearest mother to be John’s mother afterwards.”

(The Apostles Peter and John, Volume 19, p. 548)

The Final Objective

“Let us construct a city and a house that has its foundation in Heaven. There, each one will dwell as did the people of Israel at the time of Solomon: sub ficu sua, et sub vita sua. Each one has his own house built by himself; each one has his own garden planted by himself. But if we do not think about it in plenty of time beforehand and carefully consider the requirements that are involved - sedens prius cogitat etc. - woe to that person who does not prepare himself now.”

(Reform 6, Volume 7, No. 14/1, p.38)

“If one thinks, he thinks with God, if he loves, he loves with God, if he works, he works with God, with God he sets his mind, with God he sets his heart, with God his arms, with God his voice, with God ... Oh! How much more do I see in this divine transformation.

(Sermon on Paradise, Volume 7, No. 33, p. 117)

The Holy Mission

“What means is there that is more effective in jarring sinners from the deep sleep that weighs them down, in encouraging the tepid, in enlivening the pusillanimous, in moving the just to become more holy, than promoting Missions in our dioceses? Venerable brothers and beloved sons, console yourselves with the peace that is given to you through your participation in the ministry! From our many hearts, one heart alone will be formed in the adorable side of Jesus Christ. The Blood of the innocent lamb will reconcile all of us to the divine, eternal Father and the holy fire of the love of God will

purge our souls that will then be converted into burning fires of charity.”

“Prepare yourselves for the holy Retreat which you will make in these days of salvation that we have announced to you. Work hard to promote tirelessly that greater glory of God and thus correspond better to the holy vocation of the priesthood. Every type of person will be responsive to the divine voice as you will soon see as you practice more. But, in a special way, let us pray to God, oh venerable brethren, for ourselves, so that at the end of the Missions, the vineyard of Jesus Christ that has been entrusted to us will remain in an improved condition for our Heavenly Vinedresser. Thus, armed in a special way with fortitude and courage, we will see his divine intentions fulfilled to whom be honor et gloria in saecula saeculorum. Amen.”

(Notification of the Mission in Terracina in 1819, Volume 19, p. 556-558)

The Nativity of Most Holy Mary

“It is certain that the soul of Mary was the most beautiful soul created by God. Indeed, after the Incarnation of the Word, this was the grandest and of itself the most worthy work that the Omnipotent God performed in this world – opus quod solus deus supergreditur.”

“Was it not because of her that this august mystery of the Incarnation of the eternal Word occurred? Was it not because of her that we have received so many benefits and favors? Was she not born to be the chosen mother of God, and at the same time our mother, our mediatrix, our refuge, our advocate? Oh day of exultation! Oh thoughts of Paradise, etc. – haec dies quam fecit dominus exultemus et laetemur in ea.”

“Reflect, however, on that expression diligentes. Mary wishes to fill us with blessings because of her birth in grace; but, she wishes to have our love, our hearts, our affection etc. Can we, perhaps, deny her, so great a mother? Ah no, etc.

(Nativity of the most holy Mary, Volume 7, No. 5, p. 16-17)

The Nobility

“Meditations

1. Good use of time
2. To love, to study, to imitate Jesus Christ
3. Peace for the one who loves God, or in other words, friendliness in the divine service.

(Retreat for the Nobility, Volume 8, No. 59/3, p. 203)

Repentance

“This is what happens, what enters, what is encountered in a lover who is sorrowful. Like a flash of lightning, it is noticed in the eyes that burn and are tearful; oh what a

sight! In the midst of everyone, he sees Jesus for in the midst of all, he alone is the one offended. Only Jesus can restore his eyes to a clear state, only he can display a good heart. At that first pitying glance that Jesus gave, Magdalene could die out of pure love. Struck deeply in her heart, she fell at his feet and, in order not to lose again her once lost love who has now been recovered, she places her life firmly at his feet -- cecidit secus pedes ejus.” While there at the feet of Jesus, what does Magdalene do, what does she say, what is she seeking, what does she want? She weeps, she weeps, she weeps inconsolably – cecidit ad pedes ejus et coepit flere. Nothing else can she do but weep; nothing else can she do but weep; she thinks of nothing else than to weep; she has no other want than to weep; she shows no other interest in life than to weep – et coepit flere. She sighs, she sobs, she moans, she is silent – but she weeps. Then building up a love and a sorrow within herself, she bursts out in a renewed weeping, even more, so that it would now seem as though she had just begun to cry – et coepit flere. There are some who make fun of her, some who insult her, some who shout at her, some who joke about her. Magdalene pays no attention to them, she simply continues to weep...

“Oh those happy tears, oh happy tears that managed to wash clean not only Magdalene’s wrongdoings but even the adored feet of the heavenly Lord. At the base of those feet, she begs for the grace to return to the straight path. At the base of those feet, she is set back on the correct road and merits the peace that Jesus gives, Jesus who is the true way. At those feet, Magdalene erects her own altar and there overwhelmed with tears she sacrifices her heart. There she sets aside her mundane loves as a trophy to her Lord, and as an indication of her shaky shipwreck, she tramples down on the earth with the fragrant unguents which she has brought and sprinkled on his feet. Then, with her hair, the superb adornment of that profane head, she formed a most humble towel to dry those most holy feet.”

“My listeners, should one of you be in need of a notable forgiveness, before Magdalene leaves those adorable feet, and though not prostrate at those feet, go to her and with your own soul enter with her into that sacred side and there you will find the heart of the crucified Lord still replete with his blessings. Likewise, listeners, realize that he has the Father’s love and concern. So, what do you have to fear? Draw close, approach him trustingly and no longer put it off.”

