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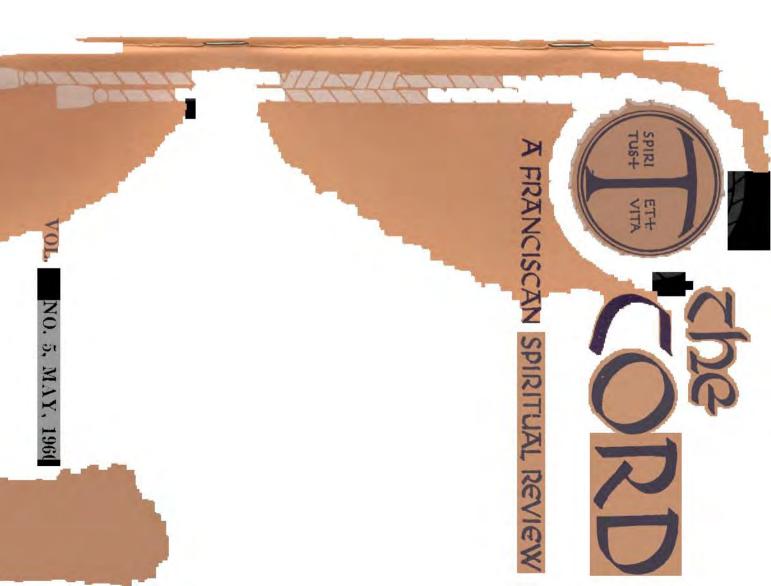


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# The Liturgy of the Holy Mass: I

Father Daniel A. Hurley, O.F.M.

The intense love of his Eucharistic Lord filled the heart of our Father Francis and necessarily included an ardent desire to

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renewing the Sacrifice of the Cross on the altar in their convent chapel.

up the victim through Christ." All the religious of the convent, then, join together with the celebrant of the daily community Mass in Mystical Body. Hence the whole Church can rightly be said to offer

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offer up the Body and Blood of the divine Victim to His heavenly only of our Savior but also of the whole Mystical Body and every one of the faithful." Together with Christ, therefore, we religious daily

our divine Head . . . For here the sacred minister acts in the person not wished to give special evidence of our union among ourselves and with His Mystical members. "Through the Eucharistic Sacrifice our Lord

Father for our own needs and the needs of the whole world. "Now it

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and spiritual life of every member of the convent. <sup>8</sup>Celano, op. cit., p. 236. <sup>4</sup>Pope Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*. <sup>1</sup>Thomas of Celano, Vita Secunda S. Francisci, Analecta Franciscana, X, p. 245.

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your saints, exposed for veneration by your people, afford an opportuni to pay the debt of honor due them, and also to relate the wonds worked by God in their life here on earth.—Your parish-bulletin mig well contain each week some write-up on the saints whose feasts celebrated currently. And it would make a very useful sermon ne and then to comment on the loving wisdom and the ingenuity display by Mother Church in her assembling from the Bible and Tradition the pattern of the prayers at Mass on such a day.—Reading lives saints will often give you good material for argument or exhortati If in your parish there is some benighted parent who denies daughter permission to enter convent life, you might remind him t run away at twenty years to foll St. Teresa of Avila had to her vocation. And think what would have been forever lost to Mot Church if that young girl had meekly taken her selfish father prohibition!—If in your parish birth-control is till too prevalent helps to reminisce about the cowded homes from which the sainte God have always come. That a me Teresa was one of twelve child in her family, and Rose of Lima one of eleven, St. Basil one of St. Louis Bertrand one of nine, and so on and on and on.—If y married parishioners find it hard to fix their eyes on holiness as could point out how St. Elizabeth goal God set for them, you Hungary had three children be ore her widowhood that came so you and so did St. Alphonse Rodriguez before his young wife d joined the Jesuits, had fathered e St. Francis Borgia before he children, and St. Leopold becane a saint although,—or would it rat be because?—he had eighteen

