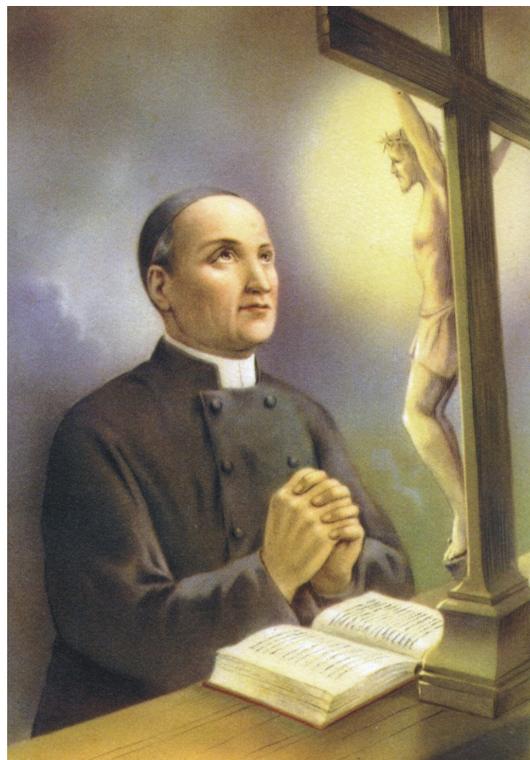


STIGMATINE SPIRITUALITY

and

PRAYER

(The Brown Book)



Stigmatine Fathers and Brothers

Waltham, Massachusetts

1997

Foreword

This volume includes basic elements of Stigmatine spirituality.

Part One is a new translation of *The Spirit of Saint Gaspar Bertoni*. This is the classic synthesis of the Stigmatine Founder's spiritual legacy. It summarizes the unique ideals and values that inspired Gaspar Bertoni's personal growth in holiness and apostolic vision. All who would join their own spiritual journey to his will find it a challenging insight into the Stigmatine way of life.

Part Two is the revised version of *The Stigmatine Manual of Prayer*. It includes the traditional devotions that are recommended for all Stigmatines throughout the world. These acts of piety may be used both communally and privately as part of a vibrant and regular prayer life.

Part Three is the *Stigmatine Proper for the Liturgy of the Hours* for the feasts associated with the Congregation.

Part Four contains the Mass texts for the *Solemnity of Saint Gaspar Bertoni*, *the Feast of the Sacred Stigmata*, and *the Feast of the Holy Spouses, Mary and Joseph*.

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PART ONE

The Spirit

of

Saint Gaspar Bertoni

Founder of the Stigmatine Fathers and Brothers

Joseph Fiorio, C.S.S.

Translated by

Charles F. Egan, C.S.S.

PREFACE

The first edition of the SPIRIT OF ST. BERTONI was published anonymously in 1914, due to the modesty of the author, Rev. Joseph Fiorio, C.S.S. With admirable simplicity and intense enthusiasm, he sketched the characteristic features of our saintly Founder and his teachings.

In 1965, an English translation was first published. For some time, a new edition of this work has been desired, especially following his canonization in 1989.

This revised edition retains the essential and fundamental teachings and examples of St. Gaspar as they were presented by the author. However, efforts have been made to change certain phrases, words, and constructions to make for a better, smoother reading of this inspiring work, and at times, to quote more exactly the texts of our Founder.

Our gratitude goes to those who helped to make this revised edition more readable and inspiring. They are: Rev. Charles Grady; Rev. Richard Scioli; Rev. Charles Egan; Rev. Joseph Fellin. It is their hope that this present work presents correctly the thoughts, ideas, and intent of the humble and unforgettable author.

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THE SPIRIT OF SAINT GASPAR BERTONI

Introduction

"It is the spirit which gives life" (John 6:64)

1. NECESSITY OF PRESERVING THE SPIRIT OF OUR FOUNDER.

Every religious order or congregation has a particular spirit as well as a special purpose and aim, a spirit which each founder possessed and endeavored to impart to and perpetuate in his sons. Experience teaches us that as long as the purpose of an order's founder continues to influence his followers, and as long as they are motivated by his ideal and his spirit, then that order will be full of life and fervor. If this spirit diminishes, then the order will begin to decline. This should not come as a surprise if we reflect that the purpose of every religious order is supernatural, and without the help of divine grace it cannot reach its goal. Hence, in assisting and enlightening founders, by making known to them His will concerning the purpose of the order and how to achieve it, God promises to the order or congregation a special grace, a spirit connected with its purpose. He will not grant this grace, at least not abundantly, if its members digress from the purpose that he manifested to them through their founder.

2. WORDS OF OUR FOUNDER IN THIS REGARD.

Our Founder expresses these very thoughts in our Constitutions. After mentioning the difficulties and dangers to which we are exposed in attaining the purpose of our congregation, he bids us place our trust in the Holy Spirit, for "He who began and inspired the work will also bring it to fulfillment, provided we do not place obstacles in the way." (1) Hence, we need to study and imitate the spirit of our Founder if we want to draw down heavenly blessings on our congregation, (which was so evidently blessed in its beginnings), and if we want God to make use of it for that supernatural purpose for which He destined it.

3. THE CONGREGATION WAS INSPIRED BY GOD.

The assertion, that our congregation is really a work desired by God, and that it was established by our saintly Founder under divine inspiration, is a truth which needs no proving after the explicit declaration of our Founder. Nevertheless, let us present some proof of this point which may serve for our greater comfort and encouragement.

First of all, it is well known that our Founder was truly a man of God, wise, prudent, free from all exaggeration, a lover of humility and silence, in a word, a person worthy of our complete confidence. He, himself, in the year 1810 confided to Father John Mary Marani, then his assistant in the work of the Oratory, that God had revealed to him that he should establish a religious congregation. Father Marani assures us of this fact (2), and we catch a glimpse of this, though somewhat vague and obscure, in the following words which Father Bertoni wrote in his spiritual diary on 23 July 1809: "In order to begin a work, great and heroic virtue is necessary. Poverty is the basic requirement and then we must use all the other virtues."

4. THE BEGINNING OF OUR CONGREGATION.

Faithful to his principle of not anticipating the will of God, but of following and complying with it, Father Gaspar waited for the sign which God would give him to begin his work. In the meantime he lent his assistance to other religious institutes which were emerging at that time. He received the awaited sign in the year 1816 (3), when Archpriest Nicholas Galvani offered him the House of the Stimite, inviting him to assume the direction of the school which he had previously established. Without delay Father Bertoni went there with his early companions to begin the planned undertaking. Although they assembled under the apparent pretext of teaching young people, their real thought in those early years was to establish a permanent congregation. This is proven by the fact that right from the start they began to rebuild the church and the house and to accept young candidates. This is further substantiated by the concern that Father Bertoni had in endowing the new founded congregation with the necessary funds to ensure its permanence. Likewise, for this purpose, all the members agreed to a strict lifestyle which edified everyone. They followed this severe rule of life for many years. It was obvious, however, that such austerity kept many candidates from joining them. Thus, for the welfare of the congregation, he forfeited the lawful and holy consolation of seeing himself surrounded with many zealous followers. Their manner of living was prompted by the desire to obtain God's blessing on the new congregation and to leave to posterity splendid examples of religious virtue. When someone mentioned to Father Bertoni that life at the Stimite was too rigorous, he used to answer: "Nothing is too excessive when starting a congregation, because time and the needs of later years will mitigate things." (4)

5. OUR CONSTITUTIONS.

If we can say that our congregation is the work of God in its fundamental idea, we can say the same for its purpose and goal. To be convinced of this, let us recall a very familiar principle of Saint Gaspar which has already been quoted: "We should not anticipate the will of God so as not to confuse the work of man with that of God." This principle formed the first rule of his conduct. He used to recommend this to others and followed it faithfully in all his undertakings. Writing to Mother Naudet, who asked his advice concerning the foundation of her institute, he said: "If God has clearly made known to you the work of His glory, He will make known to you little by little the manner and the time for it." (5) In another letter on the same subject he wrote to her: "God will grant you the necessary inspiration; then you must proceed, encouraging your companions to do likewise just as David once did. Never take your eyes away from the Lord, but continue uninterruptedly in prayer until you have obtained the grace and mercy of the inspiration you need." (6) When compiling our constitutions, he showed the same concern. Father Mark Bassi wrote: "Father Bertoni lavished on these constitutions loving care, arduous study, long meditation and assiduous prayer. With the assistance of God, in whose presence he conceived and compiled them, he fashioned, ordered and perfected them to such an extent as to merit the praise of the reigning Pontiff and the approval of some of the most learned theologians. Side by side with the example of our Father Founder, these constitutions are a very precious inheritance of his paternal heart." (7)

We can glean this same thought from a fragment of a letter which Father Bertoni wrote to Father Bragato on 5 November 1841. In it he says: "Pray that God may accept and turn to His honor what I am writing in little spurts. If we do our part, following the grace which God gives us, He will certainly do His part; I do not presume to know what He wants done. I console myself firmly believing that God can do anything that He wants, and He always does what is best, though it be far removed from our limited views." (8)

Let this thought serve for our comfort: God wanted our congregation, and he wanted it just as our forefathers left it to us. Whatever our saintly Founder taught us by example and word, he first received from God.

6. THE WORDS OF THE VICAR OF CHRIST.

We will conclude by quoting from the Apostolic Letter which Pope Leo XIII addressed to the Superiors of Religious Orders on 29 June 1901. After speaking of the troubles and the persecutions directed against religious in those days, he encouraged them with these inspired words: "Devote yourselves with redoubled fervor to a life of faith, prayer, and holy works. Let religious discipline, rigid detachment from worldly things, and devotion to the things of God prevail among you. Let your thoughts be lofty, your purpose generous, your zeal for the glory of God and the spreading of His kingdom be tireless. If we have to add that, owing to these wicked times, you are oppressed by hateful laws or in danger of dispersion, you will understand how the need increases of keeping, with the greatest possible care, the integrity of the religious spirit from the contagious dissipation of the world, and of keeping yourselves armed and ready for any arduous trial whatsoever.

"All then, young and old, look to your illustrious Founders! They speak to you through their maxims; they direct you by their rules; they precede you by their example. Let it be your sacred and loving duty to listen to them, follow them, and to imitate them. Many of your elders did this in more troublesome circumstances and times, thus transmitting to you a rich inheritance of unbeatable constancy in every excellent virtue. Show yourselves worthy of such priests and brothers, and let everyone say with holy pride: 'We are children and brothers of saints.'"

Notes

- (1) Constitution 185
- (2) John Mary Marani, CSS, "An Account of the Congregation," Verona 1855.
- (3) Cf. *Bertoniano* Year 2, pg. 25 ss.
- (4) Giacobbe: Life of Father Gaspar, pg. 281.
- (5) Correspondence (Epistolario), pg. 86.
- (6) Correspondence, pg. 45
- (7) Father Mark Bassi, CSS, Sermon delivered at Trent commemorating the first centenary of the birth of Saint Gaspar Bertoni.
- (8) Correspondence, pg. 325.

Section I

Religious Perfection

Chapter One

PERFECTION IN GENERAL

The first duty of anyone who enters religious life is to aspire and work toward perfection. Therefore, we will now highlight some thoughts of Saint Gaspar Bertoni on the acquisition of perfection, and group them under special headings.

I. The Life of Faith

7. WORKING FOR A SUPERNATURAL END.

One of the oft repeated principles we find constantly in his spiritual diary, his letters, and in his exhortation to the clergy was: "We must always live and act motivated by a supernatural principle. We must dissuade ourselves from doing our own will, and instead do all things motivated by the will of God in order to please and honor Him." (1)

In other words, we must close our eyes to the things of earth so that we may recognize always and everywhere the will of God. This is what the Lord asks of us: "We should live by the spirit, sanctify all things, so that we make anything which falls under our senses of no great account. But, rising above all things we really live in Him and, confident of his infinite mercy and goodness, we will not be dissuaded from this spirit no matter what may befall us." (2)

We must mortify ourselves and our nature order to make grace triumph in us. If we do this, it will not be ourselves who are living and working, but God living and working in us. This is what our saintly Father Founder had in mind when he noted in his spiritual diary: "To act solely through the impulse of nature, even for an instant, is to impede the work of God, and makes it an act of a creature." (3)

8. THE MEANS FOR ACCOMPLISHING GREAT THINGS.

Furthermore, according to our saintly Founder: The secret for obtaining Divine assistance on our undertakings to overcome all obstacles and difficulties, and to do great things in the service of God is "to see only God." These are his words: "To see God in all things, this is how we place ourselves above all human things." (4) Writing to

Mother Naudet in regard to the government of her community he said: "We should never pay attention to the voice of our timid nature. This is why God made us participators in His divine nature, so that we should neither live nor work on the strength of our human nature, but rather on the divine, which was communicated to us by the grace of our adoption as children of God. You must understand well what God demands of you so that the timid thoughts and affections of your human nature do not impede the action and the stupendous effects of the divine." Then he concludes: "Briefly, everything is reduced to living faith and constant prayer." (5)

II. Fidelity to God

9. CORRESPONDENCE WITH DIVINE GRACE.

Complete filial trust in God results from this spirit of faith. From this, another duty arises which Saint Gaspar recommended, namely, the obligation of corresponding with divine grace. "We must be vigilant," he wrote, "that we do not fail the Lord, for we are assured that on His part He certainly will not be found wanting. If we do this we are in complete accord with God. Then who can sway us or thwart our undertakings?" (6)

Another maxim which frequently occurs in his writings is this: "There are very few who realize what wonders God would work through them if they did not impede His plans for them. We cannot imagine what wonders God would perform through us, and how much He would work in and through us, who are the apple of His eye, if only we would not place obstacles in His way, but put ourselves completely and freely in His hands." (7) He used to repeat this often when speaking to the clergy. On another occasion he recalled the same principle to Mother Naudet: "Let us freely allow God to enter and take possession of our soul which He loves very much and tries to unite to Himself. We know the time of His visit; let us separate ourselves from all creatures and from our own senses so as not to awaken our soul when it is reposing in the Lord! Nothing more is required. In due time it will produce results that are precious, lofty, noble, and worthy of a union that is so holy and so sublime." (8)

Let us recall his very beautiful thought on divine inspiration: "These inspirations are like heralds who come before the great princes of the world. Now the heralds of His divine majesty should be properly received and listened to, and we should do what they say, because we must prepare everything according to their counsel. Then the Lord of heaven and earth will come in person to visit us." (9)

10. SPIRIT OF RECOLLECTION.

A spirit of recollection is needed if we are to hear the voice of God and to follow His inspirations. With his usual insistence, Saint Gaspar gives us this recommendation: "The Lord would speak to certain souls if only they would remain quiet for a while, because the world makes too much of a din around them." (10) Further on he wrote: "In order to receive and preserve the counsels of the Lord, solitude, quiet, internal and external silence are needed; otherwise, either God's counsels will not be heard, or they will vanish and disappear." (11) Recollection is also a good preparation for prayer. Hence, Saint Gaspar wrote to Mother Naudet on those words of the Sacred Scripture: "It is the duty of man to prepare his soul; use the greatest, the most delicate, and the utmost care, so that your soul may be always ready for the visits of His divine majesty. Prudent silence, avoidance of idle talk and jokes -- these are ways of being sure that our soul is alert to the sweet voice of our Creator." (12)

11. CORRESPONDENCE OF SAINT GASPAR WITH THE GRACE OF GOD.

Saint Gaspar used all these means himself, before suggesting them to others. One of his worries was that of not corresponding with the grace of God. He feared that he might be found lacking: "I fear Jesus passing by." (13) For this end he requested the prayers of others. "I recommend myself to your prayers," he wrote, "so that I may not be ungrateful to the Lord who has given me so many graces which I did not deserve. Even now, I am very undeserving of them." (14)

For this reason he used every precaution to keep himself recollected and united to God. Father Gaetano Giacobbe, his first biographer, observed that mental prayer was his constant occupation. It had become so familiar and natural to him, that should an occasion arise whereby he had to omit it through obedience, he would be greatly upset. Thus, he was seen in the streets of the city with his eyes riveted heavenward, usually with his head uncovered, no matter what the weather was, wholly absorbed in God. (15)

Often, in his spiritual diary, we find mention of a special recollection and union with God which he had during the day, almost a continuation of those raptures which he experienced while celebrating Mass or during his morning meditation. (16)

III. Tenacity of Will

12. GOOD WILL IS NECESSARY.

These are the means to achieve perfection: act always with an upright intention; correspond faithfully with divine grace. In order to do this a strong and resolute will in the service of God is necessary, a will which is firm and constant in the face of all difficulties. On this point Father Bertoni followed the maxim of St. Augustine and often quoted it: "He who has good will has everything, but that will is not good which does not accomplish all that it can." (17)

Therefore, on our part, we must be generous and prompt to follow the divine will in everything, prompt to follow divine inspirations. "In this work of perfection," our saintly Father wrote, "where there is a question of a divine call, we must seize the opportunity and the moment." (18) Then he points out the example of the apostles, who, as the Gospel said: "Forthwith left their nets and followed him." We should not lose courage in the difficulties we meet, since we should not rely on the strength of our human nature, but rather on that of our second nature which God shares with us, that is, on the aid of grace.

"Let us remember," Saint Gaspar wrote, "those two sayings of our Lord: the first 'Without me you can do nothing' and the other 'I can do all things in him who strengthens me.'" (19) Then he continues: "Blessed are they who trust in divine providence; they do not fear anything thwarting their plans. Everything serves it equally, whether prosperous or adverse, whether the good or bad will of men. 'There is nothing that can resist your will.'" (20) "Everything consists," he further states, "in forming a resolution to serve God no matter what the cost. We must guard against impulses; an impulse of the will is discerned in its effect. The former yields in difficulties and becomes weak; the latter resists, defines, and strengthens itself." (21) Since we will always be faced with difficulties and contradictions, we must arm ourselves beforehand and fortify ourselves against them so that we can overcome them and turn them to our advantage. Saint Gaspar wrote: "It is necessary to prepare oneself for greater temptations and to make amends for past faults, so that we attain that place where God wants us to be." (22) "Great temptations are the matter and the means of great sanctity, provided there are also courage and strength." (23)

13. THE STRENGTH OF SAINT GASPAR.

St. Gaspar has left us many admirable examples of this. He never relented in the fervor of his work of zeal to which he had pledged himself; not even in the many trials and persecutions which he had to endure from the French Government and from his enemies.

Tried as he was by God with a long and painful illness, not even in the midst of all his sufferings did he cease from fulfilling the many burdensome tasks which his superiors entrusted to him. Nor did he desist from taking on any undertaking which could result in the glory of God.

Finally, even when tested by God in the foundation of his own congregation, and experiencing the lack of necessary personnel at a time when it seemed needed, he did not lose heart, nor did he give up the undertaking. Rather, it was at this time that he began to write the constitutions for our congregation, fully trusting in the assistance of God who had clearly manifested His will to him.

Let us conclude by quoting a few lines which St. Gaspar wrote in his spiritual diary. They concern a saint he had chosen as a model and whom he proposed to imitate. We reproduce these lines because we see his own portrait sketched in them. "He united strength and energy of soul which rendered him steadfast against any obstacles which might upset his plans. This arose from an interior peace which he derived from following the divine will, and from a lively faith that nothing could hinder God from executing what He had planned. He had no other fear than that of not corresponding with the grace of God." (24)

IV. Detachment From the World --

Abandonment in God

14. DETACHMENT FROM THE WORLD.

St. Gaspar had on several occasions presented these thoughts on perfection in different ways. For example, he claimed that perfection resulted in the detachment from ourselves and from earthly things, and in union with God. He said, "Perfection consists in unselfishness and in humility, because 'the root of all evil is cupidity, the beginning of all sin is pride.' Thus, poverty of spirit, unselfishness, cuts the root of all these vices. It brings about humility, and introduces all the virtues in which

perfection consists." (25) We must have the right intention of always acting for the glory of God in all our actions if we want to acquire this detachment. "Do nothing if not for the glory of God and his holy love; from this proceeds contempt of the world, and the banishment of all vice." (26)

Hence we must mortify our desires and our natural inclinations, even those that are licit, so that we can let ourselves be guided in all things by the will of God. "The Lord does not want anything to remain in us, not even the smallest thing, which would oppose what He wants. After the Lord has purged the soul of sin, He wants to purge it of defects, then imperfections, and finally, even natural inclinations themselves." (27)

A sign of this total detachment is the lack of any inclination for the goods and pleasures of the world; indeed, these become very distasteful. The contrary will be most regrettable for us. "Woe to you," he said to the clerics, "if you begin to taste the delights of the world, its riches, its honors, and its pleasures. This will be a sign that the delights of heaven are distasteful to you. The manna vanished from the Hebrews, and never appeared again, when they began to delight in the fruits of the earth." (28)

15. UNION WITH GOD -- THE ADVANTAGES IT BRINGS.

Moreover, we should not be satisfied only with detachment from the world, but we should use it as a means to ascend to an intimate union with God, where we will find perfection. "A soul is pure," St. Gaspar said, "when it is detached in its affections from the things of the earth which are inferior to it. It becomes purer as it ascends to a higher plane, that is, the more it is united to God." (29)

We will find our peace and trust in this always of Him and that our affections be continually fixed and concentrated on Him. If, because of this, we forget to do something, He will know when to remind us of it, or in His providence, He will perform the duty much better than we could ever have accomplished it. So, let us always be diligent when 'we love God.' Blessed is he who loses himself in this abyss, who courageously throws himself into this ocean and is shipwrecked in it. A child is never more secure than when it is sleeping in the arms of its mother, abandoning his every thought and care; he does not see, he does not hear, he does not speak, but his mother hears, speaks, and sees, and acts for him, and, when she wants, she knows that she can awaken him, since she is so near." (30)

We will also find strength and courage in this union and abandonment in God. "Blessed are they who have greatly trusted in this most powerful and loving God. Nothing else is required. He will give us strength as He has given us the desire. What a beautiful thing this is where the desire is not far from its fulfillment. 'He can do whatever He wills,' not that it has to be done, it is already done, for nothing can resist His will. Therefore, nothing is wanting where there is no lack of confidence, skill, knowledge, strength -- all these we will find in Him super-abundantly. 'Blessed is the one who trusts in Him!'" (31)

Finally, in union with God we will find the means to perform great things for His love; we will find our happiness and perfection. "In order to do much for God, we must be entirely His. The more we become proud the less apt we are to do great things for our neighbors. It is only those who have given themselves entirely to God who can expect to die well, for only they live good and tranquil lives. This is the manner in which lively faith and firm hope are preserved. They ask this of God with confidence, and they infallibly obtain what they seek." (32)

16. HOW SAINT GASPAR WAS UNITED TO GOD.

St. Gaspar directed his aim and efforts to achieve this state of perfection. As Father Giacobbe observed in *The Life of Bertoni*: "Even from the early years of his priesthood, he had proposed these two principles of perfection in his prayers and meditation: To have his heart filled with God, and to have it emptied of all that was not God." (33) In this he admirably succeeded as he desired. Creatures no longer attracted him, so absorbed was he in his Lord that he desired nothing else but the love of God and the fulfillment of His will. This is clearly proven from his spiritual diary where he noted the intimate communications of his soul with God especially in the celebration of the divine mysteries. "In my three Christmas Masses," he wrote in 1808, "I recalled with deep emotion the great benefit of my calling. Oh! how good it is to forget and divest oneself of things created and to seek God alone." (34)

The cause and goal of all his actions was the glory of God. Father Giacobbe says that he never acted out of any simple natural inclination, no matter how licit and honest it might be. He did not permit himself any diversion or pastime, even for a few moments, just for the scope of enjoying himself or passing time. Nor would he ever take a step or a look simply out of desire or curiosity. (35)

From the numerous examples which the author cites to confirm this assertion, we will mention one which seems very significant to us. He never desired to go to visit his property at Sezano, no matter how much he heard of its beauty from those at home. However, one day, urged by his companions, a carriage was prepared to take him out to see it. Hardly had he left the city, when he ordered the driver to turn the horses around and return home. Thus, he wanted to mortify any natural and innocent desire which he might experience.

The more he was detached from himself and the world, the more united he was with God. Father Giacobbe wrote: "He lived by no other spirit than that of God. His actions, his words, his holy thoughts were motivated by nothing else but God alone, whom he loved very much and by Whom he let himself be ruled -- the Spirit of the Lord." (36) This was the sentiment and the opinion of many who knew him and saw him act in this manner. Father Anthony Bresciani, S.J. who knew him in Verona and consulted him concerning his vocation, wrote of him in 1855: "It seemed to me that his every action was influenced and directed by the Holy Spirit." (37)

Now we can understand how Father Bertoni, acting on his own principles, was able to accomplish so much good and perform so many great things for the divine glory, for he was filled with God.

Notes

- (1) Spiritual Journal, 16 July 1809.
- (2) Correspondence, pg. 48.
- (3) Spiritual Journal, 15 July 1808.
- (4) Spiritual Journal, 3 July 1808.
- (5) Correspondence, pg. 66.
- (6) Spiritual Journal, 2 December 1808.
- (7) Instructions on "The Book of Kings," on the Words: "*Loquere, Domine,*" etc.
- (8) Correspondence No. 660.
- (9) Correspondence, pg. 68.

- (10) Spiritual Journal, 22 April 1809.
- (11) Spiritual Journal, 23 July 1809.
- (12) Correspondence, pg. 68.
- (13) Spiritual Journal, 18 September 1808.
- (14) Correspondence, pg. 98.
- (15) Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 43.
- (16) Spiritual Journal, 9, 23, 25 October 1808; 4, 11 December 1808; 24, 30 July 1809, etc.
- (17) Spiritual Journal, 22 March 1809.
- (18) Spiritual Journal, 7 December 1808.
- (19) Correspondence, pg. 96.
- (20) Correspondence, pg. 53.
- (21) Spiritual Journal, 30 July 1808.
- (22) Spiritual Journal, 13 September 1808.
- (23) Spiritual Journal, 31 August 1808.
- (24) Spiritual Journal, 11 February 1809.
- (25) Meditation 4 on the "Book of Kings".
- (26) Spiritual Journal, 14 July 1809.
- (27) Correspondence, pg. 39.
- (28) Instruction I to Acolytes.
- (29) Correspondence, pg. 38.
- (30) Correspondence, pg. 96.
- (31) Correspondence, pg. 82 and the following.

(32) Exercises to the Clergy: The Three Grades of Humility.

(33) Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 223.

(34) Spiritual Journal, 25 December 1808.

(35) Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 276.

(36) Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 255.

(37) Rev. Anthony Bresciani, S.J. (1798- 1862), a noted author, was a founder and early contributor to *Civiltà Cattolica*. After God, he considered Father Bertoni as one of the prime instruments in directing his vocation to the Society of Jesus.

Chapter Two

THE RELIGIOUS VIRTUES

I. Humility

17. THE NECESSITY OF HUMILITY.

If attachment to worldly things impedes the realization of perfection, so too does attachment to an inordinate love of self. Therefore, Father Gaspar highly recommended detachment from self which is acquired by sincere and profound humility. In fact, this was his favorite virtue. He spoke about this virtue most willingly and recommended it very frequently to others. He wrote: "At the very depths of my being God is found." (1)

Wherefore, whoever wishes to find God and live in union with Him must empty himself and deepen the knowledge of his own nothingness. This is what he practiced. Even amid the very special graces he received from God he humbled himself profoundly. We read in his spiritual journal: "Sensing something of the sublimity of God, I had a deep insight of myself." (2) In another place: "I experienced vivid sentiments and profound reverence for the presence of the Father at the '*Telgitur*' of the Mass, and a deep trust and love toward His Son. A profound realization of my sacerdotal dignity at the consecration, as representing the person of Christ before His Father. Great love and profound humility spread over me when I held Christ in my hands immediately after the consecration. Behold the greatest good united with the greatest malice; the purest with the impurest; the holiest with the greatest of sinners. This sentiment lasted until after Holy Communion, and remorse until evening." (3)

Without deep humility, we cannot arrive at perfection and union with God. "Before the Lord raises a soul to a higher plane," wrote St. Gaspar, "he humbles it more, for God is no less a wise architect than most common laborers who know that a foundation must be dug more deeply the higher the building will rise. Let us ask the Lord to increase His light in us, then, realizing how great is our indigence, we will arrive at the bottom, yes, even the abyss. It will be then that an abyss calls forth another abyss, and the foundation will correspond to the height of the work." (4)

18. THE ADVANTAGE OF HUMILITY.

Blessed are they who acquire deep humility. It will certainly lead them to a high state of perfection and render them worthy instruments in the hands of God to do great

things for His glory. "This is a sign," wrote St. Gaspar, "that God wants to elevate someone to a higher place in the ecclesiastical state when He steeps him in humility." (5) In a course of spiritual exercises to the clergy he said: "If I want to be someone, I will first become a nobody. From the very moment I agree to be nobody in the sight of God I become capable of everything. This is the way the saints achieved such a high state of perfection. We notice that God always chooses the most humble souls to bring them to extraordinary degrees of sanctity or to use them for some very important task." (6)

19. THE DANGERS OF PRIDE.

This is why those who rightly understand the advantages of humility love this virtue and fear nothing else but pride and vain glory which bring on terrible consequences. "The just," said St. Gaspar, "who understand the distortions caused by this vice feel only a horror for it. Hence, at the slightest hint of pride, their spirit becomes all the more fearful. They see more clearly its danger as a result of acquired virtues and gratuitous gifts, fearing just as the rich and the wealthy of this world fear thieves who despoil and vandalize their homes suddenly and completely." (7)

Speaking to the clerics on this point our Founder said: "We are called to a very high state of perfection, so we must be more fearful. Other vices feed on sinful acts, but our virtues, even the more excellent ones, serve as fodder for gluttonous pride. You see then that you must always be on guard. 'Blessed is the man who is always afraid' even in the midst of genuine love." (8)

This is what he himself practiced. If someone tried to recall his merits or to show esteem for him, he would show in the expression of his face how this displeased him. Hence he jealously tried to hide his virtues and the gifts which he had received from God, so as not to have any occasion for vain glory. On this point we read in his spiritual journal, dated 9 October 1808: "During Mass at the 'Secret' and near the 'Memento' I suddenly realized with whom I was speaking. I experienced an expansion of love in my prayers, and a certain rapture of my heart in God. Then there came the desire that this feeling would continue and the desire to overtake the Supreme Good would increase. But fearing some vanity and being in public, I recalled my grievous sins. Then the remembrance of God's goodness and love increased, bringing on sweet tears which lasted until after Communion. Meanwhile, my faith and confidence increased all the more, together with humility and loving reverence."

20. HUMILITY AND CELESTIAL GIFTS.

Here is another thought from his spiritual journal: "Realizing that we are called to perfection, we must be careful not to look down on others who do not wish to follow us. They may have the same or greater merit in the sight of God. Though all of us have the same goal, we arrive at it in different ways. 'You have not chosen me, I have chosen you!'" (9)

Father Bertoni's meaning is quite clear. It is not up to us to determine how we should serve God. He is the absolute Lord and He enjoys the right to let others serve in many different ways as it pleases Him. If, then, we feel called to a special state of perfection, we ought to see in this call a special grace from God, and not regard it as something due to our own merit, esteeming ourselves as superior to others, or more acceptable to God. In other words, we are obliged to serve God in our state of life just as others must serve him in the state of life to which He has called them. In whatever state or condition we find ourselves, our principal duty is to correspond faithfully to the words of the Gospel: "We are useless servants; we have done what we had to do."

We should always be mindful of these divine favors so as to realize the gravity of our failings and infidelities, and humble ourselves before God. St. Gaspar wrote: "If our faults were made public as are those of others, we would see how detestable they are, especially since we have received so many graces and favors. If these graces were given to others, they would be saints." (10) This is what he believed and this is what he practiced. One day, while he was suffering very much due to his illness, the brother who was caring for him thought to comfort him by recalling all the good he had done in his life. St. Gaspar interrupted him saying: "Ah! Hush up, brother, hush up for goodness sake. You do not know what a great sinner I am. If you really want to do me a favor please don't talk like that, but pray often to God for me, that He may pardon me and have mercy on me." (11)

21. THE HUMILITY OF FATHER GASPAR.

It would take too long to record the many heroic examples of humility which our saintly Father left for us, since his whole life was one continual practice of this virtue. We recall the humility he used in counseling the many people who had recourse to him. He tried to divert attention from himself by quoting the authority of others to give weight to his counsel. We notice the care he used in hiding his merits and virtues. For

instance, after having directed the Sisters of Charity and the Sisters of the Holy Family from their early days and having had a great part in drawing up their Rule, he withdrew to leave the credit to others. Father Lenotti says of him: "His usual tactic was the following: after having assisted in the various undertakings and foundations of men and women, helping them to reach their goal, he would then withdraw and leave to others the honor and glory of their foundation." (12)

22. HUMILITY IN THE CONGREGATION.

Above all, Father Gaspar sought to instill humility in his Congregation. "All great initiatives," he said, "have their roots in humility, which prepare us so that God may use us to carry out some undertaking for His greater glory." (13) For this reason he desired to live a hidden life together with his spiritual sons. "There was a saying in the house," Father Lenotti reports, "that Father Bertoni was too humble. Certainly, with all his knowledge and with such a gifted mind he could have distinguished himself in the literary field, and most certainly he could have written some useful books and had them published. He might have made his Congregation better known in the world, and perhaps even obtained its ecclesiastical and civil approbation (14) but he was content to settle down to a life that was hidden and humble." (15) He often recommended the practice of humility to his spiritual sons, repeating to them these words which have become proverbial among us: "Be humble, be humble, seek out the nooks and crannies (*Bassi, Bassi, Buseta e taneta*)." His heart was gladdened with holy joy and was very much consoled when he saw them practice humility and live a hidden life. He once wrote to Father Bragato: "I forgot to congratulate you on renouncing the miter, though we should be grateful to those who offered you this honor. You have followed the advice of the late Archpriest, Father Galvani: 'Be humble, be humble, seek out the nooks and crannies.' 'And He will save the humble heart.'" (16) May these examples serve for our edification and comfort. Jesus Christ has said: "He who humbles himself will be exalted." Because of the personal humility of our saintly Founder, we believe that God has glorified him in heaven. So too, because of the virtuous beginnings and the humility of his first followers, we hope that God will bless our Congregation. We can also contribute to this if we imitate the examples of our first confreres in practicing this virtue, which is so necessary for all of us.

II. Poverty

23. RELIGIOUS POVERTY.

We have already spoken of poverty of spirit, or detachment of the heart from the things of the earth when we spoke about perfection. Here, we will speak of poverty as a virtue proper to the religious state, and of the principles that St. Gaspar Bertoni taught us on the use of the goods of this world.

First of all, he rightly considered poverty as the foundation of religious life. It is mentioned in his spiritual journal as early as 1809, when God revealed to him that he was to found a congregation. He wrote these words: "To begin an undertaking, we must first acquire great heroic virtue. Poverty is the basic requirement." (17)

24. THE USE OF TEMPORAL GOODS.

In regard to the practice and spirit of poverty in our Congregation, here are the principles which St. Gaspar left us, principles which he proposed for himself as a rule of conduct in imitation of St. Vincent de Paul: we must not have any attachment to human things nor should we desire more than what is necessary to fulfill the divine will. We must not anticipate the will of God, or apply ourselves to any task before God had made known His will to us. We must trust entirely in divine providence, and believe that the Lord will give us the necessary means to carry out whatever He has directed us to do.

These principles explain his manner of conduct on many occasions, and explain why he refused the donations made to him; this was characteristic of his life. His spirit in this regard was one of complete abandonment and confidence in God, and he sought to instill this spirit in others. On this point, we recall the beautiful thoughts he wrote to Mother Naudet in the year 1813 to animate her toward this confidence in God. From the beginning of that year she had been looking for a convent where she and her spiritual daughters could go to live in order to begin her Congregation. She had set her sights on the Convent of St. Theresa, which had already been bought by Mr. Bellotti, the miller, a penitent of the Archpriest, Father Galvani, when she learned that he had already given the convent to another Congregation of nuns. Mother Naudet wrote to Father Bertoni about this, and he replied to her letter quickly to console her, saying: "Can't you feel how strongly the Gospel cries out: 'Seek first the kingdom of God and all else will be given to you?'"

"Don't be solicitous for tomorrow. If anyone gives up one house out of love for the glory of Christ, will not the Lord open a hundred more for that person? Indeed does not reason tell us that it is the concern of the bridegroom to provide a house and then conduct his bride into it?" (18)

25. THE CONDUCT OF ST. BERTONI.

It was this confidence in God which led him to refuse so many donations which were offered to him and were not really needed at the moment. This conduct cannot be attributed to a certain inactivity or a desire to shirk work. Anyone who has only a summary knowledge of the life of Father Bertoni will easily recall how he was inflamed with zeal. On all occasions he sought to busy himself in works of charity, always seeking new ways and means of doing good, sacrificing himself night and day, whenever the glory of God and the salvation of souls required it. At no time did he ever withdraw from a deserving project. When he knew that God wanted something from him, he did not back out in spite of difficulties, nor did he lose heart due to the lack of means. A proof of his can be found in a letter which he wrote to Pope Gregory XVI, offering him all the property which he had acquired for his Congregation. In his letter our Founder said that he was making this offer not to free himself from the work already undertaken, but to assure the Pope that, if he accepted his offer, he would continue his work with greater zeal and confidence.

If, therefore, he repeatedly refused the gifts which were offered to him, it was not to shirk work. He had in mind greater perfection, which the circumstances of time and place demanded of him. He confesses this in a letter to Miss Theresa Gamba, who had repeatedly offered him all her wealth. Father Bertoni, after having counseled her to preserve her wealth until death and then dispose of it by will, continued: "But not in my favor, nor that of the House of the Stimate, for I will not accept it, nor will I allow my companions to accept it. I am most anxious that they heed my advice and realize that in these circumstances it is more important for the honor of God." (19)

From these words, we can see that his real purpose in these repeated refusals was that of instilling in the hearts of his sons a spirit of detachment from worldly possessions and to preserve them from the trap of selfishness and attachment to worldly things.

Addressing the clergy he said: "We must conclude that the trap used by the devil is temporal goods in which the clergy in particular are caught. Happy is he who can free himself from this trap." (20)

He was overjoyed when he saw that this sentiment took deep root in his sons. This happened in 1846, when three of them followed his example, and one after the other renounced the large legacy left to them by their deceased confrere, Father Francis Cartolari. On that occasion our saintly Founder gathered the entire community in the chapel and intoned a solemn *Te Deum* to thank God for having aided them to achieve this victory.

Father Bertoni later wrote of this fact to Father Bragato, informing him of the grace that God had granted them, that of driving out of the house the trash (that is what our Founder calls the legacy) of Father Cartolari, and keeping only the legacy of his virtues. (21)

26. RULES ON POVERTY.

The rules which Father Bertoni left us regarding the practice of poverty can be reduced to the following: "Food, clothing and other articles that we use are not our own property but that of the Congregation. We should use them with great care and diligence, considering them as something loaned to us, being ready to return them should the superior so request. We should possess nothing which is superfluous, but only those things which are necessary. No one should ever have or demand special treatment, but all should live a common life and be satisfied with the common goods which are distributed to them, disposed even to receive whatever is most mean and abject in a spirit of self-denial." (22)

Our Founder taught these same rules to his first associates. "In his Congregation," wrote Father Lenotti, "he was most anxious to preserve both the spirit and reality of poverty, - - whether it was food, or clothing, furnishings, and all other things which he wanted to be like that of poor priests. He seemed most jealous of poverty, and always feared that at some time a love of ease, comfort, and luxury would be introduced into his Congregation. He therefore abhorred this and censored it severely and quickly in whatever form or shape it might take. "Let us remember," he repeated to his sons, "that we are poor, and if we have anything, it is not ours but the Lord's. We have come here not to live as princes, but as poor men of Jesus Christ." (23)

27. THE POVERTY OF ST. GASPAR.

Our Founder was the first to give example in this. Father Giacobbe relates the diligence and the extraordinary care he used with even small things (as a piece of paper, a pen, etc.) so as not to waste them or wear them out. He wanted the utmost poverty in his room and in those of his associates. If he felt that anything was not strictly necessary or needed, it had to be removed. He also recalls that, even though Father Bertoni was the owner and administrator of wealth, beyond that which was necessary for the common expenses of the house, he never took anything for himself nor did he ever touch a cent of the money to use in any way different from his other associates. His biographer finally notes that he sought the least expensive items, and old and worn out clothing. He would not accept new clothing even when his old clothes were no longer adequate to protect him from the inclemency of the weather. When he did accept new clothing, it was only through obedience on order from his doctors. So great was his love of poverty that he called it his most beautiful and favorite virtue, and he sought to instill it in others also. (24)

III. Chastity

28. THE CHASTITY OF ST. BERTONI.

St. Gaspar wrote in his spiritual diary: "A soul which harbors charity is shunned by lust." (25) Since he was so detached from the world and united to God, so full of heavenly fervor and zeal for the glory of God, he must have felt a great love for chastity. Indeed, his biographer, Father Giacobbe, expressly notes this, saying that this virtue shown in him in a beautiful manner, so perfect and sublime, that it stood out in his life as a distinctive characteristic and special badge. (26) The same writer further states that the beauty of this virtue radiated from him and was apparent in his words and his looks, so that it captivated all who came in contact with him. (27)

Father Bertoni knew how necessary chastity is in order to achieve perfection, so he recommended it to all classes of people, but especially to religious and priests. "God calls us," he said, "to emulate the purity of the angels." (28) In his Constitutions he wrote: "Let them remember (the members of the Congregation) that their souls are consecrated and wedded to Christ; moreover, as the Apostle St. Paul says, they should be pure and chaste in mind and body." (29)

29. THE MEANS TO PRESERVE CHASTITY.

In his Constitutions our Founder indicates the means for us to preserve this beautiful virtue (30), means which he suggested and recommended to the people he directed.

THE FIRST MEANS: MEDITATION AND PRAYER.

"Accustom yourselves to meditate on divine things, especially on the good and evil which in the future life will be prepared for us according to our merits; read books about saints and spiritual things; be humble in prayer, not only in time of temptation but prior to it." (31)

He recommended this means especially to priests and he repeated that omitting meditation caused so many to defect. This fact, sad to say, occurred very often in his day. "If they would consider," he said, "the beauty of their goal, how less willing and curious they would be to seek out the beauty of the human body. But one loves one kind of beauty because he does not see anything better." (32)

Therefore, he recommended that they should always try to become more fervent in divine love by meditating on the divine perfections, and above all, by devout use of the sacraments. He also suggested these same means to us in his Constitutions and added an ardent devotion to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and to the most Blessed Virgin Mary. He himself meditated frequently (especially on the eternal truths) in order to prepare himself against temptations. Thus we find noted in his spiritual journal: "Is the fascination in our vision? Then the remedy is in our intellect, e.g., if you see the living, think of the dead." (33) For this same end he used to meditate daily on those words of Psalm 15: "Lord, who has the right to enter your tabernacle? The man whose way of life is blameless, who always does what is right." (34)

THE SECOND MEANS: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL

MORTIFICATION. "To desire chastity," he said, "and not its rigors, is to want a fruitful vine without its thorny hedge." (35) Above all, he recommended mortification of the sense of taste, the first vice which rises up against those who are dedicated to a spiritual life. (36) He recommended this practice to all and sought to instill it in the youth of his oratory. He left it as a recommendation to us in his Constitutions with these words: "Everyone should practice that mortification of the flesh, principally by abstinence from

food and drink, which shall be helpful for him according to the judgment of his superior or confessor." (37)

THE THIRD MEANS: A REGULAR OCCUPATION.

With this in mind, he suggested that superiors assign some work to their members, even manual, as long as it is not harmful to each one's condition. (38) But for priests especially he recommended the study of sacred matters or even those profane. "If you do this," he said, "you will not only clear your mind of many impure fantasies, but also mortify your body. If it does nothing else, study will remove laziness, which is intimately connected with impurity, for without it the waters in the marshes become stagnant, and souls are immersed in pleasures." (39)

THE FOURTH MEANS: CUSTODY OF ONE'S SENTIMENTS AND FLIGHT FROM ALL OCCASIONS.

On this point our Founder was most rigorous as were all the saints. He said: "He, who does not follow an inspiration, which God uses advising us to flee, or warning us against a certain danger, deserves to fall." (40) Therefore, together with prayer, he recommended vigilance according to those words of the Gospel: "Watch and pray." This is how he commented on those words: "Watch" -- he who is vigilant is awake and circumspect but without arms; if he is attacked he will be conquered. "Pray" he who only prays is well armed but asleep; if he is attacked he will be stripped of his arms and treacherously killed.

"Watch and pray," behold the man who is vigilant and armed; he cannot be overcome. (41)

Moreover Father Bertoni suggested even some minute precautions. "One can never speak out enough," he said, addressing priests, "about how harmful is that liberty of people, even good people, of staring intently at one another, conversing with either sex, responding to every joke, of holding hands in the manner of youth. This is an evil which cannot be measured, for this small liberty removes an obstacle to a greater one. It is wrong from the beginning and it is enough to make one fear."

At other times he returned to the same argument when he spoke to priests. "Don't hold hands or let yours be held. Don't do it; if others do it, don't judge, don't imitate them. It would be very imprudent." (43) He recommended the same things to us in our Constitutions. (44)

Above all, Father Bertoni demanded great caution in dealing with women, even those aspiring to perfection. Thus in his Constitutions he ordered superiors to permit visits and conversations with such people only to those who were prudent and of tried virtue, and in the hope of some great spiritual advantage. (45) Therefore, those visits should never be permitted without such a motive, or just as a mere pastime or entertainment. "A pleasant and long conversation with women," he said when speaking to priests, "is like falling asleep at the edge of a precipice." (46) Even in cases of necessity, we must use great prudence and caution so as not to fall. "How often," he added, "under the pretext of saving a soul, two are lost." (47)

30. THE PRECAUTIONS OF ST. GASPAR.

He rigorously used all these precautions. His manner of dealing with persons of the opposite sex, says Father Giacobbe, was most reserved, mixed with gravity and gentleness. He conducted himself in this way even with his relatives, with his penitents, with persons seeking perfection, and with the foundresses of religious orders whom he directed for many years. All could attest that they saw in him an exemplar of vigilance and custody of the senses that one reads about in the lives of St. Bernard, St. Aloysius, and other saints. He recognized a person more through hearing than by sight, using his eyes when necessity demanded, but never fixing them on persons, so as not to distract his mind and heart which were constantly occupied in meditating on the divine presence. (48)

IV. Mortification

Among the methods suggested to preserve chastity, we have mentioned mortification. Hence we will pause here and say a few words about this virtue which is so necessary and almost the foundation of Christian life.

31. EXTERNAL MORTIFICATION: THE EXAMPLE OF ST. GASPAR.

When speaking of this virtue, St. Gaspar did not insist so much on external mortification as he did on internal mortification. Even in our Constitutions, among the external penances prescribed for us, he mentions only those necessary for the practice of religious virtues, as "mortification of the sense of taste (which we noted in the preceding chapter) and modesty of the eyes and person, which we ought to practice," he said, "so as to preserve purity of manners, and for the edification of our neighbor in the Lord." (49)

It wasn't that he underrated penances and external mortification, rather he recommended that we accept them willingly when superiors impose them on us or when we ourselves desire and ask for them from superiors. (50) In his life, our Founder left us numerous and heroic examples of this.