(Panegyric Discourse on Magdalene, the Penitent, Volume 6, pp. 450-451)

“Such an unfortunate sinner raised up. Remittuntur peccata tua, vade in pace. O true peace, oh beautiful peace! Oh what sweet contentment must the heart of Magdalene not have felt at the mention of that sweet word. Peace with God, what a dear peace, oh indescribable peace. Happy Magdalene! Hurry! God in peace. Peace, indeed, with you my Lord, not by own self. On this very same altar of your most holy feet, where I have recovered a state of peace, I swear that I will wage war against myself and I swear that erit in pace amaritudo mea amarissima. Yes, peace with you, oh Jesus, but war against myself and against the entire world.”

“All the people of Jerusalem rise up against Jesus, the nobles speak out, the scribes take up arms, the magistrates utter threats and the high priests raise a rumpus. And Magdalene? The loving Magdalene, in love with her Jesus, holds up for her beloved Jesus. One of his disciples betrays him, the others abandon him and flee. And Magdalene? Loving Magdalene, in love with her Jesus, holds up for her Jesus. Oh Magdalene’s great and invincible love! The priests accuse him, the courts condemn him; finally, Peter publicly denies him. And the good Magdalene, the beloved one and the one in love with Jesus, holds out for her beloved Jesus. Magdalene accompanies him through the court processes, follows him to the blood-stained hill of Calvary, she comforts him in his sufferings, assists him during the painful agony. Abandoned by everyone, Magdalene does not abandon him and in that tossing to and fro from everyone, in the turbulence raised in the heavens, in that confusion of stars and jolting of planets, amidst all the derision and insults, that great soul of Magdalene always remained firm with unshakeable devotion to her Crucified Lord. Oh Love! That shining constancy of Magdalene. Magdalene, anoints the dead Lord; she witnesses his burial; she seeks him and finds him and with public jubilation announces his resurrection. Never did this sorrowing lover ever remain silent, this holy sinner, until she saw her Lord raised in triumph into heaven.””

(Panegyric Discourse on Magdalene, the Penitent, Volume 16, p. 456)

“Magdalene is an example of a creature similar to ourselves, fragile, of a similar physical constitution; she was a sinner just like you, sensitive with regard to bodily organs. In noticeable scars she shows the signs of penitential sufferings, of battles fought and productive of victories of unmistakable glory and triumph.”

(Panegyric Discourse on Magdalene, the Penitent, Volume 16, p. 456)

Laziness

“The first effect of laziness is sluggishness with respect to doing good works: Pigredo immitit soporem (Prov:19)

The second effect is a stupid fear or apprehension which raises doubts where there shouldn’t be any, as Scripture says: Pigrum dejicit timor (Prov:18). Illic trepidaverunt ubi non erat timor. They think that serving God is etc.

The third effect is pusillanimity. The lazy person is struck with a mud-like stone and remains stricken from a difficulty that is unimpressive. In lapide luteo lapidatus est piger (Eccl: 22).

The fourth effect is a fool-like ambition: Vult et non vult piger (Prov:13)

(Laziness, Volume 7, No. 24, p. 77)

Prayer

My dearly beloved, convince yourselves... without prayer you will be sterile plants, without prayer you will remain deprived of fruitful helps, of so many productive graces

that are granted to those who pray, those who share themselves with others, those who recommend themselves fervently. Without prayer, finally, you will not be received by that Sovereign Queen of heaven and earth. Oportet semper orare et numquam deficere.”

(For Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Volume 7, No. 31, p. 103)

“There are three principal reasons which oblige each Christian to offer prayers: reasons of justice; reasons of obedience; reasons of charity.”

“Prayer must be done with humility, trust and perseverance.”

(Prayer, Volume 19, p. 535-537)

“This is the water of benediction which irrigates, restores greenness and flowering to the plants of our good desires, washes souls from their imperfections and relieves our hearts from their passions.”

(Mental prayer, Volume 19, p. 538)

The Precious Blood

“The abuse shown toward the price of our Redemption nowadays and the urgency to render continual compensation to the Divine Redeemer for all the ingratitude shown by people, demands that the devotees and lovers of Jesus should occupy themselves in promoting perpetual adoration of the divine Precious Blood of our Savior. Twelve churches, located in different sections of the city, would exercise in succession a month dedicated to the mysteries of our Redemption, would offer that sacred cult of compensation that is so desired in order to placate the Lord who has been abused by our sins.

(Empti enim pretio magno, Volume 12, No. 67, p. 252)

My faithful people, the adoration of the inestimable price of our Redemption is the most tender objective that we can propose for ourselves. Through it, we become recipients of the treasures of Wisdom and sanctification. Through it, we are freed from the pains of hell in proportion to our love of Jesus. Through it, we take possession of the holy glory of heaven, in virtue of the Divine Blood! Hence, my dear faithful, it is only just that compensation be made for the ingratitude of people by consecrating this present month to the Adoration of the Divine Blood and in that way restore tenderness to our hearts.”

“Thanks to the application of this inestimable price by which we are redeemed, our sinful souls will discover our sacred and religious motivation to be hopeful for mercy and pardon. The penitent will find therein an encouragement to grow in virtue and holiness. Finally, the just one will be moved to a most ardent zeal to save souls for the Lord.”

(Encouragement for the month of the Divine Blood, Volume 16, p. 442)

“My beloved people, Jesus is therefore our most beloved, totally candid and rubicund. Candid because he is essentially candor; rubicund because of his Divine Blood... Wherever I manage to fix my gaze, I do not recall, but I would see only Blood... The wounds on his feet, on his hands...his head crowned with thorns...his Divine Heart opened – omnia ad redamandum nos provocant ... let us call to mind the words that the Church uses in the hymn for the Passion of Jesus Christ: Adstate maerentes Cruci, pedes beatos unгите... lavate fletu, tergite comis, et ore lambite. Oh my Jesus, please accept the offerings for this holy month in compensation for all the acts of iniquity performed by people. While the enemy of all good seeks to make people remain far-removed from a remembrance of your love, from the mindfulness of the children of Adam, the devotion of the Divine Blood will draw us close to your Divine Heart. May our minds always be occupied with thinking of the mysteries of your love, may our hearts be eager to apply that love, may our bodily sentiments be aware of our own sanctification and that of others. May the recollection of this inestimable price by which we have been redeemed remain indelible within us.”