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your saints, exposed for veneration by your people, afford an opportunity to pay the debt of honor due them, and also to relate the wonder worked by God in their life here on earth.—Your parish-bulletin might well contain each week some write-up on the saints whose feasts are celebrated currently. And it would make a very useful sermon now and then to comment on the loving wisdom and the ingenuity displayed by Mother Church in her assembling from the Bible and Tradition the pattern of the prayers at Mass on such a day.—Reading lives of saints will often give you good material for argument or exhortation If in your parish there is some benighted parent who denies hi daughter permission to enter convent life, you might remind him that St. Teresa of Avila had to run away at twenty years to follow her vocation. And think what would have been forever lost to Mothe Church if that young girl had meekly taken her selfish father prohibition!-If in your parish birth-control is till too prevalent, helps to reminisce about the crowded homes from which the saints of God have always come. That same Teresa was one of twelve children in her family, and Rose of Lima one of eleven, St. Basil one of ten St. Louis Bertrand one of nine, and so on and on and on.—If you married parishioners find it hard to fix their eyes on holiness as the goal God set for them, you could point out how St. Elizabeth of Hungary had three children before her widowhood that came so young and so did St. Alphonse Rodriguez before his young wife died St. Francis Borgia before he joined the Jesuits, had fathered eight children, and St. Leopold became a saint although,—or would it rather be because?—he had eighteen.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>Thomas of Celano, Vita Secunda S. Francisci, Analecta Franciscana, X, p. 245. <sup>2</sup>James Meyer, O.F.M., The Words of Saint Francis; Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press. P. 147.

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active and beneficial through a fuller appreciation of the various fruits won by Christ on the Cross. This participation will be more must participate as fully as he can in this great work if he is to receive namely, because they not only offer the sacrifice by the hands of the Sacrifice. elements and their meanings that are embraced in the Eucharistic from this fountain-head of grace an ever-increasing supply of the priest, but also, to a certain extent, in union with him."6 Yet each one in the oblation after their own fashion and in a twofold manner. derived from this supreme act of worship. "Now the faithful participate of the Sacred Victim, so all have a sharing in the benefits to be Since all present at the Holy Sacrifice have a part in the offering

upon the Cross and gave Himself to be the life of the whole world.8 and prayers. The same essential words and actions used by Christ on really) on the altar. The same sacrifice is offered but it is surrounded offers Himself to His heavenly Father, but this time the offering is present and is offered in an unbloody manner . . . For it is one and the offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is "In the divine sacrifice that is offered in the Mass, the same Christ who His heavenly Father ("I lay down my life that I may take it up again. next day, on Calvary, Jesus Christ offered Himself on the Cross to gave His Body and Blood to the Apostles in Holy Communion. The changed the bread and wine into His own Body and Blood; then He took bread and wine and offered them up to His heavenly Father; He the Church has appropriately added. At the Last Supper, Jesus Christ surrounded by a number of prayers and sacred texts and actions which the first Holy Thursday evening are retained in the Mass, but they are has been lengthened and enlarged by the addition of various actions in the Cenacle and on Calvary, but it is made mystically (but just as done in an unbloody manner: the offering is made not physically, as Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, therefore, Christ again, through the priest, same victim." In the Offertory, Consecration and Communion of the No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself."7); He truly died Christ our Savior instituted the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper development during several centuries. The simple ceremony in which Sacrifice of the Mass at the present time is the result of a gradual by many prayers and ceremonies. We can gain a better understanding 5Pope Pius XII, Mediator Dei The sacred ritual which Holy Mother Church uses in the Holy

8cf. 1 John 2, 2.
9Council of Trent, Sess. XXII, chap. 2, Denz. 940.

in their liturgical sequence. make up the liturgy of the Mass. Our purpose, then, will be to consider meditate upon the various prayers and instructions and actions that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass by meditating upon its several elements and enjoy a fuller participation in this Sacrifice of the Altar, if we

the Creed, only the baptized, the faithful, were present. departure for the catechumens was the recitation of the Creed. After dismissed; then the sacrificial part of the Mass began. The point of allowed to come to the beginning and preparatory part of the Mass. haptized) were not permitted to assist at the Holy Sacrifice but were preparing themselves to come into the Church but who had not yet been early days of the Church when the catechumens (those who were "Mass of the Faithful." This division is based upon the practice in the of two broad divisions, namely, the "Mass of the Catechumens" and the When this first part of the Mass was finished, the catechumens were preface our remarks by the general observation that the Mass consists Before considering the individual parts of the Mass, we may

in word or in work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus."10 Holy sacred sign, following the admonition of St. Paul, "Whatever you do this work, the renewal of the "work of salvation" should begin with this is begun with the Sign of the Cross. It is especially appropriate that Cross, the priest says, "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and Salvation. Mass is begun in the Name of the Holy Trinity with the Sign of our of the Holy Spirit. Amen." Every good work is begun well when it heart for the great action of offering sacrifice. Making the Sign of the stands at the bottom of the steps leading up to the altar to prepare his ascending the altar to celebrate the divine Mysteries, the celebrant Holy Mass begins with the prayers at the foot of the altar. Before