One may note the rigid controls he used in sleeping and eating even from his youth, and later, the great inconveniences to which he allowed himself and so willingly put up with while rendering spiritual assistance at the Convent of St. Joseph; the many sleepless nights which he spent both in that convent and in the seminary chapel, or at the hospital, when assisting the sick; the austere life which he and his confreres practiced at the House of the Stimante, especially in those early days. These are a few examples.

32. INTERIOR MORTIFICATION.

St. Gaspar, as we have mentioned, especially recommended interior mortification as a virtue which is without doubt more excellent and absolutely necessary to serve God, so much so, that without it, exterior mortification becomes useless and at times even dangerous. Moreover, he even suggested to spiritual directors that should their penitents be moved to practice exterior penances and mortifications and not practice those internal ones, they should prohibit the former and urge their penitents to practice the latter. (51)

We have already pointed out some thoughts of our saintly Founder on the necessity of mortifying our passions and natural inclinations when we spoke of perfection. On this point he speaks often, even in his Constitutions. At the very outset he enumerates the means which we ought to use for our spiritual profit: a great eagerness to liberate ourselves from our vices and defects, to acquire the contrary virtues, to suppress all inclinations of the flesh, of our senses, of self-love, and the spirit of the world. (52) On this last point, here is what he said to the clergy (and we can also apply it to religious) while explaining these words: "We ought to be separated and detached from the world, and crucified to it. The world is crucified to me and I to the world. If the world does not agree with my maxims, even though I am a priest (or religious), but I am easily in accord with its maxims, then I am a priest (or religious) in name only. 'If I seek to please men I am not a servant of Christ.' To be a priest in name and in fact, I must be in the world as in a state of suffering, so that the world becomes my cross. I infallibly will be a cross to the world through the contrariety of sentiments

and principles that will be found between us if I wish to conduct myself as a true priest (or religious)." (53) Hence, we must renounce the maxims of the world to follow those of Jesus Christ if we want to correspond to our divine calling. We must struggle against our passions and our natural inclinations, so that we will always be ready to follow the will of God. We must arm ourselves with courage to overcome the difficulties and to bear the persecutions which the world will heap upon us. We must clothe ourselves with the spirit of renunciation and sacrifice, and give up our own comforts so as to be ready to go wherever duty calls us for the benefit of our neighbor.

33. MEANS OF ACQUIRING MORTIFICATION.

In order to acquire the spirit of mortification, we must ask for it from God through humble prayer. St. Gaspar wrote in his spiritual journal (presumably regarding the revelation he received to found our Congregation): "We must prepare ourselves for a great struggle against the power of hell: (1) Humility is needed to obtain assistance from heaven: 'Put on the armor of God;" (2) Detachment from all things so that the devil will have nothing to latch on to." (54)

"Through prayer," he says further, "we obtain the grace to carry our cross without feeling fatigued." Then he continues: "The Lord only shows us the cross so that we may have the good will to accept it out of love for Him; out of love for us, He is the one who bears it." (55) This was the constant aim of his prayer and meditations. This was the profit which he reaped from his intimate conversation with God, especially at holy Mass. We find this noted in his spiritual journal. "At Mass," he wrote, "as a precious gift from the Lord, I had the feeling of real and constant offering of my work joined to that of the holy sacrifice." (56) Further on, we read: "I experienced strong sentiments to follow Our Lord closely, even at the cost of my own life, through poverty and ignominy." (57) Further still: "An intense, lively faith and a great desire of sharing the sufferings and ignominies of Christ, asking for the grace to suffer and to be despised with him" (58). "During meditation and after, I felt the desire and the petition even for martyrdom, and great internal encouragement." (59) Thus it goes on.

34. THE MORTIFICATION OF SAINT BERTONI.

It is not surprising then, to note that, since he possessed such sentiments in his soul, he knew when the occasion arose to deny his nature and to obtain complete victory over himself. Many examples could be quoted about this in his life. For example,

once when he was berated and insulted on a public street, he so strongly restrained himself that he fainted and fell to the ground. (60) On another occasion when he was rudely struck, this time, too, on a main street, he humbly turned around and thanked his attacker, greatly edifying the bystanders. (61) That invincible patience, or rather, that joviality and cheerfulness which he displayed throughout his long and painful illness sprang from this spirit of mortification. Speaking of his illness, even in the last days of his life, when anyone asked if he needed anything, he would answer: "I need to suffer." The unflagging zeal which made him sally forth to wherever there might be a soul to save, forgetful of self, robbing himself of hours of necessary rest, later brought on the grave illness that was to torment him all his life -- all this sprang from that same spirit of sacrifice.

35. THE MORTIFICATION OF OUR FIRST FATHERS.

St. Bertoni sought to inculcate this spirit into his spiritual sons. He often exhorted them to seek out mortification, sufferings, and even martyrdom. They, on their part, profited by his example and exhortations. The penitential life that they led, especially in those early days at the House of the Stimato, proves it. They were cramped for lack of space and had to convert their sleeping quarters each morning into classrooms. Besides teaching school, they had to attend to many and varied types of ministry which St. Gaspar assigned to them, such as, hearing confessions, preaching, assisting at prisons, and hospitals. In addition to this, they had to be satisfied with coarse food, which was just enough to soothe the pangs of hunger. Still, they were always happy, always ready to go wherever obedience called them. "All were thin and weak," reports an eyewitness, "but untiring in assisting people both in their own church and in other parishes." (62)

They regarded the calumnies and persecutions of the world as graces from heaven. Thus Father Bragato, on New Year's Day, 1840, wished them many blessings, mixed with a few crosses. Father Bertoni answered, thanking him for his kindness: "Indeed, what greater good could you desire for your old friends than crosses? Certainly, for my part, you could not please me more. Not that I have the strength or virtue to carry them, but the Lord will give me the grace to appreciate them. I count on your prayers together with divine mercy for the patience to suffer. At the start of the new year, as I look ahead, like a man forewarned, I can get acquainted with them and say: 'These are the crosses which my friend Father Louis wished on me.' Blessed be God." (63) Let us admire such noble examples and strive to imitate them.

V. Obedience

36. NECESSITY OF OBEDIENCE.

St. Bertoni had great esteem for this virtue and he demanded it from all who placed themselves under his direction, for he considered it as a sure sign of the good will that animated them. "When a person," he said, "is docile to superiors, even to the extent of foregoing his own judgment, then, that person is surely led by the spirit of God. 'He who hears you hears me.'" (64) Even in judging ecclesiastical vocations, he placed great stress on this virtue. "The sign of heavenly choice which confirms all others is the fullness of the Holy Spirit. ... the sign of this fullness is deep humility; the sign of deep humility is perfect obedience, which is the sign of signs, or rather the seal of all testimony." (65)

37. THE QUALITIES OF OBEDIENCE.

Our Founder recommends obedience in a special manner in our Constitutions, where he treats of the qualities which our obedience should have. Before all else, our obedience should be simple (66), that is, animated by faith, so that we execute it with the intention of performing the will of God and not of man. The virtue of obedience implies a total subjection to the will of God, and a prompt disposition to carry it out in whatever way it is manifested. Taken in this sense, St. Gaspar observed that it obliges all classes of people, subjects, and even superiors. Therefore, he wrote: "The vow of obedience for him who has no superior, indeed, anyone who is a superior, binds his spirit to a total dependence on God in all things." (67)

If our obedience has this first quality then it will be prompt, willing, joyful, persevering, and strong against difficulties. St. Gaspar recommended these in his Constitutions. (68) Our obedience should be humble, submitting not only our will to the superior's commands, but also our intellect, with complete renunciation of our own judgment. On this point, St. Gaspar reminds us of the words of St. Paul: "He who wishes to be wise, let him become a fool." (69)

38. THE OBEDIENCE OF ST. GASPAR.

This is how St. Bertoni wanted obedience to be observed. He himself was the first to put it into practice. Father Lenotti wrote of him: "Whatsoever was commanded of him, he hastened to carry out with such speed you would think he had wings on his feet.

From his manner and external behavior, we can clearly see the conformity of will and harmony of intellect, which he so often commended and demanded, and ardently desired that it be practiced by others." (70) Father Giacobbe says of him: "His whole life was a perfect and constant abnegation of himself so that he offered himself as a complete sacrifice to the will of his superiors. Should a bishop or another ecclesiastical superior command anything which was disagreeable or difficult, he would execute the task with such promptness and cheerfulness as if it were to his own taste, finding in it everything to his liking and pleasure." (71)

39. OBEDIENCE TO BISHOPS.

Such obedience to ecclesiastical superiors and to bishops in particular he recommended especially to the clergy. When he had to counsel clerics or young priests, his advice was: "Obey." There was no longer any place for discussion once a bishop spoke or manifested his will. (72) As we have noted above, he considered obedience to bishops and ecclesiastical superiors the sure sign of a divine calling. On the contrary, disobedience was for him the ultimate abyss into which a person could fall who had abused the grace of God and not corresponded with his vocation. Obedience is founded on humility and leads to perfection. On the other hand, from pride there proceeds dissipation, and in its wake tepidity; then sins of the flesh which God permits as a medicinal cure for pride. "If this medicine is not helpful, then one arrives at the very bottom, which is disobedience. 'When the impious man descends into the depths he will be condemned.'" (73)

In his Constitutions our Founder recommends respect and obedience to bishops in a very special way, as we shall see later. He left this as part of our purpose, and as a special characteristic of our Congregation, founded to be of service to bishops. (74)

40. OBEDIENCE TO THE SUPREME PONTIFF.

If St. Bertoni recommended respect and obedience to bishops, much more did he recommend submission and obedience to the Holy See, and to the Roman Pontiff, the Vicar of Christ. "Let us listen to Christ and his Vicar," he wrote, "even if we are left alone with Noah who stood 'alone against all.' We who are few and alone will be saved within the ark, outside of which there is no salvation." (75)

His sincere attachment to the Roman Pontiff was well known. How happy he was to receive his blessing! Speaking to the clerics on devotion to the Vicar of Christ, he said:

"Docile submission to the Supreme Pontiff is the greatest confirmation that the vocation, to which we are called, is from God." (76) These are consoling words for us when we consider the magnanimous act of our Founder who offered to the Supreme Pontiff, Pope Gregory XVI, the property which he had bought for the Congregation, and the apostolic blessing which the Holy Father, who was deeply moved by St. Gaspar's act, bestowed upon him and his work. That act of devotion and that blessing are a pledge of heavenly blessings for us.

VI. Observance of the Rule and Spirit of Piety

41. MOTIVES FOR OBSERVING THE RULE.

The purpose of our Congregation, says our Founder, is that of procuring the salvation of souls. Since charity is very orderly, before working for the salvation of others, we must first attend to our own salvation. Then among our neighbors, we must be concerned first with the salvation of those who are closer to us. Therefore, care for our own spiritual progress and that of our confreres and the good of our Congregation -- all these are obtained by observance of the Rule. (77)

Indeed, as St. Gaspar observed, the Rules of our Congregation do not bind under pain of sin, but it is also true that in following one's vocation, we are obliged to aspire to perfection, and the rules are the means which God has given us to achieve it. Therefore, he who is obliged to the end is also held to use the means to achieve that end.

"The grace of a vocation," says St. Gaspar, "is an immense series of graces. This series can be broken. Does it take much to break it? It is enough to start by failing to correspond with them. That chain, that bond, that order of graces from the Lord is quickly broken by a person who does not correspond. Then what happens? The duties of our vocation begin to annoy us, weary us, and become a burden. As time goes on, either they are not fulfilled, or they are avoided; finally, our vocation itself is lost." (78)

Thus, he often recalled that important principle of paying attention to the most minute rule and obligation, repeating: "He who fears God neglects nothing." Therefore, he wanted promptness, exactness, and punctuality in all things. Here is the complete rule which he left us in this regard: "All, at the sound of the bell, rivaling on earth the heavenly spirits, brooking no delay, leaving unfinished everything whatsoever in which they are engaged, shall hasten, even fly, to fulfill the will of their Lord." (79)

We must be faithful in observing this norm, not only for our own spiritual profit, but also for that of our confreres, to give them good example and to encourage each other to greater fervor. He will render himself culpable before God who by his neglect and bad example diverts his confreres from practicing these virtues.

Finally, we must practice obedience to promote the good of our Congregation, because its prosperity depends on the faithful observance of the rules by each member. "When in a religious congregation," said St. Bertoni, "each member does not attend to his particular perfection, the Congregation cannot progress, but if it does operate, then it does so languidly and without interest." (80) Here, then, is another motive why we should observe our rules. This is a further reason for animating ourselves and others, and should be observed especially by superiors, who by virtue of their office are obliged to care for the spiritual welfare of their confreres and the good of the Congregation. (81)

42. CARE FOR OUR SPIRITUAL DUTIES.

St. Gaspar urgently wanted punctuality and exactness in the fulfillment of our spiritual practices of piety. He recommended that we should not neglect them for any reason, not even under the pretext of attending to the salvation of our neighbor. We must realize that, in order to expect results from our sacred ministry, divine assistance is necessary, and God grants this to the one who faithfully fulfills his duties.

Our Founder used to say: "There are many who are deceived by this. Thinking they might ruin their work or activity, they neglect some of their duties, but, precisely because of this, they ruin them all the more. Never omit any point of perfection so that you will not ruin your work." (82)

MEDITATION. Among all the practices of piety, St. Bertoni recommended in a special way morning meditation. Indeed, he was so convinced of the necessity of meditation that he advised it for all classes of people, even the youth of his oratory, many of whom obtained great spiritual benefits through this means. For his religious, this was no longer a simple counsel or an exhortation, but a strict duty. Hence, he could tolerate the omission of some other duty, but not of meditation. Even when they went to preach missions, and were busy night and day, in preaching, instructing youth, and hearing confessions, he recommended that they should not deny themselves this hour of meditation, which was wholly theirs and so necessary." (83)

Among the means he suggested to derive great benefits from this holy exercise was jotting down the inspirations received and the emotions experienced during the time of meditation. He also recommended this to diocesan priests, "so that you may later read the points written down and put them into practice. Thus a gardener will profit during the dry spell by using the water collected during an abundant rain fall." (84) This is what he himself did as we have already noted many times.

There is another point we should not overlook on this subject. He prescribed that morning meditation should be made before Mass. (85) He urged his sons and companions that if there were any real need to hear confessions, he recommended that they make at least a part of their meditation before Mass. Thus he wanted meditation to serve as a proximate preparation for the celebration of Mass and for holy communion. This was his custom. It was during his meditation that he conceived those strong proposals to follow Christ more closely, and to suffer for the love of God. Then with his soul filled with great fervor, he ascended the altar and there received those special favors that he noted in his spiritual journal. His soul remained entirely united to God, fortified against all difficulties, and his great desire to propagate the glory of God and his holy love.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE. We will not mention here any of the other acts of devotion which our Founder prescribed for us (as common prayer, frequent reception of the sacraments, spiritual exercises, etc.), (86) but let us note his thought on the use of the examination of conscience. He regarded this exercise as one of the principal means of perfection, and he practiced it even from his youth with great care. (87) To make it well and to obtain results from it, he suggested this practical rule: "In order to make our examination of conscience we should imitate a saint who had the same vocation as our own, using him as a mirror. Whatever we find lacking from that example is a defect in us." (88)

43. PARTICULAR DEVOTIONS.

Let us record here some devotions which St. Gaspar practiced and left us as a means to help us acquire and preserve our religious spirit. Devotion to the most Blessed Sacrament is first and foremost.

We already know from his life what a great devotion he had for this august mystery. He showed this in his manner of celebrating Mass, and in the frequent visits he

made to churches, where he frequently passed the entire night before Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament. Father Gaetano Giacobbe, his biographer, says of him: "I saw him many times prostrate before the Most Blessed Sacrament, and when celebrating holy Mass he was animated with such faith and piety that he resembled St. Alphonsus de Liguori and St. Philip Neri." (89)

Our Founder demonstrated this devotion especially in the last years of his life. Since he was not able to celebrate Mass because of his long and painful illness, he wanted to assist every day at the holy sacrifice of the Mass. Right up to the day of his death he longed to feast himself daily on the Eucharistic Bread, even though at times he had to suffer much, due to the inconvenience of the Eucharistic fast. He had already approached the point where he could no longer do without his Lord, who was his strength and consolation.

Nor can we remain silent about our saintly Founder's devotion to the Passion of the Divine Savior. From the year 1822 (that is, when the Church of the Stigmata was open to the public) he instituted the devotion of the Five Wounds. He gave a brief sermon every Friday for the purpose of encouraging the faithful to practice this devotion. Cardinal Canossa, Bishop of Verona, who attended this devotion said of these sermons: "He spoke with such persuasion and zeal that his listeners were not only moved, but convinced and animated in a very special way." (90)

Another favorite devotion of St. Gaspar was his devotion to the Holy Spouses, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and St. Joseph. "He was very devoted to the Madonna," attested Father Giacobbe, "and sought to foster this devotion in everybody, especially young people." (91) To ignite the fire of love in their young hearts, he made special use of the Oratory. The Camillian, Father Caesar Bresciani, called him a second St. Philip Benizi, raised up by the Virgin in Verona, after the Servants of Mary were driven out, in order to revive devotion to her." (92) Later, he was equally zealous in fostering devotion among the young people at the school which he conducted at the Stimato. For this purpose, he gave a brief homily to them every Saturday, and likewise every day during the month of May. (93)

It is further known how he very frequently preached on our Blessed Lady. (94) He recommended the devotions of the month of May to everyone. (95) Finally, as a proof of his teaching of our Father, redoubling our fervor in the service of God, seeking to instill it in our confreres by word and example; then God will bless us. He will make use

of us to do good, and will give our Congregation what we need to prosper and develop according to His plan.

VII. Fraternal Charity

45. THE EXCELLENCE OF CHARITY.

This subject deserves special treatment because of the great importance which our Founder attached to this virtue. It is enough to state that in the Constitutions he wrote for us, one-fourth of them treat of charity. Charity, our Father taught, is that virtue by which each member of the Congregation is bound to one another, so that together they may become more united and drawn to God and to our Savior, Jesus Christ. (100) Charity will also be for the members the beginning and foundation of every virtue.

By its strength, if all love each other in an orderly way, and seek to assist one another by prayers, by private conversations, and by good example, they will work out their own sanctification. (101) The model of fraternal charity which he proposed for our imitation was that of the early Christians, of whom St. Luke says: "They had one heart and one soul; they placed their goods in common, and they distributed their food with great joy and simplicity of heart, praising God and finding favor with all the people." (102)

46. VICIES CONTRARY TO CHARITY.

Our saintly Founder encourages us to acquire this union of charity with every possible diligence, and to avoid any vices which are contrary to it, among which he enumerates: dissensions, discords, contrasting opinions, particular friendships, and grumbling. Particular friendships, he said, are injurious to charity, a source of suspicion and deceit, a danger to chastity (103), and should be avoided at all cost. In regard to grumbling, we all know the rule that he left us: "The evil of detraction either in word or gesture should never be found among the confreres for any reason whatsoever." (104) He wrote further: "Often, detraction (grumbling) is self-love, masking as zeal or charity, as a way of protecting ourselves or others. The real motive is passion, and those who are guilty will have to pay the penalty to God for it, and to weep very much." (105) When either defect was discovered, he wanted it severely punished. (106)

To preserve our charity we must even avoid diversity of opinions. While diversity of opinion is acceptable theoretically, in practice it can become very harmful. For it is very easy, as our Founder observes, that in an argument one tends to support his own opinion almost imposing it on another, and the other confrere considers this insistence as a lack of esteem toward him. Hence, mutual affection begins to diminish. He further states that, even in those questions that are free to be held and are disputed among the Doctors of the Church, we should strive to have uniformity of opinion. Should there be any diversity of opinion, it should not cover a whole system of doctrine. Thus, there should not be among us any appearance of opposing schools of thought, for this can produce divisions. (107)

Further, he even recommends that we avoid differences of opinions about our methods of procedure, for this is something which tends to produce even greater dissensions and misunderstandings, since these can occur frequently in almost all our actions. (108) Hence, we should have a common understanding about our goals, the direction to take, and methods to be used, at least in those things which are more important and connected with discipline and the exercise of our ministry.

47. MEANS TO PRESERVE CHARITY.

Among the positive means to help us acquire and preserve this virtue, St. Gaspar recommends first of all that we foster in ourselves this spirit of charity and union through prayer and meditation according to the words of Holy Scripture: "In my meditation fire is kindled." (109) Then he reminds us that the foundation of charity is perfect observance of the rules, obedience, poverty, common life, and uniformity in all things, even exterior, such as, clothing, food, and the manner of living. He observes that St. Luke, after having said that the early Christians had but one heart and mind, added: "And they held everything in common." (110)

To increase further the spirit of charity, our Founder wanted everyone, without exception, to take part in common recreation after dinner and supper. During these hours he wanted the confreres to speak frequently of spiritual matters, so that they would accustom themselves to speak of such matters even with their neighbor. (111)

For the same purpose our Founder desired that the confreres of different houses meet and get together often. He exhorts us to receive these confreres willingly and with pleasure, even if they come together frequently, for such visits afford us the occasion to

rest our tired spirits from our daily occupations. At the same time we perform an act of charity. (112)

When confreres are not able to visit one another, he desired that there be frequent correspondence, an exchange of news about one another, especially news which would serve for general edification. On this point he recalls the informative letters which the Christians in the first centuries sent to one another as proof of their faith. (113)

48. CHARITY TOWARDS THE SICK.

If we should be charitable and kind with all our confreres, we must be more so toward the sick and toward guests.

Regarding the sick, St. Gaspar says we ought to see the person of Christ in them, and serve them with the same affection. He especially advises superiors to use sympathy with them and to give them every care, even when their sickness seems to be of an imaginary nature. They should be so treated that they want for nothing or envy the comforts of the rich or the affection of a mother. (114)

49. TOWARD GUESTS.

We should show charity towards guests, receiving them with every sign of friendship and kindness which we use on special occasions with persons of the world and with our own relatives. Above all, let us be mindful of the virtues of humility and charity, seeing to their needs as far as religious poverty permits. When a confrere is visiting, (apart from any special need he may have) let him be satisfied with the common table of that house. (115) It is not forbidden to have regard for the quality of the guests, but in every case the treatment should be the same for all, and the food should not be fancy or costly, for this would be against poverty. (116) Our Founder made these recommendations so that abuses might not creep in under the guise of charity. However, if charity or prudence dictated otherwise, he did not frown on such manner of acting. "One virtue never excludes another," he wrote to Mother Naudet, "nor do they oppose one another. When it appears to you that prudence or charity demands something extra, do not fear that this is against poverty, or against the religious vow. The religious vows are only a means leading to charity, which is the end, and the end gives order, method, and measure to all the means." (117)

50. THE CHARITY OF OUR EARLY FATHERS.

Great was the esteem which he had for this virtue. Consequently, we too should exercise great care to preserve it. We have only to imitate the example of our first fathers. Father Bragato, speaking about the beginning of our Congregation wrote: ""The bond of the Congregation was charity which gave a spiritual flavor to all occupations and labors. Its foundation was a perfect common life, regulated by strict obedience in all things." (118)

This spirit of charity was noticed with great edification by their neighbors. In 1838, A Viennese priest described the community of the house of the Stimato during his stay in Verona in these words: "Only one spirit animates them all. The same vitality, so to speak, permeates them all. If you converse with them, you notice that each one, in his thoughts, in the sentiments of his heart, in his exterior deportment, is a faithful portrait of the other. If you want to know what is outstanding in them, it is their humility, charity, and affability." (119)

May the Lord grant that these admirable traits be perpetuated among us for our spiritual progress, for the benefit of our Congregation, and for the edification of our neighbor.

Notes

- (1) Spiritual Journal, 24 August 1808
- (2) Spiritual Journal, 24 August 1808
- (3) Spiritual Journal, 11 December 1808
- (4) Correspondence, pg. 115
- (5) Meditation 8 on "The First Book of Kings"
- (6) Spiritual Exercises to the Clergy -- on The Incarnation
- (7) Spiritual Journal, 17 November 1808
- (8) Meditation 48 -- "First Book of Kings"
- (9) Spiritual Journal, 20 December 1808

- (10) Spiritual Journal, 16 August 1808
- (11) Giacobbe -- Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 215
- (12) Lenotti -- Life of St. Gaspar, n. 28
- (13) Spiritual Exercises to the Clergy -- "The Public Life of Christ"
- (14) Father Marani, in a report on our congregation written after the death of our Founder, relates that the approval of the Congregation was "greatly desired by St. Bertoni, but out of deep humility he formally requested it." Father Fedelini recalls that when his confreres asked him to apply for approval, our Founder replied with his usual humility and kindness that "he was not the type to found a religious order."
- (15) Lenotti, Life of St. Gaspar-- on his humility.
- (16) Correspondence, pg. 327. Since 1835, Father Bragato served at the royal court of Vienna as confessor of the Empress Marianna. In 1848, he was offered the episcopacy, but in humility he renounced the honor.
- (17) Spiritual Journal, 23 July 1809.
- (18) Correspondence, pg. 86.
- (19) Correspondence, pg. 365
- (20) Spiritual Exercise to the Clergy -- The Two Standards.
- (21) Spiritual Conferences of Father DaPrato.
- (22) Constitutions 96-104.
- (23) Lenotti, Life of St. Gaspar -- On Poverty (Sum. Add. pg. 176).
- (24) Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 300.
- (25) Spiritual Journal, 17 August 1808.
- (26) Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 285.
- (27) Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 289.
- (28) Spiritual Journal, 13 September 1808.

- (29) Constitution 109.
- (30) Constitutions 110-119.
- (31) Spiritual Exercises to Newly Ordained Priests - Remedies against dishonesty.
- (32) Goal of the Priest.
- (33) Spiritual Journal, 23 January 1809.
- (34) Ibid.
- (35) Spiritual Exercises to New Confessors.
- (36) Meditation 43 on "First Book of Kings".
- (37) Constitution 112.
- (38) Constitution 113.
- (39) Spiritual Exercises to New Confessors -- Loc. Cit.
- (40) Spiritual Journal, 9 August 1808.
- (41) Spiritual Journal, 28 April 1811.
- (42) To New Confessors -- On Venial Sin.
- (43) Spiritual Exercises to the Clergy.
- (44) Constitution 117.
- (45) Constitution 114.
- (46) To New Confessors -- Loc. Cit.
- (47) To New Confessors -- Loc. Cit.
- (48) Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 287
- (49) Constitutions 112, 119.
- (50) Constitution 44.
- (51) Spiritual Journal, 28 September 1808.

- (52) Constitution 48.
- (53) Spiritual Exercises to the Clergy.
- (54) Spiritual Journal, 24 July 1809.
- (55) Spiritual Journal, 3 December 1808.
- (56) Spiritual Journal, 24 July 1808.
- (57) Spiritual Journal, 25 September 1808.
- (58) Spiritual Journal, 27 September 1808.
- (59) Spiritual Journal, 28 September 1808
- (60) Giacobbe, Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 292.
- (61) Giacobbe, Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 293
- (62) Father Beltrami -- Diocesan Process.
- (63) Correspondence, pg. 318.
- (64) Meditation 35 on "The First Book of Kings".
- (65) Ibid., Meditation 39.
- (66) Constitution 149.
- (67) Spiritual Journal, 20 December 1808.
- (68) Constitutions 143, 145, 147, 148
- (69) Constitutions 144, 150.
- (70) Lenotti -- Life of St. Gaspar, "Obedience".
- (71) Giacobbe-Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 324.
- (72) Ibid., pg. 323
- (73) Meditation 49 -- on "First Book of Kings".
- (74) Constitution 1.

- (75) Correspondence, pg. 262.
- (76) Meditation 35 on "The First Book of Kings".
- (77) Constitutions 188, 283, 284.
- (78) Instruction I -- To the Acolytes.
- (79) Constitution 143.
- (80) Spiritual Journal, 11 October 1808.
- (81) Constitution 263.
- (82) Meditation 16 bis -- "The First Book of Kings".
- (83) Giacobbe-Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 261.
- (84) Spiritual Exercise to the Clergy -- Instructions.
- (85) Constitution 47.
- (86) Ibid.
- (87) Spiritual Journal, 17 October 1808.
- (88) Spiritual Journal, 30 July 1808
- (89) Father Giacobbe -- Diocesan Process.
- (90) Father Giacobbe -- Diocesan Process.
- (91) Ibid.
- (92) Funeral Eulogy of St. Bertoni, pg. 86.
- (93) Giacobbe -- Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 117.
- (94) Father Leonardi -- Diocesan Process.
- (95) Father Giacobbe -- Ibid.
- (96) Lenotti -- various papers.
- (97) Giacobbe-- Diocesan Process.

- (98) Correspondence, pg. 247.
- (99) Correspondence, pg. 235.
- (100) Constitution 221.
- (101) Constitutions 222, 223, 251.
- (102) Constitution 189.
- (103) Constitutions 208-213.
- (104) Constitution 194.
- (105) Spiritual Journal, 9 August 1808.
- (106) Constitutions 194, 213.
- (107) Constitutions 197-201.
- (108) Constitution 201.
- (109) Constitution 222.
- (110) Constitutions 224-226.
- (111) Constitutions 250-255.
- (112) Constitution 253.
- (113) Constitutions 257-261.
- (114) Constitutions 234-242.
- (115) Constitutions 243-247.
- (116) Constitutions 248, 249.
- (117) Correspondence, pg. 174. This same concept is expressed in St. Gaspar's Constitution where he speaks of the manner of receiving guests (Constitution 247).
- (118) Summ. Add. 284
- (119) L. Schlor The Life of the Church in Verona.

Section II

Particular Duties

Chapter One

DUTIES OF STUDENTS

51. CONCERN FOR SPIRITUAL PROFIT.

The young student's first thought should be perfection in his spiritual life. St. Gaspar says: "Let the time of study be used to improve yourself in religious life and to aspire to perfection. Therefore, persevere in the practice of those virtues in which you were tested during your Novitiate, and give good example in the observance of our Rule, so that your real piety, humility, and prudence may be apparent to your superiors and other confreres." (1) This time should serve as a good preparation for the apostolic life so that they can work profitably for the salvation of their neighbor. "Study is a means singularly apt for the furthering of divine glory," our Founder says, "so we ought first of all to further divine glory in ourselves, that is, we should first obtain complete victory over ourselves before entering the field to conquer the hearts of others. For this purpose study serves as a weapon." (2)

Therefore, he reminds the students that they should have a priority in their studies, i.e., they should not place studies above their spiritual exercises, nor before religious discipline, nor the commands of their superiors. (3) To this end, he ordered superiors to watch out for our young students so their ardor for study does not suffocate their love of piety. (4) In his instructions to the clergy he reminds superiors of their obligation to be vigilant about discipline and observance of the rules by their young students, correcting their defects at opportune times, and educating them in the spirit of sacrifice and self-denial. He calls it a terrible temptation when some timid superiors fail to correct the defects of their students. "Because of this" Father Bertoni said, "it is very easy for the devil to introduce tepidity, his usual tactic against anyone who is trying to advance in the spiritual life. Then follows laxity, and finally a disgust for his vocation. For this reason the Holy Spirit says: 'Do not take away discipline from a young man.'" (5)

52. NECESSITY OF STUDY.

After the spirit of piety and the observance of the Rule, our Founder recommended nothing more insistently to his students than application to study. Our Congregation, he said, does not limit itself to the contemplative life, but joins this to the active life, i.e., we propose to transmit to our neighbor the truths we have learned and meditated on. To accomplish this we must have a more than ordinary knowledge and a thorough understanding of those things which pertain to faith and morals. Therefore, the religious clerics of our Congregation must eagerly strive to acquire such knowledge perfectly. (6) Later on, we will discuss the importance of study and its continuation, particularly for our Congregation, when we speak of the studies of priests. Here let us recall some of the norms which St. Gaspar suggested for progress in our studies.

53. NORMS ON STUDY.

He recommended above all an upright intention. Writing to the servant of God, Mother Naudet, on how she should regulate the studies of her daughters, he counseled her to remind them that they should direct their studies to the glory of God. "Fortify them against the temptation of the devil, who, as St. Gregory says, under the pretense of piety, uses every means to distract people from the study of Liberal Arts, foreseeing the great danger that this will do to the power of hell. Likewise point out to them that other temptation of the enemy who uses misdirected study to make us fall into greater ruin." (7)

Our Founder says further, that if we keep this intention before us and direct all our studies to it, we will avoid the danger which usually happens when these studies are pursued out of self-love, through curiosity, or natural attraction. Studies made with an upright intention do no harm to our piety, rather they aid it. "Even minor studies," St. Gaspar said, "are an important means for prayer and meditation." (8)

To acquire this upright intention we must moderate our curiosity. We should not study solely out of any natural inclination, but for the glory of God. Therefore, we should try to find out what the glory of God is asking us, and then see how and when we can accomplish it, always with due dependence on our superiors. (9)

Before all else, we should avoid those studies which are harmful; then those which are useless or irrelevant to our purpose, for they may distract us from the study of those things which are necessary: "Be not more wise than it behooveth to be wise,

but be wise unto sobriety." (10)

When there is a question of those studies which are deemed necessary or useful, we should not spare any effort. With constancy and diligence, we must overcome every difficulty and weariness as to prepare ourselves to be worthy instruments in the hands of God in order to promote his glory and the good of the Church. (11)

"With God's grace," wrote Father Bertoni, "and our own diligence, we can do all things. God is Father and font of all knowledge, for whose honor we study, 'God is the Lord of the sciences.' Jesus Christ, our Lord, who did not have to struggle to learn, (since he is uncreated wisdom) worked in a shop in order to teach us how to work so that we might acquire wisdom and transmit it to our neighbor." (12) With this purpose in mind, our Founder recommended that Superiors be concerned about their young students. They should be provided with whatever is necessary for their health and for their studies. He wanted each house to have a common library, equipped as completely as possible according to the needs and nature of the studies pursued there. (13) He stipulated that the superiors schedule periods for necessary recreation and rest for the students, and to moderate their study time so they do not harm their health, which is needed in the service of God and of the Church. Finally, Father Bertoni also wanted superiors to relieve the students from every exterior occupation, from work in the house, and from other duties, and to provide a sufficient number of coadjutor brothers needed for this purpose. Thus, relieved of other occupations, the students could devote themselves more assiduously to their studies. (14)

54. MATTER FOR STUDY.

In regard to the subject matter to be studied, Father Bertoni recommended above all sacred and ecclesiastical sciences, as very necessary and useful for our purpose. This does not mean that he wanted us to neglect secular sciences. On the contrary, he highly recommended them, as necessary for sacred studies, and for an understanding of Holy Scripture. They also help us get closer to our neighbor so that we can do them some good. Thus, when speaking to the diocesan clergy he repeated this thought: "The devil is author of the idea that we should know nothing of the world." (15) He tries to influence us so that we will have no knowledge of human sciences. For this reason, in his Constitutions, he prescribed that we should have at least some acquaintance with the secular sciences (as fine arts, medicine, physics, natural history, etc.) for the glory of God and the good of the Church. (16) Indeed St. Gaspar

recommended that each one should select a particular branch of study to which he is more inclined, or in which he is more apt to succeed, and to cultivate it in his spare time. Such a study should be continued even when one is a priest, so that he can specialize in it and use it for the good of the Church as circumstances require. (17) But the study which St. Gaspar recommended more highly than any other was Holy Scripture. (18) He said that it teaches us to know God, and to appreciate things as God esteems them, for it forms our minds and hearts according to that of God. It is the stairway by which we will arrive at the knowledge of God through faith. A knowledge of Holy Scripture will help us in prayer, because a great part of the prayers which priests recite consist of scriptural words. It will help us know the will of God and communicate it to others. (19)

55. THE STUDIES OF FATHER BERTONI.

These are the norms which our Founder left us in regard to study. There is no need to state that before he enforced them on others, he had practiced them himself ever since he was a young student. Many examples from his life are well known and it is superfluous to recall them here: examples of piety, zeal, Christian mortification. Even as a young cleric, he was regarded as another St. Aloysius Gonzaga, and was publicly proposed as a model of clerical life. But he was not content only with the practice of virtue. He was well-acquainted with the sad times which befell the Church at that time and the many errors which were then rampant. So he applied himself to his studies with the firm resolution of not sparing himself any fatigue, until he had acquired a rich treasure of learning, so that one day he could become useful to the Church.

We also know that over and above his regular school hours, he devoted nine to ten hours a day to study; he gave up part of his necessary rest at night just to study and pray. (20) His principal study was Holy Scripture, which he knew by memory, and which he had assimilated in such a way that his manner of speaking was, as Father Lenotti stated, the language of Scripture. (21) After Holy Scripture, his favorite book was the *Summa of St. Thomas*, which, before he was ordained a priest, he had read entirely almost three times. Father Bertoni did not only read it, but he studied it with commentaries, acquiring such a knowledge and familiarity with it, that when the occasion warranted he could cite the question, article, and almost the same words in order to resolve doubts and questions. (22)

56. THE FIRST STUDENTS OF OUR CONGREGATION.

Our Founder wanted the first students of our Congregation to follow these norms. They attended their philosophical and theological classes at the diocesan seminary. Every day before leaving the house, he listened to their lessons or had another priest listen to them, and he gave them any necessary explanations, especially in philosophical matters. The students fully corresponded with the interest he took in them. At the seminary, they distinguished themselves in such a way as to be proposed as models to their fellow students, and sometimes (a rare exception) they were even dispensed from taking their examinations. (23)

Besides the prescribed studies, Father Bertoni made them cultivate an interest in other branches of knowledge, as Father Lenotti mentions in the report which he left us on this point. The young students had to study Sacred Scripture in particular, learning it by memory, using commentaries and other books which would aid them in furthering their knowledge of the sacred science which they had already acquired at school. When time permitted, without detracting from the obligatory studies, he allowed them to study one of the natural sciences, or the fine arts, or take up designing, read the history of painting, or some tract on agriculture, and he provided the necessary books for this purpose. With this in mind, our Founder assembled a library which, because of the importance of the books it contained, had no need to be envious of other libraries, even the public libraries of the city.

These are the precepts of our Founder, his example, and his desires. It is up to us now to correspond to his concern and hopes, and to profit from our studies, so as to be his worthy sons and imitators and become proficient in promoting the glory of God and the good of the Church.

NOTES:

- (1) Constitution 42.
- (2) Correspondence, pg. 91.
- (3) Constitution 127.
- (4) Constitution 66.
- (5) Meditation 12 on the "First Book of Kings" on the weakness of Eli.

- (6) Constitutions 49, 50.
- (7) Correspondence, pg. 91.
- (8) Meditation 52 on the "First Book of Kings".
- (9) Constitution 127.
- (10) Constitution 123.
- (11) Constitution 125.
- (12) Correspondence, pg. 123.
- (13) Constitution 60.
- (14) Constitutions 62-64.
- (15) Meditation 52 on the "First Book of Kings".
- (16) Constitution 54.
- (17) Constitution 57.
- (18) Constitution 52.
- (19) Meditations 3a, 6a on "Genesis".
- (20) Lenotti -- Life of St. Gaspar.
- (21) Ibid. on his learning.
- (22) Lenotti -- Life of St. Gaspar.
- (23) Giacobbe-Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 123.

Chapter Two

DUTIES OF COADJUTOR BROTHERS

57. CHARACTERISTICS WHICH COADJUTOR BROTHERS SHOULD POSSESS.

The true essence of perfection lies in the conformity of our will with that of God, in our readiness to serve God in the manner in which He wants us to serve Him. Therefore, our Father Founder, speaking to coadjutor brothers in particular, demands that they be content with their state of life, namely, that they should recognize in their vocation the will of God regarding them. They should believe that for them this is the better state, the way in which they can serve God more perfectly and obtain His aid and grace. (1) From this firm belief should proceed the ability to apply themselves diligently to the work which has been assigned to them by obedience, avoiding all types of idleness which brings with it so many dangers. Our Founder said, "Laziness is all the more reprehensible during the time of evangelical grace, which comes through the example of Jesus Christ who worked during the day and prayed during the night; also because we have been bought at a great price through the blood of Jesus Christ so that we may do good." (2) But in order that their work may be pleasing to God, the brothers ought to perform it with an upright intention.

This should be the spirit of all our actions. Our Founder recommended this to the clerics in their studies, to the priests in their ministry, and to the coadjutor brothers in that section of the Rule which states: "they ought to serve God with simplicity of heart." (3) By this he means they ought to perform their various duties with the intention of pleasing God. But in order to carry out the will of God, it is necessary that all their labors be regulated by obedience. If they want to achieve the purpose of their vocation, they should not occupy themselves only with matters of their own taste, but they should attend to those duties assigned to them by their superiors, who represent God Himself for them and who manifests His Will in their regard.

58. HOW COADJUTOR BROTHERS CAN COOPERATE IN THE ADVANCEMENT OF OUR CONGREGATION.

The coadjutor brothers should recall their particular purpose in our Congregation, which is to relieve and assist the priests and students by attending to the material works of the house so that these can more diligently attend to their own duties. (4)

Moreover, coadjutor brothers, by faithfully fulfilling their own duties, enable the priests and students to have more opportunity to work for the good of souls. Thus, the brothers, too, participate more abundantly in the good works that the priests and the students perform. Indeed, by their diligence and upright intention, they directly cooperate in the great work of saving the souls of their neighbors, and call down God's blessing on the apostolic work of their confreres.

But there is more. We have seen how St. Gaspar was most zealous in recommending to us the queen of all virtues, i.e., fraternal charity. By constantly strengthening this bond of charity, the work of the brothers will be a strong asset through their concern in helping one another and relieving their other confreres. Likewise, they will become deserving of this virtue, which is so important and necessary in drawing down the blessings of God upon ourselves and our work. Here, it may help to recall to the brothers some recommendations which our Founder has left us: use charity especially with the sick and the poor, and with those who are in special need; try always to give them what they need, sacrificing if necessary your own comforts. They should keep in mind what our Founder said: "Charity is the principal goal," which should be sought and preserved at all costs.

59. HOW THE COADJUTOR BROTHERS CAN PROCURE THE SALVATION OF THEIR NEIGHBOR.

Even the coadjutor brothers, as members of our Congregation, ought to be concerned about the salvation of their neighbor, either indirectly by prayer and observance of the rule, imploring the blessings of God on the apostolic labors of the priests, or more directly still when an occasion presents itself. That is why our Founder wanted the brothers to be well-instructed in Christian doctrine, so that should the occasion arise, they would be able to teach it to others. (5) St. Gaspar even reminded the brothers of their obligation, in so far as their ability and circumstances allowed, to work for the salvation of their neighbor through private conversations when the opportunity presented itself, by correcting their faults, or exhorting them to the practice of virtue, and to the reception of the sacraments. (6)

60. GOOD EXAMPLE.

However, the best and most ordinary means of helping their neighbor which the brothers share in common with the priests and students is good example. Therefore,

our Founder also recommended to the brothers the practice of modesty, which helps us to preserve purity of morals and edify our neighbor. (7)

Here we note that he speaks of modesty in general, of that virtue which regulates all the actions of our life. Therefore, there should be modesty in a person's deportment, in the custody of the senses, especially of the eyes and tongue. (8) Then there should be the observance of religious silence, of not speaking without necessity in the times and places assigned for silence. Concern and kindness should be used in time of recreation, so that everyone realizes that our house is a religious house, and our neighbor may be edified. Our Founder also recommended diligence and cleanliness in our appearance. We ought to avoid negligence and carelessness, and take every care to preserve that decorum which is proper. (9) He mentioned that we should be unassuming in our dress, which should be simple and poor, but at the same time clean and appropriate. This should be all the more apparent when we are among others, whether they be our confreres or outsiders, or when the positions we hold require this. (10)

Finally, there should be decorum and cleanliness in all things, in our room, in the objects or things we use, in the whole house, but especially at table, which, Father Bertoni said, should be clean and well ordered. (11)

We can say that this last point has special reference to the coadjutor brothers, since they have charge of the domestic cares of the house, and are entrusted with its cleanliness. They should take care, therefore, each in his assigned task, of the things and places committed to their charge. They should strive to make the religious house a mirror which reflects the order and the harmony of religious life. This order and cleanliness can be advantageous to us because it serves to harmonize order and internal recollection, and can be a source of edification to our neighbor. In this manner, the coadjutor brothers through their service, humble in the eyes of men but not before those of God, will achieve works that are highly meritorious, works of great glory to God and of great usefulness to our neighbor.

NOTES:

- (1) Constitution 7.
- (2) Instruction 9 to the Acolytes.
- (3) Constitution 78.
- (4) Constitution 64.
- (5) Constitution 51.
- (6) Constitution 280.
- (7) Constitution 119.
- (8) Ibid.
- (9) Constitution 136.
- (10) Constitution 137.
- (11) Constitutions 133-135, 249.

Chapter Three

DUTIES OF THE PRIESTS

I. Faith

61. SPIRIT OF FAITH.

The priest is a minister of a higher order, taken from among men to disassociate them from worldly self-seeking, and to lead them to heaven. For this reason he ought to live a supernatural life, a life of faith. The more he advances and perfects himself in the supernatural life, and the more he corresponds to the character of a priest, a representative of Jesus Christ, the more advantageously he will work for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

It was for this reason that our Founder highly recommended a spirit of faith to priests, a faith which raises us above our senses and our reason, and renders us superior to all human things. "A lively faith," he said, "makes those things we hope for in the future a reality in the present, placing invisible things almost before our eyes, and makes the future object of our eternal beatitude form itself as an object of joy and happiness even here and now, ineffable joy, inexplicable to the heart, which further overflows from our tongue even in the midst of and before our enemies." (1)

Among the signs of an ecclesiastical vocation he placed lively faith, similar to that which would be shown before unbelievers. (2)

62. STUDY OF SACRED SCRIPTURE -- THE EXAMPLE OF FATHER BERTONI.

To acquire an attitude of faith, after prayer, he suggested study of Holy Scripture. "The Scriptures well meditated upon," he said, "mold our spirit, develop it, and educate it; they give order to our ideas, and rectify our judgments. Attention to the word of God and reflection on it are the font of all knowledge and holiness." (3)

Speaking of the study of Holy Scripture, our Founder said further: "God is order and all of his ideas are ordered; man the sinner is all disorder. God is truth; man is a lie. God is omnipotent; man is weak. If we focus our attention on God, we can put some order into our spirit, mind, and heart. We would stay on our feet even if the whole world should fall, because God can sustain us even in the air. If we apply ourselves to anything else outside the teacher of truth, who is God, we will not learn anything." (4)

What our Father taught to others, he himself was the first to practice. From the time he was a young student, he studied Holy Scripture with the aid of commentaries and learned it by memory. This was the Book which was continually found in his hands even to the last days of his life. With it he regulated all his thoughts and actions. His counsels and exhortations were so full of scriptural sayings, and they issued forth from him with such spontaneity and naturalness, that it seemed as if they were assimilated into his very blood. He knew how to recall an appropriate text for his own and others' comfort for any occasion and need. When he cited Sacred Scripture in his discourses, he did so with such faith and efficacy that it seemed as if one were actually hearing the voice of God issuing forth from his mouth. (5)

63. DISDAIN FOR THE WORLD.

Consequently, from this spirit of faith, there follows proper estimation of all things, namely, a disdain for the world and all that it seeks and esteems. Thus the priest should despise the world and its loves, which are pleasures, riches, and glory. "A soul visited by the Holy Spirit," Father Bertoni said, "and enlightened in the knowledge and manner of estimating things, values nothing else but Christ, and that which Christ values. Not only does he abhor that which the world loves, and, on his own, discards it as something rancid and old, but he cannot even bear to hear it mentioned. 'Let old things recede from your mouth.'" (6) Besides having contempt for the world and its heroes, when comparing them to Christ and the saints, the priest should despise its errors and the way the world misuses even human knowledge. Finally, he should despise it in its terrors. (7) The priest is separated from the world according to those words of Jesus Christ: "I have chosen you from the world." He should be detached from and crucified to the world. He ought to repeat what the apostle Paul said: "The world is crucified to me and I to the world." If the world, even though I am a priest, is not in accord with my maxims, and I am easily in accord with those of the world, then I am but a priest in name only. If I seek to please men, then I am not a servant of Christ. To be such in reality and in truth, I must be in the world as in a state of suffering, so that the world is my cross as I infallibly will be a cross to the world through contrariness of sentiments and principles, which will be found between the world and me, if I want to conduct myself as a true priest. (8) Separated in this way from the world, the priest will be able to say with St. Paul: "Who can separate me from the love of Christ?...I am certain that neither death nor life... neither the present nor the future... nor any creature will be able to separate me from the love of God."