(Encouragement for the month of the Divine Blood, Volume 15, pp.443-444)

“How great was the desire that Jesus had throughout his mortal life to shed his Blood for the Redemption of the world! Equally ardent was his desire that everyone would profit from it, that every soul would be a participant. Therefore, he invited us to this fount of mercy, saying: Bibite ex hoc omnes. He opened up for us in his most sacred wounds four founts, as St. Bernard says: a fount of mercy, a fount of peace, a fount of devotion, a fount of love and summons all to quench their thirst there. Si quis sitit veniat ad me. That, in fact, was why he instituted the Sacraments that are the channels through which the merits of that most Precious Blood are communicated to us. That is why he continually offers it to his Eternal Father in heaven above. That is why he wishes that each day it comes etc. Why, then, has he aroused in the hearts of so many of the faithful of our times to observe this devotion? It was surely for no other reason than that his heart burned deeply for love of souls to come to those sacred founts of his wounds and receive there, through his Blood, the waters of his graces. Oh what a deadly form of ingratitude would it be not to profit from this by trampling down such an efficacious means of salvation!”

Who can count all of the plans which the Heart of Jesus had in the shedding of this most lovable Blood? Through it, he intended to placate Divine Justice, to reconcile us to his Father, to cleanse our souls from every iniquity, to gain for us those efficacious aids of his graces, to open up for us an entry into the place of blessed sojourn in heaven. Hence, who is it that can doubt, who could lack the desire, who could fail to make use of it like those souls who are unfortunate ingrates who fail to realize its value. O man made of earth!”

(Most Precious Blood, Volume 18, p. 503-504)

Purgatory

“This interior longing is ever as great as the loveliness of its objective, namely God. The Almighty, who is essentially love itself, cannot be described in any terms that would adequately state with what amorous affection he shows himself pleased nor how he accepts the offerings made in behalf of these his daughters. His inspirations lead the living to this end, both in regard to his granting of mercy as well as the stimulus of his promises uniting us to his burning desires. Eadem mensura qua mensi fueritis remetietur, etc.”

“Indeed, it is so easy to promote suffrages; there are so many different ways of responding to God... but how sad it is that today so many people have been corrupted and their spirit of piety has become so utterly languid!”

“Oh my children, says the Church, please listen once to my words. Be ever mindful of the sweet relationship, the bond, the connection between us and not only the Church triumphant in heaven, but also between the Church militant and the Church in purgatory. The faith is one, the religion is one, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is one. May charity be the binding force of fraternal love; may it be the balance for the operations of mankind; may it be the guide to the blessed possession of heaven. So much so that by your offering of suffrages for the blessed souls in Purgatory, religion may make evident to you the great benefits that can flow from your activity – something that we will speak about more at length at a later time.”

(Sermon on Purgatory, Volume 7, pp. 82-87)

Reconciliation

“What are Missions? They are a message sent by God. Haec dicit Dominus. Let us listen to it with reverence. Convertimini ad Dominum Deum vestrum quia benignus et misericors est (Joel c.2). Let us be reconciled to God ...

hora est jam nos de somno surgere. Oh sinners, be converted to your God who is so benign, so merciful, who loves you so, who has been seeking you for a long time. Now is the time for you to set aside that worthless and evil-filled style of life; to put away those bad affairs, to end those scandalous ways, and to make retribution for stolen goods etc. Hora est etc. How is it possible to have such coldness, such stupidity in so many Christians! This is the time when God is calling out to you, that God is showing you the disillusion of earthly things and that they are nothing more than sheer vanity. How is it that we cannot be awakened from that profound sleep of death that oppresses us! How can we be so deaf to the many words of advice! Oh! The ineffable goodness of our loving God who, rather than hurling bolts of lightning toward us in righteous justice and condemning us to perdition, is rather misericordia motus toward each sinner, as he exclaims:

“Your soul is buried in vices and you are yourself your own tomb. Presently, the Lord is drawing near to you; he will let you hear his voice and he will lead you once and for all from that miserable state in which you exist. Oh misled soul, he calls out to you, he

invites you, he encourages you, he arouses you by saying tibi dico surge. Oh Christian, will you be even more insensitive than a dead person? God is commanding you to rise ... rise up. He is speaking to you – respond to him so that he can return you to life in the Church, your loving mother, who never wants her children, deadened by mortal sin, to be left weeping. My most beloved people, this is what a Mission is! In the Old Testament, God sent prophets – now he is sending us, the ministers of his sanctuary. This time, he is sending me to you my listeners. Weak, indeed, is the instrument that is being used, but I am consoled by the thought that his divine mercy will be evermore triumphant. The Lord was always accustomed to select weak subjects to do his work of bringing relief: infirmi mundi elegit Deus, in order that all would be attributed to his divine power, as it is most fitting to do. Thus, he chose a Moses, a David etc. But then, you, too oh dearest mother Mary, will be my support before God etc. You, oh great Xavier, will obtain zeal for me; finally, oh guardian angels of all these souls who will be listening to me, you will be the defensive shield against the attacks of Lucifer etc.”

(Introduction to the Holy Missions, Volume 16, p. 458-459)

“Life goes by, day by day, and as a matter of fact, in so many measured seconds and no more; mercy and graces, too, are counted and numbered, and no more.”

“As a consequence to this, note that one must take firm hold of the Holy Mission and with fullness of heart and decision of will to become holy. Convertimini ad me in toto corde vestro; scindite corda vestra. Oh sinner, be courageous! God could have stricken you with an unexpected death – but no, because he wants you to be saved and hence is sending you another of his ambassadors – convertimini promptly since hodie si vocem domini audieritis etc. Numquid Deus dilationi tuae cratinum diem promisit sed in quo propheta legis (Augustine). With a generous heart, be converted. Regnum caelorum vim patitur etc. This is how you are to receive this holy Mission and what dispositions you are to have.”