speaks in the name of the congregation, the 42nd Psalm, "Judge me, psalm, the priest asks God's help and protection in the face of daily is a certain uneasiness when we realize our sinfulness. In reciting the anticipation of the great privilege of participation in the Eucharistic joy." Such is the spirit with which we approach the altar, with joy in introduction, and indicates the reason for beginning the Mass with this for aid. When he has finished the psalm, the priest-celebrant is mindful trials and he rejoices in the knowledge that God will answer his request Sacrifice. The spirit of joy is in our heart but at the same time there psalm: "Then will I go to the altar of God, the God of gladness and O God," The fourth verse of the psalm is used as an antiphon, or After this beginning, the priest then recites with the server, who

<sup>7</sup>John 10, 18,

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and let my cry come to you."12 Then he goes to the altar and when he Thy people shall rejoice in you. Show us, O Lord, your mercy, and grant us your salvation,"11 Relying upon the goodness of express their confidence that God has heard their prayers and granted of his past faults and sins against God, and, filled with the consciousness of his unworthiness to approach the altar of God, he humbly confesses and of all the saints, deign in thy mercy to pardon all my sins. Amen." beseech thee, O Lord, by the merits of Thy saints whose relices lie here, plea for pardon before beginning the prayers of the Mass: "We mindfulness of the relices in the altar he has kissed and makes a final entombed in the altar. At the same time, his prayer expresses his stone which the builders rejected,"13 and for the saints whose relics are the saints. This kiss symbolizes his deep interest for Christ, the "cornerreaches it he bends over and kisses the altar containing the relics of God, the priest prepares to go to the altar: "O, Lord, hear my prayer, them forgiveness: "You will turn, O God, and bring us to life; the steps to the altar, the priest and people (through the server) guilt and unworthiness to have a part in the sacrifice. Before ascending the server, speaking for the faithful, makes a similar confession of his sins to God, to the angels and saints, and to his fellowmen. Then

Father, etc. Crave, etc." This theme of rejoicing is appropriate because it was on this day, in the early days of the Church, a week after Easter, repetition of the Scriptural verse. The words of the Introit change Holy Communion, still wearing their white haptismal robes that they that the newly baptized marched solemnly for the first time to receive joyfully to God our strength, acclaim the God of Jacob. 15 Glory be to the born babes, Alleluia, pure spiritual milk, Alleluia, Alleluia.14 Sing First Sunday after Easter (also called Low Sunday): "Crave, as newexpressed by the Introit can be seen in the Introit for the Mass of the the day or to the season of the year. An example of the thought with each Mass and indicate the spirit or thought proper to the Mass of Scripture, a verse from a psalm, the "Glory be to the Father," and the much shorter than a whole psalm and consists in a verse from Sacred Mass does not begin with the solemn entry of the clergy, the Introit is entered the sanctuary in solemn procession before Mass. Now that the derives its name from the psalms that used to be sung as the clergy The Introit is the first prayer of the Mass and the word itself comes from the Latin, "introitus", meaning "entrance" or "entry". This prayer 11Ps. 84. 7-8.

12Ps. 101, 1.

18Matt. 21, 42. 14] Pet. 2, 2. 15Ps. 80, 1.

> of the Sunday to be mindful of the glorious resurrection from sin which of Easter this theme of the Introit encourages us throughout the Mass had received at their baptism on Holy Saturday. In the joyful spirit desiring all the spiritual fruits they can receive from the Mass. gave such great joy to the neophytes as they assisted at the Holy Sacrifice

with their one Mediator and High-Priest, Jesus Christ, in this "work we recite the Kyrie eleison. of salvation." These are the sentiments that belong in our hearts when to the Triune God, that they might be permitted to unite themselves to offer up the Holy Sacrifice, that they might be forgiven their offenses for all members of the Mystical Body that they might be made worthy alternate chants, the priest and people fervently beseech divine mercy us; Christ have mercy on us; Lord, have mercy on us." Here, in Persons with a three-fold plea to each Person, "Lord, have mercy on the people pray to Almighty God for mercy, invoking the Three Divine The Kyrie is a shortened form of a litany in which the priest and