II. Prayer

64. UNION WITH GOD.

This is the end to which a priest should aspire: to be detached from the world in order to live with Christ. He is an instrument in the hands of God. Now an instrument is useless unless it is united to the hand of the one who uses it. The more a priest is united to God by lively faith and ardent charity, the more powerful and energetic his actions will be. The priest is the trustee and the dispenser of heavenly gifts. Consequently, he ought to keep himself united to Jesus Christ, who is the source of all grace, so that he can obtain abundant graces and communicate them to the faithful. In a letter to Father Bragato, our saintly Founder wrote: "A priest should be very intimate and familiar with God, and very confident in order to sway God according to his pleasure." (9) He continues further: "It is certain that he promised: 'He will act according to the will of the fearful.' Humility and confidence, prayer and diligence, faith and patience, -- practice these virtues and God will do the rest. 'He who remains in me and I in him, the same bears much fruit.'"

65. MEANS TO OBTAIN UNION WITH GOD.

To attain the spirit of union with God, the priest ought to make use of creatures, rising above them to the contemplation and love of God. Father Bertoni taught, "God is in his creatures. He not only gives them power to work, but he works in them, as the principal cause. Thus, it is God who is more resplendent than the sun itself; it is He who gives warmth to the fire itself, it is He who causes more nourishment in food than the food itself. When you feel the good effects of the functions of these creatures, for example, the beauty of light, the utility of heat, the taste of food, you ought to attribute all this to God and not to creatures, and recall that it is God who does more good to you than creatures." (10) "What joy," he says further, "what happiness for a priest who is so well ordered that everything serves as a stairway leading to God! This ought to be the goal of his life: 'Walk before me and be perfect.'" (11)

Above all, the priest should maintain this union with God through prayer and spiritual practices. Among the spiritual practices of a priest, the most excellent without doubt are the praying the divine office and the celebration of Mass. St. Gaspar recommended these above all else to the clergy as the most efficacious means of uniting themselves to God, in order to work for their own sanctification and for the salvation of their neighbor.

66. PRAYING THE DIVINE OFFICE.

From Father Bertoni's life we already know how much diligence and attention he used in praying the Divine Office. He considered it not only to be one of his principal duties, but also a pleasant conversation with God. He prepared himself for its recitation with great diligence, by placing himself in God's presence and seeking to remove all causes of distraction. To aid him in doing this, he had some practical rules, which he wrote on a card, using it as a marker in his Breviary. He observed them scrupulously and made those who recited the Breviary with him observe them also. We recall them here for our edification and instruction. They are:

- 1) Consult the ordo.
- 2) Place the ribbons in order, even those in the Psalms.
- 3) Control oneself in all feelings and gestures.
- 4) Pray the Breviary either standing or kneeling, or through necessity, sitting, but without leaning or fidgeting.
- 5) Recite it with sufficient pause.
- 6) Pronounce the words distinctly, noting each time that this is not done.
- 7) Read it with attention so as not to repeat any of the words.
- 8) Do not stop to understand the sense. This can be done when you have finished praying your Breviary.

Because he followed this plan, the Divine Office became for him a continual meditation on the divine word. When one saw him praying his office, one could clearly understand that he was speaking with his God and attending to the deepest concerns of God and his Church. (12)

67. CELEBRATION OF MASS.

It was in the celebration of Holy Mass that he found his greatest delight. He longed for that blessed moment, and when it arrived he thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated it. These who assisted at his Mass were profoundly moved to note his recollection, piety, and devotion, and the lifting up of his spirit, almost in ecstasy with God. (13) Proof of this can be seen in the graces which he received from God, tranquility

of soul, and the tears which fell while he was celebrating Mass. He has mentioned all these things in his spiritual journal.

Since he understood through personal experience what a great means the devout celebration of Mass is for uniting the soul to God in order to sanctify it, he recommended that the priests prepare themselves for Mass with great diligence. For this reason (as noted above) he required that his first confreres make their meditation before Mass. He prescribed the same thing for us in his Constitutions, so that we may prepare ourselves to celebrate Mass with more fervor, and thus draw from so great a mystery a greater abundance of graces. Then, having formulated strong proposals in our meditation, we can present ourselves with confidence before God, to seek and obtain whatever assistance is needed to change what is wanting in our life for our own sanctification.

68. THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER-EXAMPLE OF OUR SAINTLY FOUNDER.

The priest, however, should not be satisfied with only these two principal devotions, which are, so to speak, the public and official audiences accorded to him by God. He has need of further quiet and intimate colloquies with God in order to treat of the affairs of his own soul. Therefore, St. Gaspar suggested that priests find other times to speak with their God. "Some priests," he said, "enter a church to preach, to say Mass, to sing, to bury the dead, to hear confessions, but they never pause to pray -- yet this is their greatest duty." (14) He highly recommended to them the same pious practices which they suggest to the faithful, and that they give them good example. "It is only right that the priest," he said, "should join with the laity in following the pious customs of the church, and not leave them only to the laity or pious women; as for example, accompanying the Blessed Sacrament, making the way of the cross, reciting the rosary, acquiring indulgences." (15)

Even on this point our Founder left us many admirable examples. When he could, he was in church with his sacramental Lord in intimate conversation. He spent nights in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament at the Convent of St. Joseph and in the seminary chapel. When he was in church, his deportment was that of a saint. Father Gaetano Giacobbe testified about him during the diocesan informative process as follows: "I saw him many times prostrate before the Blessed Sacrament, and while celebrating Mass,

animated with such faith and piety, he seemed like another St. Alphonsus Liguori or a St. Philip Neri."

69. MEDITATION.

To priest-confessors Father Bertoni recommended the practice of meditation. He felt they have a special need for this to protect themselves against the dangers to which they are exposed in their ministry; to beg from God the grace to exercise it fruitfully, and to overcome the temptations of the devil, which are stronger against priests. Preaching to the clergy he said: "There are some mortal sins to which a priest is more exposed, for example, the constant dealing with evil, studying about it, and hearing it in confession without being tainted by it. Sometimes, through necessity, standing in the midst of fire without being burned.. the layman, the monk can back off, but not the priest." (16) Because of this the priest has more need of meditation.

Here are some other thoughts of Father Bertoni on this point. The priest is the mediator between God and man, but to reconcile souls to God that mediator must be a friend of God. The duty of a confessor is to sanctify souls, and to guide them to virtue. He must have first overcome his own passions. To put order in the lives of others, there must be tranquility and order in his own life. All this can be obtained through the practice of meditation. (17)

Our Founder explained that many disorders found among the clergy of his time were due to the lack of meditation. "If they would consider the beauty of their goal," he said once while speaking to priest-confessors, "how they would be less willing and curious to look at the beauty of the human body. But one loves a particular beauty because he doesn't see anything more beautiful." (18)"To hear confessions well," he said further, "compassion is very necessary, which is closely akin to carnal love; love is necessary, but sometimes it degenerates into the flesh; assistance is necessary, but sometimes it overflows into another's vices." (19) Consequently, prayer is necessary to understand and to avoid all these dangers.

Prayer is further necessary, St. Gaspar said, to enkindle that fire of divine love which must be lighted in others, and to nourish zeal in ourselves for the salvation of souls. "It is charity which generates and nourishes spiritual children; it is charity which God wants to scatter all over the world: 'I have come to spread fire in the world.' But it is set aflame through meditation. 'In my meditation fire bursts forth!'" (20)

Finally, the confessor has need of great enlightenment from God because he will encounter many things hidden and difficult, and also arduous circumstances. Hence, a great spirit of prayer is needed. Meditation is necessary to apply doctrine to particular cases. "Often some souls are more knowledgeable than the confessor is; if he does not have the humility to refer them to others, he will displease God. He will not have humility without prayer, nor will he have the understanding to direct others without prayer." (21)

St. Gaspar applied those first verses of Psalm I to the zealous minister who dedicates his time to prayer and meditation: "Blessed is the man who does not rely on the counsel of the impious, but whose will is in the law of the Lord, and his law he will meditate day and night;" in order that he might learn this first, and then teach it to others. "He will be as a vine which is planted near running water" in him one sees grace and spirit increase. "Which will bring forth fruit in its time" -- he not only gives the appearance of fruit, but produces fruit itself. "And its leaves will not die" -- not a word will be lost. "Everything he does will prosper" -- his ministry will be fruitful. (22)

III. Prudence

70. THE NECESSITY OF PRUDENCE.

To priests, Father Bertoni strongly recommended prudence. He wrote in his spiritual diary in 1809 the following: "It is not enough to be simple to make others saints; prudence is also necessary." (23) Knowing the importance of this virtue, he applied himself from his youth to acquire it. Father Lenotti said that he succeeded so well that he accomplished an immense amount of good. Prudence was one of his favorite virtues. He wanted his spiritual sons to possess this virtue as something very necessary, and he never let any occasion pass without reminding them and exhorting them to be cautious in speaking, to be circumspect, not to put too much confidence in themselves, and to seek counsel before acting. "Son, without counsel you can do nothing." (24)

The prudence which he recommended was not so much a human prudence, but rather divine or heavenly prudence, the prudence of the saints. Therefore, even when suggesting the means which they could use to acquire this virtue, he indicated above all prayer and love of God. "How does one, he said, "learn this prudence which is not human but divine? Who can set up laws and rules about it? Behold the school, behold

the teacher of whom Holy Scripture speaks: 'The king has brought me into his wine cellar and ordered me in charity.' We must permit this king to lead us; he calls us; he invites us; he awaits us, so that we may enter into the cellar of his love. Once there, the soul, through its good fortune, inebriates itself on the wine of his charity. This precious wine delights, fortifies, lifts the soul outside of itself, and unites it to God who regulates it most perfectly: 'He ordered charity in me.' There, a light sparks the intellect with admirable wisdom and divine prudence, to judge the universal cause of all things which is God, to select, to direct anything, in so far as it has relations with God, whether as an effect or as a means to reach Him in the future, and to glorify Him in the present." (25)

71. THE PRUDENCE OF ST. BERTONI.

In the final analysis, the prudence which Father Bertoni recommended is nothing else but full conformity of our judgment and affections with those of God, so that we judge things as God judges them, to desire and to choose always that which will serve as the best means to achieve His love and fulfill His will. Our Founder was filled with this heavenly prudence. As a result, persons of all walks of life had recourse to him seeking his advice. After listening to him they became happy and tranquil as if they had heard the voice of God. It was a common opinion that he had received the gift of counsel from God.

Thus, Father Viscardini, S.J., who was Master of Novices at the Jesuit Novitiate in Verona, related that if anyone came to him with doubts about his vocation, he would send him to Father Bertoni, "as a man who possessed special insights from heaven and had the gift of discerning souls," and then he abided by his judgment. Father Anthony Bresciani, also a Jesuit, consulted him many times especially in regard to his own vocation. He wrote of St. Gaspar to Father John Marani (the successor of Fr. Bertoni) in 1855 as follows: "It seems to me that his every action was guided by the Holy Spirit." Such was the prudence which our Founder taught his spiritual sons. After exhorting them to seek counsel in their needs, he recommended above all that they should ask God for enlightenment through prayer. He wrote: "Behold the words of God: 'Son, without me you can do nothing.' Listen then to the counsel of sound advice; nothing impedes us from placing the weak spark of our human reason before the very bright sun of divine Wisdom. Even if on our part we have done nothing, we will acknowledge that every good thing proceeds either directly or indirectly from that source." (26)

As a consequence of this heavenly wisdom and prudence, he adopted the

following rule of conduct, and recommended it to others: "Do not anticipate the will of God, but faithfully follow it." As St. Gregory says, "Take one step when you see the way clear, then wait before taking the second step, until the light becomes clearer." (27) On this point our Founder cited the example of the Church, the spouse of Christ, which "does not stop seeking counsel in order to carry on its work, but, once the way is clear, she does not stop working, studying and consulting in order to advance further in understanding her function. When she is impeded in her work, she waits confidently, trusting completely in God. By these two ways of acting, her trust in God is always uniform." Then he continues: "This, if I am not mistaken, is the perfect model of our abandonment to the Lord. Oh, what a wonderful virtue it is to abandon oneself to the omnipotent arms of divine providence, when we cannot function by ourselves. But what a more perfect virtue, carried to the utmost degree, it is when we can function as we ought according to the plan of divine providence with our own hands, but, at the same time, equally and totally abandoned in His hands. Then this would be like the man who said, 'I live now (and consequently work) not I, but Christ lives (and consequently works) in me.'" (28)

These are the thoughts of St. Gaspar: intimate union of our soul with God, and uniformity of our judgment and will with His. Desire for His love, and zeal to promote His glory. Pray to receive His enlightenment, and faithfulness in following His divine will when it is known to us. Our Founder was faithful to these maxims and he wanted others to do the same, especially priests, so that they could correspond with their calling.

IV. Study

72. NECESSITY OF STUDY.

According to the intention of our Founder, our Congregation has the special purpose of rendering assistance to bishops "by means of the various ministries of our vocation." He observed that this was an arduous and difficult task. For this reason the Congregation should be attentive to prepare and train her members by providing them with the necessary means and aids, and by strengthening them against dangers and difficulties. (29)

The first characteristic of the members should be a desire for perfection, zeal for the glory of God; then, serious application to study. (30)

Thoroughly convinced of the great usefulness of study in promoting the glory of

God and the good of the Church, he rigorously applied himself to study even from his youth. The time that was left free to him from his ministry, he devoted to study, even robbing a great part of the night, which was so necessary for rest. As a result, our Founder succeeded in acquiring a wealth of knowledge which he used advantageously, especially with the clergy of Verona, in protecting them against Jansenism, which in those days threatened to extend itself to Verona, and in assisting them by his exhortation and counsels. This point prompted Father Lenotti to write: "It is difficult to estimate how much good Father Bertoni did for the clergy; this is known only to God." (31)

73. THE SCOPE OF OUR STUDIES.

It was this same motive which moved our Founder to recommend us to study with great diligence; and he also prescribed their extent. St. Gaspar did not want us to study only the sacred sciences, but also the secular ones, as philosophy, mathematics, physics, some medicine, fine arts, languages, plus Italian, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew literature, because all these may be useful to us in aiding the Church. (32) Moreover, he did not expect that each individual in the Congregation would become proficient in all the branches of the ministry. Rather, he insisted more on the necessity of dividing and specializing in study. It is impossible, our Founder observed, that an individual can be proficient and profound in all the sacred and secular sciences. On the other hand, it is necessary that the Congregation as a whole possess a perfect knowledge in all these sciences and languages, so that the Congregation can achieve its goal. Therefore, our Founder prescribed that in every branch of study, either literary or scientific, some members should apply themselves to special study more at length, so become qualified to render to the Church those services which are needed according to the changing times and circumstances. (33)

Our Founder continues: although in the Congregation these studies should be principally concerned with sacred theology and the interpretation of sacred scripture, there should, however, be those who devote themselves for a longer period of time to secular or minor branches of knowledge. They should specialize themselves in such studies with the motive of aiding the Church. Father Bertoni wanted the members of the Congregation to be prepared to teach, if called upon, theology and philosophy, especially in seminaries. He also recommended that they receive academic degrees at the University. (34) Furthermore, when speaking of the students who had finished their

theological courses, he wanted them to apply themselves until the age of 30 to the study of those sciences and arts which are taught in our schools, or choose those which conform more to their talents; concentrating on those for which they have a special aptitude. (35)

To anyone who did not take on special studies, our Founder recommended the study of literature, making them understand that besides the other advantages they derive from study, they will avoid laziness and purify their minds of daydreams, and at the same time mortify their body for their greater spiritual profit. (36) He himself pursued these studies from the very beginning of his priesthood. Indeed, we know from Father Bragato (then a young student) that every night he went to Father Gaspar's house to read and study Italian classics, for example, Ariosto, Tasso, and especially Dante, whom Father Gaspar interpreted with such clarity and profundity "as it made his commentators appear ignorant, when compared to him." (37) Later on, even at the Stimato, he continued such studies. Father Giacobbe testified at the diocesan informative process for his cause of beatification: "Whenever I visited him, I always noticed he had some classical book in his hands, such as Valsecchi, Verger, Baronius, etc., remarking that Sacred Scripture was his daily bread." Father Lenotti, speaking of our Founder's studies, said among other things, that even in his old age, he read from beginning to end "all the seven folio volumes of Vitruvio." (38)

All these norms of study Father Bertoni enforced with his first students and priests of the congregation. Besides the study of Sacred Scripture, he required the students to study and read those works which served to round out their scholastic knowledge: the dogmatic theology of Petavius, the moral theology (the complete works) of St. Alphonsus, the fonts of canon law, etc. He wanted them to continue these studies even after they became priests. Father Giacobbe notes that, in his selection of studies and authors, he knew how to make the right choice according to the inclinations and the capacity of his clerics and priests. He required one to study the more accredited works of canon law, others he assigned the study of the Fathers, and to others he allotted special studies in Gregorian chant, making use of the codices and manuscripts, which were found in the public libraries of the city, and in the churches to which monasteries were formerly attached. (39)

He suggested that whenever they did any reading, they should do so calmly and with attention, and quote, or at least jot down in a notebook, anything which made an

impression on them, because perhaps someday it could be of use to them.

74. SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCES.

Our Founder did not only rely on his books; he taught us by his example to use every means to increase the treasure of knowledge in ourselves and in others. From the time he was ordained, when he was attached to the parish of St. Paul, then later on at St. Firmus, he invited zealous priests to his house to discuss and debate the sacred sciences together. (40) At these reunions or conferences, the young priest Father Nicholas Mazza was also present. "Every day," wrote Father Caesar Cavattoni, "they studied together, especially Aquinas and Liguori, (on whose moral theology some older priests looked with suspicion, saying that it was too liberal and soft). They were the first to follow Liguori's system here, and were instrumental in having it accepted and esteemed by others." (41)

Later on, even at the Stimate he held similar conferences at which diocesan priests were also present. The principal aim was to study St. Thomas. This is the method they used: a case was proposed, and one of those present was called upon to solve it; then the solution from St. Thomas was read, and the discussion continued. (42)

In 1836 when the Church of St. Mary of the Lilies was reopened for public worship, our Founder sent two of his priests there. He encouraged them to conduct similar conferences there. We learn of this from a letter which St. Gaspar wrote to Father Bragato. After speaking of the ministry of Father Marani at the Stimate (where he taught school), and at the Derelitti (where he heard confessions especially on Saturdays and Sundays), he continued thus: "On other nights, he holds conferences on moral theology with ten or twelve priests present, similar to the one he held at St. Firmus. After the methodical reading, he followed the same manner as Father Guerreri. (43) He specifies and solves, as the occasion arises (and this almost daily) the most intricate cases, and the Lord gives him extraordinary light, prudence, and sincerity." (44)

75. THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDY.

From what has been said so far, we can conclude that, according to the mind of our Founder, our Congregation ought to be a center of study, and a life of study should be one of the principal duties of the priests who belong to it. There is another Congregation, the Institute of the Holy Family, for which Fr. Bertoni labored so much, as to be called its founder. According to his thinking and that of its foundress, this

Congregation likewise should be dedicated to study. (45) This is what he wrote to Mother Naudet on the importance and necessity of study in her Congregation. We reproduce it here because it can be applied entirely to our Congregation with equal value. "When my work permits, I will try to present to you a complete and perfect model of the joy of study as something of great glory to God, who is its author: 'God is the Lord of knowledge.' Without the aid of these natural sciences, we cannot arrive at the heights of spiritual things, as St. Gregory clearly says. And I dare to add, in your circumstances, so delicate is the work of the project, that even though one may build now, it cannot be preserved without the aid of much knowledge on the part of its members. The first weak link in this great work will be ignorance, or its equivalent, knowing much, but poorly. This would be a loss of style. We will have occasion and need to speak of this later on, in other circumstances. Meanwhile, after charity and other virtues, you should also regard study as the principal support of your edifice. You should implore great enlightenment from God for the proper direction and plan of these studies." (46)

76. THE MANNER OF PURSUING STUDIES.

Our Founder certainly recognized the dangers which study is likely to bring, namely, distractions of mind and vanity of heart. However, when speaking to diocesan priests, he said that such dangers are encountered by those who cultivate study through vanity or curiosity. That is why, he observed, learned men were wont to be less devout, because curiosity had distracted them, knowledge had inflated them, and pride had blinded them. (47) However, when you study with an upright intention of cooperating with the glory of God, or of rendering yourself useful to the Church according to the spirit of our Congregation, study will not harm you, but rather will aid you to greater spiritual profit. Thus, when speaking to diocesan priests he said: "Minor studies are a great help even for prayer and meditation." (48)

Here, then, is the spirit of our saintly Founder and what he thought about the necessity of study for the proper development of our Congregation. It is our duty to become one with him on this point, by cultivating study with the same spirit he recommended to us, if we wish to be his true sons, true members of the Congregation which he founded.

NOTES

- (1) Meditation 8 on the "First Book of Kings" - signs of a vocation.
- (2) Ibid.
- (3) Meditation 3 on "Genesis".
- (4) Meditation 4 on "Genesis".
- (5) Giacobbe: Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 207.
- (6) Meditation 9 on the "First Book of Kings" - signs of a vocation.
- (7) Ibid.
- (8) Exercises to the Clergy: Vocation.
- (9) Letter to Father Bragato -- 27 August 1840 (Correspondence, pg. 321).
- (10) Exercises to the Clergy: Contemplation.
- (11) Exercises to new Confessors: Goals Giacobbe-- The Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 44
Giacobbe-- The Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 45 Exercises to the Clergy -- Public Life of Christ.
- (12) Exercises to the Clergy -- Personal Sin Ibid. -- Meditation.
- (13) Exercises to New Confessors -- Goals Exercises to the Clergy -- Meditation.
- (20) Ibid.
- (21) Ibid.
- (22) *Ibid.*
- (23) Spiritual Journal, 23 September 1809.
- (24) Giacobbe: Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 254.
- (25) Correspondence, pg. 56 ss.
- (26) Correspondence, pg. 100
- (27) Correspondence, pg. 98 ss.

- (28) Correspondence, pg. 99
- (29) Constitution 185.
- (30) Constitution 49.
- (31) Life of St. Gaspar: His zeal for the missions.
- (32) Constitution 54.
- (33) Constitution 57.
- (34) Constitutions 58, 68.
- (35) Constitution 71.
- (36) Exercises to New Confessors.
- (37) Letters of Father Bragato to Father Marani (Summ. Add. pg. 287).
- (38) Lenotti: Life of St. Gaspar -- concerning his studies.
- (39) Giacobbe: Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 126.
- (40) Giacobbe: Life of St. Gaspar, pg. 234.
- (41) Manuscripts of Cavattoni. Public Library of Verona.
- (42) Letter of Father Fochesato to Father Lona.
- (43) Father Guerreri was a famous Dominican in Verona at this time, he conducted similar conferences.
- (44) Letter to Father Bragato, 1 December 1837 (Correspondence, pg. 315 ss.).
- (45) This is how Leopoldina Naudet called him: cf. a letter addressed to him Correspondence, pg. 166.
- (46) Correspondence, pg. 74 ss.
- (47) Exercises to the Clergy -- Meditation.
- (48) Meditation 52 on the "First Book of Kings"

Section III

The Active Life

Chapter One

THE GOAL OF OUR CONGREGATION

The goal of our Congregation (like that of other Congregations of mixed life) is that besides attending to our own sanctification, we must work for the salvation and sanctification of others. To attain this common goal, every Order or Congregation has its own means, its own spirit, and special purpose. The means and the spirit constitute the particular goal of the Congregation, its individuality, and the reason for its existence.

This fact being established, what are the means, what is the special goal of our Congregation, and how does it differ from other Congregations of mixed life?

77. THE MEANS BY WHICH WE ARE TO ATTAIN OUR SANCTIFICATION AND THAT OF OTHERS.

First of all, the means which we must use for our sanctification and that of others (besides the practice of our religious vows and the observance of the Rule) are the exercise of those ministries which are conducive to the salvation of souls. They can be reduced to these categories:

1. The administration of the sacraments (1)
2. Preaching of the Word of God, especially by giving the Spiritual Exercises (2)
3. The Formation of Clerics in piety and study (3)
4. The Christian education of youth, especially their literary and scientific instruction. (4)

78. THE PARTICULAR SPIRIT OF OUR CONGREGATION.

The manner, then, or the spirit by which we are to exercise all these ministries is indicated to us by our Father Founder in these words: "Apostolic Missionaries for the assistance of Bishops." These words do not signify only that general assistance rendered to Bishops by the exercise of our ministry, but a special help which we should render to them. On our part, we need to prepare ourselves to assist them in every kind of work

(within the limits previously indicated in our program), making ourselves available to them, ready to accede to their invitation to assume or carry out any work where there is a need, always within the limits alluded to before.

In other words, we ought to be as a "flying squadron" for the bishops to which they can have recourse each time they want to begin a work for the good of souls, for which we have the necessary personnel.

This explains why our saintly Founder, when speaking of the goal of our Congregation, calls it a difficult and arduous one. He felt almost the need of pointing out that it was not rash or imprudent. To attain this goal, he assures us of a special assistance from God which he calls "a special grace of our vocation." (5)

79. THE PREPARATION OF OUR MEMBERS.

Moreover, all this is in complete harmony with what our Founder prescribed for the preparation of our members about which we have already spoken when treating of the necessity of study. Father Marani wrote; "He did not limit it (the Congregation) to any specific kind of occupation, or to some determined event or contingency. He wanted those who embraced our life to be ready and prepared for all contingencies and for every good work in the service of God for the assistance of souls." (6)

According to the thought of our Founder, we ought to study continually the needs of the Church and prepare ourselves to render those services which are needed according to different times and circumstances. (7) Every member of our Congregation (always according to the mind of Father Bertoni) should strive, as much as possible and under the direction of superiors, to prepare himself to exercise some special ministry. (8) Thus, the Congregation will have individuals ready for whatever work the bishops might ask for our help (9), provided that it is in conformity with the goal of our Congregation, and be compatible with religious life.

80. RELATIONS WITH BISHOPS.

Saint Gaspar says in his Constitutions that we must work under the direction and dependence on the bishops. (10) These words do not mean that the members of the Congregation must actually depend on the orders of the bishops. That would be incompatible with the essence of the religious state which demands that the members be always at the disposition of their superiors, always ready to fulfill the obligations of

religious life.

Indeed Saint Gaspar himself expressly declared that we should not accept any work which would bind our members in any way or which would remove them from proper dependence on superiors, such as, dignities, residence, and benefices and the perpetual care of souls. (11)

To give an example of the offices which we can accept from the bishops, our Founder mentions the teaching of philosophy and theology in seminaries. He himself sent two of his priests to teach dogma and moral and church history at the diocesan seminary in Verona.

Therefore, these words "under the direction of bishops" mean that in our work we should keep in mind above all the needs and demands of bishops, that in our foundations we act in accord with them, that we adapt them in such a way as to draw from them greater good for the church and souls. This must be especially so when there is a question of some extraordinary work or difficult ministry. We should assume such work only at their invitation. (12)

These words also mean that we ought to show respect and reverence toward bishops, to observe exactly the norms which they have established for exercising our apostolic ministry. (13)

Moreover, besides this special respect which our Founder orders us to have, the words "*in obsequium Episcoporum*" for the assistance of bishops, are the distinctive mark he gave us and are directed more to the Congregation as a whole than to any particular member. "The manner with which the Congregation shall fulfill its goal" (these are the words of our first fathers) is "to serve or assist the bishops in those works which the needs of the times and circumstances require. The bishop will ask the superior of the Congregation for one or more individuals for some office or work, which is in conformity with the spirit of our Congregation, and in accord with our rules, provided that there be persons suitable for the purpose according to the judgment of the superiors." (14)

In conclusion, our Father Founder wanted us to be always aware of the needs of the Church, and diligent in preparing ourselves to be as useful to it as we can, always ready when the bishops beckon, rushing to the breach to arrest evil and promote good, to work with them in every kind of ministry in conformity with our end and compatible

with the duties of religious life. This is the goal which our Founder set out for us under divine inspiration. (15) Now it is up to us to exert ourselves to attain it, if we want to have the blessing of God, and to enjoy the special assistance which our Father Founder promises us, that is, "the special grace of our vocation."

NOTES

- (1) Constitutions 162.
- (2) Constitutions 163.
- (3) Constitutions 164.
- (4) Constitutions 165-167.
- (5) Constitutions 185.
- (6) Father Marani: brief facts about our Congregation (1855).
- (7) Constitutions 57.
- (8) Constitutions 72 d.
- (9) Constitutions 56.
- (10) Constitutions 2, 185.
- (11) Constitutions 4.
- (12) Constitutions 185.
- (13) Constitutions 2.
- (14) Father Marani: brief outline, etc.
- (15) Constitutions 185.

Chapter Two

GENERAL NORMS FOR THE ACTIVE LIFE

81. NORMS TO FOLLOW IN THE ACTIVE LIFE.

When explaining the way we must carry out the ministry of the active life for the good of souls, our Founder uses this statement of Saint Bernard: "Right order requires that first of all you should care for your own soul, and then that of others. This is the first step of charity about which it is written: 'to take care of your own soul is pleasing to God.'" (1) Therefore, we should exercise our ministry in such a manner that it does not impede our spiritual life. Hence our ministry should always be regulated by obedience. It should not take us away from spiritual exercises, or from divine worship to which we are obligated by rule, nor should it make demands on us as to render us almost like seculars. (2)

To achieve this, Saint Gaspar highly recommends two things: the observance of our rule and right intention. We shall say something about these two points, and add a few words on prudence and the spirit of sacrifice that a priest must use in his ministry.

I. Observance of the Rule

82. THE OBLIGATION OF ATTENDING TO ONE'S OWN SANCTIFICATION.

Our first obligation is to save our own souls. We cannot neglect this on the pretext of saving the souls of others. On this point our Founder said: "A fatal deception of the devil, and a very common one, which deceives so many priests, is to rely on having done much good for others by preaching and hearing confessions.... caring for the lives of others, but neglecting ourselves. 'What does it profit a man if he gained the whole world and then suffer the loss of his own soul?' Let us save our own soul and not think only of saving others. Let us perform our duties with exactness for the glory of God, for this brings salvation to the soul, and let us not be blinded by false zeal." (3)

He pointed out to priests that in order to help one's neighbor and to draw fruit from their sacred ministry, the most effective means above all else is to fulfill one's own duties, and not to neglect one's own spiritual exercises. "Many fall into the deception of neglecting some point of duty," he said, "in order not to ruin their work or project. It is precisely because of this that they ruin them all the more. Never neglect even one point of perfection in order not to do any damage to any undertaking." (4)

Our Founder wrote the same thing in his spiritual journal: "We should never neglect any virtue so as not to damage our work. Many are deceived by this, and experience shows that the work is all the more damaged and ruined. But when one has a care for virtue, God shows his protection, and the work is blessed and increases all the more." (5)

83. NECESSITY OF PRAYER IN ORDER TO HELP OUR NEIGHBOR.

The Example of Saint Bertoni.

Our Founder recommended that the priests who are occupied with their neighbor's welfare should cultivate a spirit of prayer. "Some spiritual people," he said, "start building in reverse: with fervor in exterior works of charity, where there really is little charity and much of nature. They should start properly from the beginning, for they are lacking a solid foundation, which is an interior spirit. This will produce in its own good time results seasoned and matured by charity. Meanwhile it is assisted by the strong discipline of obedience and practical prayer which will inflame the will."(6) He was in the habit of saying: "If one does not first pray well, he will not speak well about God." (7)

This is how our Founder acted. Even though he was continually occupied with difficult tasks which superiors entrusted to him, he found comfort and repose in prayer. In it he asked for and obtained the grace to carry out fruitfully all his ministries.

Thus, when he was scheduled to preach the morning meditation on feast days to the clerics in the seminary, he prepared himself by spending the night in prayer and meditation in the chapel of the seminary. When he had to assist a dying person at St. Joseph's Convent, he would stay up and pray in the choir of that church.

His method was so well known that his contemporaries, speaking of the conversion which he obtained of that unhappy religious who had committed parricide, and was condemned to death, supposed without doubt that before Saint Gaspar went to visit the prisoner, he spent the night in prayer in order to obtain the grace of that man's conversion. (8) Only this can explain how that unhappy murderer, who for many days previously had obstinately refused all who had urged him to make a good confession, was very moved at seeing Saint Gaspar, greeting him as his savior and deliverer.

II. Upright Intention

84. OF AN UPRIGHT INTENTION.

An upright intention gives value to our actions and renders any work licit and meritorious. Without it, such work is not proper to our state. This is precisely our case. When we are in contact with persons of the world, observed Saint Berton, and become too familiar with them, this is in itself a mundane thing. This should be prohibited to religious if not done for a higher spiritual end, such as charity or religion, or because of the needs of our neighbor or for their advantage. If there is no hope of obtaining these results in our neighbor, such contact with them becomes a useless conversation and not conformable to our state. (9) On the contrary, when we speak at times to our neighbor with an upright intention about material and indifferent matters with the idea of encouraging our neighbor to do good, this may not be a waste of time, but advantageous and religious. (10)

85. INDIFFERENCE TOWARD VARIOUS MINISTRIES.

The following consequence proceeds from this upright intention: we ought to exercise our ministry solely with the intention of giving glory to God and of being useful to our neighbor. When obedience assigns us to any ministry, we should be completely indifferent. Many examples can be drawn from the life of Saint Gaspar to illustrate his indifference, but we will mention only one. The close union which he had with the servant of God, Leopoldina Naudet, and the love which he lavished on the work of that holy woman is well known. In 1812, he had just begun to assist her in her undertaking, when his superiors assigned him to the seminary where they wanted him to assume the position of confessor. They told him to give up his work at St. Joseph's Convent. He maintained a most perfect indifference on that occasion, and he wrote as follows to Mother Naudet: "As I came to St. Joseph's to serve his Divine Majesty, so do I depart with the same desire to serve Him." (11)

A few days later, after Mother Naudet had obtained permission from superiors to allow Saint Gaspar to continue to assist her, at least with his counsel, he wrote to her: "When I was very ill, and later when other prohibitions came, it seemed as if the Lord was using me as a joke of divine providence, but a loving one, with which to test you. I was at peace with that decision, and I am very happy that I had no part in displeasing you. This motive of pleasure seems to me to be known by His Divine Majesty and which

turned out to your advantage." (12)

God alone ought to be the goal of all our ministries. Therefore, we should follow that great maxim of Saint Gaspar which became a guiding principle of his life, which has been cited many times before: we should never anticipate the will of God by devoting ourselves to this or that ministry; rather we should await the manifestation of His divine will, and be ready to follow it at all cost. "The Lord," says Saint Gaspar, "often uses some of his ministers to make his plans known to the world, and to set them in motion, but in finalizing them, he makes use of other faithful ministers entirely different from the former ones. Since we must diligently follow the spirit of our vocation, and operate according to His orders, we must be on our guard not to take any step before Him and not to place our hands ahead of Him." (13) On another occasion he said: "The Lord unites himself with us when we abandon ourselves in Him and follow Him faithfully and energetically, and when we humbly do not precede Him. Then, He gives unmistakable signs to us of our divine calling. These signs are: holiness, an attitude more of heaven than of earth, and the harmonizing of our life with our preaching." (14)

86. THERE SHOULD BE NO JEALOUSY.

In keeping with our right intention, there should be no envy or jealousy in our ministry because of the good which others perform. Rather, our aim should be only the glory of God and we should be very happy also when others work to promote it.

Our Founder advises us on this point: "Let one, even though he be called to an extraordinary mission, think himself alone; for he will find many others on that long road, endowed by the Lord with an equal or an even better spirit." (15) In this regard he left us many splendid examples. In 1813, Mother Naudet had her heart set on the convent of St. Theresa, where she wanted to begin her institute with her first companions. She became upset when she learned that Mr. Bellotti had already given the convent to another religious congregation who were dedicated to the education of poor girls. Father Bertoni wrote to her, inviting her to thank God for the good news which she had communicated to him concerning St. Theresa's Convent. Then, our Founder continued: "Whatever the situation may be, you can take consolation in the fact that from all sides many souls are coming together under different leaders all under the glorious banner of Christ our Lord. The more we are, so much the better it is for the glory of God, and for all of us, and for each one of us, for by communicating and sharing with each other our charity increases and multiplies." (16)

And, even though he and his companions had maintained a school at the Stimato for many years to the great benefit of the citizens of the town, when the Jesuits returned to Verona, he most willingly withdrew and closed his school in order to leave the field open to the Jesuits whom he loved and esteemed so much. We also know that when they were looking for a place for their novitiate, he offered them the buildings and his property which they gratefully refused. The Jesuits have recorded this generous offer in the annals of their society.

III. Prudence

87. NORMS ON PRUDENCE.

Another virtue which Saint Gaspar recommended in the exercise of our ministry is prudence; we have spoken of it previously. In his Constitutions, precisely in that section which treats of the active life he mentions it twice to impress upon us the precautions we should use in the custody of the virtue of chastity which he wanted absolutely to be observed; (17) and to remind us not to become involved in the temporal affairs of our neighbor, especially when we are called upon to assist the dying.

Our Founder said that we ought to exhort the dying to set their affairs in order, but not to counsel them about how to dispose of them, if it doesn't pertain to the necessary matters of salvation, as for example, the obligation of restitution, a paying of one's debts, the leaving of necessary inheritance. For other arrangements, we need not descend to particulars lest we become involved in law suits and disputes.

If a sick person is ready to dispose of his property and he asks our advice, we ought to suggest only those things which we think and judge to be more conducive to the greater glory of God and the advantage of the person's soul. (18)

IV. The Spirit of Sacrifice

88. THE NECESSITY OF THIS SPIRIT.

If those norms and precautions are observed, the priest, the minister of God, need not place any limit on his zeal. He ought to arm himself with the spirit of sacrifice so as to become all things to all men and thus gain all for Christ. He should adapt himself to his people, speak of matters which interest them, so that he can do some good for them. As our Founder said: "We should enter into the house of others in their manner so that we may come out according to our manner." (19) Thus, he counsels us

to read newspapers so as to be informed of the every day events which are taking place about us. He said that it is very useful for a religious priest to know the world since he must be in contact with it. We know that he and his companions at the Stimato read newspapers. (20)

In particular he urged kindness toward those who at one time were on the right path, but who had let themselves be swept up by the current of the world. "We must," he said, "never abandon our friends no matter how misguided they may be, especially when they are avoided by other good people. For this may be a great help to hasten their conversion." (21) He truly followed his own advice. We recall the great kindness and respect which he showed to Father Joseph Venturi, (who at the time of the revolution had abandoned the clerical state), and were the means that served to urge this unfortunate man to rethink his position and to reconcile himself with ecclesiastical authorities. Father Lenotti also states in his life of Saint Gaspar that there were many priests who were opposed to him and his works of zeal, but whenever Father Gaspar met them, he always greeted them with respect, and in a short time won them over as friends.

Our Founder suggested this same method to others. One day Father Giacobbe asked him how he should act toward some of his parishioners who had broken church laws, especially concerning their Easter duty. Saint Bertoni answered: "When you meet them, doff your hat even to your knees," suggesting that this act of kindness which indeed costs nothing, might serve the good purpose of gaining access to them on their death bed." (22)

89. SAINT GASPAR'S SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE.

Above all, the priest should clothe himself with the spirit of Jesus Christ, that is, the spirit of charity, which does not seek its own interests but those of Christ. This is the example which our Founder demonstrated for us in his life. Since he was a diocesan priest entrusted with the care of youth, the Canossian religious, the clerics and acolytes at the seminary, assistance at the parochial church, and the sick at the hospital, he hardly had a moment to rest. Indeed, it was a marvel to all; they could not understand how he could carry on. After many tiring hours of labor during the day, he would dedicate a great portion of the night to study and prayer. Even after he retired to the Stimato he continued to concern himself untiringly with the needs of others.

Even during his long illness he was very diligent in teaching school, in conducting the spiritual exercises to clerics who came to him almost every day, either on their own or because they were sent by their bishop. Whatever time was left over, he made himself available to those who came to him either for comfort or for spiritual counsel. All were received with greatest courtesy and love. He patiently listened to them and took such interest in their problems that he never showed himself tired or annoyed, but always appeared happy and serene. He welcomed everyone with kindness. "No matter how many times," wrote Cardinal Louis di Canossa, "did I go to him for counsel, comfort, or spiritual direction, I always found him with a sweet smile on his lips (even though he was suffering greatly at the time). He counseled me about my concerns with humility, prudence, kindness, and with great understanding, forgetting himself and his sufferings." (23)

It was because of this that Father Anthony Bresciani, S.J. wrote in 1855 to Father John Mary Marani, Saint Bertoni's immediate successor, asking him to point out with great emphasis a hidden feature of Saint Gaspar's life "his generous, noble and kindly sanctity; his heavenly smile, his gentle charm, his tender charity towards the suffering and those troubled souls who had recourse to him for counsel and aid." Then he continued: "His every action, every word, every look brought comfort. Such an authentic humility in one so dignified is difficult to find in a manner so pronounced as in Father Gaspar."

90. THE SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE OF OUR FIRST FATHERS.

With such example before their eyes, it was not surprising that his own sons and companions should animate themselves with holy zeal and sacrifice for the good of souls. This was not only in the beginning when they were very few in number and they had to exert themselves in order to fulfill their many duties. Even later in the years that followed, they were afire with a holy zeal and found comfort in working for souls. As a source of edification to all, let us cite some lines from a letter which Saint Gaspar wrote to Father Bragato, a letter already alluded to before, in which he speaks of the ministry of Father Marani. He mentioned that during the day Father Marani taught at the Stimato, spent some time studying in the library preparing his sermons; at night he went to the Derelitti, where he heard confessions on Saturdays and Sundays; on other evenings he presided at the conferences of moral theology. Then our Founder continues: "Thursday he examines the clerics at the seminary as usual, and following

that, he receives penitents of all classes, at any hour, interrupting his dinner, supper, and deferring his rest. Likewise on feast days, he hears confessions in the choir of St. Stephen's Church until he has to leave to give instructions at St. Sebastian's, which he shall continue to do as long as it pleases God. The people listen to him very willingly, and it seems that the word of God is not wasted on them but falls on good ground. Before he began to give instructions again, I sent him to St. Zeno's to preach the octave of the dead... (24) (here the letter is torn).

This is how our first fathers worked with holy simplicity, seeking only the glory of God and the good of souls. They acquired this spirit of zeal and sacrifice from the example and recommendations of Saint Gaspar. We have a real treasure in their example; let us strive to imitate them.

NOTES

- (1) Constitutions 283.
- (2) Constitutions 284.
- (3) Spiritual Exercise to New Confessors.
- (4) Meditation 16 on the 1st Book of Kings.
- (5) Spiritual Journal, July 9, 1808.
- (6) Journal, November 16, 1808
- (7) Journal, February 4, 1809.
- (8) Lenotti: Life of Saint Gaspar, n. 19.
- (9) Constitutions 282.
- (10) Constitutions 279.
- (11) Correspondence p. 27.
- (12) Correspondence p. 37.
- (13) Meditation 17 on the 1st Book of Kings.
- (14) Meditation 16 on the 1st Book of Kings.

- (15) Meditation 17 on the 1st Book of Kings.
- (16) Correspondence p. 86.
- (17) Constitutions 119.
- (18) Constitutions 296.
- (19) Journal, August 20, 1808.
- (20) Giacobbe: Life of Saint Gaspar, p. 146, 260.
- (21) Journal, July 13, 1808.
- (22) Giacobbe: Life of Saint Gaspar, p. 327.
- (23) Letter to Father Peter Vignola.
- (24) Correspondence p. 316, speaks of the labors of Father Marani, also in a letter to Mother Naudet written in 1828, where it is stated that (during the sickness of Father Gaspar he taught at two schools, and he taught while the others ate and slept.) Correspondence 244.

Chapter Three

APOSTOLIC MINISTRY

I. Preaching

91. VARIOUS TYPES OF PREACHING.

The principal duty which the priests of our congregation ought to engage in for the good of souls is preaching. Our Founder dedicated himself to this form of ministry from the time he was a young priest, and applied himself with fervor and zeal even to the last days of his life. These are the means which Saint Gaspar himself used and recommended to us: The explanation of Christian Doctrine, exhortations with a moral tone, dialogue and sermons given with the intention of correcting faults, exhorting others to the practice of virtue, and the frequent reception of the sacraments, the Marian sodalities and spiritual assistance to the sick. (1)

92. THE SPIRITUAL EXERCISES AND MISSIONS.

Among the various types of preaching, our Founder recommended in a special way the preaching of the spiritual exercises according to the method of St. Ignatius Loyola. He himself was

constantly occupied in this form of preaching.

We are already familiar with the famous mission he preached with Canon Louis Pacetti in the church of St. Firmus at Verona in 1816. Besides this, he preached many other missions and courses of spiritual exercises. According to the testimony of the Jesuits who heard him (such as Fathers Avesani and Luigi Fortis, the latter was Superior General of the restored Society of Jesus) he succeeded in becoming an expert in giving these exercises.