“...you must now place yourself in that state of soul that you would like to have at the time of your final moments.”

(Introduction to the Holy Missions, Volume 16, p. 461-462)

Religious Women

“(Reform) Weapons for gaining heaven

Prayer
Humility
Confidence

“Reminders

The Crucifix
The tree of life
Seat of truth
Mirrors of Sanctity.”

Renewal

“There is no one among us who, from time to time, in looking within our very selves, does not weep for not being the Christian that all of us should be, just as were those first children of the Church in apostolic times. Renew the spirit of your minds. If our minds do not have the desire for sanctification, etc.

1. Many times, from the eternal truths and from the power of the divine word, we look into ourselves and we are filled with compunction. What do we do then? We invoke the saints etc., we promise to change etc., but experience teaches us that once that fervor of compunction is passed, we go back to what we were before. Why that? Because in that new life that is begun, lacking is that real spirit. Like a lamp, it is simply lacking in oil etc.

No real method is established, not even variations. The spirit of the mind is simply not activated etc. One must observe order so as to achieve the end proposed, and, the means are to be set up.”

“So, the renewal that must take place in us must not be like the changes we undergo with the change of seasons that simply go by, for example, we make a change in our way of dress; but, we are to maintain the same method, (make an adjustment in it, etc.), and that change must be an intrinsic one of spirit, that is to say, a complete change of governing, a change of heart.”

(Reform 1, Volume 7, No. 21/1, p. 67-69)

“Blessed would all of us be if we were to imitate etc. Yes, but! 1. Some will make a choice of occasions etc. 2. Others would like to make a halfway bargain between God and the world. 3. Others would like to serve God, but not too strenuously. 4. Others would look on sanctity as something frightening and thus vult et non vult piger.”

“Let us examine how many ways there are for the will to want and not want, following the footsteps that have taken place.

(Reform 4, Volume 7, No. 21/4, p. 71)

The Priesthood

“As a first point, there are basically two things that the Almighty requires in his sacred ministers...the light of sanctity and the salt of doctrine. Vos estis lux mundi, vos estis Sal terrae. Above all, good example of life and along with it preparation for the ministry must be the bases for the special delights of anyone dedicated to the Sanctuary. To each one, the Apostle says: Attende tibi, attende lectioni, exhortationi, et doctrinae, noli

negligere gratiam quae est in te. And oh! Quam pulchra est casta generatio cum claritate! How beautiful are those souls that are mystically generated with a singular clarity of holiness; the brilliance of their virtue removes them from the darkness, the fogginess of vice and of sin. Hence purity of life, as figured in the candor of the lily, tenderness of love as symbolized in the red rose, tireless search of ecclesiastical perfection as depicted in the fragrant cedars of Lebanon, all are the cause of a robust holiness and the inestimable qualities of the Priesthood.”

“The sanctuary is the place of an exalted holiness. It seeks inhabitants who will emulate what is heavenly. Required is a detachment from everything and from everyone; a deep humility, a suffering longanimity, a tireless desire to cultivate one’s talents in order to perfect them and direct them for the welfare of the Church and the advantage of the faithful.”

(Panegyric for the feast of St. Vincent de Paul, Volume 7, No. 34, p. 127)

St. Francis Xavier

“May this saint in Paradise always protect anyone who is especially occupied in the ministry of giving Missions. May the grace of Jesus Christ, who at the price of his Blood redeemed us, always be with us.

(St. Francis Xavier, Brief Biographical Manuscript, Volume 13, No. 70, p. 285)

“Great Apostle for so many people who had such an exalted idea of the price of my salvation, obtain for me from my Savior, Jesus Christ, the grace to cooperate with all those that he has already bestowed on me. Grant that I may not ever lose sight of the price of my redemption and only as something to be my support, I beg of you a particular favor at the time of this novena; obtain it for me, I pray, if it redounds to the glory of God.”

(Novena of Grace in honor of St. Francis Xavier, Volume 13, No. 70bis., p. 311)

“Oh Jesus, God of my heart, I beg that through your five wounds and the love that you poured forth for us on the Cross, you will come to the help of your servants whom you have redeemed with the price of your Blood. Amen.”

(Prayer which St. Francis Xavier used to recite in honor of the five Wounds of Jesus Christ)

(Novena of Grace in honor of St. Francis Xavier, Volume 13, No. 70bis, p. 312)

“March – St. Francis Xavier -- Virtues to be practiced. Zeal for the salvation of souls.

(Saints – Protectors of the month, Volume 18, p. 488)

St. Joseph

”As a matter of fact, whether one considers the dignity of office entrusted to St. Joseph... or his elevation to a place of merit, thanks to his faithful correspondence to the graces granted him, or, finally his exercise of patrimony, I must come to the conclusion that after Jesus and Mary, the most exalted creature is the glorious Patriarch St. Joseph, even though of the Precursor of the Lord, it is said: non surrexit major Joanne Baptista. that is always meant to be understood with exception of Mary and Joseph. Otherwise, the expression inter natos mulierum non surrexit major would have to be understood in an entirely different manner and would have excluded even Mary – which is something altogether foreign to any concept about her; the same would hold true with regard to St. Joseph.”

“The office of Spouse of Mary and putative father etc. through which he cooperated in the work of redemption means that St. Joseph, in a marvellous way, cooperated with the great purposes of the Redemption – Adam brought ruin to the human race through his disobedience to God, through his attachment to the sensuous and through his pressing desire to become like God. Jesus redeemed mankind by learning obedience in the world, detachment from sensuous things, to seek deeply the reconciliation of mankind to God. Joseph, then, is the great Patriarch of the divine mysteries as Jesus shows obedience toward him. Oh mankind! Learn to humble yourself.”