newly born into the world. We relive that great moment of God's This cry for mercy is followed by the great hymn of praise, the Gloria. This prayer, or, more properly, this hymn, was first sung by present on the altar hidden under the appearances of bread and wine. again in a few moments at the call of His minister, when He will be Him for the great gift of Himself to us. We anticipate His coming becoming Man and find it difficult to refrain from praising and thanking Bethlehem where we are overjoyed in the Presence of our Savior, The beauty of this hymn of glory brings us in spirit to the Crib of Trinity, and to beg from Him again mercy and to ask Him for peace. Him, to bless Him, to give thanks to Him, to glorify Him in His words added by the Church, to proclaim the glory of God, to adore was born in Bethlehem. We use the words of the angels, together with the angels who were welcoming their Lord when He became Man and We welcome again the Prince of Peace and beseech Him to dwell in

name, he will give it to you."16 To understand this fact, that the Collect in the name of the Church, our prayer offered up to God the Father through the mediation of His Divine Son, in union with the Holy Spirit, marize it all in an official prayer, or oration, or collect. Here we present, heeding the words of Christ, "If you ask the Father anything in my begging His mercy, praising and adoring His majesty. Now we sumdirecting our hearts and our minds to God in prayer, asking His pardon, From our very entrance before the altar of sacrifice, we have been 16John 14, 13. Now we have reached the mid-point of the Mass of the Catechumens.

those things that will be for our own and the Church's spiritual welfare. strive to have the same "mind" as the Church, we will be praying for made to God and unite ourselves with all the members of the Mystical the Collect of the Mass each day to discover the particular petition obtained through the mediation of Christ. We should note carefully prayer presents a petition to God for the benefit of the Church to be the unity of the Holy Spirit, God world without end. Amen." The Thy goodness, always keep its spirit in our life and conduct. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Thy Son, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in we who have now come to the end of the Easter festivities, may through illustrates this point: "Grant, we beseech Thee, O Almighty God, that expressed the theme of the Mass, so the Collect presents the petitions and is asked "through our Lord Jesus Christ." As the Introit has including the priest and the people; it is addressed to God Himself, Body and strive to have the same desires as the Church has. If we of the faithful in keeping with the principal thought or spirit contained the name of all the members of the Church, the "we" in the prayer in that theme. The collect for the Mass of the First Sunday after Easter is the "official" prayer of the Church, we must note that it is expressed in

From this point until the end of the Mass of the Catechumens, our position, or attitude, changes. We are still preparing ourselves for the act of sacrifice which is to come, but our manner of preparation is different. Up to now we have been active, we have been elevating our minds and hearts, we have been praying, we have been "going out", as it were to God. Now our attitude changes: we become more passive, we "sit back and listen," so to speak, we allow ourselves to be instructed, receive the Word of God. We have been speaking to God; now we stop speaking and let God speak to us.

God speaks to us in the Mass, first of all, in the Lesson, or Epistle. This is a reading from the Bible, either the Old Testament or the New Testament. Since this reading is so often taken from the Epistles of St. Paul, this part of the Mass has come to be called the Epistle, even though the selection read might be taken from another part of the Bible. St. Paul was not able to visit all the Christian communities he had established as often as he wished, so he was accustomed to write letters (epistles) to them and these letters would then be read to the people assembled for the Eucharistic Sacrifice. A continuation of this practice resulted in the inclusion of the Epistle in the Mass. Sometimes the other Apostles also wrote letters to distant communities for the same purpose. So, whether the selection read at this part of the Mass is taken from a book of the Old Testament, it is called the Epistle of the Mass. This

reading or Epistle, then, is a lesson read for the purpose of instructing the peoiple. Whether from the Old or New Testament, the lesson is the Word of God as expressed by an inspired writer.

Realizing that the Epistle is read for our instruction, we should listen carefully to the Word of God presented to us. We will discover in this message from God, spoken through the sacred writer, an explanation of a point of doctrine or an encouragement to the practice of a holy life. The lesson that is contained in the Epistle is related in some way to the thought or theme of the Mass of the day as this theme was introduced to us at the Introit. Referring again to the Mass of the First Sunday after Easter, we see from the first words of the Epistle the doctrinal basis of our joy in the Resurrection: "All that is born of God overcomes the world, and this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith<sup>17</sup> The newly baptized (born again to God through baptism) have received the gift of faith and in their new victory over sin, they are strengthened and encouraged by their faith in the risen Christ who overcame the world by "water and blood" of His Sacrifice. We are strengthened in our joy by the testimony of the Son of God.