Nor did he interrupt this type of ministry after he withdrew to the Stimato. "He made constant use of this art for the good of souls," says Father Lenotti, "which he had acquired as a result of long and diligent study, and coupled with a special enlightenment from God, during his long life. He gave the spiritual exercises many times to the laity, more frequently to the clerics and priests at the seminary, or in retreats at the Stimato. It was wonderful to hear him even when he was ill and in pain, sometimes so infirm that he was unable to move. It was touching and edifying to hear him give the spiritual

exercises to the clerics who at times surrounded him while he sat at his desk or was propped up in bed. This part of his ministry was most frequent and at different times was given either to the clerics who were to be ordained outside the regular time, or to the priests of the diocese, or even to strangers who longed to stay a few days to make the spiritual exercises. To all these, he preached the exercises to their great advantage and consolation. If he personally was unable to give them either because of his illness or because of other duties, he had his own priests give them. He sent them many times to preach the exercises to the people in the churches of the city, and to the clerics at the seminary, and sometimes even to priests." (2)

93. RULES TO BE FOLLOWED IN PREACHING: THE EXAMPLE OF SAINT BERTONI.

In preaching the divine word, "He did not want too much structural preparation in ordinary preaching, but recommended zeal, heart, spirit, and confidence in God in order to be successful." (3)

In other words, he wanted the minister of the Lord to imbue himself and be penetrated with what he was going to say, so that the words would spontaneously flow from his heart. Our Founder feared that excessive study from books would suffocate the sentiments of the heart, transforming the minister into a dried up machine. "Moreover," Father Lenotti says further, "what he recommended in preaching was not so much studied eloquence, but rather the spirit of God in the heart of him who was preaching." (4)

This is how he acted. Father Lenotti observed: "When he was to preach a Lenten or Advent course of sermons or give a panegyric, he would prepare nothing but a schema or an outline of the sermon with many scriptural texts, and he knew how to develop these with skill and zeal of spirit, thus he succeeded in filling his discourses with wisdom and fervor." (5)

We should not conclude that Fr. Bertoni neglected the necessary preparation to the detriment of the divine word. Before delivering his sermons, he meditated for a long time before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, and presented himself to the public with a heart full of zeal and fervor, thus arousing and inflaming the hearts of others. Present at his sermons (for example, those given every Friday at the Church of the Stigmata) were many well known people, such as, Bishop Mutti, the Marquis of Canossa, Father Caesar Bresciani, the restorer of the Camillian Fathers in Italy, and the Servant of God, Father

Nicholas Mazza. (6)

Cardinal Louis di Canossa wrote in this regard: "In his sermons which I heard him give many times on Fridays, he spoke with such fervor and zeal that the heart of whoever heard him was not only persuaded, but moved and touched in a very special way." (7)

Father Lenotti records other counsels on the manner of preaching Saint Gaspar gave to his sons. "Sometimes immediately before preaching Father Gaspar told me to remain quiet without studying a point. When preaching, imagine that it is God who listens, and not worry what people may think. After preaching to retire to my room, and to remain silent for sometime without speaking, so as not to injure my health, and likewise to be recollected and to consider that about what we have preached to others the Lord will judge us." (8)

All those thoughts which our Founder carried engraved in his heart, he practiced with exactness. "He spoke," says a witness at the diocesan informative process, "with a facility and an astonishing clarity, always with exemplary modesty, eager only to engrave in the hearts of others what he had already engraved in his own - the teachings of sacred scripture, the sayings of the fathers of the Church, and the lives of the saints." (9)

Father Gaetano Giacobbe also stated in the diocesan process: "I can attest that I heard him preach many times, and I always had the impression in preaching was not so much studied eloquence, but rather the spirit of God in the heart of him who was preaching." (4)

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Father Gaetano Giacobbe also stated in the diocesan process: "I can attest that I heard him preach many times, and I always had the impression of a soul that was totally God's, one full of faith." (10)

As an example of this sentiment of faith which our Founder preserved in his preaching, let us cite a selection from his Spiritual Journal, where he wrote: "The bishop came to visit my Christian Doctrine class while I was catechizing the adults. He bade me to continue. My spirit became confused, and my mind became blank, so that I was not able to think and to sum up, but I did, almost without knowing what I was saying. Meanwhile, I thought to myself: "How will my spirit ever stand before the tribunal of Christ to render an account of my sacerdotal ministry! Even though I may have lived with great innocence and may have done my duty, Oh! how great will my discouragement be, and what fear in this regard! Oh, how necessary it is to prepare

oneself to stand with confidence before Christ, then, no longer a father, but a judge." (11)

"Here we must admire," says Father Giacobbe, "how even in that state of discouragement and confusion of spirit he found a way to think of God and of humbling himself before Him." (12)

II. The Direction of Souls

94. NORMS OF SAINT GASPAR FOR THE DIRECTORS OF SOULS.

At his superior's request, St. Gaspar applied himself to another ministry, that of directing souls who were seeking perfection, such as those in the ecclesiastical state. He also recommended this ministry to us. "These people," he said, speaking of those who had embraced a state which united the active and contemplative life, "are very dear to God, and at the same time are exposed to greater dangers and snares. Therefore, the ministers of God must give special attention to those who love to serve the interests and the glory of their Father." (13) Because of this, he said that the priest has need of prayer and union with God. He should especially meditate on sacred scripture to know and be penetrated with the spirit of God. "Search the scriptures", he said, "not on the surface, but at the font. By meditating, one extracts the doctrine needed to direct souls." (14) The priest should pray for enlightenment from the Lord. "Often," our Founder said, "many souls are superior to his (the priest's) knowledge, and without prayer, he will not have the knowledge to direct them." (15) This was precisely his method of conduct. Having assumed the direction of that pious soul, Mother Leopoldina Naudet and her work, he prescribed for himself: "You should not only study to direct N.N., but turn to the source of light; this will do you much good." Further: "You should not precede but follow the Lord who will shed his light on the matter. He will suggest the method to you, if you ask how to lead her to progress and how to correspond." (16)

This was our Founder's fundamental principle, a principle which he recommended to others, especially when treating of a vocation: "Concerning vocations, instead of using pressure it is better to leave the matter to God." (17)

Secondly, the priest should be entirely filled with the fire of divine love and with the desire of enkindling it in the hearts of others. His zeal should be at the same time gentle and strong. A gentle zeal which is enamored with all holy virtue, "instilling in

souls the spirit of obedience and correspondence, love of mortification together with discretion, simplicity of spirit and heart." (18) A strong zeal, which is not too indulgent, but which will guide them firmly in the practice of virtue, "demands great concern of self and cooperation, and teaches them not to rely on themselves but to trust in Jesus Christ, to hold nothing back, to keep themselves humble and from becoming proud. This demands compunction and penance." (19)

95. THE EXAMPLE OF SAINT BERTONI.

Above all, the priest should be convinced of what he teaches others, and he himself should be the first to put it into practice. "The ministers of God," Saint Gaspar said, "should teach not only by instruction, but by experience, and attribute nothing to themselves." (20) This is the secret of the saints; this is the means to accomplish great good just as they did. This was also the secret of Saint Bertoni. Called to direct the Canossian Sisters, he left with them an indelible remembrance not only of his zeal and charity, but especially of the admirable example he gave of every virtue.

If he was able to do so much good for the clergy of Verona by directing first the clerics of the seminary, the College of Acolytes and, later, we may say all the clergy of the diocese, by means of his exhortations and counsel, this was accomplished more so by the example of his holy life. As a young cleric and later as a priest, he was always regarded and pointed out as a perfect ecclesiastical model afire with love of God, desiring nothing else but to enkindle it in the hearts of others. He did not seek to promote himself, but only the glory of God. Because of this, God further added grace and strength to his words, which penetrated all hearts, and moved them to compunction and love.

NOTES

- (1) Constitutions 163.
- (2) Lenotti: Life of Saint Gaspar, zeal for the missions and spiritual exercises.
- (3) Lenotti: Life of Saint Gaspar, zeal for the missions and spiritual exercises.
- (4) Ib.
- (5) Lenotti: Life of Saint Gaspar, zeal for the missions and spiritual exercises.
- (6) Biondani Fortunato: The Diocesan Process.

- (7) Letter to Father Vignola.
- (8) Lenotti: Various writings
- (9) Father Beltrami: Diocesan Process.
- (10) Father Giacobbe: Diocesan Process.
- (11) Journal, November 20, 1808.
- (12) Father Giacobbe: Life of Saint Gaspar, p. 216.
- (13) Meditation 23 on the 1st Book of Kings.
- (14) Spiritual Exercises to Clerics: Meditation.
- (15) Ib.
- (16) Journal, January 12, 1811.
- (17) Journal, August 17, 1808.
- (18) Meditation 23 on the 1st Book of Kings.
- (19) Ib.
- (20) Meditation 23 on the 1st Book of Kings.

Chapter Four

THE EDUCATION OF YOUTH

I. Houses of Education

96. EDUCATION OF THE HEART.

Our Founder exercised a wide and successful field of activity in the education of youth, and he left it as an essential part of our goal. We are to promote the education of youth by means of schools, colleges, oratories, and trade schools, taking the occasion to instruct youth in Christian doctrine, and to instill their young hearts with the love of piety and holy virtue. We will speak about the oratory in the following article; here we will speak about the houses of education.

"Before all," says Saint Gaspar, "those who assume the direction of these houses should be capable of educating youth in the discipline and correction of the Lord. This should be their aim. Without this aim, without this hope, our work will not be acceptable to the Lord, nor convenient or advantageous to us. (1) Consequently, only those young people who show this hope should be accepted. Hence that other great principle of Father Bertoni: "They should not be concerned with the number, but rather with the quality of young people." Our Father Founder wanted us above all to use the utmost diligence to educate them in good morals and piety. For this reason he recommended all those precautions which he himself used with the young people of his school and oratories to protect them from all dangers, not giving them too much confidence, prudently and with discretion forbidding them to touch one another, even in jest, watching out that they do not come in contact with dangerous books, pictures, or conversations.

But all these means are negative, and in education, positive means are more necessary. For this reason, our Father Founder recommends that we inculcate in the hearts of youth a solid and sensitive piety, accustoming them to assist at daily Mass, to meditate, to read spiritual books, to examine their conscience, and to receive the sacraments frequently. Above all, they should fulfill these practices with a true spirit of piety, finding pleasure in prayer, maintaining themselves in union with God, directing their studies to Him, and invoking his assistance in all their actions. He further orders that every week we give them a moral exhortation, and at other times to take the occasion either during class or in other conversations to speak to them of the love of

God, to exalt holy virtue and to encourage them to practice virtue. In brief, the first aim of the educators should be the spiritual profit of the young people, and to educate them in virtue. All else is nothing but a means to arrive at this end. (2)

97. PROFIT FROM STUDY.

One should not think that because of what has been said our Founder wanted studies to be neglected. On the contrary, he recommended this very highly. Application to study will shield the youth from distraction, laziness, and other dangers. These are an aid to piety and good morals. Therefore, Saint Gaspar wanted the teachers to be not only well instructed, but also assiduous in their duties, and concerned about the progress of their students. He recommended that they encourage the young people to study well, praising them and rewarding them with signs of honor and distinction, distributing on occasion small prizes to encourage the diligent, but to correct and to reprove the negligent. If corrections appeared useless, and some were incorrigible (or lazy in their studies), he wanted them to be quickly separated so that they might not harm the others by their bad example, even more so, if other bad qualities were noticed and the students became a danger. (3)

98. THE EXAMPLE OF OUR FIRST FATHERS.

To Our Founder and his companions used all these norms in the school which they opened at the Stimato. Their greatest concern and aim was that the students profit from their studies. That they were successful is apparent, so much so that in the judgment of all, their students were the best instructed and without any difficulty could compete with those students attending public schools. For this reason, Saint Gaspar and his companions were praised by all, especially for the sound method which they used in teaching. Even the noted Abbot Trevisani, prefect of studies in the seminary of Verona, who was called "the teacher" by all, sent his teachers to Saint Gaspar so that they could learn from him how to conduct school.

But above all, they concentrated their efforts in the education of the young people. Through frequent exhortations and recommendations, through corrections when necessary, through weekly conferences, through the practice of the monthly day of recollection, through the devotion of the month of May and the spiritual exercises, they animated the young people in piety and in the exercise of virtue. If someone by his conduct was a bad example to his companions, Saint Gaspar was very strict, and he

spared no means to reform him of his defects, otherwise he would expel him. (4)

The young students corresponded to this care. It was moving to see the recollection and the deportment which they maintained in church, the piety and devotion with which they approached the sacraments. Many persons enjoyed being present at the morning Mass of the students, because it seemed to them that they were in the midst of so many little angels, and their own hearts were filled with greater devotion. (5)

Thus trained in piety, these young students learned to love both living a Christian life and practicing virtue. This fact is proved because as a witness in the diocesan informative process observed: "It is to be attributed to the spirit which Saint Gaspar trained the young people of his school that a great number of priests came from it, who brought honor to the church of Verona, beside all those others who entered religious orders and those others who lived such exemplary lives in the world." (6)

II. The Oratories

99. THE ORATORIES OF FATHER BERTONI.

Finally, let us speak of that work with which our Founder accomplished so much good in the city and in the diocese of Verona, a work which was very dear to his heart. He recommended it to the pastors and the clergy of the diocese, and even to others, but he especially recommended it to us. Those were difficult times during which the spirit of the French Revolution spread to the cities of Italy, bringing with it unbelief and indecency. As a result, young people were miserably uncared for and exposed to a thousand dangers. Saint Gaspar saw the necessity of finding new ways to come to their assistance. To the work of the oratory, which had somewhat of an existence prior to his time he added the Sunday get-togethers, nightly conferences, and many other ways with which to save the youth of Verona. Moreover, whatever one reads about the work of the oratory started much later by Saint John Bosco was already practiced by Father Bertoni from the very beginning of the century. Festive games, sports, hikes, sing-alongs, cookouts in common - it was like poetry which excited them which won their hearts and drew them to good. Nor are we treating of just one oratory. All the parishes and many churches of the city, all the parishes of the diocese had their own oratory modeled after that of Father Bertoni. He was often invited with his group to go to another district to start a new oratory. That day was a festive one for Father Bertoni's

young people, and likewise a time of great edification for the people of that district.

100. THE GOOD WHICH EMANATED FROM THE ORATORIES.

The oratories of Father Bertoni became famous. Bishop Joseph Grasser, bishop of Verona, in his report to the Holy See in 1835, highly praised them and said they were providential. Other noted men and learned writers, even strangers spoke of them, as did Cardinal Louis di Canossa: "In our oratories," affirmed the Cardinal, "the youth learned, as they should, how to sanctify holy days, putting aside all human respect. They are formed with real devotion in the practice of Christian piety, and in the reception of the sacraments. In the oratory they learn their duty toward parents and all ecclesiastical and civil authority, in the fertile field of the oratory the seeds of numerous vocations to the clerical and religious life are wholesomely developed. The sacred walls of the oratory protect the unprepared youth from the dangers of the world and the occasions of sin. The youth of Verona found a holy and healthy recreation in it through sports, good and wholesome entertainment which are still famous." (7) We also know from "The Life of Saint Gaspar" that the oratory spread throughout the diocese, and was the salvation of many districts. Father Bertoni suggested it to the clergy as a means to regenerate Christian life in the parishes, which had waned and was almost extinct.

101. THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH OCCASIONED THE RISE OF THE ORATORY.

The growth and advantages of the oratory should not be attributed to the special circumstances of the times as if those times were better than our own. One must reflect that Father Bertoni began the work of the oratory in 1802, when Verona had already been in the hands of the French troops for five years. Very many of the clergy, seduced by false revolutionary maxims, had put aside their clerical attire and gave a sad example of themselves. There was a great lack of priestly vocations (the diocesan seminary of Verona counted about 30 seminarians) and the youth were abandoned to themselves and alienated from the Church. Indeed, we know that from the first years of his priesthood, Saint Gaspar plodded through the streets of the city to round up the young people and to catechize them. We also know that while Saint Bertoni started his first oratory on the left bank of the Adige River, on the right bank a group of Frenchmen, in shirts and long pants, went about the city (with government orders) preceded by six drums, screaming and singing revolutionary songs, inviting especially the youth to indecent festivals and events. Later, when even the left bank of the Adige came under French domination in 1805, thus bringing the whole city of Verona under their

influence, Saint Bertoni had much to suffer from the government because of his oratory. When we reflect on all these events, we can easily understand that those times were not more propitious or favorable, that the work of the oratory was not a product of the conditions of the times, but rather a work which our Founder instituted to combat the times and persons because he saw that it was an absolute necessity. If the oratory succeeded and brought forth excellent results at that time, it can also accomplish great good even in our own time.

102. THE ORATORY ACCORDING TO THE MIND OF SAINT BERTONI.

The oratory, as Saint Bertoni conceived it, considered in itself, is a structure perfectly adapted to our times. His first oratory was nothing else but a sort of a trade school for youth as we understand the word now. Indeed he wasn't content just with an oratory for feast days and Sundays, but he looked after his young people throughout the week, and at night he gathered the more promising students into his house, and taught them to read and write, to sing and to play musical instruments. He started a little musical band for his oratory, and he directed it himself. (8) When the occasion demanded, Saint Gaspar provided them with books and tools, helping them in any necessity. For this purpose, he approached other charitable persons who willingly helped him in his work. He found an employer for one, or for another a shop to work in, and he was continually in contact with these employers checking on the welfare of his young people. (9)

Finally, he even found the means to spark a competitive spirit among his students through an exposition or a fair to show off their arts and crafts. From time to time he scheduled a day on which each youth had to bring a product of his labor, the best that he could make (as a set of keys, a pair of shoes, or an article of clothing, etc.). With these, he would set up a small exposition which would last for some days. Then, when the product was judged better than the rest, its maker was rewarded with a little prize, a little song, and the applause of all the young people of the oratory. (10)

Should not all these skills which were used more than a century ago cause us surprise? Can we not rightfully take pride in this work which is completely ours? Should we not feel obligated to promote this ministry and make it known and adopted by others, following the example of our saintly Founder?

103. THE SPIRIT OF SAINT GASPAR IN THE ORATORIES.

However, if we hope to obtain the advantages which Saint Gaspar gained from the oratory, we must also follow his spirit. He was not satisfied with the benefits which came to the youth who were removed from danger at that tender age but he wanted to give them a solid foundation which would later protect them from greater dangers they might encounter in the future. So, he sought to instill in their hearts a real solid piety. He accomplished this without exerting any pressure, and without imposing any exacting rules. In the beginning, he attracted them through games and sports, later, little by little, he accustomed them to find joy in prayer, in devotion to Mary, and in frequenting the sacraments. His charity and his zeal won their hearts in such a way that he could do anything he wanted with them. This is why he was so much loved by them, and in their evening get-togethers, he was able to have them spend time in prayer, in spiritual reading and in pious discourses. He could also get them to practice mortification without their complaining or being offended, rather, they loved him all the more. Then there were some young men who were older. These became his trusted helpers, and they did a lot of good, becoming apostles to the others. By their example and exhortations, they attracted their peers even the most restless, and helped them appreciate the oratory.

Therefore, even with the oratory, Saint Gaspar adopted the rule of conduct which he recommended to others: not to be concerned with the number of youth but with their virtue. By this he meant that we should not neglect any point of Christian education of youth so as to have a greater number, but always, with prudence and charity, and to make them perfect Christians, who will not be ashamed of their religion, but rather glory in it, so that they don't shun piety as something burdensome, but find in it comfort for life. This zeal and example will draw many others. This is how Saint Gaspar educated young people. A witness of this fact is revealed in a young man who had abandoned his religious practices. A friend brought him to the oratory. When this lad saw the kindness of Saint Gaspar and the piety and recollection of the young people, he felt himself completely changed, and joined the oratory coming even on feast days. Being a miller by trade, he would work most of the night in order to attend the oratory in the morning. (11)

Nor was Saint Gaspar's method of handling young people a reason for having a scarce number of boys at the oratory. His first oratory at St. Paul's had more than four

hundred members. Later at the Stimate, when all the parishes and many of the other churches of the city had their own oratory, (not counting the children who had not yet made their first communion, who met in the oratory of the Immaculate Conception), there was such a great number that they could not all fit into the church of the Stimate, so the older ones had to meet in the house chapel where Saint Gaspar or another priest gave them a talk adapted to their age.

Here then are the example of our saintly Founder, his spirit, and his teaching. We have reason to believe that by continuing the work of the oratory with the same spirit we will accomplish great results, even as he did. The work of the oratory is a precious heritage which our saintly Founder left us, and recommended to us in a special way. In the mind of Saint Gaspar, it should be a principal part of our goal. Therefore in order to carry it out, and to obtain results from it, the grace of our vocation will help us - that grace will also be extended to all the ministries of our congregation.

104. THE NECESSITY OF IMBUING OURSELVES WITH THE SPIRIT OF OUR FOUNDER.

Certainly, to obtain all the good which Saint Gaspar reaped through the oratory, we need to possess his spirit and his sanctity. This is precisely what he recommended to us as we have seen through the whole course of this study. To draw benefit from this work, as from any other ministry, we should not perform them only out of a sense of duty, but because there is a real heartfelt need, the need of promoting the glory of God and the salvation of souls. We ought to clothe ourselves with the spirit of God in order to transplant it in others. We ought to belong entirely to God, full of his love, in order to inflame the hearts of others. This should be the motivating principle of all our actions, this the desire and the need of our soul. For this we should sacrifice ourselves, our interests, and our own convenience, so as to gain all for Christ. It was the way our saintly Founder acted and this is how he wants us to act also. Animated by this spirit of zeal and charity, our ministry certainly will bear fruit, our words will touch all hearts, and, like good seed, which is nourished by divine grace, will produce fruits of holiness.

Notes

- (1) Constitutions 166.
- (2) Constitutions 168-174.
- (3) Constitutions 175-181

- (4) Giacobbe: The Life of Saint Gaspar, p. 119.
- (5) Ib. pg. 116.
- (6) Father Antonio Pighi: Diocesan Process, see also Father Lenotti: Life of Saint Gaspar: Schools.
- (7) Pastoral Letter 1898.
- (8) Giacobbe: The Life of Saint Gaspar, pg. 65.
- (9) Ib. pg. 238.
- (10) Giacobbe: The Life of Saint Gaspar, pg. 71.
- (11) Lenotti: Life of Saint Gaspar, The Oratories.

CONCLUSION

105. THE WORDS OF THE VICAR OF JESUS

As we come to the end of this study, we believe that there is no better way to conclude than by repeating the words of Pope Leo XIII which he directed to superiors of religious orders and congregations in his apostolic letter of June 29, 1901. After having exhorted the religious to redouble their efforts in their service to God, in the observance of the rule and to revive in themselves the spirit of their founders, this great pontiff concluded:

"From this, you are promised a claim to special favors for yourselves, for the Church, and for society. Therefore, strive to attain the degree of sanctity to which God has called you; fulfill the designs of His special providence and you will merit the reward which He promised you. May the Church, a very kind mother, who lavishes her graces on your various families, receive from you, as if in exchange, faithful cooperation and special dedication to her mission of peace and salvation. It is precisely this peace and salvation that our present society needs, for it is so miserably weakened and depraved. In order to inspire, to ennoble, and to bring society to the feet of our most holy Redeemer, we need men of outstanding virtue, living examples, men with apostolic hearts, so that in this our day they may be acceptable meditators of grace before Him. Without doubt, you will be these men, and you will bring to society a more noble and opportune service.

"Therefore, be comforted in the Lord. From heaven your glorious fathers and brothers encourage you. Your supreme leader, Jesus Christ, surrounds you and fills you with his virtue. Be insistent in staying close to His divine heart, through fervent prayer, and be sure that you will draw from this a reinforcing of strength and hope to overcome all the ways of the world through him. Continually, they resound strongly and consolingly his: 'have confidence, I have overcome the world.'"

PART TWO

Stigmatine Devotions

PART TWO**Stigmatine Devotions****DAILY DEVOTIONS****IN THE MORNING****MORNING PRAYER (LITURGY OF THE HOURS)**

"Sacred ministers, and all... living in community or assembling together, should arrange to say at least some part of the Liturgy of the Hours in common, particularly Morning and Evening Prayer." (*General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours... No. 25*)

General Offering of the Day

O my God! I adore You and thank You for the new day You grant me. I offer You all my thoughts, words, actions and sufferings of today, in union with whatever my Redeemer Jesus Christ did and suffered, for the intention of His most loving heart, for Your honor and glory, in thanksgiving for Your favors, in reparation for my offenses, in supplication for the grace of final perseverance, for the conversion of sinners and infidels, and for the relief of the poor souls in purgatory. I intend to gain today all the indulgences I can.

I recommend to You the Catholic Church, our Holy Father, the Pope, the Bishop of this diocese, our Superior General and our Provincial, my dear Congregation, my relatives and benefactors.

I protest my unwillingness to commit any willful sin, and promise to struggle valiantly against my predominant passion, and to do my utmost to love You, and to win others to Your love, so that, should death come to me today, I might present myself unblemished in Your sight. *Amen*

Angel of God

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here. Ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. *Amen*.

Act of Faith

O my God, I firmly that You are one God in three Divine Persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; I believe that Your Divine Son became man and died for our sins, and that He

will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe these and all the truths which the Holy Catholic Church teaches, because You have revealed them who can neither deceive nor be deceived.

Act of Hope

O my God, relying on Your goodness and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of Your grace, and life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer.

Act of Love

O my God, I love You above all things with my whole heart and soul, because You are all good and worthy of all love. I love my neighbor as myself for the love of You. I forgive all who have injured me, and ask pardon of all whom I have injured.

Prayer of the Founder to the Blessed Virgin Mary

I greet you, O my Mother; give me your blessing; bless me and all who are dear to me. Please offer to God all I have to do and suffer today, in union with your merits, as well as those of your Blessed Son. I offer you and consecrate to your service, all my being and whatever belongs to me placing everything under your protection. Obtain for me, my dear Lady, purity of soul and body, and grant that I may not do anything today displeasing to God; I entreat you through your Immaculate Conception and your perfect Virginitv.

Prayer to St. Gaspar

Saint Gaspar Bertoni: with generous self-giving, you followed the path of filial abandonment to Divine Providence and came to live for God and His glory alone, dedicating your life for the benefit of others. Intercede for us to have the strength not to be overwhelmed with the cares of our own lives. May we accept with love, faith, and hope God's Divine Will.

Obtain for us, through the intercession of Mary most holy and St. Joseph, whom you chose as special patrons, the graces which we now need... Help us to reach the Father's house one day, to sing there with you our own hymn of eternal gratitude.

We ask you for one more favor. You, who were a tireless apostle for the youth who lived in difficult times, come now to the assistance of so many young people who

are searching for God's love. Intercede for them that they might discover the light of faith and live in the grace and love of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

AT NOON

DAYTIME PRAYER (LITURGY OF THE HOURS)

Examination of Conscience

Preparatory Prayer

Here I am in Your presence, O my God. I adore You with my whole heart, and thank You for the favors You have heaped upon me. I am sincerely sorry for not having duly corresponded with them, chiefly with those of my religious vocation. I promise to amend my life in the future; but, since without Your help I am unable to do anything, give me light that I may know the faults I have committed and strength to detest them sincerely.

Resolution

In the presence of God, Who is infinite holiness, let us repent our failings and make our resolution, keeping before us above all the object of our particular examen.

Act of Contrition

O my God, I repent with my whole heart of all my sins, and I detest them, because I have deserved the loss of heaven and the pains of hell, but most of all because I have offended You, infinite Goodness. I firmly intend with the help of Your grace, which I pray You to grant me now and always, to do penance and to die rather than offend You again. I desire also to receive the holy Sacraments during my life and at my death.

DURING THE DAY

Visit to the Blessed Sacrament

O my Lord Jesus Christ, Who for the love You bear mankind, remain night and day in this Sacrament, all full of tenderness and love, expecting, inviting and receiving all those who come to visit You;

I believe that You are present in the Sacrament of the altar;

I adore You from the depths of my own nothingness and thank You for all the favors You have bestowed upon me; especially for having given me Yourself in this Sacrament, and Your holy Mother Mary as my advocate; and for having called me to visit You in this church.

I pay my homage this day to Your most loving Heart and this I intend to do for three intentions: first, in thanksgiving for this great gift; secondly, in reparation for all the insults You have received from Your enemies in this Sacrament; thirdly, by this visit I intend to adore You in all places upon the earth, where You are least adored and most neglected in Your Sacrament.

My Jesus, I love You with my whole heart, I repent of having in the past so many times displeased Your infinite goodness. I promise with the help of Your grace never more to offend You in the future; and at this moment, wretched as I am, I consecrate myself wholly to You. I give to You and utterly renounce my entire will, all my affections, all my desires, and all that I possess.

From this day forth do with me and with all that is mine whatever is pleasing in Your sight. I ask and desire only Your holy love, final perseverance and the perfect fulfillment of Your will. I commend to You the souls in purgatory, especially those who were most devoted to this Blessed Sacrament and to Blessed Mary, I commend to you in like manner all poor sinners.

Finally, my dear Savior, I unite all my affections with those of Your most loving Heart, and thus united I offer them to Your Eternal Father and I pray Him in Your name graciously to accept and answer them for love of You.

Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire You in my soul. Since I cannot receive You now sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though You were already here, I embrace You and unite myself wholly to You; permit not that I should ever be separated from You.

Prayer before taking leave of the Blessed Sacrament

O Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, Whose delights are to be with the children of men, the time has come for me to leave You, but not without having previously given You my heartfelt thanks for all Your favors, with which You have blessed me during this day, and not without having expressed my intention that every beat of my heart may be an act of prayer, adoration and love for You.

O Jesus, give me Your blessing; bless also my superiors, associates, my relatives, benefactors, my friends and enemies. Shield me this night from all my spiritual enemies. I commit my soul into Your hands; keep it during life and for all eternity. Into Your hands I commend my spirit.

TOWARD EVENING

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried.

He descended into hell; the third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.

Mysteries of the Rosary

The Five Joyful Mysteries

1. The Annunciation
2. The Visitation
3. The Birth of Our Lord
4. The Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple
5. The Finding of Our Lord in the Temple

The Five Sorrowful Mysteries

1. The Agony of Our Lord in the Garden 2. The Scourging at the Pillar
3. The Crowning with Thorns
4. The Carrying of the Cross
5. The Crucifixion and Death of Our Lord

The Five Luminous Mysteries

1. The Baptism of Our Lord in the Jordan, by John, the Baptist
2. The First Miracle of Jesus, in Cana
3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God
4. The Transfiguration in Mount Tabor
5. The Institution of the Eucharist

The Five Glorious Mysteries

1. The Resurrection of Our Lord
2. The Ascension of Our Lord into Heaven
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit Upon the Apostles
4. The Assumption of Our Blessed Mother into Heaven
5. The Coronation of Our Blessed Mother in Heaven

Hail Holy Queen

(Salve, Regina)

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy; hail our life, our sweetness and our hope. To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, your eyes of mercy toward us. And after this our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus.

O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us Pray

O God, Whose only-begotten Son, by His life, death and resurrection, has purchased for us the rewards of eternal life; grant we beseech You, that, meditating on these mysteries of the most holy rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, we may imitate what they contain and obtain what they promise. Through the same Christ our Lord.

Amen.

(After the recitation of the Rosary, it is customary to add the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary.)

(When the occasion calls for them the Litanies of the Sacred Heart or Precious Blood or Saint Joseph may be recited in place of the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary.)

Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Lord, have mercy on us
 Christ, have mercy on us
 Lord have mercy on us Christ, hear us
 Christ, graciously hear us

God, Father in heaven, ... have mercy on us
 God, Son, Redeemer of the world, ... have mercy on us
 God, Holy Spirit, ... have mercy on us
 Holy Trinity, one God, ... have mercy on us
 Holy Mary, ... pray for us

Holy Mother of God,
 Holy Virgin of virgins, Mother of Christ,
 Mother of divine grace,
 Mother most pure,
 Mother most chaste,

Mother inviolate,
Mother undefiled,
Mother most amiable,
Mother most admirable,
Mother of good counsel,
Mother of our Creator,
Mother of our Savior,

Virgin most prudent,
Virgin most venerable,
Virgin most renowned,
Virgin most powerful,
Virgin most merciful,
Virgin most faithful,

Mirror of justice,
Seat of wisdom,
Cause of our joy,
Spiritual vessel,
Vessel of honor,
Singular vessel of devotion,
Mystical rose,
Tower of David,
Tower of ivory,
House of gold,

Ark of the Covenant,
Gate of heaven,
Morning Star,
Health of the sick,
Refuge of sinners,
Comforter of the afflicted,
Help of Christians,

Queen of angels,
Queen of patriarchs,
Queen of prophets,
Queen of apostles,
Queen of martyrs,
Queen of confessors,
Queen of virgins,
Queen of all saints,
Queen conceived without original sin,
Queen assumed into heaven,
Queen of the most holy rosary,
Queen of families,
Queen of peace,

Lamb of God, Who take away the sins of the world,
spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who take away the sins of the world,
graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God:

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of
Christ.

Let us Pray

Grant, we beseech You, O Lord God, unto us Your servants that we may rejoice in continual health of mind and body; and, by the glorious intercession of blessed Mary ever Virgin, may be delivered from present sadness and enjoy eternal happiness. Through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Litany of Saint Joseph

Lord, have mercy on us
Christ, have mercy on us
Lord, have mercy on us Christ, hear us
Christ, graciously hear us
God, Father in heaven, ... have mercy on us
God, Son, Redeemer of the world, ... have mercy on us
God, Holy Spirit, ... have mercy on us
Holy Trinity, one God, ... have mercy on us.
Holy Mary, ... pray for us

Saint Joseph,
Illustrious son of David,
Splendor of patriarchs,
Spouse of the mother of God,
Chaste guardian of the Virgin,
Foster-father of the Son of God,
Watchful defender of Christ,
Head of the Holy Family,

Joseph, all just,
Joseph, all pure,
Joseph, all prudent,
Joseph, all courageous,
Joseph, all obedient,
Joseph, all faithful,
Model of patience,
Lover of poverty,
Model of laborers,
Glory of family life,
Protector of virgins,
Mainstay of families,

Solace of the afflicted,
 Hope of the sick,
 Patron of the dying,
 Terror of demons,
 Protector of holy Church,

Lamb of God, Who take away the sins of the world, spare us,
 O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who take away the sins of the world,
 graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who take away the sins of the world, spare us,
 have mercy on us.

V. God made Him master of His household.

R. And ruler of all His possessions.

Let us Pray

God, Who in Your indescribable providence singled out Saint Joseph as the spouse of Your holy Mother, grant, we pray, that we may merit to have him for our intercessor in heaven, whom we venerate as our defender here on earth. We ask this of You Who live and reign forever and ever.

Amen

Litany of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Lord, have mercy on us

Christ, have mercy on us

Lord, have mercy on us Christ, hear us

Christ, graciously hear us

God, Father in heaven, ... have mercy on us

God, Son, Redeemer of the world, ... have mercy on us

God, Holy Spirit, ... have mercy on us

Holy Trinity, one God, ... have mercy on us

Heart of Jesus, Son of the eternal Father, ... have mercy on
us

Heart of Jesus, formed by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the
Virgin Mother, ...

Heart of Jesus, substantially united to the Word of God, ...

Heart of Jesus, infinite in majesty, ...

Heart of Jesus, sacred temple of God, ...

Heart of Jesus, tabernacle of the Most High, ...

Heart of Jesus, house of God and gate of heaven, ...

Heart of Jesus, aflame with love for all people ...

Heart of Jesus, abode of justice and love, Heart of Jesus, full
of goodness and love, ...

Heart of Jesus, endless source of all virtues, ...

Heart of Jesus, worthy of all praise, ...

Heart of Jesus, King and center of all hearts, ...

Heart of Jesus, in Whom are all the treasures of wisdom and
knowledge, ...

Heart of Jesus, in Whom dwells the fullness of divinity, ...

Heart of Jesus, in Whom the Father was well pleased, ...

Heart of Jesus, of Whose fullness we have all received, ...

Heart of Jesus, desire of the everlasting hills, ...

Heart of Jesus, patient and merciful, ..

Heart of Jesus, enriching all who call upon You, ...

Heart of Jesus, fountain of life and holiness, ...

Heart of Jesus, atonement for our sins, ...

Heart of Jesus, loaded down with opprobrium,

Heart of Jesus, bruised for our offenses,

Heart of Jesus, obedient unto death, ...
Heart of Jesus, pierced with a lance,
Heart of Jesus, source of all consolation, ...
Heart of Jesus, our life and resurrection, ...
Heart of Jesus, our peace and reconciliation,...
Heart of Jesus, victim for sin, ...
Heart of Jesus, salvation of those who trust in You, ...
Heart of Jesus, hope of those who die in You,...
Heart of Jesus, delight of all the saints, ...

Lamb of God, Who take away the sins of the world,
spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who take away the sins of the world,
graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.

V. Jesus, meek and humble of heart:

R. Let our hearts resemble Yours.

Let us Pray

Almighty, everlasting God, look upon the heart of Your dearly beloved Son, and upon the praise and satisfaction He offers You in the name of sinners and for those who seek Your mercy. Be appeased, and grant us pardon in the name of Jesus Christ, Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You forever and ever.

Litany of the Precious Blood

Lord, have mercy on us

Christ, have mercy on us

Lord have mercy on us

Christ, hear us

Christ, graciously hear us

God, Father in heaven, ... have mercy on us

God, Son, Redeemer of the World, ... have mercy on us

God, Holy Spirit, ... have mercy on us

Holy Trinity, one God, ... have mercy on us

Blood of Christ, the only-begotten Son of the eternal Father,
... save us

Blood of Christ, Word of God made flesh, ...

Blood of Christ, of the New and everlasting Covenant, ...

Blood of Christ, trickling to the earth in the agony in the
garden, ...

Blood of Christ, pouring from Your body in the scourging, ...

Blood of Christ, flowing from Your head in the crowning with
thorns, ...

Blood of Christ, shed on the cross, ...

Blood of Christ, the price of our salvation, ...

Blood of Christ, without which there is no remission of
sins, ...

Blood of Christ, drink and cleansing of souls in the
Eucharist, ...

Blood of Christ, flood of mercy, ...

Blood of Christ, triumphant over demons, ...

Blood of Christ, strength of martyrs, ...

Blood of Christ, inspiration of confessors, ...

Blood of Christ, seed of virgins, ...

Blood of Christ, help of those in peril,.

Blood of Christ, support in our trials,
 Blood of Christ, solace in our sorrows,
 Blood of Christ, hope of the repentant,
 Blood of Christ, comfort of the dying,
 Blood of Christ, peace and delight of our hearts, ...
 Blood of Christ, pledge of everlasting life,
 Blood of Christ, deliverance of the souls in purgatory, ...
 Blood of Christ, worthy of all honor and glory, ...

Lamb of God, Who take away the sins of the world, spare us,
 O Lord.

Lamb of god, Who take away the sins of the world,
 graciously hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who take away the sins of the world, have
 mercy on us.

V. You have redeemed us, Lord, by Your Blood:

R. You have made us to reign with our God.

Let us Pray

Almighty everlasting God, Who appointed Your only-begotten Son as Redeemer of the world, and chose to be appeased by His Blood; help us, we beg You, so to reverence this price of our salvation, that we may be protected by its power from the evils of this life, and enjoy its lasting rewards in the life to come through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

IN THE EVENING

EVENING PRAYER (LITURGY OF THE HOURS)

"It is strongly recommended that religious not bound to a common celebration, as well as members of any institute of perfection, should gather together, by themselves or with the faithful, to celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours or part of it."

(General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours - No. 26)

**Prayer for our deceased confreres,
relatives and benefactors**

(De Profundis)

Out of the depths I cry to You, O Lord;

Lord hear my voice!

Let Your ears be attentive to my voice in supplication.

If You, O Lord, mark iniquities, Lord, who can stand?

But with You is forgiveness, that You may be revered.

I trust in the Lord; my soul trusts in His word.

My soul waits for the Lord more than sentinels wait for the
dawn.

More than sentinels wait for the dawn, *let Israel wait for
the Lord,

For with the Lord is kindness* and with Him is plenteous
redemption;

And He will redeem Israel from all their iniquities.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord. And let perpetual light
shine upon them.

May they rest in peace. Amen.

V. O God, You are generous in forgiving and You desire
that all men be saved.

R. We pray that You grant the happiness of eternal life
to all the deceased members of our Congregation, to
our parents, relatives, and benefactors.

Prayer for Our Superiors

Omnipotent and eternal God, You alone are the creator of all the wonderful things that we admire. Grant to our superiors, Your servants, and to the communities entrusted to them, Your gift of grace and health. And so that they may always please You, shower upon them the endless gift of Your blessing.

Amen.

Prayer to the Sacred Stigmata

O Jesus, our Redeemer, You wished to preserve in Your glorious Body the marks of Your five Wounds, so that they, together with the remembrance of Your passion, could afford a proof of Your resurrection and of Your victory over death and hell. These marks are a witness of Your continued mediation between heaven and earth, a comfort for the just, and cause of greater shame for the wicked on the day of the last judgment. Grant us, we beseech You, that we may ever be loyal to our vocation. Bearing Your Sacred Stigmata always impressed upon our minds and hearts, may we be able to draw from them abundant fruits of grace and virtue, for our advantage, and for those souls whom You have entrusted to our apostolate.

Amen.

Prayer to our Holy Patrons

O most holy Mary and Saint Joseph, our patrons, we recommend to you ourselves and our beloved Congregation. Keep and increase in its members the spirit of humility, mortification, sacrifice and fraternal charity such as our holy Founder left unto us. Obtain for the superiors the light of divine wisdom, and for the members a perfect submission, such as was practiced unto you by the Son of God, made man.

Grant, O holy patrons, that the little flock may grow both in merit and number, so that it may be able to reap always more fruit in the vineyard of the Lord, to the satisfaction of the great thirst of the Sacred Heart of Jesus for souls, and the spreading of His kingdom over all the world.

Amen.

NIGHT TIME

NIGHT PRAYER (LITURGY OF THE HOURS)

"Religious communities, and their individual members are advised to celebrate some parts of the Liturgy of the Hours, in accordance with circumstances, for it is the prayer of the Church and makes the whole Church, scattered throughout the world, one in heart and soul."

(General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours, No. 32)

WEEKLY DEVOTIONS**Friday****Prayer to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus**

O most Holy Heart of Jesus, shower Your blessings in abundant measure upon Your holy Church, upon the Supreme Pontiff, the bishop of this diocese, and upon all the clergy; to the just grant perseverance; convert sinners; enlighten unbelievers; assist the dying; deliver the holy souls in purgatory; and extend over all hearts the sweet empire of Your love.

Amen.

Prayers in honor of the Sacred Stigmata of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Jesus, risen from death, Who chose to preserve in Your glorious Body the Sacred Stigmata, as a means to heal the unbelief of Your apostles, grant, we beseech You, that confirmed as they were in the belief of Your resurrection and of all other truths of the Gospel we also may be able to preach them efficaciously to our brethren.

Glory to the Father.

Jesus, Conqueror of sin and death, Who ascending into heaven chose to preserve Your Sacred Stigmata, as a trophy of Your victory, grant we beseech You, that walking in the steps bathed by Your Divine Blood, we, together with all our living brethren, may be able to share one day in Your triumph in heaven.

Glory to the Father.

Jesus, Mediator between God and man, Who chose to sit at the right hand of Your Father bearing Your Sacred Stigmata, in order to increase in us confidence in Your power of intercession, grant, we beseech You, that reviving in us ever more this confidence, we may be able to instill it into our needy brethren also.

Glory to the Father.

Jesus, Redeemer of the human race, Who by Your Sacred Stigmata chose to render everlasting the remembrance of that excess of love, which led You to die for man, grant we beseech You, that redeemed by Your precious Blood, we, together with all our brethren, may join our voices with those of the blessed in eternally singing Your goodness.

Glory to the Father.

Jesus, Judge of the living and the dead, Who shall come in the day of the last judgment bearing Your Sacred Stigmata, to the great shame of the wicked, grant, we beseech You, that we, together with our sinful brethren, may now commit ourselves into the arms of Your infinite mercy, so that we may not fall then into the hands of Your severe justice.

Glory to the Father.

V. Behold, O God our protector:

R. And look on the face of Your Christ.

Let us Pray

O God, Who did appoint Your only-begotten Son to be the Redeemer of the world, and by Him, vanquishing death, did mercifully restore us to life, grant that, recalling these benefits, we may merit to cleave to You with continual charity and receive the fruit of that same Redemption. Through the same Christ our Lord.

Amen

Prayer to the Glorious Wounds of Our Lord Jesus Christ

We adore You, O most amiable Redeemer, Jesus Christ, Who, led on by Your infinite love for us, did not hesitate to give Yourself over into the hands of Your enemies and suffer the torments of the cross, through which Your hands and feet were pierced and Your wounded side opened.

For thus showing Your merciful goodness toward us, poor sinners, we express our gratitude, and we rejoice with You, Who even in heaven wished to preserve in Your glorious body those sacred Wounds, the price of Redemption and a pledge of victory, which, as Saint Bernard says: "You kept glory for Yourself, grace for us and confusion for Your enemies."

Those Wounds are indeed the shining proof of Your victory over sin, death and hell; they are the inexhaustible source of divine grace, which for us is the fount of consolation in adversity and strength in temptation; and they will be the eternal dismay of the wicked who crucified You and abused Your grace and mercy.

We beseech You, O Lord, to grant all of us who devoutly adore Your glorious Wounds, an increase of grace and divine strength that we may, with lasting patience and ardent zeal, labor here on earth for our own sanctification and for the conversion of all poor sinners, that in heaven we may unite our hymn of praise to that of the heavenly court, rendering to You, O immaculate Lamb, benediction, honor, glory and power forever.

Amen.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS

Act of Contrition

O most loving Jesus, prostrate at Your feet, I beg pardon, with all my heart, for my sins, which I detest as an offense against Your infinite goodness. I propose to die rather than offend You again. I wish to love You above all things even unto death. To recompense Your divine justice for the debts my sins have contracted, I offer You this holy exercise, in honor of Your dolorous way to Calvary, intending to acquire the indulgences attached to it, and to apply them as suffrages for deceased relatives and benefactors.

(or specify some particular intention.)

Most holy Virgin, bless me as consecrated to you, and assist me in the daily *Via Crucis* of life which is destined to lead me to a greater glory in heaven.

Amen.

*Stabat Mater Dolorosa
Juxta Crucem lacrimosa
Dum pendebat Filius*

At the Cross her station keeping,
Stood the mournful Mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last.

FIRST STATION

Jesus is condemned to death.

- V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;
R. Because by Your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Meditation

Jesus hears with joy the impious sentence of death, for He had long ardently desired to be baptized with this baptism of blood.

Well do I know that to be a saint I must die to everything, so as to live only for God; but instead, despite Your example, Divine Master, how many times have I complained at privations, how many times have I sought to avoid the little sacrifices You demanded of my heart, my spirit, my body!

Prayer

Forgive me, O Lord, and help me to overcome the weakness of my corrupt nature; give me that spirit of mortification and generosity so necessary if I would consecrate myself without reserve to Your divine service.

Our Father... Hail Mary....

V. Have mercy on us, O Lord.

R. Have mercy on us.

*Cuius animam gementem
Contristatam et dolentem
Pertransivit gladius.*

Through her heart. His sorrow sharing
All His bitter anguish bearing.
Lo! the piercing sword had passed.

SECOND STATION

Jesus carries His Cross.

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

R. Because by Your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Meditation

Consider Your Divine Redeemer as He embraces His cross. He takes it lovingly and gives it to us as a sacred treasure. Let us hasten to embrace it. We will find it everywhere; in our work, in our recreation, in the house and outside it, on our shoulders and in our hearts. Happy we, if we know how to carry it with resignation and love, thus imitating our Divine Model.

Prayer

O most loving Jesus, my heart yearns to be crucified with You; I desire to see other souls consecrated to You marching forth under Your glorious banner. Increase, O Lord, the number of souls who love the folly of the Cross, in which lies the Salvation of the world.

Our Father... Hail Mary...

V. Have mercy on us, O Lord.

R. Have mercy on us.

*O quam tristis et afflicta
Fuit illa benedicta
Mater unigeniti.*

O, how sad and sore distressed
Was that Mother, highly blessed,
Of the sole-begotten One.

THIRD STATION

Jesus falls the first time.

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

R. Because by Your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Meditation

Jesus generously begins the terrible road to Calvary, but the heavy weight of the cross makes Him fall to the ground. Consider how the guards shower blows and kicks upon Jesus, Who accepts these indignities with patience and silence. What a reproach for us who murmur and complain so much about the little trials and privations, the little sufferings that come our way.

Prayer

O good Jesus, I detest my pride and impatience with suffering. Through the merits of Your dolorous fall, help me to support patiently the daily crosses of my life, and to be ready to accept any greater trials You may have in store for me.

Our Father... Hail Mary....

- V. Have mercy on us, O Lord.
R. Have mercy on us.