(Thoughts about St. Joseph, Volume 7, No. 4, p. 13-14)

The Most Holy Trinity

“God is good by essence, full of Charity and love, in the same way in the essence of the Three Divine Persons, even though both are two indivisible attributes.”

“Two incomparable benefits are the goodness and the love that God shared with mankind by sending into this world his only begotten Son, awaited for so many centuries. He deigned to do this because he willed that both benefits would always remain impressed upon the minds of both the just man as well as the sinner.”

“Abraham’s faith would have been useless if it had not been accompanied by his good works. They, too, would never have been good works if grace, if his firm belief in the future Messiah and his goodness had not animated him.”

(The Apostles, Peter and John, Volume 19, p. 543-546)

Holiness

“Reminders

Think about God

Speak to God

(Retreat for Women, Volume 8, No. 59/2, p. 203)

“Who is it that does not know that even though God wants all to be saints, still the manner of acquiring sanctity and the practice of sanctity must be varied? ...All, indeed, must perfect themselves in the ways of holiness, but the manner of doing so is diverse and of many forms. Just as in a garden, the flowers that make it good and delightful are of multiple varieties, so also varied in the garden of the Church are the vocations and the states of life in which virtue is acquired and progressively developed.”

“Sanctity has a gentle aspect; sanctity requires good example, a purity of intention, freedom from the human. It flees from those particularities which might irritate the humble life and humility, in certain cases, brings it back to that circumspection by which it is enabled to know what is due to God and to its guide alone. Its outer nature, its very equilibrium of action, its peculiar lightness of bearing are all virtuous treasures that are completely hidden within its internal spirit!”

(Directory, Volume 13, pp. 380-381)

“The world has containers but it does not have the oil. God is the one who quickly provides the precious balm of true contentment in his divine grace and holy peace. He is ready to pour them out into the empty containers, but first it is necessary etc. This balm will continue to be multiplied as each day follows after the other, etc. etc.”

(Another Principle, Volume 16, p. 466)

“Blessed is the person who walks in the noted footsteps of the Redeemer. Insofar as it is possible for him in his wretched humanity etc., but with due proportion, he will be able to bring about in himself what is read about Jesus in the Gospel: *bene omnia fecit*. This is the knowledge that we must acquire which was so eagerly sought after by the true servants of God etc. Every art must be learned in its basic principles and its practice. So, too, in this particular art must one learn by recognizing: 1. The necessity of being saints; 2. The manner of achieving it. *Bene omnia fecit*.

“In order to act, one must first know; once the truth is known, one must proclaim it in a practical way etc. But, oh how many there are who are mistaken in a just discernment of things. Some think that sanctity is only for contemplatives; others say that they are content to remain in a state of mediocrity; still others would like to equate Christ and Belial. So, one must wait and see, etc.

“1. It is incontestable that the Christian is called by God to perfection. *Estote perfecti* etc.

You young people who are listening to me right now, prepare yourselves to climb this mountain etc. It is a mistaken notion that some people have that a mediocre sanctity is enough. In the pursuit of virtue, they say that if you are not making progress it is the same as going backward. A ship out on the open sea does not reach port until it has

already navigated through an imminent storm. Woe to those slothful and lazy souls for the devil is already singing a song of victory. The more we are slow to admit our need for repentance because of our frequent failings, the greater is the need for rising again with a renewed fervor and a desire for the purification of our spirit. In a garden, if one does not remove those growths that keep increasing and stand in the way of a fruitful harvest, one cannot have hope for the awaited crop. Remember how the workers were summoned at any hour for service in the vineyard. Does that not mean that at any time at all we must always be ready to cultivate the field of our heart.”

“Woe to those who set aside the weapons of virtue etc. How is it possible to maintain ourselves ever strong and never wearied in our war against the enemy if we do not give ourselves to prayer etc. *Vigilate et orate* – these words are meant for everyone. *Contendite intrare per augustam portam*. The kingdom of heaven will not be conquered except by the one who does violence...

“Are you going to say that the undertaking is much too arduous? You are deceiving yourselves. Our reaching perfection is not a matter covered in a day. Furthermore, with God’s help, you do not want to form a false idea of what sanctity is. It surely is not the producing of miraculous deeds or even in doing great things. No. My dear Christians, perfection in the ordinary works kept in proportion to our state in life as willed by God, well, that is what sanctifies us. So, let your aspirations be highly elevated for they are most pleasing to God. Remember, however, *holocausta medullata offeram tibi...* *sacrificate sacrificium justitiae...* *Non omne prophetarum* etc. *voluntas Dei sanctificatio vestra.*”

Therefore, if one does his meditation well etc., that is something that sanctifies us. Imperceptibly we detach ourselves from the world, we show affection to God, we enjoy heaven – *anticipate gaudete in domino semper...servite domino in laetitia*. The law of Jesus is very gentle yoke: *Jugum meum suave est* etc.

“Let us impress upon ourselves deeply this maxim: our perfection consists in our doing what God wills and to do it just as he wishes to have it done.”

(Sanctifying oneself, Volume 18, p. 508-512)

“1. To do everything in the way that one would do it at the final moments of life. 2. To do it in the presence of God. 3. To do it without allowing the devil to overcome us by calling to our minds extraneous things or things that are applicable at the moment etc. *Omnia tempus habent* etc. One should work like bees etc. let us remain faithful in the Ark of the good Noah etc. etc.

(Means, Volume 18, p. 513)

Excuses of ignorance

“Father, we know, indeed, that human weakness, with the grace of God, is capable of doing everything.”

(On excuses, Volume 7, No. 12, p. 32)

God’s thirst

“In truth, God, through his provident mercy, establish *ab aeterno* that man should know that the true delight, the real joy is not to be really found here but in his glory in heaven.