"Alleluia, alleluia. In the day of my resurrection, said the Lord, I will Alleluia verse is found in the events of our Savior's Resurrection: evident). On the First Sunday after Easter the reason for the joy of the Alleluia verse becomes more solemn (when it is sung, this is more the Mass. In the Easter Season the Gradual itself is omitted and the of special joy united with the reason for joy as found in the theme of the Mass of the day and is followed by the Alleluia verse, an expression the solemn singing of the Gospel. The Gradual repeats the theme of of the people while preparations were being made by the clergy for period of listening to the lessons, or, more likely, to occupy the attention sung by a minister of the Mass who stood on the first step of the ambo from the Latin word "gradus" meaning "step", because it was originally times more in varying combinations. The Gradual takes its name and the Sequence, never all four together, but always one and some-In the meantime, we have the Gradual, the Alleluia verse, the Tract speak to us through the voice of His Son, Jesus Christ, in the Gospel. upon the lesson we have just heard or read. Soon we shall hear God us to learn from this instruction. The Church would have us meditate writings of the Apostles and other Sacred Writers. There is much for go before you into Galilee. 18 Alleluia. After eight days, the doors being (pulpit). This verse was originally sung, perhaps to break up the long In the Epistle, then, God speaks to us and instructs us through the

<sup>171</sup> John 5, 4. 18cf. Matt. 28, 7.

closed, Jesus stood in the midst of His Apostles and said, 'Peace be to you.' alleluia."18

In some Masses, where the Alleluia verse is omitted, the Tract is added and continues the thought already expressed in the Gradual. The Tract generally has a sad or serious theme and is found in Masses during the Lenten season and on the Ember Days. The Sequence is found in the Mass immediately after the Alleluia verse or the Tract. Years ago, there were many Sequences, but at the present time there are only five Sequences in use in the Roman Missal. Whenever it is used, the Sequence represents a more emphatic, more solemn, and more dramatic continuation of the thought in the verses immediately preceding it (literally "sequence" means "verses which follow").

after the Gospel has been read. Since standing is a posture of respect of the Gospel by the priest and the people on the forehead, lips and further demonstrated by the Sign of the Cross made at the beginning of God as spoken by His Son. This great reverence due to the Gospel is of God. We should appreciate this act of the priest as signifying the special blessing from God before announcing the message of the Son note the humility of the priest who, recognizing his lowliness, asks a worthily and in a becoming manner announce His Gospel." We should blessing: "May the Lord be in my heart and on my lips that I may cleanse the lips of the Prophet Isaias with a live coal; vouchsafe, of thy prays: "Cleanse my heart and my lips, O Almighty God, Who didst of God Himself, the celebrant bows before the middle of the altar and prayer, "Munda cor meum." Before pronouncing the words of the Son priest before he dares to read the Gospel, by the recitation of the importance of the Gospel is seen in the special preparation made by the the Gospel in the Solemn Mass. Even today the ceremonies of the we stand to listen to the Son of God speak to us in the Gospel. breast,20 as well as by the kissing of the Gospel-book by the priest great reverence and attention with which we should receive the Word Gospel, Through Christ our Lord. Amen." Then he asks God's Solemn Mass indicate the reverence due the Gospel. In any Mass the Church by the great solemnity which accompanied the singing of importance of the Gospel was demonstrated in the early days of the which God speaks to us through His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. The great mercy, so to cleanse me that. I may worthily proclaim thy The principal lesson or instruction of the Mass is the Gospel, in

Since the Gospel contains the teachings and examples of our Blessed Lord Himself, we ought to listen to it with attention and

20Signifying our readiness to believe, to speak and to love the Word of God.