*Quae moerebat et dolebat,
Pia Mater, dum videbat
Nati poenas inclyti.*

Woe-begone, with heart's prostration,
Mother meek, the bitter Passion
Saw she of her glorious Son.

FOURTH STATION

Jesus meets His Holy Mother.

- V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;
R. Because by Your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Meditation

Who can imagine the grief of Jesus and Mary as they meet on the road to Calvary! O, how much Mary suffered with Jesus, for Jesus and for us, all during her life.

Our Divine Redeemer, with His Blessed Mother sharing His sorrows, teaches us to unite our sufferings with His and those of His Mother, so as to make them more meritorious for ourselves, and more efficacious for the conversion of sinners.

Prayer

O Jesus, through that indescribable spasm of sorrow and filial love You felt as You met Your Mother on the terrible road to Calvary, grant that all priests, all missionaries, all the members of my beloved Congregation, may ever increase in love of You and Your Blessed Mother, that we may find in her every sweetness of maternal love, every light of wise counsel, every comfort of strong patronage and a sure refuge in all our troubles.

Our Father... Hail Mary...

- V. Have mercy on us, O Lord.
R. Have mercy on us.

*Quis est homo qui non fleret
Matrem Christi si videret
In tanto supplicio.*

Who on Christ's dear Mother gazing,
In her trouble so amazing,
Born of woman, would not weep?

FIFTH STATION

Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus to carry His Cross.

- V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You.
R. Because by Your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Meditation

Our Divine Savior is no longer able to bear the weight of the Cross; and His enemies, fearful lest He die under the burden, force Simon of Cyrene to help Him.

Just what are the daily crosses imposed on us by common life when compared to the cross of Jesus? And how much more precious and meritorious they would be if we accepted them willingly for the love of God, instead of complaining about them! Let us humble ourselves and resolve to lighten our Lord's burden by embracing willingly whatever God sends us.

Prayer

O most loving Jesus, I thank You for the occasions You have given me to suffer for You and gain heavenly merit for myself. Help me to understand the immense value of suffering. Sustain me with Your grace, so that after having borne patiently for Your love the trials of this life, I may some day possess the eternal joys of heaven.

Our Father... Hail Mary...

- V. Have mercy on us, O Lord.
R. Have mercy on us.

*Quis non posset contristari
Christi Matrem contemplari
Dolentem cum Filio?*

Who on Christ's dear Mother thinking,
Such a cup of sorrow drinking,
Would not share her sorrow deep.

SIXTH STATION

Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.

- V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You.
- R. Because of Your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Meditation

Consider how Veronica, braving the insults of the guards, draws near to wipe the august face of the Savior. Jesus rewards her by leaving the imprint of His sacred Face on the cloth. The passion of Jesus continues even today on the Calvary of His love—the Eucharist, profaned by sacrilegious and impure mouths, forgotten by so many Christians who do not know the gift of God.

Prayer

O good Jesus, I wish to be the companion of Your solitude, to make up for the many outrages You suffer every day. Imprint, I beg of You, Your sacred image on my heart, that it may burn with love of You alone.

Our Father... Hail Mary...

- V. Have mercy on us, O Lord.
- R. Have mercy on us.

*Pro peccatis suae gentis
Vidit Jesum in tormentis
Et flagellis subditum.*

For His people's sins rejected,
Saw her Jesus unprotected,
Saw with thorns, with scourges rent.

SEVENTH STATION

Jesus falls the second time.

- V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;
- R. Because by Your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Meditation

Contemplate Jesus falling a second time under the weight of the cross, a weight much too heavy for His shoulders. I understand the mystery of this second fall. The religious life has its trials and combats; often, notwithstanding my good intentions, I fall into misery, so often deplored and detested. But I know, too, that Jesus guides my footsteps as a mother does those of her child. I know, too, that my desire to better myself forms a golden chain that binds me to His most Sacred Heart.

Prayer

O Divine Master, teach me to profit from my very mistakes, to know myself and the weakness of my corrupt nature, to console myself with the hope that You will never forget the souls consecrated to You.

Our Father... Hail Mary....

- V. Have mercy on us, O Lord.
R. Have mercy on us.

*Vidit suum dulcem natum
Moriendo desolatum
Dum emisit spiritum*

Saw her Son from judgment taken,
Her Beloved in death forsaken,
Till His Spirit forth He sent.

EIGHTH STATION

Jesus consoles the women of Jerusalem.

- V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;
R. Because by Your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Meditation

For the pious women whose compassion was aroused as He staggered under His Cross, Jesus had but one message: "Weep not over Me, but weep for yourselves and your children!...for if in the green wood they do these things, what shall be done in the dry?"

Prayer

O my God, my sins have multiplied beyond number, and the instances of my ingratitude surpass in number the sands of the sea. And though I know myself to be worthy only of eternal fire, my heart remains without feeling and I am not able to shed a tear of repentance.

O sweet Jesus, through that love which led You to suffer so much for my salvation, help me to weep for my sins; create in me a clean heart, and fill it with Your Holy Spirit, so that with a humble and contrite heart I may repair my past and make a complete immolation of myself for You.

Our Father... Hail Mary...

V. Have mercy on us, O Lord.

R. Have mercy on us.

*Eja, Mater, fons amoris,
Me sentire vim doloris
Fac, ut tecum lugeam.*

Fount of love and holy sorrow,
Mother! may my spirit borrow
Somewhat of thy woe profound.

NINTH STATION

Jesus falls the third time

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

R. Because by Your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Meditation

The third and worst fall opens up a new lap on the way to Calvary, a new outburst of brutal wrath against the innocent Divine Victim. It is for you, O tepid soul, that Jesus suffers this third fall; for you that He bears this burden. But you cannot rouse yourself from the mortal torpor in which you are immersed. Yet the Lord loves you so much! Is not the very fact that He has called you to His holy house, a sign of the singular love He bears you, and at the same time a crown and pledge of innumerable graces?

Prayer

O my good Jesus, behold me repentant at Your feet; have mercy on my poor soul; do not permit the little spark of love that still glows to be extinguished. You Who raised the dead of old, give new vigor to my spirit, extend Your hand and I shall be cured.

Our Father... Hail Mary...

V. Have mercy on us, O Lord.

R. Have mercy on us.

*Fac ut ardeat cor meum
In amando Christum Deum
Ut sibi complaceam.*

Unto Christ, with pure emotion,
Raise my contrite heart's devotion
Love to read in every wound.

TENTH STATION

Jesus is stripped of His garments.

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You.

R. Because by Your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Meditation

Jesus is stripped of His garments in the sight of the huge mob, to His great shame and confusion; His sacred and immaculate body is livid and bruised. Thus He expiates the sins of impurity of the world.

The prodigy of a religious vocation is this, that a man in corrupted and vitiated flesh leads the life of an angel. We must not forget then, that we are to give our body not idleness but work, not softness but humiliation; obedience and not liberty, poverty and not riches, chastity and not pleasures.

Prayer

Make me worthy, O Lord, of my vocation. Help me to keep my soul pure through Christian mortification, that I may not be lost on the great day of final judgment.

Our Father... Hail Mary...

V. Have mercy on us, O Lord

R. Have mercy on us.

*Sancta Mater, istud agas,
Crucifixi fige plagas
Cordi meo valide.*

Those five wounds on Jesus smitten,
Mother! in my heart be written,
Deep as in your own they be.

ELEVENTH STATION

Jesus is nailed to the cross.

V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;

R. Because by Your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Meditation

Behold the meek Lamb of God, Who without a word of lament lays Himself upon the cross. The blows of the hammer echo loudly as the crowd slowly becomes silent. With His Body wracked by spasms of pain, the innocent Victim offers Himself as a perfect holocaust to His heavenly Father.

Happy am I if I can say with the Apostle: "With Christ I am nailed to the Cross; and I live, now not I; but Christ lives in me, for I bear the wounds of Christ crucified in my heart."

Prayer

O Jesus, through the merits of Your crucifixion, accept the offering I make of myself: my senses, my heart, my liberty; so that from now on I may live only for You, Who immolated Yourself for me. O holy Cross of my Jesus, be my treasure during life, my comfort at death, my crown for eternity.

Our Father... Hail Mary....

V. Have mercy on us, O Lord.

R. Have mercy on us.

*Tui Nati vulnerati
Tam dignati pro me pati
Poenas mecum divide.*

Thou, Thy Savior's Cross who bearest,
Thou, Thy Son's rebuke who sharest,
Let me share them both with thee.

TWELFTH STATION

Jesus dies on the cross.

- V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;
R. Because by Your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Meditation

With a loud cry after having recommended His soul to His heavenly Father, Jesus bows His head and dies. The great drama is finished. The Son of God, torn, humiliated, bloodless, hangs on the cross for my sins and those of the entire world. Draw near, O Christian soul, to the dead Jesus; kiss His feet; contemplate His wounds, proofs of His love, trophies of His victories.

Prayer

O sacred wounds of my Jesus, living fountains of love, purple roses of incomparable beauty, mystic caverns opened by sorrow and love, I adore You from the depths of my soul. O Lord, I beg You, imprint on my heart the marks of Your bleeding wounds, that some day I may be worthy to participate in the splendor of Your glorious wounds.

Our Father... Hail Mary...

- V. Have mercy on us, O Lord.
R. Have mercy on us.

*Fac me tecum pie flere
Crucifixo condolere
Donec ego vixero*

In the Passion of my Maker,
Be my sinful soul partaker,
Weep till death and weep with thee

THIRTEENTH STATION

Jesus is taken down from the cross.

- V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;
 R. Because by Your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Meditation

The Blessed Mother, her heart broken by sorrow, takes in her arms the body of Jesus, so disfigured by sufferings and death. Reflect, O my soul, that we will reap in eternity what we sow in time. The Blessed Mother lived in anguish and tears, but had her reward in the joy of her Son's Resurrection, and in the glory of her own assumption and coronation in heaven. When will I learn that my love for God and for souls must likewise pass through the crucible of sufferings?

Prayer

O most sorrowful Virgin, ask of your Jesus and my Jesus, that I may have generosity and perfect obedience in everything, that I may die completely to myself, and that I may not live except by the life of my Redeemer.

Our Father... Hail Mary...

- V. Have mercy on us, O Lord.
 R. Have mercy on us.

*Juxta crucem tecum stare
 Et me tibi sociare
 In planctu desidero.*

Mine with thee be that sad station,
 There to watch the great salvation.
 Wrought upon the stoning tree.

FOURTEENTH STATION

Jesus is laid in the sepulcher.

- V. We adore You, O Christ, and we bless You;
 R. Because by Your holy Cross You have redeemed the world.

Meditation

In the quiet of the evening, a little group of faithful souls accompanies the body of Jesus to the sepulcher. The humiliation of the grave is the last act of the infinite love of Jesus for me, but it is also a great lesson.

A true Christian is one who leads such a hidden and interior life, that he enjoys being overlooked even by his own confreres.

Prayer

O good Jesus, through the merits of Your passion and death, grant all of us the grace to lead a hidden life, as our humble Father and Founder set us the example. Grant that in all our work, avoiding all desire for praise or human and personal satisfaction, governed by obedience in all things, we may forget and hide ourselves entirely, that Your glory may be the greater, and the reward of our future resurrection the more secure and consoling.

Our Father... Hail Mary...

V. Have mercy on us, O Lord.

R. Have mercy on us.

*Quando corpus morietur
Fac ut animae donetur
Paradisi gloria. Amen.*

When to dust my dust returneth,
Grant a soul that to Thee yearneth,
In Thy paradise a place. Amen.

Say an Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory be to the Father, according to the intentions of the Holy Father, in order to gain the indulgences.

V. Grant, Lord Jesus Christ, that we who devoutly worship Your five most precious Wounds,

R. May keep them deeply impressed upon our hearts both in our life and in our deeds.

V. Pray for us, O Virgin most sorrowful:

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us Pray

O God, Who by the passion of Your only- begotten Son, and by the shedding of His precious Blood through His five Wounds, restored human nature when it was lost by sin; grant we beseech You, that we who venerate on earth the Wounds suffered by Him, may be found worthy to obtain in heaven the fruits of that same Most Precious Blood.

O Lord Jesus Christ, we beseech You that now and at the hour of our death the blessed Virgin, Your Mother, whose most sacred soul the sword pierced in the hour of Your passion, may intercede for us at the throne of Your mercy.

Through You, Jesus Christ, Savior of the world, Who with the Father and Holy Ghost lives and reigns world without end.

Amen.

MONTHLY DEVOTIONS

Act of Consecration

O God, hidden in this great mystery of Your love, with lively faith prostrate before Your throne, we render You the homage of our hearts, we renew the promises which bind us to You, we offer You our humble supplications. O gentle Jesus, take under Your special protection our Congregation; keep and increase in its members the spirit of humility and mortification as our Holy Founder instilled into them. Make its enterprises for Your glory successful; bless its works for the salvation of the souls redeemed with Your precious Blood. Pour forth the abundance of Your grace over the missions and other priestly functions; over the studies and occupations of the professed students and brothers, the probation of the novices, and postulants, the training of the aspirants; over all our houses, schools and boarding colleges.

Bestow on the superiors the light of Your wisdom, on the members a perfect submission, as it was practiced by You towards the Blessed Virgin Mary, Your mother, and Saint Joseph, Your foster father.

Bless our friends, reward our benefactors, forgive our enemies.

May all vie with one another in the practice of virtue and good works, with pure intention, perfect obedience, and strong endurance in trials; so that all, living united by true concord and fraternal charity, may have but one heart and soul.

Grant, we beseech You, O Lord of the Blessed Sacrament, that the little flock, growing in merit and number, may ever be enabled to gather more fruit in Your holy vineyard, to the satisfaction of the thirst for souls which consumes Your Sacred Heart, for the spreading of Your kingdom over the world.

Amen.

Prayer to Saint Joseph

To you, O blessed Joseph, do we have recourse in our tribulation, and having implored the help of your thrice holy Spouse, we confidently invoke your patronage also. By that charity wherewith you were united to the Immaculate Virgin Mother of God, and by that fatherly affection with which you embraced the child Jesus, we beseech you and we humbly pray, that you look graciously upon the inheritance which

Jesus Christ has purchased by His Blood, and assist us in our needs by your power and strength.

Most watchful guardian of the Holy Family, protect the chosen people of Jesus Christ; keep far from us, most loving father, all blight of error and corruption: mercifully assist us from heaven, most mighty defender, in this our conflict with the powers of darkness; and even as of old you rescued the child Jesus from the supreme peril of His life, so now defend God's holy Church from the snares of the enemy and from all adversity; keep us one and all under your continual protection, that we may be supported by your example and your assistance, may be enabled to lead a holy life, die a happy death and come at last to the possession of everlasting blessedness in heaven.

Amen.

Examination on the Stigmatine Spirit

(A section of the examination may be read every day during the spiritual exercises)

Preparatory Prayer

Here I am in Your presence, O my God, I adore You profoundly and with all my heart thank You for the favors You have granted me. I am sincerely sorry for not having duly corresponded with them. I promise to do better in the future, to accept willingly for Your love and with Your help all the sacrifices of religious life in the Congregation of the Sacred Stigmata which I embraced of my own free will. Since I am unable to do anything without Your help, give me the grace to recognize my obligations, to know my failings, to detest my faults and to be faithful unto death to all my duties.

ANNUAL RETREAT: MONDAY

Monthly Day of Recollection

January - June - November

Search for Spiritual Perfection

Do I always keep in mind the essential end of my Baptismal Promises: my own sanctification? Can I truly say that it constitutes my predominant interest that which conditions and directs all others?

In my occupations study, work, apostolic ministry do I cultivate before all else a right intention? Am I convinced that in God's sight the only thing that counts is the love and the supernatural spirit I put into my every action, and not the position I hold or what I accomplish? Do I know how to recall these fundamental principles in certain difficult cases; for example, if I am assigned to a position I dislike, or to an office of little importance, or if I am the victim of misunderstanding, or have experienced a failure, etc?

How do I react to deceitful temptations that threaten the supernatural spirit? Do I sometimes allow myself to be ensnared, beset or deceived by false ambition, undue interest in money and love of ease and comfort? Do I consider these allurements as real enemies of progress in accordingly combat them perfection and sincerely? Or do I accept them as normal factors in today's way of life, and perhaps, even, unwittingly, cultivate them?

Can I say that I esteem and cultivate fervor? That I really tend to perfection? Have I, instead, allowed a kind of tepidity to creep into my spiritual life? In this event have fatigue, bad habits, discouragement or perhaps even some fall from grace been the cause of this lukewarmness? Am I convinced that, with God's grace, I can always start anew, and can achieve that degree of holiness which God has destined for me from all eternity?

What is my state of mind as I make this retreat? Do I take into account the grace God gives me and strive to correspond to it with all my strength? Am I determined to avoid all waste of time and every inordinate distraction so as to dedicate myself exclusively to the work of my sanctification?

Act of Sorrow

ANNUAL RETREAT: TUESDAY

Monthly Day of Recollection: February - July - December

Life of Piety

What place do I give prayer in my life? Do I consider it as my most important and necessary occupation the one that gives supernatural meaning and value to all the others? How do I defend my prayer from dissipation, misguided activity and natural sloth?

In particular: At Mass, do I participate personally and intimately in the sacrifice of Jesus? Do I strive to make the Divine Office, which is of its nature a public prayer of praise to God, a personal prayer of my own as well. Do I recite it with attention and devotion in the most convenient place, and, if possible, at the times assigned by the rubrics? Do I go to confession regularly? What can I say about my meditation, examination of conscience, spiritual reading? Am I convinced that the fervor of my interior life depends on my faithfulness to mental prayer?

In vocal prayer, do I have regard for exterior dignity so that such prayer serves for edification? Whenever I am impeded from taking part in a common devotional exercise, do I make it up at another time?

What concern do I have for habitual union with God, recalling the words of Christ: "It is necessary to pray always"? Do I esteem and practice recollection? What care do I have for the sense of God's presence and for keeping myself in loving contact with Him? Do I turn swiftly to prayer in difficult times of temptation, trial and discouragement? Do I strive to make prayer the core of my day?

Act of Sorrow

ANNUAL RETREAT: WEDNESDAY

Day of Recollection: March-August

Stigmatine Spirit

What is my concern for and valuation of the special demands of the Christian vocation? Am I persuaded that the Constitutions, the vows, common life and silence are fundamental means for my spiritual progress, and great helps for a truly intense apostolic activity? What course of action do I follow when there is difficulty reconciling the demands of Christian living and my work?

In particular: How do I esteem the Constitutions and what effort do I make in observing them? Am I aware of any frequent, perhaps even habitual, violation of them? Do I take pains to remedy this situation, or do I dismiss the matter from my mind? Does my regard for the daily schedule show that I consider it the expression of God's will in my regard? Am I concerned with punctuality, "imitating on earth the heavenly spirits"?

As a Stigmatine do I strive to use my time well, not wasting it in idle and useless activities? What place does study have in my daily program? Am I persuaded that no

matter what might be the nature of the apostolic ministry in which I am engaged, it requires preparation and cultural updating? Do I aim for perfection in fulfilling my office and work, or am I satisfied with mediocrity? At the same time, do I cultivate the spirit of perfect adaptability which makes us "*parati ad omnia*", ready to go anywhere for the glory of God and the good of souls?

Act of Sorrow

ANNUAL RETREAT: THURSDAY

Day of Recollection:

April - September

Virtues of Religion

Poverty: Do I esteem religious poverty and strive with all my power to guard it zealously? How do I practice dependence even in trifling matters? Am I faithful in keeping my accounts in order? Do I seek to restrict myself to what is what is necessary or useful, avoiding superfluous? Do I keep in my possession books, clothing and other articles not actually necessary? Have I allowed myself to become habituated to certain demands regarding food, drink, travel, etc., which are not in conformity with religious poverty?

Chastity: Do I live my consecration to the love of God and souls with joyful fidelity? Do I guard my chastity as is befitting one who has embraced a consecrated state of life? How do I observe the safeguards recommended by the Constitutions. Do I show dependence when I leave the house or remains outside of it? Do I avoid all excessive familiarities? Do I avoid whatever has even the appearance of evil? Am I sincere in manifesting to my spiritual father what eventually may prove to be for me a danger or an occasion of sin?

Obedience: Do I generously offer to God the sacrifice of my will in religious obedience to the Church? Am I convinced that obedience is not only essential to the life of the congregation but to my own personal progress as well? Is my obedience animated by the spirit of faith? Am I well disposed to all the Holy Father says? If I encounter difficulties, do I have recourse to my superior with right intention, disposed to accept his decision? Do I show confidence in my superiors, giving them an account of my life and activities? Do I consider myself a servant of the community?

Act of Sorrow**ANNUAL RETREAT: FRIDAY****Day of Recollection:****May - October****Fraternal and Apostolic Charity**

Do I see in my neighbor a child of God the Father, and is my conduct towards him the same as it would be toward Christ Himself? What is my usual attitude toward my confreres? How do I love them? How do I react towards minor conflicts which arise in community life?

How painstaking are my attempts to foster good harmony and genuine fraternal union in my community? Am I a source of union and collaboration? Do I appreciate the value of kindness and courtesy in my manners, not merely requiring it of others, but practicing it myself? When circumstances require it, do I pardon others, in imitation of Christ, or do I keep rancor in my heart, and show in my whole demeanor a deliberate coldness which is equivalent to denial of pardon? As a truly apostolic missionary, do I cultivate zeal for the salvation of souls? Do I expend my energies generously in the work of the apostolate? Do I cultivate a supernatural spirit in exercising my ministry? Do I show dependence on superiors and on those placed in charge of various works, even at the sacrifice of my own personal ideas? Do I consider my personal sanctification as the first and most effective means in the apostolate? Is charity really the characteristic of my vocation?

Act of Sorrow and Resolution

Humbly acknowledging the small gain I have made in religious perfection according to the Stigmatine spirit, I am heartily sorry for the faults I have committed, and resolve to live every day as I wish to be at the hour of death.

Formula for Renewal of Vows

In order to renew the spirit of my vocation, to increase apostolic charity in myself and in my congregation, and for the greater good of the Church, in the presence of almighty God, the Blessed Virgin, her spouse Saint Joseph, our founder Saint Gaspar Bertoni, the entire heavenly court, and you, my brothers, with all my heart I confirm the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience already professed in the Congregation of the

Sacred Stigmata of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Prayer for a good death

O Mary, from your place in heaven you already know what our death will be. Do not abandon us in that last hour. Be the defender of a happy death for us. You closed the eyes of St. Joseph at his death, and assisted at the agony of Jesus. Assist us, your adopted sons at our death. Inspire us to live a holy life so that we may merit a holy death. After fulfilling our expiation in purgatory, grant us the joy of seeing you in heaven.

Let us pray

O Almighty God, we ask You in Your goodness to grant to us Your servants the power of Your grace, so that the enemy will not prevail at the hour of our death. But may we merit to journey with the angels to eternal life. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

ANNUAL DEVOTIONS
FEAST OF THE SACRED STIGMATA OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST
Prayers in honor of the Sacred Stigmata of
Our Lord Jesus Christ

First Chaplet

O Lord Jesus Christ, we adore the sacred wound of Your left foot. We give You thanks for having suffered such bitter pain for love of us. By the merits of this sacred wound, we beseech You to grant us the forgiveness of our sins.

Glory to the Father

O Lord Jesus Christ, we adore the sacred wound of Your right foot. We give You thanks for having suffered such bitter pain for love of us. By the merits of this sacred wound we beseech You to grant us the abundance of Your holy grace.

Glory to the Father

O Lord Jesus Christ, we adore the sacred wound of Your left hand. We give You thanks for having suffered such bitter pain for love of us. By the merits of this sacred wound we beseech You to grant us an ever more generous correspondence to the demands of our vocation.

Glory to the Father

O Lord Jesus Christ, we adore the sacred wound of Your right hand. We give You thanks for having suffered such bitter pain for us. By the merits of this sacred wound we beseech You to grant us a lively charity toward our brothers.

Glory to the Father

O Lord Jesus Christ, we adore the sacred wound of Your heart. We thank You for having chosen to suffer for us even after Your death this additional offense which You endured with infinite love.

Glory to the Father

Second Chaplet

Dearest Lord Jesus crucified, bending low before You, we adore the most holy wound of Your right hand. We give You thanks for the infinite love wherewith You willed to suffer so many bitter pains because of our sins which we detest with all our hearts; we implore You to grant graciously to Your Church victory over all her enemies, and to all her children grace to walk in holiness in the way of Your commandments.

Glory to the Father

Dearest Lord Jesus crucified, bending low before You, we adore the sacred wound of Your left hand, and we beseech You for grace for all poor sinners, for the conversion of unbelievers, and for the dying that they may find peace with You and gain eternal salvation.

Glory to the Father

Dearest Lord Jesus crucified, bending low before You, we adore the sacred wound of Your right foot, and we beg of You the grace that countless flowers of holiness may blossom among the clergy and those who are consecrated to You, especially in our Congregation.

Glory to the Father

Dearest Lord Jesus crucified, bending low before You, we adore the sacred wound of Your left foot and implore You to deliver the holy souls in Purgatory, and especially those of our confreres, relatives, friends and benefactors.

Glory to the Father

Dearest Lord Jesus crucified, bending low before You, we adore the sacred wound in Your heart, and we beseech You to hear graciously the prayers we offer You today for the sanctification and well-being of our Congregation.

Glory to the Father

V. Grant, O Lord Jesus Christ, that we who devoutly worship Your five most precious wounds.

R. May we keep them deeply impressed upon our hearts both in our life and in our deeds.

Let us Pray

Ever merciful God, You gave new life to our lost sinful human nature by the passion of Your only begotten Son and the shedding of His Blood through His five wounds. Grant that we who venerate His wounds on earth may enjoy the fruits of His precious Blood in heaven. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

FEAST OF THE ESPOUSAL OF MARY AND JOSEPH

My Lord Jesus Christ, giver of peace and lover of charity, we beseech You by the virginal Espousal of Your Blessed Mother Mary and Saint Joseph, to grant to Your servants true union with Your divine will.

Glory to the Father

My Lord Jesus Christ, our help and our defense, by the virginal Espousal of Your Blessed Mother Mary and Saint Joseph, we beseech You to grant that the hearts and bodies of Your servants may please You with their holy demeanor.

Glory to the Father

My Lord Jesus Christ, Who resist the proud and grant Your grace to the humble, we beseech You to grant us that true humility which the holy Spouses Mary and Joseph exemplified for us in their lives, so that we may attract the gifts of Your grace by our humility.

Glory to the Father

My Lord Jesus Christ, Who promised Your kingdom to the poor, we beseech You by the example of evangelical poverty and toilsome work left us by the holy Spouses Mary and Joseph, to defend us propitiously against the desires of the flesh and the temptations of the world that we may merit Your heavenly kingdom.

Glory to the Father

My Lord Jesus Christ, Who were obedient to the holy Spouses, Mary and Joseph, have left us, in them perfect models of obedience to Your divine will, help us to love and fulfill with true humility Your desires, so that in You, with You and through You we may gain eternal glory.

Glory to the Father

O holy Spouses, Mary and Joseph, our models and patrons, we beseech you to grant us the grace to reproduce in our lives all the virtues which adorned Your holy home.

Prayer

O Jesus, Who became man for our salvation and entrusted Yourself to the faithful keeping of Your mother, the Virgin Mary, and her Spouse, Saint Joseph, we also entrust ourselves and our Congregation to their safekeeping. O Mary and Joseph, models and patrons of communities, we draw near to your shrine to find comfort in meditating upon your sublime example, and to ask for your protection. With Jesus, be near us in joy and sorrow, at work and rest, and assist us at the hour of death. Grant us this grace, that every house will be holy, as was yours, and a school of virtue for its members, a refuge of holiness and an open door leading to heaven, where Jesus awaits us, Who with the Father and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns forever.

Amen.

Eja Festivis

Hail to our Patrons! Happy songs we tender
As we observe the day of their chaste Wedding;
Anew the faithful enjoy the holy splendor
Shining about them.

How beautiful thou art, O Virgin Mary!
The Trinity has covered you with graces'
The lavish Godhead splendidly adorns you
As thou art married.

O Blessed Joseph! To you also we sing
Thy virtue raises you to the highest summits;
Thy sanctity is a mirror reflecting
Thy saintly Mary.

Jesus was happy to be known as your Son;
How much He loved you, Parents of such virtue!
From your belov'd arms to the world
His Mission Already is started.

O Blessed Couple! Light of earth and Heaven!
Continue to inspire us with your blessing,

While the renown of your names we may leaven By our devotion.

Eternal praise be to the mighty Godhead, Who, by the gift of Mary and Saint Joseph, To our poor lives have, by their merits, added Gifts of divine peace.

Amen.

In General

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

Amen.

The Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death.

Amen.

Glory to the Father

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever.

Amen.

The Angelus

V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary...

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it done unto me according to Your Word.

Hail Mary...

V. And the Word was made flesh.

R. And dwelled among us.

Hail Mary...

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us Pray

Pour forth, we beseech You, O Lord, Your grace into our hearts, that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ, Your Son, was made known by the message of an Angel, may, by His passion and cross, be brought to the the glory of the Resurrection, through the same Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Regina Coeli

- V. Queen of Heaven rejoice, alleluia.
R. For He Whom you did merit to bear, alleluia.
V. Has risen, as He said, alleluia.
R. Pray for us to God, alleluia.
V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia.
R. Because the Lord is truly risen, alleluia.

Let us Pray

O God, Who by the Resurrection of Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, have vouchsafed to make glad the whole world, grant, we beseech You, that through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, His Mother, we may lay hold of the joys of eternal life, through the same Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Veni Creator Spiritus

Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest,
And in our souls take up your rest;
Come with your grace and heavenly aid
To fill the hearts which you have made.

O Comforter, to You we cry,
You, heavenly gift of God Most High,
You fount of life and fire of love,
And sweet anointing from above.

You in your sevenfold gifts are known;
You, finger of God's hand we own;
You, promise of the Father, You
Who do the tongue with power imbue.

Kindle our senses from above,
And make our hearts overflow with love;
With patience firm and virtue high
The weakness of our flesh supply.

Far from us drive the foe we dread,
And grant us Your peace instead;
So shall we not, with you for guide,
Turn from the path of life aside.

Oh, may your grace on us bestow
The Father and the Son to know;
And You, through endless times confessed,
Of both the eternal Spirit blest.

Now to the Father and the Son,
Who rose from death, be glory given,
With You, O holy Comforter,
Henceforth by all in earth and heaven. *Amen.*

Veni, Sancte Spiritus

Come, Holy Spirit,
And send from on high
The ray of Your light.

Come, Father of the poor,
Come, giver of gifts,
Come, light of hearts.

Most excellent comforter,
Sweet host of the soul,
Sweet place of refreshment.

In labor, You give rest,
In heat, cool shade,
In sorrow, comfort.

O most blessed light,
Fill the inmost hearts
Of those who believe in You.

Without Your grace
There is nothing in man,
Nothing that is not hurtful.

Cleanse what is impure,
Water what is parched,
Heal what is diseased.

Bend what is stiffened,
Warm what has grown cold,
Straighten what is crooked.

Give to the faithful
Who trust in You,
Your Sacred, sevenfold gift.

Grant reward of virtue,
Grant final salvation,
Grant eternal joy.

Amen. (P.T. alleluia)

Prayer of Saint Bernard

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that any one who fled to your protection, implored your help or sought your intercession, was left unaided.

Inspired with this confidence, I fly unto you, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother; to you do I come, before you I stand, sinful and sorrowful.

O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in your mercy hear and answer me. *Amen.*

Prayer to the Blessed Virgin

Most Holy Virgin, mother of God, and my Mother Mary, look upon me at your feet, a poor sinner, your son, who commends himself to you and puts his trust in you.

I am mindful of having done nothing to merit even the favor of your gracious look but I know that, having seen your Son Jesus die to save sinners, you have a great desire to help them to salvation.

Look therefore, on my wretchedness and have pity on me, O Mother of mercy.

By your intercession, obtain from Jesus the pardon of my sins, the strength to resist all temptations and the grace of salvation.

Mother, I place myself in your hands; I commend myself to you with complete confidence.

Give me to Jesus now and forever more.

Amen.

Prayer to Saint Joseph

We greet you, O glorious St. Joseph, most pure spouse of the Virgin Mary and guardian of the child Jesus.

We venerate your profound humility, your unshaken faith and your zeal in sacrificing yourself with simplicity to the service and defense of Christ's infancy.

We recognize in you the most perfect model of devotion to Mary, Mother of our Savior.

We pray you, together with your most pure spouse Mary, to protect our Congregation by your holiness and virtues.

We recommend to your care, in a special way, our novices and aspirants.

Increase their number, defend and protect them, so that from their youth they may be imbued with a genuine religious spirit.

May our Congregation thus increase in the number of its members,
but most of all may it grow and flourish through their holiness.

Amen.

Prayer to Christ Crucified

Behold, O kind and most sweet Jesus;
I cast myself upon my knees in Your sight,
and with the most fervent desire of my soul
I pray and beseech You that You would impress upon
my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope, and charity,
with true repentance for my sins,
and a firm desire of amendment,
while with deep affection and grief of soul,
I ponder within myself and mentally contemplate
Your five most precious wounds,
having before my eyes that which David spoke
in prophecy of You, O good Jesus:
They have pierced my hands and feet,
they have numbered all my bones.

Anima Christi

Soul of Christ, be my sanctification.
Body of Christ, be my salvation.
Blood of Christ, fill all my veins.
Water from Christ's side, wash out my stains.
Passion of Christ, my comfort be.
O good Jesus, listen to me.
In Your wounds I fain would hide,
Never to be parted from Your side.
Guard me should the foe assail me.
Call me when my life shall fail me.
Bid me come to You above,
With Your saints to sing Your love,
World without end.

Amen.

Prayer of St. Ignatius

Take, Lord, receive all my liberty,
My memory, my understanding, and my entire will,
All that I have and possess. You have given all to me.
To You, Lord, I return it.
All is Yours, dispose of it wholly according
To Your will.
Give me Your love and Your grace.
For this is sufficient for me.

Prayer attributed to Pope Clement XI

I believe Lord, but may I believe more firmly; I hope, but may I hope more securely, I love, but may I love more ardently, I grieve, but may I grieve more vehemently.

I adore You as my first beginning, I desire You as my last end; I praise You as my everlasting benefactor; I invoke You as my merciful defender.

Direct me by Your wisdom, avert from me Your justice, console me with Your mercy, protect me with Your power. I offer to You, O Lord, my plans, may they be Yours, my deeds, may they be through You; my sufferings, may they be for You. I desire what You desire, because You desire it, however, You desire it, as long as You desire it.

I pray, O Lord, that You brighten my mind, inflame my will, cleanse my heart, sanctify my soul.

May I repent of past sins, repel future temptations, correct vicious tendencies, cultivate virtuous ideals.

Grant to me, good Lord, that I may love You, hate myself, do good to my neighbor, despise the world.

May I strive to obey my superiors, support my inferiors, aid my friends, spare my enemies.

May I conquer ease by self denial, avarice by liberality, wrath by meekness, indifference by fervor.

Make me prudent in counsel, steadfast in danger, patient in adversity, humble in prosperity.

Grant Lord, that I be attentive in prayer, moderate at meals, sedulous at work, firm in purpose.

May I achieve innocence within, modesty without, exemplary converse, and an ordered life.

May I watch carefully the demands of my nature, cherishing grace, fulfilling the law, furthering my salvation.

May I learn from You how slight what is of earth, how great what is divine, how brief are things temporal, how everlasting what is eternal.

Grant that I may prepare for death, fear judgment, avoid hell, obtain paradise. Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Act of Consecration of the human race to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

O most sweet Jesus, Redeemer of the human race, look down upon us humbly prostrate before Your altar.

We are Yours, and Yours we wish to be; but, to be more surely united with You, behold each one of us freely consecrates himself today to Your most Sacred Heart.

Many indeed have never known You; many too, despising Your precepts, have rejected You. Have mercy on them all, most merciful Jesus, and draw them to Your Sacred Heart.

May You be King, O Lord, not only of the faithful who have never forsaken You, but also of the prodigal children who have abandoned You; grant that they may quickly return to their Father's house lest they die of wretchedness and hunger.

May You be King of those who are deceived by erroneous opinions, or whom discord keeps aloof, and call them back to the harbor of truth and unity of faith, so that soon there may be but one flock and one Shepherd.

Grant, O Lord, to Your Church assurance of freedom and immunity from harm; give peace and order to all nations, and make the earth resound from pole to pole with one cry: Praise be to the divine Heart that wrought our salvation; to It be glory and honor forever.

Amen

Te Deum

You are God: we praise You;
You are the Lord: we acclaim You;
You are the eternal Father:
All creation worships You.

To you all angels, all the powers of heaven,
Cherubim and Seraphim, sing in endless praise:
Holy, holy, holy, Lord, God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of Your glory.

The glorious company of apostles praise You.
The noble fellowship of prophets praise You.
The white-robed army of martyrs praise You.

Throughout the world the holy Church acclaim You:
Father, of majesty unbounded,
Your true and only Son, worthy of all worship,
and the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide.

You, Christ, are the King of glory,
the eternal Son of the Father.

When You became man to set us free
You did not spurn the Virgin's womb.

You overcame the sting of death,
and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

You are seated at God's right hand in glory.
We believe that You will come, and be our judge.

Come then, Lord, and help Your people,
bought with the price of Your own blood,
and bring us with Your saints
to glory everlasting.

Save Your people, Lord, and bless Your inheritance.
Govern and uphold them now and always.

Day by day we bless You.

We praise Your name for ever.
Keep us today, Lord, from all sin.

Have mercy on us, Lord have mercy.

Lord, show us Your love and mercy,

for we put our trust in You.

In You, Lord, is our hope:
and we shall never hope in vain.

O Salutaris Hostia

O saving Victim, opening wide
The gate of heaven to man below,
Our foes press on from every side,
Your aid supply, Your strength bestow.

To Your great name be endless praise,
Immortal Godhead, One in Three;
O grant us endless length of days
In our true native land to see.

Amen.

Pange Lingua

Sing, my tongue, the Savior's glory,
Of His flesh the mystery sing;
Of the Blood all price exceeding,
Shed by our Immortal King,
Destined, for the world's redemption,
From a noble womb to spring.

Of a pure and spotless virgin
Born for us on earth below,
He, as man, with man conversing,
Stayed, the seed of truth to sow;
Then He closed in solemn order
Wondrously His life of woe.

On the night of that Last Supper
Seated with His chosen band,
He, the paschal victim eating,
First fulfills the Law's command:
Then as food to all His Brethren
Gives Himself with His own hand.

Word made flesh, the bread of nature
By His word to flesh He turns;
Wine into His blood He changes:
What though sense no change discerns?
Only be the heart in earnest,
Faith her lesson quickly learns.

Tantum Ergo

Down in adoration falling,
Lo! the sacred host we hail;
Lo! o'er ancient forms departing,
Newer rites of grace prevail;
Faith for all defects supplying,
Where the feeble senses fail.

To the everlasting Father,
And the Son Who reigns on high,
With the Spirit blest proceeding
Forth from Each eternally,
Be salvation, honor, blessing,
Might, and endless majesty.

Amen.

V. You have given them the bread of
heaven.

(P.T. Alleluia)

R. Which has all delight within it.

Let us Pray

God, Who left us in this wondrous sacrament a memorial of Your passion, help us, we beg You, so to reverence the sacred mysteries of Your Body and Blood, that we may always experience the effects of Your redemption: Who live and reign forever and ever.

Amen.

The Divine Praises

Blessed be God.

Blessed be His holy name.

Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true Man.

Blessed be the name of Jesus.

Blessed be His most Sacred Heart.

Blessed be His most Precious Blood,

Blessed be Jesus in the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.

Blessed be the Holy Spirit the Paraclete.

Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy.

Blessed be her holy and Immaculate Conception.

Blessed be her glorious Assumption.

Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.

Blessed be Saint Joseph, her most chaste spouse.

Blessed be God in His angels and in His saints.

Blessing Before Meals

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Bless us, O Lord, and these Your gifts, which we are about to receive from Your bounty, through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Grace After Meals

We give You thanks, almighty God, for all Your benefits; You, Who live and reign forever and ever.

Amen.

May the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.

Amen.

INTERCESSIONS FOR THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS**MORNING PRAYER (*Lauds*)****SUNDAY - For our Congregation**

You have raised up in the Church religious families, who through their varied charisms have revealed the richness of Your gifts.

- assist our Congregation, so that, faithful to the spirit of our Founder, we may cooperate with zeal in the building up of Your kingdom.

MONDAY - For our Community

We thank You Lord Jesus for in giving us Your Spirit You continue to create communion among people.

- grant that our community life, in the deeds of each day, may become ever more a joyful witness of being sons of the same Father.

TUESDAY - For our Superiors

Father, in Your Son, Who was obedient even unto death, You have given us a model in carrying out Your divine will.

- assist our superiors, so that, through their service, they may help us in our search for Your will and in following it faithfully.

WEDNESDAY- For our Missions

Lord, You entrusted Your disciples with the task of announcing Your Kingdom throughout the world.

- we pray for our Stigmatine missions, so that our missionary confreres may be aware of our solidarity, and that they may be for us an incentive for a more open and courageous witness.

THURSDAY - For Vocations

Lord, during Your life on earth, You invited some men to leave all things and follow You.

- we pray for those whom You are calling to a life of consecration in our religious family. May our life help them to make a generous and true choice.

FRIDAY - For the Sick and Suffering

Lord Jesus, You chose the cross to be the instrument of Your redemption.

- we pray for our Confreres who are suffering in body and spirit, so that, by associating themselves to Your passion, they may feel that they are participating in the apostolate even at this period of their life.

SATURDAY - For our Stigmatine Works

O Lord, You made Your Church the leaven of Your Kingdom.

- we entrust to You all our works and activities. May they be for us a place where we give witness and generous service.

EVENING PRAYER (*Vespers*)**SUNDAY**

Our Father Founder invites us to be totally available for the preaching of the Gospel.

- help us to share with all people the joy of Your Resurrection.

MONDAY

Our Father Founder placed himself and his life entirely in Your hands.

- help us each day to learn how to entrust ourselves entirely to Your Divine Providence.

TUESDAY

By the life and example of our Founder, You teach us to be humble.

- grant that in our service to others, we may have a preferential option for the poor, the neglected, and those in difficulty, without expecting anything in return.

WEDNESDAY

You have given us the Holy Spouses, Mary and Joseph as our Patrons.

- through their intercession, help us to draw closer to You so that we may live our consecration to the fullest.

THURSDAY

Through the intercession of the Holy Spouses, Mary and Joseph, to whom we entrust ourselves with filial confidence.

- guide us in our spiritual and apostolic renewal, so that we may be a good example to those we meet in our ministry, especially young people.

FRIDAY

Lord, You have left us living signs of Your passion in Your Sacred Stigmata.

- grant that we may learn to offer ourselves each day in union with Your sacrifice.

SATURDAY

Lord, imitating the trusting surrender of the Holy Spouses, Mary and Joseph,

- grant that we, as a religious family, may learn to choose whatever corresponds more to Your love and Your will.

LATIN HYMNS***Angelus Domini***

Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariae.

Et concepit de Spiritu Sancto.

Ave Maria....

Ecce ancilla Domini.

Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.

Ave Maria....

Et verbum caro factum est.

Et habitavit in nobis.

Ave Maria...

Ora pro nobis sancta Dei Genetrix

Ut digni efficiamur promissionibus Christi.

Oremus

*Gratiam tuam, quaesimus, Domine,
mentibus nostris infunde:
ut qui, Angelo nuntiante,
Christi Filii tui incarnationem cognovimus,
per passionem eius et crucem,
ad resurrectionis gloriam perducamur.
Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum.*

Amen

Regina Coeli

*Regina Coeli, laetare, Alleluia
Quia quem meruisti portare, alleluia;
Resurrexit sicut dixit, alleluia;
Ora pro nobis Deum, alleluia.*

*Gaude et laetare, Virgo Maria, alleluia;
Quia surrexit Dominus vere, alleluia.*

Oremus

*Deus, qui per resurrectionem Filii tui,
Domini nostri Jesu Christi,
mundum laetificare dignatus es:
praesta quaesimus;
ut per eius Genetricem Virginem Mariam,
perpetuae capiamus gaudia vitae.
Per eundem Christum Dominum nostrum.*

Amen.

Salve Regina

Salve, Regina, mater misericordia;

Vita dulcedo, et spes nostra salve.

Ad te clamamus, exsules, filii Hevae.

*Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes in hac
lacrimarum valle.*

*Eia ergo, Advocata nostra, illos tuos
misericordes oculos ad nos converte.*

*Et Jesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui, nobis
post hoc exilium ostende.*

O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria.

Veni Creator Spiritus

*Veni Creator Spiritus,
Mentes Tuorum visita,
Imple superna gratia
Quae Tu creasti pectora.*

*Qui diceris Paraclitus,
Altissimi donum Dei,
Fons Vivus, ignis, caritas,
Et spiritalis unctio.*

*Tu septiformis munere,
Digitus paternae dexteræ,
Tu rite promissum Patris
Sermone ditans guttura.*

*Accende lumen sensibus,
Infunde amorem cordibus,
Infirma nostri corporis
Virtute firmans perpeti.*

*Hostem repellas longius
Pacemque dones protinus,
Ductore sic te praevio,
Vitemus omne noxium.*

*Per te sciamus da Patrem,
Noscamus atque Filium
Teque utriusque Spiritum
Credamus omni tempore.*

*Deo Patri sit gloria
Et Filio qui a mortuis
Surrexit, ac Paraclito,
In saeculorum saecula.*

Amen.

V. Emitte Spiritum tuum et creabuntur.

R. Et renovabis faciem terrae.

Oremus

*Deus, qui corda fidelium
Sancti Spiritus illustratione docuisti;
da nobis in eodem Spiritu recta sapere,
et de eius semper consolatione gaudere.*

Per Christum Dominum nostrum.

Amen.

Veni, Sancte Spiritus,

*Veni Sancte Spiritus
et emitte caelitus
lucis tuae radium.*

*Veni, pater pauperum,
veni, dator munerum,
veni, lumen cordium.*

*Consolator optime,
dulcis hospes animae,
dulce refrigerium.*

*In labore requies,
in aestu temperies,
in fletu solatium.*

*O lux beatissima,
reple corda intima
tuorum fidelium.*

*Sine tuo numine,
nihil est in homine,
nihil est innoxium.*

*Lava quod est sordidum,
riga quod est aridum,
sana quod est saucium.*

*Flecte quod est rigidum,
fove quod est frigidum
rege quod est devium.*

*Da tuis fidelibus,
in te confidentibus,
sacrum septenarium.*

*Da virustis meritum,
da salutis exitum,
da perenne gaudium.*

Amen. (Alleluia)

Eja Festivis

*Eja, festivis celebremus hymnis
Virgines Sponsos sine labe pueros:
Sacra lux illis renovat fideli
Gaudia mente.*

*Quam nites Virgo! Decorare donis
Te Pater, Natus, voluitque Flamen;
Te chorus Divum face nuptiali
Splendidus ambit.*

*Te, virum, Joseph, canimus beatum,
Summa quem tollit super astra virtus,
Cui dat et vitae speciem referre
Virginis almae.*

*Liliis gaudens recubare Iesus
Vos amat flores nivei pudoris;
Iamque opem mundo properare vestris
Gestit ab ulnis.*

*Caelitum deplex hominumque lumen,
Pergite o! nobis faciles adesse;
Nomen et vestrum decus efferemus
Laude perenni.*

*Laus sit excelsae Triade perennis,
Quae, fovens tantis miseros Patronis,
Addat, amborum meritis, supernae
Munera pacis.*

Amen.