Man's heart calls for a God; his desires yearn for a God; it is only God who can fully satisfy those yearnings there. As a consequence, dear listeners, our hearts will be totally tranquil through the mediation of that very lucid and unveiled vision. I pointed this out when I spoke of the beatific possession of God and of those goods that are free of sufferings. Therefore, when we possess them, we will enjoy them. In enjoying them, and this must be said, we can never be fully satisfied in our love for the donor. In loving him, finally, we will then be in possession of true love."

(Sermon on Paradise, Volume 7, No. 33, pp. 119-120)

"Oh how greatly gentle is Jesus with us. He has made himself our way, our life and our truth."

(Banners, Volume 7, No. 54, p. 176)

Suffering

"1. One suffers with *glory*. 2. One suffers with *merit*. 3. One suffers with *peace*. That first point encourages suffering. The second rectifies the manner of suffering. The third gives proportion to the acts.

(Suffering, Volume 19, p. 531)

Humility

"It is not a surprising thing that Pride should have been found already in the heavens where the angelic nature from the very beginning was endowed with abundant gifts. But, that Pride should be found on earth where human nature is a composite of poverty and misery, certainly arouses a great sense of stupor. The prophet Hosea said in chapter 9: *Humiliatio tua in medio tui*. We do not have to travel far into distant lands to find material for humbling ourselves. All we have to do is take a look into our inner selves and there we will find, at any time at all, imbedded in our nothingness, in our very being, in our actions, an exceedingly abundant cause for looking upon ourselves with scorn. That is how it is. Mankind has naturally gotten to the point of identifying poverty with Pride so that like a balloon when it is emptiest of all, so much the more is it ordinarily more inflatable."

"...humility is the open professing of truth. That is why it so beloved to the Lord as he said to St. Mary Magdalene de Pazzi. Secondly, at the very time that we proclaim our own nothingness, we also proclaim that all good things come from God and to him must all glory be given. Therefore in that way we profess the virtue of religion by professing that we directly acknowledge the divine Excellence and indirectly our own vileness; thus, on the contrary, the virtue of humility professes that we recognize directly the baseness of mankind and indirectly the exaltation of the divine majesty."

(Humility, Volume 7, No. 37, p. 152)

"We are to seek it through prayer, otherwise it would be a huge act of pride to try to acquire it through one's own powers like other less difficult virtues. What an act of pride

would it not be to try to acquire this very rare virtue with one's own powers. (The human being is like a painting which is viewed from the exact angle used by the artist as he managed his colors with such mastery – one simply cannot find anything so rare. But, if one looks at it again from another angle, one sees nothing more than a cluttered cloth displaying its total background.)”

“Can one perhaps deny that Jesus Christ was humbled to such a point as to compare himself with a worm among men, neglected and trampled on? Certainly he cannot deny that. Is there anyone who has not seen how greatly the Lord has sublimated all of his acts of humility by assuming them as his own?”

“No other virtue is so pertinent to our perfection, which is achieved by removing the impediments and by taking on the due dispositions called for by humility. That is so just as the ocean, in order to inundate a town with the abundance of its waters, requires that the town be on a low level and below the shore level. God, who is like the ocean of abundant gifts and has such a measureless tendency to communicate himself to his creatures, finds no greater obstruction to his communication than pride etc. However, when a soul is willing to lower itself as it should, it is overwhelmed with a plenitude of grace. Thus, it is said that humility is the very foundation of all the other virtues, not because it outranks all of them, for it surely does not outrank faith, but, because it removes all of those obstacles and makes that person capable of receiving the divine influences for the acquisition of all virtues and most of all to acquire and to increase its own virtue of charity.”

(Means for acquiring this virtue, Volume 7, No. 37/1, pp. 154-155)

“One must realize that it is the very nature of Pride to consider only one's own gifts and in others only their defects. So also, it is the very nature of humility to consider in one's neighbor the goodness that God has given to him but to see in himself only the evil that he is capable of. As a result, the humble person never looks down on anyone for what appears to be something contemptible or lacking in generosity or natural talent. But with wholeheartedness, one is to regard each person as superior to oneself and outwardly to show that individual the honor that is properly due. In this way, by comparing his own demerits to the merits that are found in his neighbor, that person comes to terms with that expression that has so often issued from the mouths of great Saints that they themselves are the greatest sinners in the world. St. Paul publicly admitted this, as did St. Francis and St. Catherine of Siena. Their reason for saying that and having that attitude was, first of all, what we have already referred to, namely, that the Saints intended that they should be judges of themselves and not of their neighbors. Toward themselves they acted as severe judges condemning themselves rigorously, but toward their neighbor they acted like a mother who forgives the defects of her child. Likewise, someone who has a lot to do in his own house, will know little or nothing about the next-door houses. So, also, the Saints were assiduously concerned about their own faults and hence knew little or nothing about those of others. Those faults that they did see in others, without seeking them out, were either excused, lessened, considered as caused in inadvertence, or the result of a strong temptation or passion. In short, the Saints compared their defects not only with the good found in their neighbors, but they compared them likewise appropriately to the power of the graces that they received from God.”

(Acts that could be exercised for humility, Volume 7, No. 37/2, pp. 156-157)

1. The humble man is a great recommender of the Truth in relationship to God.
2. The humble man is a great estimator of virtue in relationship to himself.
3. The humble man is a great executor of works of sanctity in relationship to his neighbor.

“Humility is the confession of truth.”

(Humility, Volume 8, No. 58, p. 198)

Virtue

“Virtue is located on a rigid and alpine mountain. But, do not suspect that the ascent is something absolutely direct in striving to get to the top! Rather, it is a matter of meandering and following a serpentine route, starting at the very base of the mountain and then going up little by little.”

(Reform 6, Volume 7, No. 14/1, p. 39)

“In how many ways can a light be put out? A light can be put out in three ways: 1. With a gust of wind. 2. By smothering it. 3. By a shortage of fuel. In three ways is the Holy Spirit extinguished.”