O Salutaris

*O Salutaris Hostia
Quae coeli pandis ostium;
Bella premunt hostilia,
Da robur, fer auxilium.*

*Uni trinoque Domino,
Sit sempiterna gloria;
Qui vitam sine termino
Nobis donet in patria.*

Tantum Ergo

*Tantum ergo Sacramentum
Veneremur cernui
Et antiquum documentum
Novo cedat ritui,
Praestet fides supplementum
Sensuum defectui.*

*Genitori, Genitoque
Laus et Jubilatio
Salus, honor, virtus quoque
Sit et benedictio*

*Procedenti ab Utroque
Compar sit laudatio.*

Amen.

V. Panem de coelo praestitisti eis.

R. Omne delectamentum in se habentem.

Oremus

*Deus, qui nobis sub Sacramento
mirabili passionis tuae memoriam reliquisti,
tribue, quasumus,
ita nos Corporis et Sanguinis
tui sacra Mysteria venerari,
ut Redemptionis tuae fructum
in nobis jugiter sentiamus.
Qui vivis et regnas in saecula saeculorum.*

Amen.

ADDITIONAL DEVOTIONS

For the Missions

O God, You desire that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of Your truth.

Send laborers into Your harvest, and grant that they may spread the Word with all boldness,

so that Your Gospel may everywhere be heard and glorified,

and all nations may know You, the one true God,

and Him whom You have sent, Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord;

who lives and rules with You,

in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.

Amen.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Holy Spirit, in these days of doubt, confusion and uncertainty, come into our hearts with your light, your strength and your consolation.

Come with your strength that purifies our heart and our desires and guards us against the danger of pride, and self conceit.

Bring your consolation so that with a heart attuned to your holy love we may live in peace and harmony in our families and give to our communities the spirit of cooperation, tolerance and understanding.

O God, you have instructed the faithful with the light of the Holy Spirit. Grant that through this same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and enjoy His consolation always.

Amen.

A Brother's Prayer

God our Father,
creator and ruler of the universe,
in every age you call man
to develop and use his gifts for the good of others.

With St. Joseph as our example and guide,
help us to do the work you have asked
and come to the rewards you have promised.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

(Roman Missal, Feast of St. Joseph the Worker)

Prayer to Saint Gerard Majella

O most amiable St. Gerard, who, transformed by charity into a living image of Jesus Christ, so that no other riches were desired by you but the nudity and poverty of the cross; no honors were sought by you but its ignominies; and no pleasures were experienced by you save the pains and sorrows of Calvary: pray, we beseech you, that we may, after your example, resolve once and for all, to crucify our flesh with its passions and evil tendencies, so that by faithfully following in the footsteps of our Divine Master, we may fulfill His Divine will, fully confident that if we imitate Him in this life we will see Him in the next and rejoice and reign with Him for ever.

Amen.

V. Pray for us, St. Gerard:

R. That we may be worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us Pray

O God, Who wished to draw unto Yourself St. Gerard from his youth, and to conform him to the likeness of Your crucified Son, grant, we beseech You, that following his example we might be transformed into that same likeness. Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Prayer for One's Family

Pour forth, I pray You, Lord, the abundance of Your graces and blessings on my beloved parents, brothers, sisters and relatives. Keep them far removed from any misfortune.

Bless their works and keep them always in Your friendship. Grant them health, comfort and every grace of soul and body in return for the good they have done for me.

Give peace and concord to my family; grant that in joy and love we may, from now on, taste the happiness of heaven where we shall be united forever.

Amen.

Prayer for a good death

O God, who while condemning all once to die, have yet concealed from them the moment and the hour of their death; grant that, spending all the days of my life in justice and holiness, I may be made worthy to depart out of this world in Your holy love.

O Lord, God, from now on I accept most willingly from Your hands whatever manner of death it will be Your pleasure to send me, with all its accompanying pain and anguish, as a penalty for my sins.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give you my heart and soul.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, assist me in my last agony.

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, may I breathe forth my soul in peace with you.

PART THREE

Stigmatine Proper

PART THREE**Stigmatine Proper****The Liturgy of the Hours****Ordinary****Invitatory**

The invitatory belongs at the very beginning of each day's prayer. It precedes either the Office of Readings or Morning Prayer, the liturgical day may begin with either hour.

Lord, open my lips.

- And my mouth will proclaim your praise.

Afterward psalm 95 is said with its antiphon. The antiphon is said before the psalm, then immediately repeated; it is repeated after each strophe of the psalm.

In individual recitation, the antiphon may be said only at the beginning of the psalm; it need not be repeated after each strophe.

The antiphon for the invitatory is found in the Proper.

Psalm 95**A call to praise God**

Encourage each other daily while it is still today

(Hebrews 3:13)

(The antiphon is recited and then repeated)

Come, let us sing to the Lord

and shout with joy to the Rock who saves us.

Let us approach him with praise and thanksgiving

and sing joyful songs to the Lord.

(Antiphon repeated)

The Lord is God, the mighty God,

the great king over all the gods.

He holds in his hands the depths of the earth

and the highest mountains as well.

He made the sea; it belongs to him,
the dry land, too, for it was formed by his hands.

(Antiphon repeated)

Come, then, let us bow down and worship,
bending the knee before the Lord, our maker.
For he is our God and we are his people,
the flock he shepherds.

(Antiphon repeated)

Today, listen to the voice of the Lord:
Do not grow stubborn, as your fathers did
in the wilderness,
when at Meriba and Massah
they challenged me and provoked me,
Although they had seen all of my works.

(Antiphon repeated)

Forty years I endured that generation.
I said, "They are a people whose hearts go astray
and they do not know my ways."
So I swore in my anger,
"They shall not enter into my rest."

(Antiphon repeated)

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

(Antiphon repeated)

For psalm 95 one may substitute psalm 100, 67, or 24. If any of these psalms should occur in the office, psalm 95 is then said in place of it.

The psalm with its antiphon may be omitted when the invitatory precedes Morning Prayer.

Office of Readings

God, come to my assistance.

- Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen. Alleluia.

If the office begins with the invitatory, all the above is omitted.

HYMN

Then the appropriate hymn is said.

PSALMODY

The psalmody follows the hymn and consists of three psalms or sections of psalms, together with the appropriate antiphons, taken from the Proper.

VERSES

The verse is said before the readings, to mark the transition from the psalmody to the hearing of the word of God. This verse is given before the first reading.

READINGS

There are two readings. The first is a biblical reading with its responsory, taken from the Proper.

The second reading is also taken from the Proper, where it follows the biblical reading. The appropriate responsory follows the second reading.

HYMN, *TE DEUM*

The hymn *Te Deum* follows the second reading and its responsory:

You are God: we praise you;

You are the Lord: we acclaim you;

You are the eternal father:

All creation worships you.

To you all angels, all the powers of heaven,
Cherubim and Seraphim, sing in endless praise:
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

The glorious company of apostles praise you.
The noble fellowship of prophets praise you.
The white-robed army of martyrs praise you.

Throughout the world the holy Church acclaim you:
Father, of majesty unbounded,
your true and only Son, worthy of all worship,
and the Holy Spirit, advocate and guide.

You, Christ, are the king of glory,
the eternal Son of the Father.

When you became man to set us free
you did not spurn the Virgin's womb.

You overcame the sting of death,
and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

You are seated at God's right hand in glory.
We believe that you will come and be our judge.

Come then, Lord, and help your people,
bought with the price of your own blood,
and bring us with your saints
to glory everlasting.

V. Save your people, Lord, and bless your inheritance.

R. Govern and uphold them now and always.

V. Day by day we bless you.

R. We praise your name for ever.

V. Keep us today, Lord, from all sin.

R. Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.

- V. Lord, show us your love and mercy;
R. for we put our trust in you.
- V. In you, Lord, is our hope:
R. and we shall never hope in vain.

The concluding part of the hymn may be omitted.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

After the *Te Deum*, the concluding prayer is said. It is taken from the Proper.

The prayer is preceded by the invitation Let us pray.

Response at the conclusion of the prayer: Amen.

The following acclamation is said, at least at the communal celebration:

Let us praise the Lord.
- And give him thanks

In an extended vigil celebration of a solemnity, canticles may be sung and the gospel read before the *Te Deum*.

If the Office of Readings is celebrated immediately before another hour, the hymn designated for the latter may replace the hymn at the beginning of the Office of Readings. When another hour follows immediately, the prayer and acclamation at the end of the Office of Readings are omitted. The introductory verse with the Glory to the Father is omitted as the next hour begins.

Morning Prayer

God, come to my assistance.
- Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.

This verse and response are omitted when the hour begins with the invitatory.

HYMN

Then the appropriate hymn is said.
The hymn is found in the Proper.

PSALMODY

The psalmody follows the hymn and consists of one morning psalm, an Old Testament canticle and another psalm of praise, together with the appropriate antiphons.

The psalms, canticle and antiphons are taken from the Proper.

After the psalmody the reading follows.

READING

The reading is found in the Proper.

A longer reading may be selected, especially in celebrations with the people, in accord with number 46 of the General Instruction; a short homily on the reading may also be added.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

A period of silence may be observed after the reading or homily.

Next, a responsorial song or the responsory given after the reading follows.

Other suitable songs may be substituted provided they have been approved by the conference of bishops.

GOSPEL CANTICLE

Luke 1:68-79

The following gospel canticle with the appropriate antiphon is then said.

The antiphon is taken from the Proper.

The Messiah and his forerunner

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel;
he has come to his people and set them free.
He has raised up for us a mighty savior,
born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets he promised of old
that he would save us from our enemies,
from the hands of all who hate us.

He promised to show mercy to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant.

This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham:
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
free to worship him without fear,
holy and righteous in his sight
all the days of our life.

You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
to give his people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of their sins.

In the tender compassion of our God
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of
death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

The Glory to the Father is said at the end of the canticles, unless otherwise noted.

The antiphon is repeated as usual.

INTERCESSIONS

The intercessions follow the canticle.

The intercessions are found in the Proper.

All then say the Lord's Prayer. It may be preceded by a brief invitation:

Now let us offer together the prayer our Lord Jesus Christ taught
us:

Now let us pray as Christ the Lord has taught us:

With longing for the coming of God's kingdom, let us offer our
prayer to the Father:

Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us offer the prayer
Christ himself taught us:

Let us make our prayers and praise complete by offering the Lord's
prayer:

Let us conclude our prayers with the Lord's prayer:

Let us again offer our praise to God and pray in the words of Christ:

To Christ:

Remember us Lord, when you come to your kingdom and teach us
how to pray:

And now let us pray with confidence as Christ our Lord asked:

And now let us pray as the Lord told us:

We pattern our prayer on the prayer of Christ our Lord, and say:

Now let us offer the prayer Christ has given us as the model for all
prayer:

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father...

The concluding prayer, without the invitation Let us pray, is added immediately after the Lord's
Prayer.

The concluding prayer is taken from the Proper.

DISMISSAL

If a priest or deacon presides, he dismisses the people:

The Lord be with you.

- And also with you.

May almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

- Amen.

Another form of the blessing may be used, as at Mass.

Then, he adds:

Go in peace.

- Thanks be to God.

In the absence of a priest or deacon and in individual recitation, Morning Prayer concludes:

May the Lord bless us,
protect us from all evil
and bring us to everlasting life.

- Amen.

Daytime Prayer

God, come to my assistance.

- Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.

Then the appropriate hymn follows.

Mid-Morning

HYMN

Breathe on me, breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love the things you love,
and do what you would do.

Breathe on me, breath of God,
Until my heart is pure,
Until with you I have one will,
To live and to endure.

Breathe on me, breath of God,
My soul with grace refine,
Until this earthly part of me
Glows with your fire divine.

Breathe on me, breath of God,
 My soul with grace refine,
 Until this earthly part of me
 Glows with your fire divine.

Breathe on me, breath of God,
 So I shall never die,
 But live with you the perfect life
 In your eternity.

Melody: Yattendon 46

Music: H. E. Wooldridge, 1845-1917
 Text: Edwin Hatch, 1835-1889,
 adapted by Anthony G. Petti

Or:

From all that dwell below the skies
 Let the Creator's praise arise:
 Let the Redeemer's name be sung
 Through every land, by every tongue.
 Hallelujah!

Eternal are thy mercies, Lord;
 Eternal truth attends thy word:
 Thy praise shall sound from shore to shore,
 Till suns shall rise and set no more:
 Hallelujah!

Melody: Erschienen ist der herrliche
 Tag or Eisenach (without
 hallelujah) L. M.

Music: Nikolaus Hermann,
 1560 or
 Johann H. Schein, 1583-1630
 Text: Isaac Watts, 1719

Or:

Father, Lord of earth and heaven,
 King to whom all gifts belong,
 Give your greatest Gift, your Spirit,
 God the holy, God the strong.

Son of God, enthroned in glory,
 Send your promised gift of grace,
 Make your Church your holy Temple,
 God the Spirit's dwelling -place.

Spirit, come, in peace descending
 As at Jordan, heav'nly Dove,
 Seal your Church as God's anointed,
 Set our hearts on fire with love.

Stay among us, God the Father,
 Stay among us, God the Son,
 Stay among us, Holy Spirit:
 Dwell within us make us one.

Melody: Drakes Boughton
 87.87

Music: S. P. Waddington
 Text: James Quinn, S.J.

Or:

Holy Spirit, come, confirm us
 In the truth that Christ makes known;
 We have faith and understanding
 Through your helping gifts alone.

Holy Spirit, come, console us,
 Come as Advocate to plead,
 Loving Spirit from the Father,
 Grant in Christ the help we need.

Holy Spirit, come, renew us,
 Come yourself to make us live:
 Holy through your loving presence,
 Holy through the gifts you give.

Holy Spirit, come, possess us,
 You the Love of Three in One,
 Holy Spirit of the Father,
 Holy Spirit of the Son.

Melody: Laus Deo 87.87

Music: Richard Redhead, 1820-1901
 Text: Brian Foley

Or:

Come Holy Ghost, who ever one
 Art with the Father and the Son,
 Come, Holy Ghost, our souls possess
 With thy full flood of holiness.

In will and deed, in heart and tongue
 With all the powers, thy praise be sung;
 And love light up our mortal frame
 Till others catch the living flame.

Almighty Father, hear our cry
 Through Jesus Christ, our Lord most high,
 Who with the Holy Ghost and thee
 Doth live and reign eternally.

Melody: Saint Venantius L.M.

Music: Clausner Gesangbuch, 1653
 Text: St. Ambrose (?)
 Translator: J.H. Newman, 1801-1890

PSALMODY

After the verse God, come to my assistance and the hymn, the gradual psalms which follow are said, with their proper antiphon.

Ant. The antiphon is found in the Proper.

Psalm 120

Longing for peace

Be patient in suffering, be constant in prayer (Romans 12:12)

To the Lord in the hour of my distress

I call and he answers me.

"O Lord, save my soul from lying lips,
from the tongue of the deceitful."

What shall he pay you in return,

O treacherous tongue?

The warrior's arrows sharpened
and coals, red-hot, blazing.

Alas, that I abide a stranger in Meshech,
dwell among the tents of Kedar!

Long enough have I been dwelling
with those who hate peace.

I am for peace, but when I speak,
they are for fighting.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm 121

Guardian of his people

Never again will they hunger and thirst, never again know scorching heat (Revelation 7:16)

I lift up my eyes to the mountains:

from where shall come my help?

My help shall come from the Lord
who made heaven and earth.

May he never allow you to stumble!
Let him sleep not, your guard.
No, he sleeps not nor slumbers,
Israel's guard.

The Lord is your guard and your shade;
at your right side he stands.
By day the sun shall not smite you
nor the moon in the night.

The Lord will guard you from evil,
he will guard your soul.
The Lord will guard your going and coming
both now and for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm 122

The holy city, Jerusalem

*You have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem
(Hebrews 12:22)*

I rejoiced when I heard them say:
"Let us go to God's house.
And now our feet are standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem.

Jerusalem is built as a city
strongly compact.
It is there that the tribes go up,
the tribes of the Lord.

For Israel's law it is,
there to praise the Lord's name.
There were set the thrones of judgment
of the house of David.

For the peace of Jerusalem pray:
"Peace be to your homes!
May peace reign in your walls,
in your palaces, peace."

For love of my brethren and friends
I say: "Peace upon you!"
For love of the house of the Lord
I will ask for your good.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Ant. The antiphon is found in the Proper.

READING

A reading follows the psalmody.

The reading is taken from the Proper.

A period of silence may be observed after the reading. After the reading a very brief verse is proposed.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Afterward the concluding prayer, with the invitation Let us pray and the appropriate conclusion, is said.

Response at the conclusion of the prayer: Amen.

In the communal celebration of the office, the acclamation is added:

Let us praise the Lord.

- And give him thanks.

Midday**HYMN**

Help us, O Lord, to learn
 The truths thy Word imparts:
 To study that thy laws may be
 Inscribed upon our hearts.

Help us, O Lord, to live
 The faith which we proclaim,
 That all our thoughts and words and deeds
 May glorify your name.

Help us, O Lord, to teach
 The beauty of your ways,
 That yearning souls may find the Christ,
 And sing aloud his praise.

Melody: Franconia S.M.

Music: J.B. König, 1691-1758,
 adapted by W.H. Havergal,
 1793-1870
 Text: W.W. Reid, 1923-

Or:

Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy,
 Whose trust, ever childlike, no cares could destroy,
 Be there at our waking, and give us, we pray,
 Your bliss in our hearts, Lord, at the break of the day.

Lord of all eagerness, Lord of all faith,
 Whose strong hands were skilled at the plane and the lathe,
 Be there at our labors, and give us we pray,
 Your strength in our hearts, Lord, at the noon of the day.

Lord of all kindness, Lord of all grace,
 Your hand swift to welcome, your arms to embrace,
 Be there at our homing, and give us, we pray,
 Your love in our hearts, Lord, at the eve of the day.

Lord of all gentleness, Lord of all calm,
 Whose voice is contentment, whose presence is balm,
 Be there at our sleeping, and give us, we pray,
 Your peace in our hearts, Lord, at the end of the day.

Melody: Slane 10.11.11.12

Music: Traditional Irish Melody
 Text: Jan Struther, 1901-1953

Or:

Lord of all being, throned afar,
 Your glory flames from sun and star;
 Center and soul of every sphere,
 And yet to loving hearts how near.

Sun of our life, your living ray
 Sheds on our path the glow of the day;
 Star of our hope, your gentle light
 Shall ever cheer the longest night.

Lord of all life, below, above,
 Whose light is truth, whose warmth is love;
 Before the brilliance of your throne
 We ask no luster of our own.

Give us your grace to make us true,
 And kindling hearts that burn for you,
 Till all your living altars claim
 One holy light, one heavenly flame.

Melody: Uffingham

Music: Jeremiah Clarke,
 1659-1707
 Text: Oliver Wendell Holmes,
 1809-1894

Or:

Almighty Ruler, God of truth
Who guide and master all,
The rays with which you gild the dawn
With noonday heat now fall.

O quench the fires of hatred, Lord,
Of anger and of strife;
Bring health to every mind and heart
That peace may enter life.

Most holy Father, grant our prayer
Through Christ your only Son,
That in your Spirit we may live
And praise you ever one.

Melody: Ballerma C.M.

Music: F. Barthelemon, 1741-1808
Text: Ralph Wright, O.S.B.

PSALMODY

After the verse God, come to my assistance and the hymn, the gradual psalms which follow are said, with their proper antiphon.

Ant. The antiphon is found in the Proper.

Psalm 123

The Lord is the hope of his people

Two blind men cried out: "Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us have mercy on us.

(Matthew 20:30)

To you have I lifted up my eyes,
you who dwell in the heavens:
my eyes, like the eyes of slaves
on the hand of their lords.

Like the eyes of a servant
on the hand of her mistress,
so our eyes are on the Lord our God
till he show us his mercy.

Have mercy on us, Lord, have mercy.
We are filled with contempt.
Indeed all too full is our soul
with the scorn of the rich,
with the proud man's disdain.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm 124

Our help is in the name of the Lord

The Lord said to Paul: Fear not... I am with you (Acts 18:9-10)

If the Lord had not been on our side,"
this is Israel's song.
"If the Lord had not been on our side
when men rose against us,
then would they have swallowed us alive
when their anger was kindled.

Then would the waters have engulfed us,
the torrent gone over us;
over our head would have swept
the raging waters."

Blessed be the Lord who did not give us
a prey to their teeth!
Our life, like a bird, has escaped
from the snare of the fowler.

Indeed the snare has been broken
and we have escaped.
Our help is in the name of the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm 125

The Lord, the guardian of his people

Peace to God's true Israel (Galatians 6:16)

Those who put their trust in the Lord
are like Mount Zion, that cannot be shaken,
that stands for ever.

Jerusalem! The mountains surround her,
so the Lord surrounds his people
both now and for ever.

For the scepter of the wicked shall not rest
over the land of the just
for fear that the hands of the just
should turn to evil.

Do good, Lord, to those who are good,
to the upright of heart;
but the crooked and those who do evil,
drive them away!
On Israel, peace!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Ant. The antiphon is found in the Proper.

READING

A reading follows the psalmody.

The reading is taken from the Proper.

A period of silence may be observed after the reading. After the reading a very brief verse is proposed.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Afterward the concluding prayer, with the invitation Let us pray and the appropriate conclusion, is said.

Response at the conclusion of the prayer: Amen.

In the communal celebration of the office, the acclamation is added:

Let us praise the Lord.

- And give him thanks.

Mid-Afternoon**HYMN**

Firmly I believe and truly
God is three and God is one;
And I next acknowledge duly
Manhood taken by the Son.

And I trust and hope most fully
In that manhood crucified;
And I love supremely, solely
Christ, who for my sins has died.

And I hold in veneration,
For the love of him alone,
Holy Church as his creation,
And her teachings as his own.

Praise and thanks be ever given
 With and through the angel host,
 To the God of earth and heaven,
 Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Melody: Halton Holgate 87.87

Music: William Boyce, 1710-1779
 Text: John Henry Newman, 1801-1890,
 adapted by Anthony G. Petti

Or:

Lord God and Maker of all things
 Creation is upheld by you.
 While all must change and know decay,
 You are unchanging, always new.

You are man's solace and his shield,
 His rock secure on which to build;
 You are the spirit's tranquil home;
 In you alone is hope fulfilled.

To God the Father and the Son
 And Holy Spirit render praise,
 Blest Trinity, from age to age
 The strength of all our living days.

Melody: Auctoritate Saeculi L. M.

Music: Poitiers Antiphoner,
 1746
 Text: Stanbrook Abbey

Or:

Most ancient of all mysteries,
 Before your throne we lie;
 Have mercy now, most merciful,
 Most holy Trinity.

When heaven and earth were still unmade,
When time was yet unknown,
You in your radiant majesty
Did live and love alone.

You were not born, there was no source
From which your being flowed;
There is no end which you can reach,
For you are simply God.

How wonderful creation is,
The work which you did bless;
What then must you be like, dear God,
Eternal loveliness!

Most ancient of all mysteries,
Before your throne we lie,
Have mercy now and evermore,
Most holy Trinity.

Melody: Saint Flavian

Music: Adapted from Psalm 132,
Day's Psalter, 1562
Text: Frederick William Faber,
1814-1863

Or:

Faith of our fathers! faith and prayer
Shall win all nations unto thee;
And through the truth that comes from God,
Mankind shall then indeed be free.

Refrain:

Faith of our fathers, holy faith!
We will be true to thee till death.

Faith of our fathers! we will love
 Both friend and foe in all our strife:
 And preach thee too, as love knows how,
 By kindly deeds and virtuous life.

Melody: Saint Catherine L.M.
 with Refrain

Music: Henry F. Hemy, 1818-1888, and
 James G. Walton, 1821-1905
 Text: Frederick W. Faber, 1814-1863

Refrain

PSALMODY

After the verse God, come to my assistance and the hymn, the gradual psalms which follow are said, with their proper antiphon.

Ant. The antiphon is found in the Proper.

Psalm 126

Joyful hope in God

Companions with him in suffering, you will share his overflowing happiness
 (2 Corinthians 1:7)

When the Lord delivered Zion from bondage,
 it seemed like a dream.
 Then was our mouth filled with laughter,
 on our lips there were songs.

The heathens themselves said: "What marvels
 the Lord worked for them!"
 What marvels the Lord worked for us!
 Indeed we were glad.

Deliver us, O Lord, from our bondage
 as streams in dry land.
 Those who are sowing in tears
 will sing when they reap.

They go out, they go out, full of tears,
carrying seed for the sowing:
they come back, they come back, full of song,
carrying their sheaves.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the
Holy Spirit:

- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be
for ever.

Amen.

Psalm 127

Apart from God our labors are worthless

You are God's building
(1 Corinthians 3:9)

If the Lord does not build the house,
in vain do its builders labor;
if the Lord does not watch over the city,
in vain does the watchman keep vigil.

In vain is your earlier rising,
your going later to rest,
you who toil for the bread you eat:
when he pours gifts on his beloved while they slumber.

Truly sons are a gift from the Lord,
a blessing, the fruit of the womb.
Indeed the sons of youth
are like arrows in the hand of a warrior.

O the happiness of the man
who has filled his quiver with these arrows!
He will have no cause for shame
when he disputes with his foes in the gateways.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: -
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm 128

Happiness of family life rooted in God

"May the Lord bless you from Zion," that is, from the Church
(Arnobius)

O blessed are those who fear the Lord
and walk in his ways!

By the labor of your hands shall we eat.
You will be happy and prosper;
your wife like a fruitful vine
in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive,
around your table.

Indeed thus shall be blessed
the man who fears the Lord.
May the Lord bless you from Zion
all the days of your life!
May you see your children's children
in a happy Jerusalem!

On Israel, peace!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Ant. The antiphon is found in the Proper.

READING

A reading follows the psalmody.

The reading is taken from the Proper.

A period of silence may be observed after the reading. After the reading a very brief verse is proposed.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Afterward the concluding prayer, with the invitation Let us pray and the appropriate conclusion, is said.

Response at the conclusion of the prayer: Amen.

In the communal celebration of the office, the acclamation is added:

Let us praise the Lord.

- And give him thanks.

Evening Prayer

God, come to my assistance.

- Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.

HYMN

Then the appropriate hymn is said.

The hymn is found in the Proper.

PSALMODY

The psalmody follows the hymn and consists of two psalms or parts of psalms, and a New Testament canticle, together with the appropriate antiphons.

The psalms, canticle and antiphons are taken from the Proper.

After the psalmody the reading follows.

READING

The reading is found in the Proper.

A longer reading may be selected, especially in celebrations with the people, in accord with number 46 of the General Instruction; a short homily may also be added.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD OF GOD

A period of silence may be observed after the reading or homily.

Next a responsorial song or the responsory given after the reading follows.

Other suitable songs may be substituted provided they have been approved by the conference of bishops.

GOSPEL CANTICLE

Luke 1:46-55

The following gospel canticle with the appropriate antiphon is then said.

The antiphon is taken from the Proper.

The soul rejoices in the Lord

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed:
the Almighty has done great things for me,
and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him
in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm,
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
and has lifted up the lowly.

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

He has come to the help of his servant Israel
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,

the promise he made to our fathers,
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.
Amen.

The antiphon is repeated as usual.

INTERCESSIONS

The intercessions follow the canticle.

The intercessions are found in the Proper.

All then say the Lord's Prayer. It may be preceded by a brief invitation:

Now let us offer together the prayer that our Lord Jesus Christ taught us:

Now let us pray as Christ the Lord has taught us:

With longing for the coming of God's kingdom, let us offer our prayer to the Father:

Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us offer the prayer Christ himself taught us:

Let us make our prayers and praise complete by offering the Lord's prayer:

Let us conclude our prayers with the Lord's prayer:

Let us again offer our praise to God and pray in the words of Christ:

To Christ:

Remember us, Lord, when you come to your kingdom and teach us how to pray:

And now let us pray with confidence as Christ our Lord asked:

And now let us pray as the Lord told us:

We pattern our prayer on the prayer of Christ our Lord, and say:

Now let us offer the prayer Christ has given us as the model for all prayer:

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father...

The concluding prayer, without the invitation Let us pray, is added immediately after the Lord's Prayer.

The concluding prayer is taken from the Proper.

DISMISSAL

If a priest or deacon presides, he dismisses the people:

The Lord be with you.

- And also with you.

May almighty God bless you,

the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

- Amen.

Another form of the blessing may be used, as at Mass.

Then he adds:

Go in peace.

- Thanks be to God.

In the absence of a priest or deacon and in individual recitation, Morning Prayer concludes:

May the Lord bless us,

protect us from all evil

and bring us to everlasting life.

- Amen.

Night Prayer

God, come to my assistance.

- Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen. Alleluia.

A brief examination of conscience may be made. In the communal celebration of the office, a penitential rite using the formulas of the Mass may be inserted here.

HYMN

We praise you, Father, for your gifts
Of dusk and nightfall over earth,
Foreshadowing the mystery
Of death that leads to endless day.

Within your hands we rest secure;
In quiet sleep our strength renew;
Yet give your people hearts that wake
In love to you, unsleeping Lord.

Your glory may we ever seek
In rest, as in activity,
Until its fullness is revealed,
O source of life, O Trinity.

Melody: *Te Lucis ante terminum*
(plainchant)

Music: Anon., Gregorian
Text: West Malling Abbey

Or:

Holy God, we praise thy Name!
Lord of all, we bow before thee!
All on earth thy scepter claim,
All in heaven above adore thee!
Infinite thy vast domain,
Everlasting is thy reign.

Hark the loud celestial hymn
Angel choirs above are raising;
Cherubim and Seraphim,
In unceasing chorus praising,
Fill the heavens with sweet accord:
Holy, Holy, Holy Lord!

Holy Father, Holy Son,
 Holy Spirit, Three we name thee,
 While in essence only One,
 Undivided God we claim thee;
 And adoring bend the knee,
 While we own the mystery.

Melody: Grosser Gott
 78.78.77

Music: Katholisches Gesangbuch,
 Vienna, c. 1774
 Text: Ignaz Franz, 1719-1790
 Translator: Clarence Walworth,
 1820-1900

Or:

This world, my God, is held within your hand,
 Though we forget your love and steadfast might
 And in the changing day uncertain stand,
 Disturbed by morning, and afraid of night.

From youthful confidence to careful age,
 Help us each one to be your loving friend,
 Rewarded by the faithful servant's wage,
 God in three persons, reigning without end.

Melody: In Manus Tuas
 10.10.10.10

Music: Herbert Howells
 Text: Hamish Swanston

AFTER EVENING PRAYER I

PSALMODY

Ant. 1 Have mercy, Lord, and hear my prayer.

Easter Ant. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Psalm 4

Thanksgiving

The resurrection of Christ was God's supreme and wholly marvelous work
(Saint Augustine)

When I call, answer me, O God of justice;
from anguish you released me;
have mercy and hear me!

O men, how long will your hearts be closed,
will you love what is futile and seek what is false?

It is the Lord who grants favors
to those whom he loves:
the Lord hears me whenever I call him.

Fear him; do not sin:
ponder on your bed and be still.
Make justice your sacrifice, and trust in the Lord.
"What can bring us happiness?" many say.
Let the light of your face shine on us, O Lord.

You have put into my heart a greater joy
than they have from abundance
of corn and new wine.

I will lie down in peace and sleep comes at once
for you alone, Lord, make me dwell in safety.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Ant. Have mercy, Lord, and hear my prayer.

Ant. 2 In the silent hours of night, bless the Lord.

Psalm 134

Evening prayer in the Temple

Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great

(Revelation 19:5)

O come, bless the Lord,
 all you who serve the Lord,
 who stand in the house of the Lord,
 in the courts of the house of our God.

Lift up your hands to the holy place
 and bless the Lord through the night.
 May the Lord bless you from Zion,
 he, who made both heaven and earth.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Ant. In the silent hours of night, bless the Lord.

Easter Ant. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

READING

Deuteronomy 6:4-7

Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone! Therefore, you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength. Take to heart these words which I enjoin on you today. Drill them into your children. Speak of them at home and abroad, whether you are busy or at rest.

Night Prayer continues with the Responsory.

AFTER EVENING PRAYER II

PSALMODY

Ant. Night holds no terrors for me sleeping under God's wings.

Easter Ant. Alleluia, alleluia alleluia.

Psalm 91

Safe in God's sheltering care

I have given you the power to tread upon serpents and scorpions.

(Luke 10:19)

He, who dwells in the shelter of the Most High,
and abides in the shade of the Almighty,
says to the Lord: "My refuge,
my stronghold, my God in whom I trust!"

It is he who will free you from the snare
of the fowler, who seeks to destroy you;
he will conceal you with his pinions
and under his wings you will find refuge.

You will not fear the terror of the night
nor the arrow that flies by day,
nor the plague that prowls in the darkness
nor the scourge that lays waste at noon.

A thousand may fall at your side,
ten thousand fall at your right,
you, it will never approach;
his faithfulness is buckler and shield.

Your eyes have only to look
to see how the wicked are repaid,
you who have said: "Lord, my refuge!",
and have made the Most High your dwelling.

Upon you no evil shall fall,
no plague approach where you dwell.
For you has he commanded his angels,
to keep you in all your ways.

They shall bear you upon their hands
lest you strike your foot against a stone.
On the lion and the viper you will tread
and trample the young lion and the dragon.

Since he clings to me in love, I will free him;
 protect him for he knows my name.
 When he calls, I shall answer: "I am with you."
 I will save him in distress and give him glory.

With length of life I will content him;
 I shall let him see my saving power.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
 - as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Ant. Night holds no terrors for me sleeping under God's wings.

Easter Ant. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

READING

Revelation 22:4-5

They will look upon his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. Night will be no more, nor will they need light from lamp or sun, for the Lord God shall give them light, and they shall reign forever and ever.

The rest of Night Prayer is the same whether following Evening Prayer I or Evening Prayer II.

RESPONSORY

Ant. Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.
 - Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.

You have redeemed us. Lord God of truth.
 - I commend my spirit.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

Into your hands, Lord, I commend my spirit.

Ant. Protect us, Lord, as we stay awake; watch over us as we sleep; that, awake, we may keep watch with Christ, and, asleep, rest in his peace (alleluia).

GOSPEL CANTICLE

Luke 2:29-32

Christ is the light of the nations and the glory of Israel

Lord, now you let your servant go in peace;
your word has been fulfilled:

my own eyes have seen the salvation
which you have prepared in the sight
of every people:
a light to reveal you to the nations
and the glory of your people Israel.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Ant. Protect us, Lord, as we stay awake; watch over us as we
sleep; that, awake, we may keep watch with Christ, and,
asleep, rest in his peace
(alleluia).

Prayer

Let us pray:

Lord,
we beg you to visit this house
and banish from it
all the deadly power of the enemy.
May your holy angels dwell here
to keep us in peace,
and may your blessing be upon us always.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

CONCLUSION

The blessing is said even in individual recitation.

May the all-powerful Lord grant us
a restful night and a peaceful death.

Amen.

**ANTIPHONS IN HONOR OF
THE BLESSED VIRGIN**

Then one of the antiphons in honor of Mary is said.

Other hymns approved by the conference of bishops may be used.

Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy,
our life, our sweetness, and our hope.

To you do we cry,
poor banished children of Eve.
To you do we send up our sighs
mourning and weeping in this vale of tears.
Turn then, most gracious advocate,
your eyes of mercy toward us,
and after this exile
show us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus.
O clement, O loving,
O sweet Virgin Mary.

Or:

Loving mother of the Redeemer,
gate of heaven, star of the sea,
assist your people who have fallen
yet strive to rise again.
To the wonderment of nature
you bore your Creator,
yet remained a virgin as before.
You who received Gabriel's joyful greeting,
have pity on us poor sinners.

Or:

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with you!
Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death.

Or:

*Alma Redemptoris Mater,
quae pervia caeli
porta manes, et stella maris,
succurre cadenti, surgere qui curat, populo:
tu quae genuisti,
natura mirante, tuum sanctum Genitorem,
Virgo prius ac posterius, Gabrielis ab ore
sumens illud Ave, peccatorum miserere.*

Or:

*Ave, Regina caelorum,
ave, Domina angelorum,
salve, radix, salve, porta,
ex qua mundo lux est orta.
Gaude, Virgo gloriosa,
super omnes speciosa;
vale, o valde decora,
et pro nobis Christum exora.*

Or:

*Salve, Regina, mater misericordiae;
vita, dulcedo et spes nostra, salve.
Ad te clamamus, exsules filii Evae.
Ad te suspiramus, gementes et flentes
in hac lacrimarum valle.*

*Eia ergo, advocata nostra,
illos tuos misericordes oculos
ad nos converte.*

*Et Iesum, benedictum fructum ventris tui,
nobis post hoc exsilium ostende.*

O clemens, o pia, o dulcis Virgo Maria.

The Liturgy of the Hours

Stigmatine Proper

Friday after the Second Sunday of Easter

THE SACRED STIGMATA OF OUR LORD

JESUS CHRIST

FEAST

Invitatory

Ant. Come, let us adore Christ the Lord, suffering
from his five wounds. Alleluia.

Invitatory psalm, as in the Ordinary.

Office of Readings

HYMN

O Christ, my Jesus, truly God,
Thus hanging from a guilty Wood
Innocently for our Sin!

Here let Thy Grace to me begin;
Do not, though sinful I have been,
Refuse to let me love Thee.

Prostrate at Thy redeeming Tree,
To bleeding Feet so dear to me
I press my lips to soothe them.

Good Jesus, O! Do not condemn,
But from Thy Cross of requiem
My poor heart with Thine impale.

Thy Hands with awesome wounds to nail!
Thy Heart enpurpled to unveil!
- O! How deep and vast this Sign.

Beyond all loves, my love for Thine
 Outpouring Blood to run with mine
 - Quench my thirst, my heart's desire.

Please cleanse me, Thou, my Lord on fire,
 For Thine I am, whole and entire;
 Tearful prayers to Thee ascend.

May Thy unconquered Hands defend
 And shelter me, Christ, my true friend:
 Thy weak son from danger keep.

O! Jesus, born Thy Limbs to steep
 And pierced flesh of Thine, heart-deep,
 In Thy scarlet Blood unbound.

O! Grant that on my heart be found
 Thy Name inscribed and, fasten'd round,
 Chains to last forever. Amen.

Melody: *Christe Iesu*

Music: *Christe Iesu*, ?,
 Giuseppe Stofella, C.S.S., 1885-1966
 Text: Giuseppe Ermanno, ?,
 Translator: Joseph Fellin, C.S.S.,
 1921-2007

Or:

Refrain:

Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim,
 Till all the world adore his sacred name.

Come, Christians, follow where our captain trod,
 Our King victorious, Christ, the Son of God.

Refrain

Led on their way by his triumphant sign,
The hosts of God in conquering ranks combine.

Refrain

All new-born soldiers of the Crucified
Bear on their brows the seal of him who died.

Refrain

O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,
As thou has promised, draw us all to thee.

Refrain

So shall our song of triumph ever be:
Praise to the Crucified for victory!

Refrain

Melody: CRUCIFER
10.10 with refrain

Music:
George William Kitchin, 1827- 1912
Michael Robert Newbolt, 1874-1956
Text: Sydney Hugo Nicholson, 1875-1947

PSALMODY

Ant. 1 May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ! Alleluia.

Psalm 22

God hears the suffering of his Holy One

Jesus cried with a loud voice: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

(Matthew 27:46)

I

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
You are far from my plea and the cry of my distress.
O my God, I call by day and you give no reply;
I call by night and I find no peace.

Yet you, O God, are holy,
enthroned on the praises of Israel.
In you our fathers put their trust;
they trusted and you set them free.
When they cried to you, they escaped.
In you they trusted and never in vain.

But I am a worm and no man,
scorned by men, despised by the people.
All who see me deride me.
They curl their lips, they toss their heads.
"He trusted in the Lord, let him save him;
let him release him if this is his friend."

Yes, it was you who took me from the womb,
entrusted me to my mother's breast.
To you I was committed from my birth,
from my mother's womb you have been my God.
Do not leave me alone in my distress;
come close, there is none else to help.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Ant. May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ! Alleluia.

Ant. 2 They have pierced my hands and my feet, I can count all my bones.
Alleluia.

II

Many bulls have surrounded me,
fierce bulls of Bashan close me in.

Against me they open wide their jaws,
like lions, rending and roaring.

Like water I am poured out,
disjointed are all my bones.
My heart has become like wax,
it is melted within my breast.

Parched as burnt clay is my throat,
my tongue cleaves to my jaws.
Many dogs have surrounded me,
a band of the wicked beset me.
They tear holes in my hands and my feet
and lay me in the dust of death.

I can count every one of my bones.
These people stare at me and gloat;
they divide my clothing among them.
They cast lots for my robe.

O Lord, do not leave me alone,
my strength, make haste to help me!
Rescue my soul from the sword,
my life from the grip of these dogs.

Save my life from the jaws of these lions,
my poor soul from the horns of these oxen.

I will tell of your name to my brethren
and praise you where they are assembled.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

- Ant. They have pierced my hands and my feet, I can count all my bones.
Alleluia.
- Ant. 3 Why do questions arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet, that
it is I myself. Alleluia.

III

"You, who fear the Lord, give him praise;
all sons of Jacob, give him glory.
Revere him, Israel's sons.

For he has never despised
nor scorned the poverty of the poor.
From him he has not hidden his face,
but he heard the poor man when he cried."

You are my praise in the great assembly.
My vows I will pay before those who fear him.
The poor shall eat and shall have their fill.
They shall praise the Lord, those who seek him.
May their hearts live for ever and ever!

All the earth shall remember and return to the Lord;
all families of the nations worship before him
for the kingdom is the Lord's; he is ruler of the nations.
They shall worship him, all the mighty of the earth;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust.

And my soul shall live for him, my children serve him.
They shall tell of the Lord to generations yet to come,
declare his faithfulness to peoples yet unborn:
"These things the Lord has done."

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm-prayer

Father, when your Son was handed over to torture and seemed abandoned by you, he cried out to you from the cross and death was destroyed, life was restored. By his death and resurrection, may we see the day when the poor man is saved, the downtrodden is lifted up and the chains that bind people are broken. United to the thanks that Christ gives you, your Church will sing your praises.

Ant. Why do questions arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Alleluia.

He was wounded for our sins. Alleluia.

- By his stripes we were healed. Alleluia.

FIRST READING

From the first letter of the apostle Peter

Peter 1:3-9, 18-21;

2:4-5, 7-10, 21-25

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy gave us new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you who by the power of God are safeguarded through faith, to a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the final time. In this you rejoice, although now for a little while you may have to suffer the various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that is perishable even though tested by fire, may prove to be for praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Although you have not seen him you love him; and though you do not see him now yet believe in him, you rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, as you attain the goal of [your] faith, the salvation of your souls.

Realize that you were ransomed from your futile conduct, handed on by your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold but with the precious blood of Christ as a spotless unblemished lamb. He was known before the foundation of the world but revealed in the final time for you, who through him believe in God who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Come to him, a living stone, rejected by human beings but chosen and precious in the sight of God, and, like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Therefore, its value is for you who have faith, but for those without faith:

"The stone which the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone,"

and

"A stone that will make people stumble,
and a rock that will make them fall."

They stumble by disobeying the word, as is their destiny.

But you are "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own, so that you may announce the praises" of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Once you were "no people"
but now you are God's people;
you "had not received mercy"
but now you have received mercy.

For this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in his footsteps.

"He committed no sin,
and no deceit was found in his mouth."

When he was insulted, he returned no insult; when he suffered, he did not threaten; instead, he handed himself over to the one who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body upon the cross, so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. For you had gone astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

RESPONSORY

Hebrews 9:12, 26

He entered once for all into the sanctuary, not with the blood of goats and calves but with his own blood,

- thus obtaining eternal redemption. Alleluia.

But now once for all he has appeared at the end of the ages to take away sin by his sacrifice,

- thus obtaining eternal redemption. Alleluia.

SECOND READING

From a sermon on the Song of Songs by Saint Bernard, abbot

(*Sermo 61, 3-5: Opera Omnia, 2, 150-151*)

Where sin abounded, grace has overflowed

Where can the weak find a place of firm security and peace, except in the wounds of the Savior? Indeed, the more secure is my place there the more he can do to help me. The world rages, the flesh is heavy, and the devil lays his snares, but I do not fall, for my feet are planted on firm rock. I may have sinned gravely. My conscience would be distressed, but it would not be in turmoil, for I would recall the wounds of the Lord: *he was wounded for our iniquities*. What sin is there so deadly that I cannot be pardoned by the death of Christ? And so if I bear in mind this strong, effective remedy, I can never again be terrified by the malignancy of sin.

Surely the man who said: *my sin is too great to merit pardon*, was wrong. He was speaking as though he were not a member of Christ and had no share in his merits, so that he could claim them as his own, as a member of the body can claim what belongs to the head. As for me, what can I appropriate that I lack from the heart of the Lord who abounds in mercy? They pierced his hands and feet and opened his side with a spear. Through the openings of these wounds I may drink *honey from the rock and oil from the hardest stone* that is, *I may taste and see that the Lord is sweet*.

He was thinking thoughts of peace, and I did not know it, *for who knows the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?* But the piercing nail has become a key to unlock the door, that I may see the good will of the Lord. And what can I see as I look through the hole? Both the nail and the wound cry out that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. *The sword pierced his soul and came close to his heart*, so that he might be able to feel compassion for me in my weakness.

Through these sacred wounds we can see the secret of his heart, the great mystery of love, *the sincerity of his mercy with which he visited us from on high*. Where have your love, your mercy, your compassion shone out more luminously than in your wounds, sweet, gentle Lord of mercy? More mercy than this no one has than that he lay down his life for those who are doomed to death.

My merit comes from his mercy; for I do not lack merit so long as he does not lack pity. And if the Lord's mercies are many, then I am rich in merits. For even if I am aware of many sins, what does it matter? *Where sin abounded grace has overflowed.* And if *the Lord's mercies are from all ages for ever*, I too will *sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever*. Will I not sing of my own righteousness? No, *Lord I shall be mindful only of your justice*. Yet that too is my own; for God has made you my righteousness.

RESPONSORY

Peter 3:18-22

For Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the sake of the unrighteous, that he might lead you to God.

- Put to death in the flesh, he was brought to life in the spirit. Alleluia.

Jesus Christ has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God.

- Put to death in the flesh, he was brought to life in the spirit. Alleluia.

alternate:

From a sermon by Saint Gaspar Bertoni, priest and founder.

(Pagine di Vita Cristiana, April 3, 1801)

The Passion

An invitation to consider the Passion of Jesus Christ more closely

The upright perishes and no one cares. *(Is 57:1)*

Jesus, the just man, dies, overwhelmed by a sea of suffering. Yet, the faces of the bystanders show no sign; their hearts are not broken; they are not moved in the least. No one cries.

The women who are there, who may have so grieved at the deaths of their own children, their husbands or their loved ones, seem unaffected. The men, who may have extended such sympathy at the misfortune of their friends, their fellow citizens - cannot such as these shed a tear, or emit some feeling of sorrow for Christ? He himself laments for your conduct: "I had hoped for sympathy, but in vain; there was no one to console me." *(Ps 69:20)*

Do you have any understanding what He has suffered? You know by faith that He had to languish on the cross. Do you not understand how much He suffered "for us and for our salvation?"

We need to scale this hill, to that time when Jesus was about to die, overwhelmed by the anguish of approaching death. We notice that even unthinking nature has reacted out of pity for the pain He endured: the sun hid its face; the rocks split asunder; the earth trembled on its hinges. What, then, is the source of your indifference?

The Holy Spirit responds: the good man perishes and no one cares. There is no reflection, and therefore no one weeps. Even the Philosopher teaches that an object that is truly piteous in itself cannot excite the compassion of others, unless this object is close to them. When considering the miseries of others who are removed from us in time and space, we observe that either we are not moved at all, or that their situation only vaguely touches our hearts. Therefore, my task is to bring the Passion of Jesus near to you, not only to your thoughts, but to present it before your very eyes. It is up to me now to show the Passion in itself, which is truly the most lamentable of all, that it might become the object of your tender and genuine compassion.

Invocation before the Cross

O Holy Cross, still warm from the Blood of the Just Man! O Cross, that I am called to adore! You alone were considered worthy to bear the august Victim who was sacrificed on you for our sins. I know very well that you are capable of arousing many and varied sentiments in the hearts of faithful Christians. You have become the standard of their faith, the secure guide of their lives, the foundation of their hopes, the comfort for their miseries, the desire of the just, and the terror of hell. But I ask now, may the sight of you arouse in our hearts a profound sadness and a sorrow for those pains that you inflicted on our Jesus, when, for our love, He embraced you.

Therefore, show to those devoutly looking at you the splintered holes that those same nails made in you which had first lacerated the feet and the hands of Jesus. Show the place where His head reclined, when their loving Lord expired; who was even more, their faithful Friend, their most tender Brother, their most gentle and lovable Spouse. Finally, show the Blood which was shed out of great love for them, and is still evident on you as red and purple streaks. May the impression you make on them change them so

that they might be joined to the voice of this eloquent Blood - as the Apostle calls it - so that we might be filled with a deep sense of sorrow. I pray that I may see this, even though my words may not be able to bring it about.

RESPONSORY

Glorious cross, from whose branches hang the price of our liberty;

- through you the world is redeemed with the blood of Christ, alleluia.

Hail, cross, consecrated by the body of the Lord; your arms are as radiant as jewels;

- through you the world is redeemed with the blood of Christ, alleluia.

HYMN, *Te Deum*

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Let us pray...

Ever merciful God, you gave new life to our lost sinful human nature by the passion of your only begotten Son and the shedding of his blood through his five wounds. Grant that we who venerate his wounds on earth may enjoy the fruits of his precious blood in heaven. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.

- Amen.

Conclusion, as in the Ordinary.

MORNING PRAYER

HYMN

Hail! Savior from Whose Side did flow
A love whose strength we cannot know;
Crimson'd water, full of Grace.

Within that Wound my life I place,
Allow me to behold Thy Face,
Be the refuge of my need.

Hail pierced Side - my sinful deed -
Which yet in mercy did concede
Endless waves of Heav'nly aid.

Of Thy shed Blood my life is made;
The souls of men it would pervade;
Heart unveiled - to all is free.

Oh! How complete this taste of Thee,
Oh! Jesus Christ, my Lord to me,
Heart and spirit partaking.

By Thy love, I self forsaking,
All thirst for other objects slaking,
Life for love to Thee confide.

Within that Wound let me reside,
And place my human heart inside;
Never let me stray from Thee,

That thus I may be warmed by Thee,
In peace I may be soothed by Thee;
Grant Thy love my soul may keep.

Oh! Jesus, born Thy limbs to steep
And pierced flesh of Thine, heart-deep,
In Thy scarlet Blood unbound.

Oh! Grant that on my heart be found
Thy Name inscribed, and fasten'd round,
Chains to last forever. Amen.

Melody:

Salve Latus Salvatoris

Music:

Salve Latus Salvatoris, ca. 1935

Giuseppe Stofella, C.S.S., 1885-1966

Text: Giuseppe Ermanno, ?,

Translator: Joseph Fellin, C.S.S., 1921-2007

Or:

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
 The strife is o'er, the battle done;
 Now is the victor's triumph won:
 O let the song of praise be sung.
 Alleluia.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
 On the third morn he rose again,
 Glorious in majesty to reign:
 O let us swell the joyful strain:
 Alleluia!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
 O risen Lord, all praise to thee,
 Who from our sin has set us free,
 That we may live eternally:
 Alleluia!

Melody: Victory 888
 with Alleluia

Music: G. P. da Palestrina, 1588,
 adapted with alleluias by
 W. H. Monk, 1861
 Text: Cologne, 1695
 Translator: Francis Pott, 1861, alt.

PSALMODY

Ant. 1 Jesus stood in their midst and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Alleluia.

Psalm 51

O God, have mercy on me

Your inmost being must be renewed, and you must put on the new man
 (Ephesians 4:23-24).

Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.
In your compassion blot out my offense.
O wash me more and more from my guilt
and cleanse me from my sin.

My offenses truly I know them;
my sin is always before me.
Against you, you alone, have I sinned;
what is evil in your sight I have done.

That you may be justified when you give sentence
and be without reproach when you judge.
O see, in guilt I was born,
a sinner was I conceived.

Indeed you love truth in the heart;
then in the secret of my heart teach me wisdom.
O purify me, then I shall be clean;
O wash me, I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me hear rejoicing and gladness,
that the bones you have crushed may revive.
From my sins turn away your face
and blot out all my guilt.

A pure heart create for me, O God,
put a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence,
nor deprive me of your holy spirit.

Give me again the joy of your help;
with a spirit of fervor sustain me,
that I may teach transgressors your ways
and sinners may return to you.

O rescue me, God, my helper,
and my tongue shall ring out your goodness.
O Lord, open my lips
and my mouth shall declare your praise.

For in sacrifice you take no delight,
 burnt offering from me you would refuse,
 my sacrifice, a contrite spirit.
 A humbled, contrite heart you will not spurn.

In your goodness, show favor to Zion:
 rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
 Then you will be pleased with lawful sacrifice,
 holocausts offered on your altar.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
 - as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm-prayer

Father, he who knew no sin was made sin for us, to save us and restore us to your friendship. Look upon our contrite heart and afflicted spirit and heal our troubled conscience, so that in the joy and strength of the Holy Spirit we may proclaim your praise and glory before all the nations.

Ant. Jesus stood in their midst and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Alleluia.

Ant. 2 Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe. Alleluia.

Canticle

Al Habakkuk 3:2-4, 13a, 15-19

God comes to judge

Lift up your heads for your redemption is at hand
 (Luke 21:28).

O Lord, I have heard your renown,
 and feared, O Lord, your work.
 In the course of the years revive it,
 in the course of the years make it known;
 in your wrath remember compassion!

God comes from Teman,
the Holy One from Mount Paran.
Covered are the heavens with his glory,
and with his praise the earth is filled.

His splendor spreads like the light;
rays shine forth from beside him,
where his power is concealed.
You come forth to save your people,
O Lord, to save your anointed one.

You tread the sea with your steeds
amid the churning of the deep waters.
I hear, and my body trembles;
at the sound, my lips quiver.

Decay invades my bones,
my legs tremble beneath me.
I await the day of distress
that will come upon the people who attack us.

For though the fig tree blossom not
nor fruit be on the vines,
though the yield of the olive fail
and the terraces produce no nourishment,
though the flocks disappear from the fold
and there be no herd in the stalls,
yet will I rejoice in the Lord
and exult in my saving God.

God, my Lord, is my strength;
he makes my feet swift as those of hinds
and enables me to go upon the heights.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Ant. Put you finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe. Alleluia.

Ant. 3 Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed. Alleluia.

Psalm 147: 12-20

The restoration of Jerusalem

Come, I will show you the bride of the Lamb
(Revelation 21:9).

O praise the Lord, Jerusalem!
Zion, praise your God!

He has strengthened the bars of your gates,
he has blessed the children within you.
He established peace on your borders,
he feeds you with finest wheat.

He sends out his word to the earth,
and swiftly runs his command.
He showers down snow white as wool,
he scatters hoar-frost like ashes.

He hurls down hailstones like crumbs.
The waters are frozen at his touch;
he sends forth his word and it melts them:
at the breath of his mouth the waters flow.

He makes his word known to Jacob,
to Israel his laws and decrees.
He has not dealt thus with other nations;
he has not taught them his decrees.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm-prayer

Lord, you established peace within the borders of Jerusalem. Give the fullness of peace now to your faithful people. May peace rule us in this life and possess us in eternal life. You are about to fill us with the best of wheat; grant that what we see dimly now as in a mirror we may come to perceive clearly in the brightness of your truth.

Ant. Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed. Alleluia.

READING

Colossians 1:12-14, 19-20

We give thanks to the Father, who has made you fit to share in the inheritance of the holy ones in light. He delivered us from the power of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. For in him all the fullness was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile all things for him, making peace by the blood of his cross [through him], whether on earth or those in heaven.

RESPONSORY

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.
Alleluia, alleluia.

- We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.
Alleluia, alleluia.

Because by your cross you have redeemed the world.
- Alleluia, alleluia.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

- We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you. Alleluia, alleluia.

CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH

Ant. Jesus continues to offer himself for us, interceding as our advocate; having sacrificed himself on the cross he dies no more, but bearing the trophies of his passion, lives immortal. Alleluia.

INTERCESSIONS

Let us pray to our Redeemer, who saved us on the cross, and who chose to retain in his glorious body the Sacred Stigmata, the sign of his immense love for us:

By your wounds, save us, O Lord.

Jesus, Son of God, you chose to take on human flesh and redeem us by your passion,

- give us the perseverance to fulfill your will.

Jesus, our Redeemer, lifted high upon the cross you desire to draw all things to yourself,

- bring our hearts to you.

Jesus, our Savior, you preserved the five wounds in glorious body,

- by accepting our daily cross, may we happily come to you.

Jesus, our Advocate before the Father,

- make us worthy ministers of your mercy.

May your Mother, the sorrowful Virgin, intercede for us,

- so that as members of the Church we may ever more faithfully live our consecration to you.

Our Father ...

Prayer

Ever merciful God, you gave new life to our lost sinful human nature by the passion of your only-begotten Son and the shedding of his blood through his five wounds. Grant that we who venerate his wounds on earth may enjoy the fruits of his precious blood in heaven. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.

- Amen.

Conclusion, as in the Ordinary.

Daytime Prayer

Mid-Morning

Ant. The son of Man has come to give his life as a ransom for many. Alleluia.

READING

Isaiah 53:2b-4

There was in him no stately bearing to make us look at him,
 nor appearance that would attract us to him.
 He was spurned and avoided by men, a man of suffering, accustomed to infirmity,
 One of those from whom men hide their faces,
 spurned, and we held him in no esteem.
 Yet it was our infirmities that he bore,
 our sufferings that he endured,
 While we thought of him as stricken,
 as one smitten by God and afflicted.

We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you. Alleluia.

– By your cross we have redeemed the world. Alleluia.

Prayer, as in Morning Prayer. Conclusion, as in the Ordinary.

Midday

Ant. Continually we carry about in our bodies the death of Jesus, so that in our bodies the life of Jesus may also be revealed. Alleluia.

READING

Colossians 3:1-3

If then you were raised with Christ, seek what is above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Think of what is above, not of what is on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Christ died for our sins, alleluia;

- to bring us to the Father, Alleluia.

Prayer, as in Morning Prayer. Conclusion, as in the Ordinary

Mid-Afternoon

Ant. Jesus Christ loved us and has cleansed us from every sin by his blood. Alleluia.

READING

Hebrews 5:7-9

In the days when Jesus was in the flesh, he offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

He chose to shed his own blood. Alleluia.

- And opened not his mouth. Alleluia.

Prayer, as in Morning Prayer. Conclusion, as in the Ordinary.

Evening Prayer**HYMN**

Hail, holy Wounds of Jesus, hail,
Sweet pledges of the saving Rood,
Whence flow the streams that never fail,
The purple streams of His dear Blood.

Brighter than brightest stars ye show,
Than sweetest rose your scent more rare,
No Indian gem may match your glow,
No honey's taste with yours compare.

Portals ye are to that dear home
Wherein our wearied souls may hide,
Whereto no angry foe can come,
The Heart of Jesus crucified.

What countless stripes our Jesus bore,
All naked left in Pilate's hall!
From His torn flesh how red a shower
Did 'round His sacred person fall!

His beauteous brow, oh, shame and grief,
 By the sharp thorny crown is riven;
 Through hands and feet, without relief,
 The cruel nails are rudely driven.

But when for our poor sakes He died,
 A willing Priest by love subdued,
 The soldier's lance transfixed His side,
 Forth flowed the Water and the Blood.

In full atonement of our guilt,
 Careless of Self, the Savior trod,
 E'en till His Heart's best Blood was spilt,
 The wine-press of the wrath of God.

Come, bathe you in the healing flood,
 All ye who mourn, by sin oppressed;
 Your only hope is Jesus' Blood,
 His Sacred Heart your only rest.

All praise to Him, the Eternal Son,
 At God's right hand enthroned above,
 Whose Blood our full redemption won,
 Whose Spirit seals the gift of love.

Amen.

Melody: *Salvete,
 Christi vulnera*

Music:
Salvete, Christi vulnera, ca., 1935
 Giuseppe Stofella, C.S.S., 1885-1966
 Translator: Joseph Fellin, C.S.S., 1921-2007

Or:

Antiphon

Keep in mind that Jesus Christ has died for us
 and is risen from the dead.

He is our saving Lord.

He is joy for all ages.

If we die with the Lord,
we shall live with the Lord.

Antiphon

If we endure with the Lord,
we shall reign with the Lord.

Antiphon

In him all our sorrow,
in him all our joy.

Antiphon

In him hope of glory,
in him all our love.

Antiphon

In him our redemption,
in him all our grace.

Antiphon

In him our salvation,
in him all our peace.

Antiphon

Melody: Keep in Mind

Music: Lucien Deiss, 1965

Text: Lucien Deiss, 1965

PSALMODY

Ant. 1 Christ loved us and handed himself over for us as a sacrificial offering to God.
Alleluia.

Psalm 141:1-9

A prayer when in danger

An angel stood before the face of God, thurible in hand. The fragrant incense soaring aloft was the prayer of God's people on earth.

(Revelation 8:4)

I have called to you, Lord; hasten to help me!
Hear my voice when I cry to you.
Let my prayer arise before you like incense,
the raising of my hands like an evening oblation.

Set, O Lord, a guard over my mouth;
keep watch at the door of my lips!
Do not turn my heart to things that are wrong,
to evil deeds with men who are sinners.

Never allow me to share in the feasting.
If a good man strikes or reproves me it is kindness;
but let the oil of the wicked not anoint my head.
Let my prayer be ever against their malice.

Their princes were thrown down by the side of the rock;
then they understood that my words were kind.
As a millstone is shattered to pieces on the ground,
so their bones were strewn at the mouth of the grave.

To you, Lord God, my eyes are turned:
in you I take refuge; spare my soul!
From the trap they have laid for me keep me safe:
keep me from the snares of those who do evil.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm-prayer

Lord, from the rising of the sun to its setting your name is worthy of all praise. Let our prayer come like incense before you. May the lifting up of our hands be as an evening sacrifice acceptable to you, Lord our God.

Ant. Christ loved us and handed himself over for us as a sacrificial offering to God.
Alleluia.

Ant. Christ was wounded for our sins; by his stripes we were healed. Alleluia.

Psalm 142

You, Lord, are my refuge

What is written in this psalm was fulfilled in our Lord's passion
(Saint Hilary)

With all my voice I cry to the Lord,
with all my voice I entreat the Lord.
I pour out my trouble before him;
I tell him all my distress-
while my spirit faints within me.
But you, O Lord, know my path.

On the way where I shall walk
they have hidden a snare to entrap me.
Look on my right and see:
there is not one who takes my part.
I have no means of escape,
not one who cares for my soul.

I cry to you, O Lord.
I have said: "You are my refuge,
all I have left in the land of the living."
Listen then to my cry
for I am in the depths of distress.

Rescue me from those who pursue me
as yours or for they are stronger than I.

Bring my soul out of this prison
and then I shall praise your name.
Around me the just will assemble
because of your goodness to me.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm-prayer

Lord, we humbly ask for your goodness. May you help us to hope in you, and give us a share with your chosen ones in the land of the living.

Ant. Christ was wounded for our sins; by his stripes we were healed. Alleluia.

Ant. 3 Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and honor, glory and blessing! Alleluia.

Canticle

Revelation 4:11; 5:9, 10, 12

Redemption hymn

Worthy are you, Lord our God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things;
because of your will they came to be
and were created.

Worthy are you to receive the scroll
and to break open its seals,
for you were slain and with your blood
you purchased for God
those from every tribe and tongue,
people and nation.

You made them a kingdom and priests
for our God,
and they will reign on earth.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain
to receive power and riches, wisdom and strength,
honor and glory and blessing.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Ant. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and honor, glory and blessing! Alleluia

READING

Hebrews 9:11-12

When Christ came as high priest of the good things which have come to be, he entered once for all into the sanctuary, passing through the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made by hands, that is, not belonging to this creation. He entered, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, and achieved eternal redemption.

RESPONSORY

see Revelation 5:9

O Lord, you alone are worthy to take the book and break open its seals. Alleluia, alleluia.

- O Lord, you alone are worthy to take the book and break open its seals. Alleluia, alleluia.

Because you have ransomed us for God with your blood.

- Alleluia, alleluia.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

- O Lord, you alone are worthy to take the book and break open its seals. Alleluia, alleluia.

CANTICLE OF MARY

Ant. Lord, you were slain and with your blood you purchased for God those from every tribe and tongue, people and nation. You made them a kingdom of priests for our God. Alleluia.

INTERCESSIONS

Let us turn to Jesus our Savior who redeemed us through his death and resurrection:

Lord Jesus, have mercy on us!

Lifted high upon the cross, your pierced heart gave birth to the Church, your bride,

- may she be holy and untainted.

You chose the cross as the tree of life,

- pour forth many gifts on our Congregation, which takes its name from your Sacred Stigmata.

While on the cross you showed mercy to the thief who repented,

- have mercy on us sinners.

As our peace and our reconciliation, you have united us to the new man.

- show us the way to the Father.

You are life and resurrection,

- grant our deceased confreres eternal life.

Our Father...**Prayer**

Ever merciful God, you gave new life to our lost sinful human nature by the passion of your only-begotten Son and the shedding of his blood through his five wounds. Grant that we who venerate his wounds on earth may enjoy the fruits of his precious blood in heaven. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.

Amen.

Conclusion, as in the Ordinary.

JANUARY 23**THE HOLY SPOUSES, MARY AND JOSEPH**

FEAST

Invitatory

Ant. As we celebrate the Espousals of the Blessed Virgin Mary with Saint Joseph, let us adore Christ the Lord.

Invitatory psalm, as in the Ordinary.

Office of Readings**HYMN**

Oh! Word begotten of the Father on earth;
Oh! Of Thy people powerful Redeemer;
Grant us, we pray Thee, by Thy Grace a rebirth
King of Heavens.

A quick'ning Spirit o'er-shadowed the land;
Enlivening rain from the heavens was sent;
A sweet Flame of Love from the almighty Hand
Enters in Mary.

Only of Thee will Mary be the Mother,
Chaste as the lily, nature's greatest treasure;
In her chaste womb, unknown to any other,
Thou art engendered.

A thoughtful veil around the gracious maiden
Safeguards her name from ignorance and malice;
While Joseph with her guardianship is laden
Blessed involvement.

Eternal praise be to the mighty Godhead
Who, by the gift of Mary and Saint Joseph,
To our poor lives have, by their merits, added
Gifts of divine peace. Amen.

Melody: *Eia Festivis*

Music:

Eia Festivis, ca. 1935,

Giuseppe Stofella, C.S.S., 1885-1966

Text: Andrea Sterza, C.S.S., 1847-1898

Translator: Joseph Fellin, C.S.S., 1921-2007

Or:

Let all mortal flesh keep silence,
And with fear and trembling stand;
Render nothing earthly-minded,
For with blessing in his hand
Christ our Lord to earth descends now,
Our full homage to demand.

King of Kings, yet born of Mary,
As of old on earth he stood,
Lord of lords in human vesture,
In the Body and the Blood
He will give to all the faithful
His own self for heav'nly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven
Spreads its vanguard on the way,
As the Light of light descending
From the realms of endless day,
That the pow'rs of hell may vanquish
As the darkness clears away.

At his feet the six-winged seraph,
Cherubim with sleepless eye,
Veil their faces to the Presence,
As with ceaseless voice they cry,
"Alleluia, alleluia,
Alleluia, Lord, most high!"

Melody: Picardy 87.87.87

Music:

Melody from *Chansons Populaires
des Provinces de France*, 1860

Text: Liturgy of Saint James, paraphrased
by Gerard Moultrie, 1864, alt.

Or:

Joseph of Nazareth, you are the man
Last in the line that rose from David, King
Down through the royal generations ran,
And ends with Jesus Christ.

Gabriel from heaven came to Mary's side,
Came with the joyful promise of a King,
Came to you also, Joseph, to confide
That God conceived this child.

Guardian and foster-father of the Christ,
Honor to you, so chosen by our God!
Husband of Virgin Mary, you are first
To show us Christian love.

Melody: Joseph of Nazareth

Music: Stephen Somerville, 1971

Text: Stephen Somerville, 1972

PSALMODY

Ant. 1 The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary; and she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Psalm 19a

Christ, bridegroom of the Church

Defer to one another out of reverence for Christ

(Ephesians 5:21)

The heavens proclaim the glory of God
and the firmament shows forth the work of his hands.
Day unto day takes up the story
and night unto night makes known the message.

No speech, no word, no voice is heard
yet their span extends through all the earth,
their words to the utmost bounds of the world.

There he has placed a tent for the sun;
it comes forth like a bridegroom coming from his tent,
rejoices like a champion to run its course.

At the end of the sky is the rising of the sun;
to the furthest end of the sky is its course.
There is nothing concealed from its burning heat.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm-prayer

To enlighten the world, Father, you sent us your Word as the sun of truth and justice shining upon mankind. Illumine our eyes that we may discern your glory in the many works of your hand.

Ant. The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary; and she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Ant. 2 Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit.

Psalm 24

Christ, the King of glory

Christ opened heaven for us in the manhood he assumed

(Saint Ireneus)

The Lord's is the earth and its fullness,
the world and all its peoples.
It is he who set it on the seas;
on the waters he made it firm.

Who shall climb the mountain of the Lord?
Who shall stand in his holy place?
The man with clean hands and pure heart,
who desires not worthless things,
who has not sworn so as to deceive his neighbor.

He shall receive blessings from the Lord
and reward from the God who saves him.
Such are the men who seek him,
seek the face of the God of Jacob.

O gates, lift high your heads;
grow higher, ancient doors.
Let him enter, the king of glory!

Who is the king of glory?
The Lord, the mighty, the valiant,
the Lord, the valiant in war.

O gates, lift high your heads;
grow higher, ancient doors.
Let him enter, the king of glory!

Who is he, the king of glory?
He, the Lord of armies,
He is the king of glory.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm-prayer

King of glory, Lord of power and might, cleanse our hearts from all sin, preserve the innocence of our hands, and keep our minds from vanity, so that we may deserve your blessing in your holy place.

Ant. Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit.

Ant. 3 The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said: It is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in Mary.

Psalm 45: 2-10

The marriage of the king

The Bridegroom is here; go out and welcome him

(Matthew 25:6)

My heart overflows with noble words.

To the king I must speak the song I have made;
my tongue is nimble as the pen of a skillful scribe.

You are the fairest of the children of men
and graciousness is poured upon your lips:
because God has blessed you evermore.

O mighty one, gird your sword upon your thigh;
in splendor and state, ride on in triumph
for the cause of truth and goodness and right.
Take aim with your bow in your dread right hand.

Your arrows are sharp: peoples fall beneath you.
The foes of the king fall down and lose heart.

Your throne, O God, shall endure for ever.
A scepter of justice is the scepter of your kingdom.
Your love is for justice; your hatred for evil.
Therefore God, your God, has anointed you
with the oil of gladness above other kings:
your robes are fragrant with aloes and myrrh.
From the ivory palace you are greeted with music.
The daughters of kings are among your loved ones.
On your right stands the queen in gold of Ophir.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm-prayer

When you took on flesh, Lord Jesus, you made a marriage of mankind with God. Help us to be faithful to your word and endure our exile bravely, until we are called to the heavenly marriage feast, to which the Virgin Mary, exemplar of your Church, has preceded us.

Ant. The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said: It is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in Mary.

Blessed are they who hear the word of God,

-- and act upon it.

FIRST READING

From the book of the prophet Isaiah

62: 1-12

The Virgin birth brings joy to the whole world

For Zion's sake I will not be silent,
for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet,
Until her vindication shines forth like the dawn
and her victory like a burning torch.

Nations shall behold your vindication,
and all kings your glory;
You shall be called by a new name
pronounced by the mouth of the Lord.
You shall be a glorious crown in the hand of the Lord,
a royal diadem held by your God.

No more shall men call you "Forsaken,"
or your land "Desolate,"
But you shall be called "My Delight,"
and your land "Espoused."
For the Lord delights in you,
and makes your land his spouse.

As a young man marries a virgin,
your Builder shall marry you;
And as a bridegroom rejoices in his bride
so shall your God rejoice in you.

Upon your walls, O Jerusalem,
I have stationed watchmen;
Never, by day or by night,
shall they be silent.

O you who are to remind the Lord,
take no rest
And give no rest to him,
until he re-establishes Jerusalem
And makes of it
the pride of the earth.

The Lord has sworn by his right hand
and by his mighty arm:

No more will I give your grain
as food to your enemies;
Nor shall foreigners drink your wine,
for which you toiled.
But you who harvest the grain shall eat it,
and you shall praise the Lord;

You who gather the grapes shall drink the wine
in the courts of my sanctuary.
Pass through, pass through the gates,
prepare the way for the people;
Build up, build up the highway,
clear it of stones,
raise up a standard over the nations.

See, the Lord proclaims
to the ends of the earth:
Say to daughter Zion,
your savior comes!

Here is his reward with him,
his recompense before him.
They shall be called the holy people,
the redeemed of the Lord,
And you shall be called "Frequented,"
a city that is not forsaken.

RESPONSORY**Mt 1:18, 24**

Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but, before they lived together,

– She was found with child through the Holy Spirit.

When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home.

-- She was found with child through the Holy Spirit.

SECOND READING

From a commentary on Luke by Saint Ambrose, bishop

(Lib 2, 4-7A; CCL 14; 32-33)

The evangelists have divided their tasks well. Saint Matthew reveals that Joseph was told by the angel not to reject Mary. The evangelist Luke testifies that they were not living together. Mary, herself, witnesses to this when she asks the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man? (Lk 1:34)

Luke proclaims her virginity, saying, "The virgin's name was Mary," while the prophet spoke in these words: "The virgin shall be with child." (Is 7:14) In time, Joseph confirms this, for when he saw that she was pregnant, and he was not responsible, he was prepared to send her away.

Saint Matthew clearly demonstrates that this is how a just man would have acted if he ascertained his wife to be in sin, in order not to implicate himself in adultery, and to avoid murder, since "anyone who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her." (1 Cor 6:16) Therefore, Joseph totally exemplifies the merit and the image of a just man, so that his witness is emphasized: indeed the mouth of the just utters no lie, his tongue speaks prudently, his judgment is true.

Do not be amazed if scripture frequently describes Mary as a wife. This expression does not indicate her loss of virginity, but that there was a betrothal and the wedding was celebrated. Indeed, no one would consider denying the fact that they did marry. Therefore, the fact that Joseph wanted to send her away proves that he accepted her as his wife.

At the same time we ought not be surprised when the evangelist states, "He had no relations with her until she bore a son, and he named him Jesus." (Mt. 1:25) Here it is a question of a scriptural idiom that is found in various places; for instance, "Even to your old age I am the same" (Is 46:4), as though after becoming old God ceases to exist. And again, we find in the psalm, "The Lord said to my Lord: 'sit at my right hand till I make your enemies your footstool'" (Ps 110:1), as though after his enemies are defeated, the Lord would no longer be seated at the Father's right hand. Otherwise, it is the case of defending one viewpoint, which holds it sufficient to say what it is concerned with, without adding anything else. Indeed, it is enough to deal with the situation as it is found and to move on.

Whoever, therefore, sets himself to show that the mystery of the Incarnation was virginal, need not insist on the virginity of Mary in order to avoid the semblance of defending the Virgin rather than affirming the mystery.

Certainly, declaring that Joseph was just has sufficiently indicated that he would not have profaned the temple of the Holy Spirit, the Mother of our Lord, the consecrated sign of this mystery.

We are aware of numerous verifiable facts, some of which we have included in this treatise. We seek to comprehend the mystery. It is significant that Mary was married, but a virgin, because she symbolizes the Church which is without stain, but which is espoused: being virginal we are born of the Spirit, and, as a virgin, she bears us without pain. It can be said, therefore, that Mary had been made the Mother by one who was not her husband, just as the individual churches, the off- spring of the Spirit and of grace, are united above all to the person of a mortal pontiff.

RESPONSORY

Mt 1:20-21

Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home.

– For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her.

She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus.

– For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her.

HYMN, *TE DEUM*

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Let us pray:

Father, you joined in chaste wedlock Mary, the mother of your Son, and Saint Joseph the just man, that they might be of service in the mystery of the incarnate Word. Through their intercession, may we who are dedicated to you through baptism live a closer union with Christ, and, joyful in spirit, advance in the way of charity.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

- Amen.

Conclusion, as in the Ordinary.

Morning Prayer

HYMN

Virgin entrusted to a pure and just man!
Joseph forechosen for the love of Mary!
Early we ask you, as we start the day's span,
Accept our pleading.

When the first seed of his new order was sown,
Our holy Founder chose you as our patrons,
And as he labored to restore your Son's throne,
Enthroned you with Him.

Joseph and Mary, joined in holy union,
Brought to our earth the redolence of heaven;
Jesus, from childhood, in this blest communion
Rightfully enters.

O parents of the Shepherd! May our small flock
Flourish and grow strong under your pure banner;
Pray, be our refuge and our strength - a firm rock
Of ages uncounted.

Eternal praise be to the mighty Godhead
Who, by the gift of Mary and Saint Joseph,
To our poor lives have, by their merits, added
Gifts of divine peace. Amen.

Melody: *Eia Festivis*

Music:

Eia Festivis, ca. 1935,
Giuseppe Stofella, C.S.S., 1885-1966

Text: Giuseppe Stofella, C.S.S.

Translator: Joseph Fellin, C.S.S., 1921- 2007

Or:

Sing of Mary, pure and lowly,
Virgin mother undefiled,
Sing of God's own Son most holy
Who became her little child.
Fairest child of fairest mother,
God the Lord, who came to earth,
Word made flesh, our very brother,
Takes our nature by his birth.

Sing of Jesus, son of Mary,
In the home of Nazareth.
Toil and labor cannot weary
Love enduring unto death.
Constant was the love he gave her,
Though he went forth from her side,
Forth to preach and heal and suffer,
Till on Calvary he died.

Glory be to God the Father,
Glory be to God the Son:
Glory be to God the Spirit,
Glory to the Three in One.
From the heart of blessed Mary,
From all saints the song ascends,
And the Church the strain re-echoes
Unto earth's remotest ends.

Melody: Pleading
Saviour 87.87.D

Music: The Christian Lyre, 1831
Text: Anon., 1914

PSALMODY

Ant. 1 Jacob became the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary. Of her was born
Jesus who is called the Messiah.

Psalm 63: 2-9

A soul thirsting for God

Whoever has left the darkness of sin, yearns for God.

O God, you are my God, for you I long;
for you my soul is thirsting.

My body pines for you
like a dry, weary land without water.
So I gaze on you in the sanctuary
to see your strength and your glory.

For your love is better than life,
my lips will speak your praise.
So I will bless you all my life,
in your name I will lift up my hands.
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet,
my mouth shall praise you with joy.

On my bed I remember you.
On you I muse through the night
for you have been my help;
in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.
My soul clings to you;
your right hand holds me fast.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm-prayer

Father, creator of unfailing light, give that same light to those who call to you. May our lips praise you; our lives proclaim your goodness; our work give you honor, and our voices celebrate you for ever.

Ant. Jacob became the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary. Of her was born Jesus who is called the Messiah.

Ant. 2 The angel Gabriel greeted the Virgin Mary, betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David.

Canticle

Daniel 3:57-88, 56

Let all creatures praise the Lord

All you servants of the Lord, sing praise to him

(Revelation 19:5)

Bless the Lord, all you works of the Lord.
Praise and exalt him above all forever.
Angels of the Lord, bless the Lord.
You heavens, bless the Lord.
All you waters above the heavens, bless the Lord.
All you hosts of the Lord, bless the Lord.
Sun and moon, bless the Lord.
Stars of heaven, bless the Lord.

Every shower and dew, bless the Lord.
All you winds, bless the Lord.
Fire and heat, bless the Lord.
Cold and chill, bless the Lord.
Dew and rain, bless the Lord.
Frost and snow, bless the Lord.
Nights and days, bless the Lord.
Light and darkness, bless the Lord.
Lightnings and clouds, bless the Lord.

Let the earth bless the Lord.
Praise and exalt him above all forever.
Mountains and hills, bless the Lord.
Everything growing from the earth, bless the Lord.

You springs, bless the Lord.
 Seas and rivers, bless the Lord.
 You, dolphins and all water creatures, bless the Lord.
 All you, birds of the air, bless the lord.
 All you beasts, wild and tame, bless the Lord.
 You sons of men, bless the Lord.

O Israel, bless the Lord.
 Praise and exalt him above all forever.
 Priests of the Lord, bless the Lord.
 Servants of the Lord, bless the Lord.
 Spirits and souls of the just, bless the Lord.
 Holy men of humble heart, bless the Lord.
 Hananiah, Azariah, Mishael, bless the Lord.
 Praise and exalt him above all forever.

Let us bless the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
 Let us praise and exalt him above all forever.
 Blessed are you, Lord, in the firmament of heaven.
 Praiseworthy and glorious and exalted above all forever.

At the end of the canticle the Glory to the Father is not said.

- Ant. The angel Gabriel greeted the Virgin Mary, betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David.
- Ant. 3 The shepherds went in haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger.

Psalm 149

The joy of God's holy people

*Let the sons of the Church, the children of the new people, rejoice in Christ, their King
 (Hesychius)*

Sing a new song to the Lord,
 his praise in the assembly of the faithful.
 Let Israel rejoice in its maker,

let Zion's sons exult in their king.
 Let them praise his name with dancing
 and make music with timbrel and harp.

For the Lord takes delight in his people.
 He crowns the poor with salvation.
 Let the faithful rejoice in their glory,
 shout for joy and take their rest.
 Let the praise of God be on their lips
 and a two-edged sword in their hand,
 to deal out vengeance to the nations
 and punishment on all the peoples;
 to bind their kings in chains
 and their nobles in fetters of iron;
 to carry out the sentence pre-ordained;
 this honor is for all his faithful.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
 - as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm-prayer

Let Israel rejoice in you, Lord, and acknowledge you as creator and redeemer. We put our trust in your faithfulness and proclaim the wonderful truths of salvation. May your loving kindness embrace us now and for ever.

Ant. The shepherds went in haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger.

READING

Zephaniah 3:14, 15b, 17b-18a

Shout for joy, O daughter Zion!
 sing joyfully, O Israel!
 Be glad and exult with all your heart,
 O daughter Jerusalem!
 The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst,
 he is a mighty savior.

He will rejoice over you with gladness,
and renew you in his love,
He will sing joyfully because of you,
as one sings at festivals.

RESPONSORY

cf. Lk 2:51

Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on us.

– Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on us.

You were obedient to Mary and Joseph.

– Have mercy on us.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and
to the Holy Spirit:

--Christ, Son of the living God, have mercy on us.

CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH

Ant. The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary.

INTERCESSIONS

Let us pray to Jesus our Savior who deigned to be born
of the Virgin Mary and chose to be called
son of Joseph:

*Lord, may the Blessed Virgin Mary, and her husband
Saint Joseph, intercede on our behalf.*

Savior of the world, by virtue of your redemption
you preserved your mother from every stain of evil, all

-- keep us also free from sin.

Jesus our Redeemer, you submitted yourself to Mary
and Joseph,

--teach us love of poverty.

Lord Jesus, you prayed to your Father for the unity of
all who believe in you,

– grant all the members of our Congregation the gift of
your indescribable love.

Our Father...

Prayer

Father, you joined in chaste wedlock Mary, the mother of your Son, and Saint Joseph the just man, that they might be of service in the mystery of the incarnate Word. Through their intercession, may we who are dedicated to you through baptism live a closer union with Christ and, joyful in spirit, advance in the way of charity.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

– Amen.

Conclusion, as in the Ordinary.

Daytime Prayer

Mid-Morning

Ant. Behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt."

READING

Proverbs 2:7-8

The Lord has counsel in store for the upright,
He is the shield of those who walk honestly,
Guarding the paths of justice,
protecting the way of his pious ones.

His people will be powerful through all the earth.

-- The descendants of the just will be blessed.

Prayer, as in Morning Prayer. Conclusion, as in the Ordinary.

Midday

Ant. Mary and Joseph took the child up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.

READING

Sirach 2:15-16

Those who fear the Lord disobey not his words;
those who love him keep his ways.
Those who fear the Lord seek to please him,
those who love him are filled with his law.

Glory and wealth are in his house,

--his justice stands firm for ever.

Prayer, as in Morning Prayer. Conclusion, as in the Ordinary.

Mid-Afternoon

Ant. Joseph took the child and his mother and dwelt in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets was fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazorean."

READING

Isaiah 11:1-3a

But a shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse,
and from his roots a bud shall blossom.
The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him:
a spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
A spirit of counsel and of strength,
a spirit of knowledge and of fear of the Lord,
and his delight shall be fear of the Lord.

The father and mother of Jesus,

– did not understand what he said to them.

Prayer, as in Morning Prayer. Conclusion, as in the Ordinary.

Evening Prayer

HYMN

Hail to our Patrons! Happy songs we tender
As we observe the day of their chaste wedding;
Anew the faithful enjoy the holy splendor
Shining about them.

How beautiful thou art, O Virgin Mary!
The Trinity has covered thee with graces;
The lavish Godhead splendidly adorns thee
As thou are married.

O Blessed Joseph! To thee also we sing,
Thy virtue raises thee to highest summits;
Thy sanctity is a mirror reflecting
Thy saintly Mary.

Jesus was happy to be known as your Son;
How much He loved you, Parents of such virtue!
From your belov'd arms to the world His mission
Already is started.

O Blessed Couple! Light of earth and heaven!
Continue to inspire us with your blessing,
While the renown of your names we may leaven
By our devotion.

Eternal praise be to the mighty Godhead,
Who, by the gift of Mary and Saint Joseph,
To our poor lives have, by their merits, added
Gifts of divine peace. Amen

Melody: *Eia Festivis*

Music:

Eia Festivis, ca. 1935,

Giuseppe Stofella, C.S.S., 1885-1966

Text: Paolo Gradinati, C.S.S., 1855-1907

Translator: Joseph Fellin, C.S.S., 1921-2007.

Or:

*Eia, festivis celebremus hymnis
Virgines Sponsos sine labe puros:
Sacra lux illis renovat fideli
Gaudia mente.*

*Quam nites Virgo! Decorare donis
Te Pater, Natus, voluitque Flamen;
Te chorus Divum face nuptiali
Splendidus ambit.*

*Te, virum, Ioseph, canimus beatum,
Summa quem tollit super astra virtus,
Cui dat et vitae speciem referre
Virginis almae.*

*Liliis gaudens recubare Iesus
Vos amat flores nivei pudoris;
Iamque opem mundo properare vestris
Gestit ab ulnis.*

*Caelitum duplex hominumque lumen,
Pergite o! nobis faciles adesse;
Nomen et vestrum decus efferemus
Laude perenni.*

*Laus sit excelsae Triadi perennis,
Quae, fovens tantis miseros Patronis,
Addat, amborum meritis, supernae
Munera pacis. Amen.*

Melody: *Eia Festivis*

Music:
Eia Festivis, ca. 1935,
Giuseppe Stofella, C.S.S., 1885-1966
Text: Paolo Gradinati, C.S.S., 1855-1907

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Te chorus Divum face nuptiali
Splendidus ambit.*

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Summa quem tollit super astra virtus,
Cui dat et vitae speciem referre
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Vos amat flores nivei pudoris;
Iamque opem mundo properare vestris
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Pergite o! nobis faciles adesse;
Nomen et vestrum decus efferemus
Laude perenni.*

*Laus sit excelsae Triadi perennis,
Quae, fovens tantis miseros Patronis,
Addat, amborum meritis, supernae
Munera pacis. Amen.*

Melody: *Eia Festivis*

Music:
Eia Festivis, ca. 1935,
Giuseppe Stofella, C.S.S., 1885-1966
Text: Paolo Gradinati, C.S.S., 1855-1907

For love of my brethren and friends
 I say: "Peace upon you!"
 For love of the house of the Lord
 I will ask for your good.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
 - as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm-prayer

When you rose from the dead, Lord Jesus, you formed the Church into your new body, and made of it the new Jerusalem, united in your Spirit. Give us peace in our day. Make all nations come to your Church to share your gifts in fellowship, that they may render you thanks without end and come to your eternal city.

Ant. When Jesus was twelve, his parents went up to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover.

Ant. 2 The father and mother of Jesus found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.

Psalm 147: 12-20

The restoration of Jerusalem

Come, I will show you the bride of the Lamb
 (Revelations 21:9)

O praise the Lord, Jerusalem!
 Zion, praise your God!

He has strengthened the bars of your gates,
 he has blessed the children within you.
 He has established peace on your borders,
 he feeds you with finest wheat.

He sends out his word to the earth
 and swiftly runs his command.
 He showers down snow white as wool,
 he scatters hoar-frost like ashes.

He hurls down hailstones like crumbs.
 The waters are frozen at his touch;
 he sends forth his word and it melts them:
 at the breath of his mouth the waters flow.

He makes his word known to Jacob,
 to Israel his laws and decrees.
 He has not dealt thus with other nations;
 he has not taught them his decrees.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
 - as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm-prayer

All-powerful God, it is through your Church, generously endowed with gifts of grace and fortified by the Holy Spirit, that you send out your word to all nations. Strengthen your Church with the best of all food and make it dauntless in faith. Multiply its children to celebrate with one accord the mysteries of your love at the altar on high.

Ant. The father and mother of Jesus found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.

Ant. 3 Mary said to Jesus: "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety."

The following canticle is said with the Alleluia when Evening Prayer is sung; when the office is recited, the Alleluia may be said at the beginning and end of each strophe.

CANTICLE

see Revelation 19: 1-7

The wedding of the Lamb

Alleluia.
 Salvation, glory, and power to our God:
 (R. Alleluia.)
 his judgments are honest and true.
 R. Alleluia (alleluia).

Alleluia.

Sing praise to our God, all you his servants,

(R. Alleluia.)

all who worship him reverently, great and small.

R. Alleluia (alleluia.)

Alleluia.

The Lord our all-powerful God is King;

(R. Alleluia.)

let us rejoice, sing praise, and give him glory.

R. Alleluia (alleluia).

Alleluia.

The wedding feast of the Lamb has begun,

(R. Alleluia.)

and his bride is prepared to welcome him.

R. Alleluia (alleluia).

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Ant. Mary said to Jesus: "Son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been looking for you with great anxiety."

READING

Revelation 21: 2-4

I also saw the holy city, a new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will always be with them (as their God). He will wipe every tear from their eyes.

RESPONSORY

(Is 62:11)

Say to daughter Zion, your savior comes!

– Say to daughter Zion, your savior comes!

Here is his reward with him,
his recompense before him.

– Your savior comes.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and
to the Holy Spirit:

– Say to daughter Zion, your savior comes!

CANTICLE OF MARY

Ant. Jesus went down with Mary and Joseph and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart.

INTERCESSIONS

Let us be thankful to Christ our Redeemer who submitted himself to Mary and Joseph here on earth, as we pray:

Look to Mary and Joseph, and hear us, O Lord.

Divine Master, allow us to hear your word and keep it with a pure and generous heart,

– as Mary, your mother, welcomed and treasured it in her heart.

Christ, Creator of the universe, you were known as the carpenter's son,

– may we face our daily work with a generous spirit.

Jesus, as a member of the family of Nazareth you progressed steadily in wisdom and age and grace before God and men,

– help us to follow your example in all the virtues.

Jesus our Redeemer, you chose Mary and Joseph as your guardians,

– protect our Congregation.

Jesus, you have united Mary and Joseph to yourself in the glory of the heavens,

– welcome our deceased confreres to the company of the blessed.

Our Father...**Prayer**

Father, you joined in chaste wedlock Mary, the mother of your Son, and Saint Joseph the just man, that they might be of service in the mystery of the incarnate Word. Through their intercession, may we who are dedicated to you through baptism live a closer union with Christ, and, joyful in spirit, advance in the way of charity.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

– Amen.

Conclusion, as in the Ordinary.

JUNE 12

SAINT GASPAR BERTONI

Priest and Founder

SOLEMNITY

Evening Prayer I

HYMN

Hail to Saint Gaspar! As we sing together,
Let us extol the spirit of our Founder.
A humble man, the Lord has found him worthy
To be blessed forever.

A shining model of the priestly spirit,
He spent his life in caring for his neighbor;
With zeal for the Word, in loving care
he guided Sinners to Jesus.

Like a grain of wheat that falls to earth and withers,
He died, but lives in those who call him father,
Yielding in death life giving works of mercy
Harvest of Glory.

Fully abandoned to God's insistent calling,
He suffered, but bore his cross without complaining;
His daily prayer was for the strength to follow
In the footsteps of Jesus.

Good kind Saint Gaspar, smile on us from glory,
And keep us on the narrow way to Heaven,
Till at life's end, the Lord may judge us worthy
To be blessed forever. Amen.

Melody: *Eia Festivis*

Music:

Eia Festivis, ca. 1935

Giuseppe Stofella, C.S.S., 1885-1966

Text:

Inno al Beato Gaspare Bertoni, 1975,

Lodovico Nicolodi, C.S.S., 1916-2006

Translator: Joseph Fellin, C.S.S., 1921- 2007

Or:

Refrain:

Only this I want:

but to know the Lord,

and to bear His Cross, so to wear the crown

He wore.

All but this is loss,

worthless refuse to me,

for to gain the Lord is to gain all I need.

Refrain

I will run the race;

I will fight the good fight,

So to win the prize of the Kingdom of my Lord.

Refrain

Let your hearts be glad,

Always glad in the Lord,

So to shine like stars in the darkness of the night.

Refrain

Melody: Only This I Want

Music: Daniel L. Schutte, S.J.

and NALR

PSALMODY

Ant. 1 I will give you shepherds after my own heart;
with knowledge and wisdom they
will lead you to me.

Psalm 30

Thanksgiving for deliverance from death

*Christ, risen in glory, gives continual thanks to his Father
(Cassian)*

I will praise you, Lord, you have rescued me
and have not let my enemies rejoice over me.

O Lord, I cried to you for help
and you my God have healed me.

O Lord, you have raised my soul from the dead,
restored me to life from those who sink into the grave.

Sing psalms to the Lord, you who love him,
give thanks to his holy name.

His anger lasts a moment; his favor through life.

At night there are tears, but joy comes with dawn.

I said to myself in my good fortune:

"Nothing will ever disturb me."