(Reform 7, Volume 7, No. 15, p. 42)

Eternal Life

“A young man, called by God to assume the habit of a strict religious order, was already accepted. But, he stopped from going there because a thought which popped into his head. I am a healthy man, I am strong and well-built. Why, then, should I spend my whole life in fasting, in observing vigils etc? Oh no! It did not turn out that way! Do you know how long his life lasted? Four months and a few days. When the fellow reached the point of his final moments he could not find peace. Yes, our life is a sacred timepiece which might all of a sudden come to its nightfall. But even if it were to last say for thirty or forty years, *quid haec ad aeternitatem.*”

“Anyone who travels by ship, as long as he eats and sleeps, will not lose his way at all since he always has the rudder set on his fixed destiny; so also, etc. My God: *Recogitabo tibi omnes annos meos in amaritudine animae meae.* Oh poor soul of mine!”

(Importance of Eternal Salvation, Volume 16, pp. 470 and 473)

Zeal for God

“It is proper to God’s greatness that he be served by mankind who take glory in belonging to him, professing themselves entirely his. There is no way, prudently speaking, which can lessen that power or the obligation of that duty etc. *Qui non est mecum contra me est* (Luke, c. 11).”

Spiritual suggestions for Missionaries CPPS

(A collection of spiritual sayings of St. Gaspar for his missionaries: “To be meditated on during the holy Retreat” – compiled by a Missionary of the most Precious Blood.)

Hail to the Divine Blood

Beati qui lavant stolas suas in Sanguine Agni

Spiritual suggestions from my Venerable Father Gaspar del Bufalo – given to his Missionaries for meditation during the Spiritual Retreat and later to be put into practice etc.

1. God is calling me to solitude, to a spiritual retreat. During that time, like the Prophet I will meditate on the poverty and the wretchedness of my soul: *ego vir videns paupertatem meam*. (Lamen). Oh! How much do I find that alarms me, how many weaknesses, imperfections, sins! How much confusion in my mind, how much disorder in my heart, how many aberrations in my deeds. I am supposed to be entirely God’s and I do not know if I am anywhere near that. What am I to do? God does not want me to be dejected, despairing. As long as I can amend my ways, there can be resurrection. So let me get to it. Trustful of his mercy and with profound humility, let me seek out the Lord on the way to perfection.
2. *Dominus pars hereditatis meae*. As a creature, as a Christian and most of all as a priest and missionary, I should be entirely God’s, with all my soul and body, with mind, with heart and with my actions. So, no other thought than the thought of God and his glory; no other love than the love of God and my neighbor, procuring the salvation of souls, the conversion of sinners, the sanctification of people. Spare no labor in seeing that God is honored and loved, relating everything to him. I wish for myself only the scorn of the people of the world etc. Am I really what I am supposed to be? Are the qualities of an apostolic person found in me? For whom have I labored up to now? Oh! Those labors that were thus lost, like a treasure tossed into the depths of the ocean, if the Lord is not content with me!
3. “I must seek the glory of God by procuring the salvation of souls. I am in a Congregation, in an Institute which is regulated, directed by obedience. Hence, this is what I set down for myself: to serve God, to work for his glory in that office, in that place, with those people that obedience will assign to me. Thus I will remain quiet and peaceful, certain that I will be doing the will of God. Can that be done? Etc. etc. Examination and resolutions.
4. *“Luceat lux vestra coram hominibus – in omnibus teipsum praebe exemplum bonorum operum*. Every priest, every religious, but especially a Missionary, in order to see that God is given glory and in order to bear fruit in the care of souls, must

give good example. The others, the seculars, must be willing to learn from us, not only the doctrine, but still more the practice of the Gospel. Therefore, we must be like lamps burning in the house and outside, in the church and on the highway, both with our own people as well as with strangers; then, we will have the true apostolic spirit and we will bring forth much fruit by all of efforts. Can that be done? Are we that kind of people? Etc. Examinations etc. etc.

5. "A great truth = Human life is a continuous struggle. Even more so, the life of a Christian, a disciple of the crucified Jesus Christ. Even more so for a sacred person, for a Missionary to whom Jesus Christ left the cross, rejection, and sufferings as an inheritance. Therefore, suffering in the home and outside, both internally and externally, even in seeking the glory of God, in doing good works for others in the exercise of the ministry, must be my portion. But simply suffering in itself would be of no benefit to me without a holy goal. Consequently, suffering for Jesus Christ etc. This is the life of a true Missionary, his spirit, etc.
6. "In order that my courage in suffering will not diminish, I must keep looking at Jesus Christ. If he, a God-Man, has been despised, spit upon, scourged, is it so surprising that the same thing should happen to me? More. We must keep in mind the good that will result for me from the suffering. To enjoy briefly and then to suffer endlessly for the wicked; suffer briefly and enjoy eternally for the good. Superabundo gaudio in omni tribulatione etc. Matter for much examination etc. etc. etc.
7. "Jesus Christ came to this earth in order to enkindle divine love in our hearts: ignem veni mittere in terram. If Jesus Christ wished this for all people,

is it not even more so for a priest, a Missionary? He said three times to St. Peter: diliges me? Etc.

Therefore, this is the objective for all of our efforts on this earth: to love the Lord. Blessed is that person who can say: I love him! This is not something so easy. But, there is a way of quieting and calming one's heart. Jesus Christ said: si diligitis me mandata mea servate: if you love me, do my will by observing my commandments. So, doing the will of God means to love him. In doing this, one does not omit tenderness, sighs etc. Let us keep them there. But the will of God is known from his commandments, from the obligations that he imposes upon me. Hence, by observing them, I am certain of loving him. I am a rational creature and this is the natural law; I am a creature and those are the revealed precepts; I am a religious person and these are my rules; I am a Missionary and these are my duties as an apostle. Do I fulfill all of them? In that case I would be able to say: I love God.