Your favor had set me a mountain fastness,
then you hid your face and I was put to confusion.

To you, Lord, I cried,

to my God I made appeal:

"What profit would my death be, my going to the grave?

Can dust give you praise or proclaim your truth?"

The Lord listened and had pity.

The Lord came to my help.

For me you have changed my mourning into dancing,

you removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy.

So my soul sings psalms to you unceasingly.
O Lord my God, I will thank you for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm-prayer

God our Father, glorious in giving life, and even more glorious in restoring it, when his last night on earth came, your Son shed tears of blood, but dawn brought incomparable gladness. Do not turn away from us, or we shall fall back into dust, but rather turn our mourning into joy by raising us up with Christ.

Ant. I will give you shepherds after my own heart; with knowledge and wisdom they will lead you to me.

Ant. 2 A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

Psalm 138

Thanksgiving

The kings of the earth will bring his glory and honor into the holy city
(see Revelation 21:24)

I thank you, Lord, with all my heart,
you have heard the words of my mouth.
In the presence of the angels I will bless you.
I will adore before your holy temple.

I thank you for your faithfulness and love
which excel all we ever knew of you.
On the day I called, you answered:
you increased the strength of my soul.

All earth's kings shall thank you
when they hear the words of your mouth.
They shall sing of the Lord's ways:
"How great is the glory of the Lord!"

The Lord is high yet he looks on the lowly
and the haughty he knows from afar.
Though I walk in the midst of afflictions
you give me life and frustrate my foes.

You stretch out your hand and save me,
your hand will do all things for me.
Your love, O Lord, is eternal,
discard not the work of your hands.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm-prayer

Listen to the prayers of your Church, Lord God; in the presence of the angels we praise your name. You keep the proud at a distance and look upon the lowly with favor. Stretch out your hand to us in our suffering, perfect in us the work of your love and bring us to life.

Ant. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

Ant. 3 By our words and by our lives may the name of the Lord be ever blessed and glorified.

Canticle

Revelation 4:11; 5:9, 10, 12

Redemption hymn

Worthy are you, Lord God,
to receive glory and honor and power,
for you created all things;
because of your will they came to be
and were created.

Worthy are you to receive the scroll
and break open its seals,
for you were slain and with your blood
you purchased for God

those from every tribe and tongue,
people and nation.

You made them a kingdom and priests
for our God,
and they will reign on earth.

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain
to receive power and riches, wisdom and strength,
honor, and glory, and blessing.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Ant. By our words and by our lives may the name of the Lord be ever blessed and glorified.

READING

Philippians 3:7-8

Whatever gains I had, these I have come to consider as loss because of Christ. everything as a loss

More than that, I even consider because of the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have accepted the loss of all things and I consider them so much rubbish, that I may gain Christ.

RESPONSORY

The Lord loved him and crowned him with honor.

- The Lord loved him and crowned him with honor.

He clothed him with glory,

- and crowned him with honor.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

- The Lord loved him and crowned him with honor.

CANTICLE OF MARY

Ant. The wise man, Saint Gaspar Bertoni, built his house on rock.

INTERCESSIONS

God our Father, source of all holiness, we pray that with the example and assistance of the holy priest Gaspar Bertoni, you permit us to live in conformity with our baptism (and with the vows we have professed). Together we say:

Make us holy, Lord, as you are holy.

Holy Father, you call us to live our vocation worthily,
pleasing you in everything,

- help us produce abundant fruits of good works.

Holy Father, you have reconciled us in Christ,

- watch over all those who believe in your name
so that they can be one with you.

Holy Father, you desire us to be guests at the heavenly
banquet,

- nourish us at the table of the Eucharist and with
your word so that we may grow in charity.

Holy Father, in your priestly servant Gaspar Bertoni

you have given us a perfect model of total
abandonment to your divine will,

- imitating his example, may we trust
completely in your fatherly providence.

Holy Father, allow our deceased confreres
to contemplate your countenance,

- may we too be worthy of your glory.

Our Father...

Prayer

Father, you inspired your servant and priest, Gaspar Bertoni, to dedicate himself to the service of the Church, living and preaching the sufferings of Christ. Grant that, following his example, we may be faithful workers in your vineyard and heralds of your word. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

- Amen.

Conclusion, as in the Ordinary.

Invitatory

Ant. Let us praise the Lord, our God, on this feast of Saint Gaspar Bertoni.

Invitatory Psalm, as in the Ordinary.

Office of Readings

HYMN

Antiphon: I saw the new city, Jerusalem, descending from
God, the source of all love.
Comely, clothed like a bride who waits, adorned,
as for her spouse.

I saw the city of God, the new holy Jerusalem,
descending from God, who dwells on high.

Antiphon

She was adorned as would be a bride who was
waiting for her spouse.

Then I heard a voice from the throne which
proclaimed:

Antiphon

"Behold the dwelling of God among his people,
for among them he shall make his abode."

Antiphon

"They shall be his people. And he shall be their
Lord and God.
He shall have mercy and wipe the tears from their
eyes."

Antiphon

"No more sorrow or tears, no more death or pain
shall there be:
for the old order has passed away."

Antiphon

Melody:
I Saw the New Jerusalem

Music: Lucien Deis,
C.S.Sp., 1965
Text: Lucien Deiss, C.S.Sp., 1965

Or:

Lord, whose love in humble service
Bore the weight of human need,
Who did on the Cross, forsaken,
Show us mercy's perfect deed:
We, your servants, bring the worship
Not of voice alone, but heart;
Consecrating to your purpose
Every gift which you impart.

As we worship, grant us vision,
Till your love's revealing light,
Till the height and depth and greatness
Dawns upon our human sight;
Making known the deeds and burdens
Your compassion bids us bear,
Stirring us to faithful service
Your abundant life to share.

Called from worship into service
 Forth in your great name we go,
 To the child, the youth, the aged,
 Love in living deeds to show.
 Hope and health, good will and comfort,
 Counsel, aid, and peace we give,
 That your children, Lord, in freedom,
 May your mercy know, and live.

Melody: *In Babilone* 87.87.D

Music: Traditional Dutch Melody
 Text: Albert Bayly, 1901- ?

PSALMODY

Ant. 1 He asked to share your life, O Lord, and you have heard his prayer;
 you have clothed him with glory and great beauty.

Psalm 21:2-8, 14

Thanksgiving for the king's victory

*He accepted life that he might rise and live for ever
 (Saint Hilary)*

O Lord, your strength gives joy to the king;
 how your saving help makes him glad!
 You have granted him his heart's desire;
 you have not refused the prayer of his lips.

You came to meet him with the blessings of success,
 you have set on his head a crown of pure gold.
 He asked you for life and this you have given,
 days that will last from age to age.

Your saving help has given him glory.
 You have laid upon him majesty and splendor;
 you have granted your blessings to him for ever.
 You have made him rejoice with the joy of your presence.

The king has put his trust in the Lord:
 through the mercy of the Most High he shall stand firm.
 O Lord, arise in your strength;
 we shall sing and praise your power.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
 - as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm-prayer

Lord, you accepted the perfect sacrifice of your Son upon the cross. Hear us during times of trouble and protect us by the power of his name, that we who share his struggle on earth may merit a share in his victory.

Ant. He asked to share your life, O Lord, and you have heard his prayer;
 you have clothed him with glory and great beauty.

Ant. 2 The path of the just is like the passage of the dawn;
 it grows from first light to the full splendor of day.

Psalm 92:2-9

Praise of God the Creator

Sing in praise of Christ's redeeming work
 (Saint Athanasius)

It is good to give thanks to the Lord,
 to make music to your name, O Most High,
 to proclaim your love in the morning
 and your truth in the watches of the night,
 on the ten-stringed lyre and the lute,
 with the murmuring sound of the harp.

Your deeds, O Lord, have made me glad;
 for the work of your hands I shout with joy.
 O Lord, how great are your works!
 How deep are your designs!
 The foolish man cannot know this
 and the fool cannot understand.

Though the wicked spring up like grass
and all who do evil thrive:
they are doomed to be eternally destroyed.
But you, Lord, are eternally on high.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Ant. The path of the just is like the passage of the dawn;
it grows from first light to the full splendor of day.

Ant. 3 The just man will flourish like the palm-tree;
he will grow like a cedar of Lebanon.

Psalm 92:10-16

See how your enemies perish;
all doers of evil are scattered.
To me you give the wild-ox/s strength;
you anoint me with the purest oil.
My eyes looked in triumph on my foes;
my ears heard gladly of their fall.
The just will flourish like the palm-tree,
and grow like a Lebanon cedar.

Planted in the house of the Lord,
they will flourish in the courts of our God,
still bearing fruit when they are old,
still full of sap, still green,
to proclaim the Lord is just.
In him, my rock, there is no wrong.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm-prayer

Take our shame away from us, Lord, and make us rejoice in your saving works. May all who have been chosen by your Son always abound in works of faith, hope and love in your service.

Ant. The just man will flourish like the palm-tree;
he will grow like a cedar of Lebanon.

The Lord led this holy man along a sure path.

- He showed him the kingdom of God.

FIRST READING

From the letter of the apostle Paul to the Romans

12:1-2

To do a great deal for God, you must be totally his

I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God, your spiritual worship. Do not conform yourself to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.

For by the grace given to me I tell everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than one ought to think, but to think soberly, each according to the measure of faith that God has apportioned. For as in one body we have many parts, and all the parts do not have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another. Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us exercise them; if prophesy, in proportion to the faith; if ministry, in ministering; if one is a teacher, in teaching; if one exhorts, in exhortation; if one contributes, in generosity; if one is over others, with diligence; if one does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let love be sincere; hate what is evil, hold on to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; anticipate one another in showing honor. Do not grow slack in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, endure in affliction, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the holy ones, exercise hospitality. Bless those who persecute [you], bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Have the same regard for one another; do not be haughty but

associate with the lowly; do not be wise in your own estimation. Do not repay anyone evil for evil; be concerned for what is noble in the sight of all. If possible, on your part, live at peace with all. Beloved, do not look for revenge but leave room for the wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." Rather, "if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; burning coals upon his head." Do not be conquered by evil but conquer evil with good.

RESPONSORY

Philippians 2:5, 8, 12-13

Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus; coming in human likeness, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.

- Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

God is the one who, for his good purpose, works in you both to desire and to work.

-Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

SECOND READING

From a sermon by Saint Gaspar Bertoni, Priest and Founder

(Pagine di Vita Cristiana, June 5, 1803)

The law of the gospel

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart... my yoke is easy and my burden light." (Mt 11:28-30)

This is just what John has taught us: "... his commandments are not burdensome..." (1 Jn 5:3) Saint Augustine has commented on this statement, saying: they are not burdensome for anyone who loves, but they are very difficult for those who do not love.

The reason for this is evident, as the Philosopher has taught: to do what the just person does is easy, but to perform all that the just person does, and in the manner that all things are carried out, with delight and promptness, is very difficult for anyone who lacks justice. And it is precisely in justice, in peace and in the joy of the Holy Spirit that one discovers the Kingdom of God, as Saint Paul has stated. (Rm 14:17)

Hence, for the one who loves, everything is easy and light. Saint Thomas points out that those very adversities that the observers of the New Law meet, even though they are not imposed by the New Law itself, nonetheless, out of that love in which the New Law consists, are readily tolerated.

What could be more sweet, more delightful, more joyful than love? What could be better than to be guided and directed by the Spirit of Love? This is the special characteristic sign of those who have received in the New Law the adoption of sons and daughters. (Rm 8:15) All who are indeed guided by the Spirit of God are the sons and daughters of God. (Rm 8:14) "How sweet is your Spirit, O Lord!" (Wis 12:1)

What is more delightful than to act in accord with the instinct of that interior grace, which inclines us to act rightly, and moves us freely to do everything in accord with grace, and to avoid everything that is repugnant to grace? This is why it can be said that where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. (2 Cor 3:17) This is that true, holy freedom-that freedom with which Christ has freed us (Gal 4:31)-in accord with that promise which God made to the fathers of old, of allowing us to remain -after having been freed from the hands of our enemies, and of serving him without fear-in holiness and justice, in his sight, all our days. (Lk 1:74)

This is that happy state in which one dwells on the holy mountain of God. (Ps 14:1) For us, this is the Church, planted in the blood of his Son (Acts 20:28), and pertains to the New Law of his gospel.

RESPONSORY

2 Timothy 3:15 f, 4:2

Proclaim the word; be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching.

- So that one who belongs to God may be competent,
equipped for every good work.

All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reflection, for correction, and for training in righteousness.

- So that one who belongs to God may be competent,
equipped for every good work.

Alternative:

From a sermon by Saint Gaspar Bertoni,
priest and founder

(Pagine di Vita Cristiana, April 20, 1801)

Devotion

Devotion is not a hindrance to any sort of vocation; in fact, it wouldn't be real devotion if it interfered in the slightest way with the duties of one's state of life.

Devotion has wings to fly up to heaven and feet to walk on earth. Although constantly in action, it knows how to rest peacefully with its heart in God. Its eyes are on guard to plan, to conduct itself in temporal matters, but it has another more acute vision that never loses sight of its final destiny, in order to call down God's blessing on its every action, and to direct all things to His glory.

With its lips, devotion speaks to men; yet, in the secret of its heart, it never ceases to praise and bless the Lord. So, while it has contact with the world, it keeps its soul in heaven. And, drawing God to itself out of love, devotion discovers Him and possesses Him in an outpouring of peace, and thus enjoys Paradise here on earth.

From this comes that admirable sweetness that clothes all its action; from this comes that unchangeable sameness of its spirit. The world sees nothing that sets it apart, nothing out of the ordinary in its goal, in its action, or in those duties that are proper to its function. So it is surprised when it is called upon to love, in devotion, a certain something that is special and divine which it does not understand.

In prosperity, devotion doesn't get puffed up; in bad times, it doesn't give way to sadness. It rejoices in the happiness of others, as if it were its own. It divests itself of every singular whim, and has a reasonable appreciation of the talents of others because it is honest. Willingly devotion consoles those who are troubled in spirit. Open-minded with friends, it helps everyone without expecting anything in return. It awaits a reward from God, whom alone it is happy to serve. I can't seem to stop speaking about this virtue.

So, my dear brothers, what is left for you to do? Follow promptly every inspiration of the Holy Spirit, every day of your life from this moment on. He deserves at least this much from you.

Endowed with life and being by His creative hand, you were brought into this world for this purpose: to know, love and serve the Author of all good, and to promote His glory on this earth, so that you may receive a glorious reward and perfect blessedness in heaven, rejoicing and possessing your God for all eternity. You were bought with the blood of God; you are adopted sons of the King of Heaven; you are partakers of divine nature through grace; you are no longer your own, but God's, to serve Him alone. You are not bound by flesh and blood, whence come evil desires, but you are bound to the Spirit to be guided by His inspirations and His commands. You no longer belong to this world nor serve this world, but you belong to heaven. So work and live like saints.

Time is short and the things of this world pass quickly. But with great strides, we draw closer to eternity. Therefore, whatever needs to be done, we should do it at once with great haste. Shall we wait for night to catch up with us before we begin to work? Shall we wait for the bridegroom to arrive before we provide more oil for our lamps which are almost out? Shall we wait until he calls us for the wedding before we weave the cloth for our wedding garment?

"Behold, I am coming soon." Both the Master And the bridegroom tell us: "I bring with me the recompense I will give to each according to his deeds." (Rev 22:12) Happy the soul that is well prepared to welcome Him. "Come, my spouse, come. Receive the crown that your Lord has prepared for you from all eternity." "Blessed are those servants whom the master finds vigilant on his arrival." He will say to them: "My good and faithful servants. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come, share your master's joy."

RESPONSORY

2 Timothy 3: 15 f, 4: 2

Proclaim the word, be persistent whether it is convenient or inconvenient; convince, reprimand, encourage through all patience and teaching.

- So that one who belongs to God may be competent,
equipped for every good work.

All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reflection, for correction, and for training in righteousness.

- So that one who belongs to God may be competent,
equipped for every good work.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Let us pray:

Father, you inspired your servant and priest, Gaspar Bertoni, to dedicate himself to the service of the Church, living and preaching the sufferings of Christ. Grant that, following his example, we may be faithful workers in your vineyard and heralds of your word. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

- Amen.

Conclusion, as in the Ordinary.

Morning Prayer

HYMN

This is the feast day of the Lord's true witness,
Whom through the ages all have held in honor;
Now let us praise him and his deeds of glory
With exultation.

So now in chorus, giving God the glory,
We sing his praises and his mighty triumph,
That in his glory we may all be sharers
Here and hereafter.

Praise to the Father and the Son most holy,
Praise to the Spirit, with them co-eternal,
Who give examples in the lives of all saints,
That we may follow.

Melody: Herr,
Deinen Zorn 11.11.11.5

Music: Johann Crueger, 1653
Text: Iste Confessor, 8th century
Translator: Composite

PSALMODY

Ant. 1 You are the light of the world; a city set on
a mountain cannot be hidden.

Psalm 63:2-9 to

A soul thirsting for God

Whoever has left the darkness of sin, yearns for God

O God, you are my God, for you I long;
for you my soul is thirsting.

My body pines for you
like a dry, weary land without water.

So I gaze on you in the sanctuary
to see your strength and your glory.

For your love is better than life,
my lips will speak your praise.
So I will bless you all my life,
in your name I will lift up my hands.
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet,
my mouth shall praise you with joy.

On my bed I remember you.
On you I muse through the night
for you have been my help;
in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.
My soul clings to you;
your right hand holds me fast.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm-prayer

Father, creator of unfailing light, give that same light to those who call to you. May our lips praise you; our lives proclaim your goodness; our work give you honor, and our voices celebrate you for ever.

Ant. You are the light of the world;
a city set on a mountain cannot be hidden.

Ant. 2 Your light must shine before others, that
they may see your good deeds and glorify
your heavenly Father.

Canticle

Let all creatures praise the Lord

Daniel 3:57-88, 56

*All you servants of the Lord, sing praise to him
(Revelation 19:5)*

Bless the Lord, all you works of the Lord.
Praise and exalt him above all forever.
Angels of the Lord, bless the Lord.
You heavens, bless the Lord.
All you waters above the heavens, bless the Lord.
All you hosts of the Lord, bless the Lord.
Sun and moon, bless the Lord.
Stars of heaven, bless the Lord.

Every shower and dew, bless the Lord.
All you winds, bless the Lord.
Fire and heat, bless the Lord.
Cold and chill, bless the Lord.
Dew and rain, bless the Lord.
Frost and chill, bless the Lord. -
Ice and snow, bless the Lord.
Nights and days, bless the Lord.
Light and darkness, bless the Lord.
Lightnings and clouds, bless the Lord.

Let the earth bless the Lord.
Praise and exalt him above all forever.
Mountains and hills, bless the Lord.
Everything growing from the earth, bless the Lord.
You springs, bless the Lord.
Seas and rivers, bless the Lord.
You, dolphins and all water creatures, bless the Lord.
All you birds of the air, bless the Lord.
All you beasts, wild and tame, bless the Lord.
You sons of men, bless the Lord.

O Israel, bless the Lord.
Praise and exalt him above all forever.
Priests of the Lord, bless the Lord.
Servants of the Lord, bless the Lord.
Spirits and souls of the just, bless the Lord.
Holy men of humble heart, bless the Lord.
Hananiah, Azariah, Mishael, bless the Lord.
Praise and exalt him above all forever.

Let us bless the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Let us praise and exalt him above all forever.
Blessed are you, Lord, in the firmament of heaven.
Praiseworthy and glorious and exalted above all forever.

At the end of the canticle the Glory to the Father is not said.

Ant. Your light must shine before others, that
they may see your good deeds and glorify
your heavenly Father.

Ant. 3 The word of God is living, sharper than
any two-edged sword, and able to discern
reflections and thoughts of the heart.

Psalm 149

The joy of God's holy people

*Let the sons of the Church, the children of the new people, rejoice in Christ their King
(Hesychius)*

Sing a new song to the Lord,
his praise in the assembly of the faithful.
Let Israel rejoice in its maker,
Let Zion's sons exult in their king.
Let them praise his name with dancing
and make music with timbrel and harp.

For the Lord takes delight in his people,
He crowns the poor with salvation.
Let the faithful rejoice in their glory,
shout for joy and take their rest.
Let the praise of God be on their lips,
and a two-edged sword in their hand,

to deal out vengeance to the nations,
and punishment on all the peoples;
to bind their kings in chains,
and their nobles in fetters of iron;
to carry out the sentence pre-ordained;
this honor is for all his faithful.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:
- as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.

Amen.

Psalm-prayer

Let Israel rejoice in you, Lord, and acknowledge you as creator and redeemer. We put our trust in your faithfulness and proclaim the wonderful truths of salvation. May your loving kindness embrace us now and for ever.

Ant. The word of God is living, sharper than
any two-edged sword, and able to discern
molt reflections and thoughts of the heart.

READING*Isaiah 49:15-16, 18*

Can a mother forget her infant,
be without tenderness for the child of her womb?

Even should she forget,
I will never forget you.

See, upon the palms of my hands, I have written your name;
your walls are ever before me.

Look about and see,
they are all gathering and coming to you.

As I live, says the Lord,
you shall be arrayed with them all as with adornments,
like a bride you shall fasten them on you.

RESPONSORY

Psalm 131

Lord, do not let my heart grow proud,
nor let me lift up my eyes with haughtiness.

- Lord, do not let my heart grow proud,
nor let me lift up my eyes with haughtiness.

I am as tranquil and peaceful as a child
resting in his mother's arms.

- Nor let me lift up my eyes with haughtiness.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit:

- Lord, do not let my heart grow proud,
nor let me lift up my eyes with haughtiness.

CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH

Ant. O wonderful mysteries of divine love! O profound depths of your charity! When will it come to pass that we shall be so shipwrecked and abandoned in this immense sea that we no longer yearn for the shores of this wretched land!

INTERCESSIONS

Let us call upon Christ the Lord, so that, following the example of the saints, we might love God and serve our brothers and sisters all the days of our lives:

Sanctify your people, Lord.

Through the saints, you reveal to us the radiant face of the Father's goodness,

- make us ever attentive and available to the needs of our brothers and sisters.

Through the saints, you wanted to give the Church powerful intercessors to enable us to overcome life's difficulties.

- may we trustfully turn to them with our needs.

In your servant, Saint Gaspar Bertoni, you wanted to provide your Church with a teacher of Christian doctrine and of generosity to all people;

- may we always seek to live in fidelity to the values of the gospel.

In Saint Gaspar Bertoni, you wanted to offer us a true model of abandonment to the will of the Father;

- prepare us to know how to accept the trials, and sufferings of life, as a sign of God's love for all people.

Our Father...

Prayer

Father, you inspired your servant and priest, Gaspar Bertoni, to dedicate himself to the service of the Church living and preaching the sufferings of Christ. Grant that, following his example, we may be faithful workers in your vineyard and heralds of your word. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit one God for ever and ever.

- Amen.

Conclusion, as in the Ordinary.

Daytime Prayer

Mid-Morning

Ant. My Father, as you sent me into the world, so I send my disciples.

READING

Galatians 6:7b-8

A person will reap only what he sows, because the one who sows for his flesh will reap corruption from the flesh, but the one who sows for the spirit will reap eternal life from the spirit.

The Lord teaches the humble his way.

- He guides the gentle-hearted along the right path.

Prayer, as in Morning Prayer. Conclusion, as in the Ordinary.

Midday

Ant. Blessed are those who have trusted in the Lord; they will lack nothing if their confidence is not diminished.

READING

1 Corinthians 9:26-27a

I do not run aimlessly; I do not fight as if I were shadow boxing. No, I drive my body and train it.

Lord, blessed is the man whom you instruct.

-You guide him by your law.

Prayer, as in Morning Prayer. Conclusion, as in the Ordinary.

Mid-Afternoon

Ant. We are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ,
if only we suffer with him so that we
may also be glorified with him.

READING

Philippians 4:8, 9

Brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Then the God of peace will be with you.

Let all who hope in you rejoice.

- Eternal gladness will be theirs,
and you will dwell with them.

Prayer, as in Morning Prayer. Conclusion, as in the Ordinary.

Evening Prayer II

(same as Evening Prayer I)

PART FOUR

The Stigmatine Proper

PART FOUR**The Stigmatine Proper**

Friday after the Second Sunday of Easter

Feast

**The Sacred Stigmata
of our Lord Jesus Christ**

ENTRANCE ANT.

Phil 2:8-9

The Lord Jesus Christ humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name. (Alleluia.)

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray...

Ever merciful God,
you gave new life to our lost sinful human nature
by the passion of your only-begotten Son
and the shedding of his blood
through his five wounds.

Grant that we who venerate his wounds on earth
may enjoy the fruits of his precious blood
in heaven.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever.

R/. Amen.

READING I

Rev 5: 1-2, 6-10, 12b

A reading from the Book of Revelation

I saw a Lamb that had been slain

I saw a scroll in the right hand of the one who sat on the throne. It had writing on both sides and was sealed with seven seals. Then I saw a mighty angel who proclaimed in a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?"

Then I saw standing in the midst of the throne and the four living creatures and the elders a Lamb that seemed to have been slain. He had seven horns and seven eyes; these are the (seven) spirits of God sent out into the world. He came and received the scroll from the right hand of the one who sat on the throne. When he took it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each of the elders held a harp and gold bowls filled with incense, which are the prayers of the holy ones. They sang a new hymn:

"Worthy are you to receive the scroll
and to break open its seals,
for you were slain and with your
blood you purchased for God
those from every tribe and tongue,
people and nation.

You made them a kingdom and priests
for our God,
and they will reign on earth.

Worthy is the lamb that was slain
to receive power and riches, wisdom and strength,
honor and glory and blessing."

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 22:15, 17c, 20, 23, 24a, 25,

R/. I will live for the Lord,
my descendants shall serve him.

I am like water poured out;
all my bones are racked.

My heart has become like wax
melting away within my bosom.

They have pierced my hands and my feet;
I can count all my bones.

R/. I will live for the Lord,
my descendants shall serve him.

But you, O Lord, be not far from me;
O my help, hasten to aid me.
I will proclaim your name to my brethren;
in the midst of the assembly, I will praise you.

R/. I will live for the Lord,
my descendants shall serve him.

You, who fear the Lord, praise him,
for he has not spurned or disdained
the wretched man in his misery.
Nor did he turn his face away from him,
but when he cried out to him,
he heard him.

R/. I will live for the Lord,
my descendants shall serve him.

All the ends of the earth
shall remember and turn to the Lord;
All the families of the nations
shall bow down before him.

R/. I will live for the Lord,
my descendants shall serve him.

And/or:

ALTERNATE READING

Gal 6: 14-18

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Galatians

I bear the marks of Jesus on my body

May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For neither does circumcision mean anything, nor does uncircumcision, but only a new creation. Peace and mercy be to all who follow this rule and to the Israel of God.

From now on, let no one make troubles for me; for I bear the marks of Jesus on my body.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

The Word of the Lord.

- In votive Masses outside of Easter time -

READING I

Is 53: 1-5

A reading from the prophet Isaiah
He is the one who bore our sufferings

Who would believe what we have heard?

To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?

He grew up like a sapling before him,

like a shoot from the parched earth;

There was in him no stately bearing to make us

look at him,

nor appearance that would attract us to him.

He was spurned and avoided by men,

a man of suffering, accustomed to infirmity,

One of those from whom men hide their faces,

spurned, and we held him in no esteem.

Yet it was our infirmities that he bore,

our sufferings that he endured,

While we thought of him as stricken,

as one smitten by God and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our offenses,

crushed for our sins,

Upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole,

by his stripes we were healed.

The Word of the Lord.

GOSPEL

Jn 20:19-20,24-29

Alleluia

R/. Alleluia.

Hail to our king! You have had mercy on our sinful ways; like an innocent lamb led to slaughter, you embraced the cross, out of obedience to your Father.

R/. Alleluia.



A reading from the holy gospel according to John

He showed them his hands and his side.

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the doors were locked, where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord.

Thomas, called Didymus, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came, so the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the marks of the nails in his hands and put my finger into the nail marks and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."

Now, a week later, his disciples were again inside and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

The gospel of the Lord.

Or:

ALTERNATE GOSPEL*Lk 24: (35)36-43,45-47(48)*

A reading from the holy gospel according to Luke

He showed them his hands and feet

(The two disciples recounted what had taken place on the way to Emmaus and how he was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.)

While they were still speaking about this, (Jesus) stood in their midst and said to them "Peace be with you." But they were startled and terrified and thought they were seeing a ghost. Then he said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do questions arise in your hearts? Look at my hands and my feet, that it is I myself. Touch me and see, because a ghost does not have flesh and bones as you can see I have." And as he said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. While they were still incredulous for joy and were amazed, he asked them, "Have you anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of baked fish; he took it and ate it in front of them.

Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures. And he said to them, "Thus it is written that the Messiah would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day and that repentance, for the forgiveness of sins, would be preached in his name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. (You are witnesses of these things.)"

The gospel of the Lord.

Profession of Faith**PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS**

Pray brethren...

Lord,

receive these gifts offered for your glory.

By celebrating the sacrifice

of the new and eternal covenant, may we find salvation

in the outpouring of the blood of Christ through his sacred wounds.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R/. Amen.

PREFACE

Priest: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Priest: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Father, all powerful and ever-living God,
we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks,
through Christ our Lord.

He gave himself up to death
and was sacrificed on the cross for our salvation.
From his pierced side flowed blood and water,
revealing the sacraments of the Church.

Risen from the dead and seated at your right hand, Father,
he preserved the signs of his passion
as a lasting remembrance of the Paschal Mystery.

Made one with the angels and saints
in this mystery of salvation,
with one voice we sing the hymn of your praise.

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

COMMUNION ANT.

Jesus said to Thomas: "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." (Alleluia.) Jn 20:27

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray...

Pause for silent prayer, if this has not preceded.

Almighty and eternal God,
in celebrating the Sacred Stigmata of our Savior,
you have nourished us
with life giving food and drink.
May we become effective witnesses
of the Paschal Mystery.
Grant this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

SOLEMN BLESSING

May the Lord Jesus,
who chose to retain in his body
the Sacred Stigmata
as an everlasting symbol of his love for us,
grant you the assurance of his mercy.

R/. Amen.

May Christ the Lord,
who by his cross has saved us from eternal death,
grant you everlasting life.

R/. Amen.

By following the humble and suffering Christ,
may you share his resurrection.

R. Amen.

May almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

R/. Amen.

January 23

Feast

The Holy Spouses, Mary and Joseph

ENTRANCE ANT.

Hail Mary, Mother of God, united in the bond
of matrimony with Joseph, faithful guardian
of your virginal motherhood.

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray...

Father, you joined in chaste wedlock
Mary, the mother of your Son
and Saint Joseph the just man,
that they might be of service
in the mystery of the Incarnate Word.

Through their intercession,
may we who are dedicated to you through baptism
live a closer union with Christ,
and, joyful in spirit,
advance on the way of charity.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ,
your Son, who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

R/. Amen.

READING I

Is 61: 9-11

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

I rejoice heartily in the Lord

Their descendants shall be renowned among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
All who see them shall acknowledge them
as a race the Lord has blessed.
I rejoice heartily in the Lord,
in my God is the joy of my soul;
For he has clothed me with a robe of salvation,
and wrapped me in a mantle of justice,
Like a bridegroom adorned with a diadem,
like a bride bedecked with her jewels.
As the earth brings forth its plants,
and a garden makes its growth spring up,
So will the Lord God make justice and praise
spring up before all the nations.

The Word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

R/. God has blessed you forever.

My heart overflows with a goodly theme;
as I sing my ode to the king, my tongue is nimble
as the pen of a skillful scribe.
Fairer in beauty are you than the sons of men;
grace is poured out upon your lips;
thus God has blessed you forever.

R/. God has blessed you forever.

Hear, O daughter, and see; turn your ear,
forget your people and your father's house.

So shall the king desire your beauty; for he is your lord,
and you must worship him.

R/. God has blessed you forever.

All glorious is the king's daughter as she enters;
her raiment is threaded with spun gold;

In embroidered apparel, she is borne in to the king;
behind her the virgins of her train are brought to you.

R/. God has blessed you forever.

I will make your name memorable through
all generations; therefore, shall nations praise you
forever and ever.

R/. God has blessed you forever.

GOSPEL

Alleluia *Mt 1:20b*

R/. Alleluia.

Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her.

R/. Alleluia.

✠ A reading from the holy gospel according to Matthew

Jesus was born of Mary, the wife of Joseph, of the house of David

Now, this is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. When his mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found with child through the Holy Spirit.

Joseph, her husband, since he was a righteous man, yet unwilling to expose her to shame, decided to divorce her quietly. Such was his intention when, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home. He had no relations with her until she bore a son, and he named him Jesus.

The gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Pray brethren...

Father, sanctify the gifts which we present at your altar, on the feast of the Holy Spouses, the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph, and kindle in us the spirit of your love.

Grant this through Christ our Lord.

R/. Amen.

PREFACE

Priest: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Priest: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Father, all powerful and ever living God, we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks, through Christ our Lord, as we celebrate the Espousals of the Virgin Mary with Saint Joseph.

Welcoming with faith the message of the angel Gabriel, she conceived in time your eternally begotten Word, and brought to light our brother and Savior.

In daily communion with your Son in the home of Nazareth, the cradle of the Church, she gives us a precious model for life.

Mother and disciple of Christ the Lord, she treasures and reflects within herself the beginning of the good news.

Mary and Joseph, the just man,
 united by a bond of spousal and virginal love
 praise you in song, adore you in silence,
 honor you with the work of their hands,
 glorify you with their whole life.

United with the angels and saints,
 we sing an unending hymn to your glory.

Holy, holy, holy Lord...

COMMUNION ANT.

Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. *Mt 1:20b*

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray...

Pause for silent prayer, if this has not preceded.

Lord, by your holy gifts you have filled us with joy.

May we, who honor the blessed Virgin Mary and Saint Joseph, her husband, be renewed in your love and live in her eternal thanksgiving.

Grant this through Christ our Lord. *R/. Amen.*

SOLEMN BLESSING

Born of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
 the Son of God redeemed mankind.
 May he enrich you with his blessings. *R/. Amen.*

You received the author of life through Mary.
 May you always rejoice in her loving care. *R/. Amen.*

You have come to rejoice at the feast
of the Holy Spouses, Mary and Joseph.

May you be filled with the joys of the Spirit,
and the gifts of your eternal home.

R/. Amen.

May almighty God bless you,

the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit.

R/. Amen.

June 12

Solemnity

Saint Gaspar Bertoni

Priest, Founder

ENTRANCE ANT.

Gal 6:14

May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray...

Father, you inspired your servant and priest,
Gaspar Bertoni,
to dedicate himself to the service of the Church,
living and preaching the sufferings of Christ.
Grant that, following his example,
we may be faithful workers in your vineyard,
and heralds of your word.
We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ,
your Son, who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit,
one God for ever and ever.

R/. Amen.

READING I

Is 61:1-3a

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

The prophet's vocation

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me;
He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly,
to heal the brokenhearted.

To proclaim liberty to the captives
and release to the prisoners,

To announce a year of favor from the Lord
and a day of vindication by our God,
to comfort all who mourn.

To place on those who mourn in Zion
a diadem instead of ashes,

To give them oil of gladness
in place of mourning,
a glorious mantle instead of a listless spirit.

The Word of the Lord.

Or:

ALTERNATE READING I

Sir 2:1-9

A reading from the book of Sirach

You who fear the Lord, trust him.

My son, when you come to serve the Lord,
prepare yourself for trials.

Be sincere of heart and steadfast,
undisturbed in time of adversity.

Cling to him, forsake him not;
thus will your future be great.

Accept whatever befalls you,
in crushing misfortune be patient.

For in fire gold is tested,
and worthy men in the crucible of humiliation.

Trust God and he will help you;
make straight your ways and hope in him.

You, who fear the Lord, wait for his mercy,
turn not away lest you fall.

You, who fear the Lord, trust him,
and your reward will not be lost.

You, who fear the Lord, hope for good things,
for lasting joy and mercy.

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 18:2-3.5-7

R/. I love you, Lord, my strength.

I love you, O Lord, my strength,
O Lord, my rock, my fortress, my deliverer.

R/. I love you, Lord, my strength.

My God, my rock of refuge, my shield,
the horn of my salvation, my stronghold!

Praised be the Lord, I exclaim,
and I am safe from my enemies.

R/. I love you, Lord, my strength.

The breakers of death surged round about me,
the destroying floods overwhelmed me;

The cords of the nether world enmeshed me,
the snares of death overtook me.

R/. I love you, Lord, my strength.

In my distress, I called upon the Lord
and cried out to my God;
From his temple he heard my voice,
and my cry to him reached his ears.

R. I love you, Lord, my strength.

Or:

Alternate Responsorial Psalm

Ps 1: 1-2, 3, 4, 6

R/. Happy are they, who hope in the Lord.

Happy the man who follows not
the counsel of the wicked
Nor walks in the way of sinners
nor sits in the company of the insolent,
But delights in the law of the Lord,
and meditates on his law day and night.

R/. Happy are they, who hope in the Lord.

He is like a tree
planted near running water,
that yields its fruit in due season,
and whose leaves never fade.
[Whatever he does, prospers.]

R/. Happy are they, who hope in the Lord.

Not so the wicked, not so;
they are like chaff which the wind
drives away.
For the Lord watches over the way of the just,
but the way of the wicked vanishes.

R/. Happy are they, who hope in the Lord.

READING II

1Pt 1:3-9

A reading from the first letter of Peter

*He has given us a new birth as his sons,
by raising Jesus Christ from the dead.*

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for

you who by the power of God are safeguarded through faith, to a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the final time. In this you rejoice, although now for a while you may have to suffer through various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that is perishable even though tested by fire, may prove to be for praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Although you have not seen him you love him; even though you do not see him now yet believe in him, you rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, as you attain the goal of (your) faith, the salvation of your souls.

The Word of the Lord.

Or:

ALTERNATE READING II

1 Cor 9:16-19, 22-23

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians

Paul's example

If I preach the gospel, this is no reason for me to boast, for an obligation has been imposed on me, and if I do not preach it! If I do so willingly, I have a recompense, but if unwillingly, then I have been entrusted with a stewardship. What then is my recompense? That, when I preach, I offer the gospel free of charge so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel.

Although I am free in regard to all, I have made myself a slave to all so as to win over as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew to win over Jews; to those under the law I became like one under the law-though I myself am not under the law-to win over those under the law. To those outside the law I became like one outside the law- though I am not outside God's law but within the law of Christ-to win over those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, to win over the weak. I have become all things to all, to save at least some. All this I do for the sake of the gospel, so that I too may have a share in it.

The Word of the Lord.

GOSPEL*Jn 15:9-17***Alleluia***Jn 14:23*

R/. Alleluia.

Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ on behalf of his body, which is the church.

R/. Alleluia.

✠ A reading from the holy gospel according to John

A disciple's love

Jesus said to his disciples:

"As the Father loves me, so I also love you. Remain in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and remain in his love.

"I have told you this so that my joy might be in you and your joy might be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know what his master is doing. I have called you friends, because I have told you everything I have heard from my Father. It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you. This I command you: love one another."

The gospel of the Lord.

Or:

ALTERNATE GOSPEL*Jn 12:24-28***Alleluia***Jn 12:24*

R/. Alleluia.

Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies,
it remain just a grain of wheat;
but if it dies, it produces much fruit.

R/. Alleluia.

✠ A reading from the holy gospel according to John

*If a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies,
it yields a rich harvest.*

Jesus said to his disciples:

"Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me.

"I am troubled now. Yet what should I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name."

The gospel of the Lord.

PRAYER OVER THE GIFTS

Pray brethren...

God, our creator and Father,
may our gifts be pleasing to you
as was the priestly service of Gaspar Bertoni.
Let them become a sign
of our trusting surrender to your will.
Grant this through Christ our Lord.

R/. Amen.

PREFACE

Priest: The Lord be with you.

People: And also with you.

Priest: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them up to the Lord.

Priest: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Father, all powerful and ever-living God,
we do well always and everywhere to give you
thanks, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

You inspire men and women in every age
to be models of holiness for your people,
and to spend themselves in service to your
Church for the spreading of the gospel.

You granted your servant, Gaspar Bertoni,
a share in the sufferings of Christ,
making him a font of true wisdom,
each day joyfully contemplating your revealed word,
and fulfilling your will in upholding
the teachings of your Church.

His example encourages us to fight
the good fight of faith, so that we may one day
share with him the same crown of glory.

With the choirs of angels and saints in heaven,
we proclaim your glory,
and join in their unending hymn of praise.

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

COMMUNION ANT.*Jn 15:13*

No one has greater love than this,
to lay down one's life for one's friends.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray...

Pause for silent prayer, if this has not preceded.

O Lord,
through the Eucharist we have received,
you have given us a share
in the glorious life of Christ.
As we honor your servant, Gaspar Bertoni,
may we learn
to let the generous gifts of your Spirit
bear abundant fruit in us.

We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.

R/. Amen.

PRAYER OVER THE PEOPLE

A. God our Father,
may all Christian people
rejoice in the glory of your saints.
Give us fellowship with them
and unending joy in your kingdom.
We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.

R/. Amen.

And may the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit,
come upon you and remain with you for ever.

R/. Amen.

Or:

B. Lord,

you have given us many friends in heaven.

Through their prayers, we are confident

that you will watch over us always

and fill our hearts with your love.

Grant this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

And may the blessing of almighty God,

the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit,

come upon you and remain with you for ever.

R/. Amen.

APPENDIX

Sample Formulas for General Intercessions

Sample formulas for the General Intercessions

The Sacred Stigmata of our Lord Jesus Christ

Introduction:

Dearest brothers and sisters, the mystery of the death and resurrection of Christ is the proof of an immeasurable love. As we celebrate the Feast of the Sacred Stigmata of our Lord Jesus Christ, a glorious sign of his passion, let us pray that the Father will grant our petitions through the love of his Son.

Intercessions led by the deacon or other minister:

We pray in response: *Lord, save your people.*

1. For the holy Church of God, issuing forth from the pierced side of Christ, that it may live out the richness of his love, we pray...

R/. Lord, save your people.

2. For all Christians, that they may draw joyfully from the springs of salvation, faithfully, fully and effectively sharing in the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, we pray...

R/. Lord, save your people.

3. For peace in the world, that the reconciliation brought about through the blood of Christ, may attain full realization, we pray...

R/. Lord, save your people.

4. For us Stigmatines, who celebrate our titular feast, that we may have the wisdom to see in the Stigmata of Christ the sign of the Father so loving the world as to give his only-begotten Son,
we pray....

R/. Lord, save your people.

5. For the sick, that they may share in the victory of Christ, as now they share in his suffering,
we pray...

R/. Lord, save your people.

6. For our deceased confreres, that Christ, the unspotted Lamb, who offers himself to the Father in this Eucharist, will give them share in his glory,
we pray...

R/. Lord, save your people.

Concluding prayer by the priest:

Father,
hear the cry of suffering humanity, and through the mystery of the death and resurrection of your Son, grant that we may receive, from your mercy, that which earthly powers alone cannot attain.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R/. Amen.

Sample formulas for the General Intercessions

The Holy Spouses, Mary and Joseph

Introduction:

Gathered in faith to celebrate the feast of the Holy Spouses, Mary and Joseph, we pray that God will strengthen within us the resolve to foster the indissoluble unity of the whole human family, which is his will.

Intercessions led by the deacon or other minister:

Our response to each petition is: *Hear us, O Lord.*

1. For the Church, the spouse of Christ, that, resplendent to the world as the sacrament of unity, it may truly build up the one fold under the one shepherd, let us pray...

R/. Hear us, O Lord.

2. For the Pope and the Bishops, that their love for the people of God may be faithful and fruitful, always open to dialogue, as is the love of Christ for his bride, the Church, let us pray...

R/. Hear us, O Lord.

3. For the Stigmatine community, entrusted by Saint Gaspar Bertoni to the protection of the Holy Spouses, Mary and Joseph, that it will grow in merit and number, faithful to the example and teachings of their Founder, let us pray...

R/. Hear us, O Lord.

4. For religious, that they may live their love espoused to Christ in worship, in contemplation and in full and unselfish availability to the people of God, let us pray...

R/. Hear us, O Lord.

5. For all the faithful departed, especially for all deceased Stigmatines, that the day of their espousal with Christ in his kingdom may be hastened, let us pray...

R/. Hear us, O Lord.

6. For all of us gathered here, that we may never lose hope and that we may go with joy toward the day on which, having washed our robes in the blood of the Lamb, we may finally reach nuptials with Christ, let us pray...

R/. Hear us, O Lord.

Concluding prayer by the priest:

Lord,

We ask you to help us, who celebrate the feast of the Holy Spouses, Mary and Joseph, to follow their example in family and society.

May we always be united to you in love and fidelity.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R/. Amen.

Alternative petitions:

- A. For priests, that their freely chosen celibacy may open them to a complete and unequivocal love for the Church, the holy people of God, let us pray...

R/. Hear us, O Lord.

- B. For young people, for engaged couples,
for husbands and wives and families,
that, sustained by the protection of
the Holy Spouses Mary and Joseph,
in the planning, building and forming
of holy families, their homes may become
as little churches,
let us pray...

R/. Hear us, O Lord.

- C. For those celebrating the twenty-fifth
and fiftieth anniversaries of marriage,
that their love will always retain the freshness
and excitement of its beginnings,
overcoming the trials which have arisen
or may arise along the way,
let us pray...

R/. Hear us, O Lord.

Sample formulas for the General Intercessions

Saint Gaspar Bertoni

Introduction:

As we praise and venerate the good and faithful servant of the gospel, Saint Gaspar Bertoni, we ask the Lord's help and protection through his intercession.

Intercessions led by the deacon or other minister:

To each petition we respond: *Lord, hear our prayer.*

1. For the Pope, the bishops and all the holy people of God, that, faithfully striving for holiness, each and every member of the Church may assist and support the other on the journey toward sanctity, we pray...

R/. Lord, hear our prayer.

2. For all Stigmatines, that they may faithfully reflect the spirit and teachings of Gaspar Bertoni, responding to the needs of the people of today, we pray...

R/. Lord, hear our prayer.

3. For priests and deacons, that they may dutifully prepare themselves for their ministry, freely and humbly sharing the gifts they have received, we pray...

R/. Lord, hear our prayer.

4. For religious men and women,
that, in their lives and labors,
they will be true witnesses
to the beatitudes,
we pray...

R/. Lord, hear our prayer.

5. For young people,
that, along the road of life,
they will meet truly faith-filled guides,
who will direct them to respond generously
to the voice of God in their neighbor,
we pray...

R/. Lord, hear our prayer.

6. For missionaries,
and all who share with them the task
of spreading the kingdom of God,
that they may give themselves zealously
to the ministry of proclaiming the gospel,
we pray...

R/. Lord, hear our prayer.

7. For those who suffer in mind or body,
that they may be strengthened
by Gaspar Bertoni's example of
abandonment to the will of God,
finding fulfillment in offering themselves
for the salvation of others,
we pray...

R/. Lord, hear our prayer.

8. For all of us gathered here,
that we may draw strength
from the Eucharist, enabling us to live
in justice and holiness until the day
of the Lord's coming,
we pray...

R/. Lord, hear our prayer.

Concluding prayer by the priest

Lord, listen to our prayer.

Through the intercession and example
of Saint Gaspar Bertoni,

may we give witness by our lives

to what we celebrate in these sacramental signs.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R/. Amen.

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