8. "The rock against which so many people, even pious ones, are broken is this one: presuming that God is doing our will and not *we doing God's will*. We often say: Lord, just why do things have to be that way? I would like to be good, but circumstances, people of the world will not let me be so; if God does not free me

from this anguish, this bother etc., I simply cannot do it by myself etc. etc. What stupidity! Is it not his will that God is seconding my desires, my will? And, just what has happened to the will of God? When is it sought for? Examination etc.

9. “Now, a point, the most difficult one. Doing the will of God, manifested in his precepts, is not so arduous a thing. There is a more rigid path, that is, a total abandonment of ourselves into the hands of God, to his divine dispositions, always ready to resign oneself to whatever the Lord wishes to do with us, even though it appears to be grave, costly, too much and perhaps even unjust. God wants our sanctification; hence, the total sacrifice of our very selves on the altar of love. So, what does God do? He seizes a soul; he says to it: have you practiced the virtues, have you loved me as you are supposed to? Yes. But that is not enough: I want even more from you. The Lord then raises his sword and strikes and suddenly in that soul all the misfortunes of his present life, the persecution, the scorn, others’ hatred, his pains, his sickness, calumnies etc. are unloaded. What is to be done?

Here is the terrible point. Here so many souls are pardoned. Blessed is the one who has so much faith that he can remain in control and remain strong. One says: But Lord! Why so much adversity on your servants? Why should one who is serving you so faithfully be treated so badly? Why should everything go against him who is practicing virtues, someone who is so good? The Lord responds: *numquid viae meae viae vestrae*; am I, perhaps, to think in the same way your head thinks? Let us look at Jesus Christ – he was treated by his Father in the same way. So also, St. Francis Xavier, after so many labors for the glory of good and the welfare of souls, died abandoned on an isolated rock there in the midst of the most remote seas without a single comfort and even disdained. Oh! What mysteries these are. How many things we have to be ready for etc. What does self-love say now?

10. Love God and love your neighbor. The Lord also wishes the second thing: *Diligite alterutrum*. Every Christian is required to do this, but even more so the priest, the Missionary. Still more, one who lives in a Congregation that has no other bond than that of charity. *I do not want FRATI*, the Venerable used to say, *and I do not want bonds such as promises or vows with my members; the only bond is the bond of charity*. Oh how much material there is here to meditate on! Charity of mind, of heart, of action. Yes, of action; One must show love with actions, not with words. Is that being done? Etc.
11. “*Amare est velle bonum*. If people with whom you live are loved, one must show that love by working for their good, etc.

Goods of the natural order: helping each other with the needs in life...works of mercy...

Goods of the civil order: esteeming our neighbor, respecting his reputation, honor, without complaints, gossip, rumors, feelings of revenge, etc.

Goods of the moral order: edifying each other by the exchange of good works and good example.

I point out that we have an obligation to love our neighbor because that is what God wants, through Jesus Christ. This is the real, holy objective, etc. So, even though there may be defects, objections which will have to be faced or to be concealed...that is when real fraternity will be recognized.

Secondly, I point out that the vices that are in opposition to holy charity are *sympathy* and *antipathy*. Anyone who loves out of sympathy and anyone who does not love because of antipathy, does not possess a religious virtue, and does not at all regulate himself as a true Christian; he is a pagan, etc.

12. To maintain holy charity in the home, there must be unity and things are to be done in an orderly fashion. So, here are our holy rules: *Serba ordinem*. They are there, they are to be observed.

The Congregation has accepted me with this agreement in mind. It keeps me with itself with this condition in mind, So? Each one has his own office. Do not be intrigued by offices which are not due. If one would have to leave his work and other occupations assigned in obedience, such as ministers in regard to their neighbors, to pray, to meditate, etc. that is a defect, a disorder, etc., each one will determine that in accordance with the spirit of each institute. Some say: I like the spirit of the Carthusians, or of the Jesuits, etc. They do it that way – s o do we. Foolishness! Then you should have become a Jesuit or a Carthusian and not come to this Congregation. You are neither a Carthusian nor a Jesuit, because you just never became one. You are not a member of the Congregation of the most Precious Blood because you do not have its spirit. Who, then, are you?

13. Who will give us a key to enter into heaven and take possession of so many treasures of grace that are needed by us? That is in our hands through prayer. That is needed by all, but even more so by a priest, a Missionary; without it, we are like a soldier without a sword. Therefore, let us pray, *petite*, and it will be given to you; *accipietis, pulsate et aperietur*. Pray in the name of Jesus, through his merits etc. because we do not merit anything. Pray always, *semper orare*, with your mind, your heart, your aspirations. Whoever has the gift of the presence of God never ceases to pray etc. Is that being done?

14. At times, God does not hear us in accordance with our desires. This is not a sign that the Lord does not hear our prayer. He often sees that what we are asking for, is not for our good, it is not the best thing.

Often those same temptations are good for us and the Lord does not remove them from us even though we may pray for that intention etc. Keep this in mind so as to remain resigned in spirit.

15. The union with Jesus Christ is the goal toward which we aspire. That union consists in a perfect, true, pure love. Hence, to love Jesus Christ. To love him: 1. Because our Father... we are children of his blood etc. 2. Because we are thankful for all that he has done for us. 3. Because he did even more for the priest whom he raised

to the sublime dignity in which he is constituted. To bring God down to earth, to offer a sacrifice to the Heavenly Father, to remit sins, to preach the Gospel to the people -- this is his sublime ministry. Hence, recognition and love of Jesus Christ.

4. As members of the Congregation of the most Precious Blood, we must preach

the love of Jesus Christ to others. However, someone who is cold, does not give off heat. Therefore, etc. The devotion to the most Precious Blood will be the safest means of attaining the love of Jesus Christ.

Along with Jesus, we love Mary too. With Jesus and Mary, we live, we suffer, we work, we labor in the vineyard of the Lord. We die with Jesus and Mary. May God grant this to all of us and may we all be joined together in Paradise...

(Spiritual sentiments for CPPS Missionaries, Volume 19, p. 514-520)