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reverence. We ought to derive all the profit we can from the words of our Divine Master, grasping them carefully in the same spirit in which they were spoken, and receiving them "as precious balm, in imitation of the Blessed Virgin,21 who 'kept in mind all these words, pondering them in her heart.' "22 The Gospel, too, presents the teaching of Christ that bears upon the particular thought proper to the Mass of the day. In the Gospel of the Mass of the Sunday we have been discussing, we hear described for us the appearance of Jesus to the Apostles after the Resurrection in order that "you may believe . . . and that believing you may have life." The vivid proof of His Resurrection, even to the doubting Thomas, gives us a solid foundation for our joy and increases our desire for the "spiritual milk" of the Gospel.

those who are still looking forward to baptism, the recitation of the Faith. The Creed fittingly climaxes the Mass of the Catechumens. For the finishing touch to our preparation by making a profession of our spiritual and temporal needs. Then we have continued our preparation contrition for our sins, praise of the Triune God, and petition for our prepared our souls through acts of prayer, including confession and one final act to perform in the Mass of the Catechumens. We have from the Church through its divinely appointed teachers.24 Now we put Apostles and Prophets, from Christ, the Great Teacher Himself, and this belief a truly living faith, we are now prepared for the Act of our adherence to these truths revealed by God, and our desire to make profession of faith and a renewal of the belief in the truths which were is a preparation for what is to come, the recitation of the Creed is a truths of the faith they were about to receive in the sacrament of So, before they were dismissed, the catechumens recited the principal Creed was an affirmation of all the truths they must learn and believe. by instruction in the Word of God, receiving this Word from the for the principal truths of our holy Faith. With this firm avowal of with the priest at Mass, we too can renew our belief in and our love the contents of the instructions just received. When we recite the Creed baptism. For the faithful, for whom the part of the Mass just completed Having completed our preparation for the act of sacrifice, we have

<sup>21</sup>St. Francis de Sales, Introduction to a Devout Life, III, 5

<sup>22</sup>Luke 2, 19.

<sup>23</sup>John 20, 31.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup>Here we refer to the sermon, which is not, of course, in the daily Mass, but is a part of the Sunday Mass according to the instruction of the Council of Trent (Sess. XXIV, c. 4).

Rev. Martial Lekeux, O.F.M.

Love of God is practiced in two ways: by acts of virtue and by prayer. Or, as St. Bernard says, by the active and the contemplative life. Or, again as St. Francis de Sales puts it, by an effective love pouring itself out in prayer.

Let us talk about prayer first.

Prayer is the interior movement of the soul uniting the mind and heart to God. It is an elevation of the soul to God and a loving conversation with Him.

Prayer is love; it is above all an activity of the heart. It is of necessity a conversation, the action of two persons,

Prayer is the most essential act of love. It is the act proper of love itself, whereas all other acts are commanded by love, Its movement goes directly toward God, uniting the soul immediately to Him. It is the noblest and the highest act of a human creature. It surpasses all other good works. According to the unanimous teaching of the Doctors of the Church, all Christian life is ordered toward contemplation, which is its end, its aim, and its crown. That is why our Lord called it the one thing necessary and "the best part" (Lk. 10, 42). It is possible to conceive of a uniquely contemplative life as a perfect one, but sanctity without prayer does not make sense.

He who wishes to sanctify himself must pray much and learn how to pray well. This is of primary importance.

Perhaps this is just where pious souls experience their greatest difficulty. At least, there are more complaints on this score, more "things are not going right at all for me," more admissions of helplessness.

This is rather surprising because, since we were created to love God, and since the love finds its expression in prayer, it would seem that prayer ought to be the most natural and therefore the easiest thing in the world. Yet, many fervent souls wonderfully disposed, run into insurmountable obstacles regarding prayer. Despite their efforts, prayer for many is synonymous with distraction, boredom, even sleep.

Perhaps if we try to discover the causes of this singular phenomenon, we may be able to prescribe a remedy.

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Prayer was defined as the act proper to love. Everything, then, which hinders or weakens the love of God will interfere with prayer. We have already pointed out two great causes of weakness in regard to charity. The first is lack of faith, for love is built on faith. The second is self-love, which chains the heart and interferes with its natural function. Self-love is the natural enemy, the reverse and contradiction of the love of God. It prevents detachment from the things of the world. The flight of the heart toward God is made impossible.

of the world. The flight of the heart toward God is made impossible. Are not these the real reasons for your difficulties in prayer? Is it not because you lack a lively faith that God remains a stranger to you and that conversation with Him has no appeal? It is not because of immoderate attachments that your soul, instead of being centered on Him, wanders all over, swept along by all those objects which attract your heart? It is sometimes worthwhile to analyze these distractions which filter into your prayers. They show you concretely those things to which the heart is attached, and help you put your finger on the real source of difficulty.

finger on the real source of difficulty.

This, then, is the first conclusion and the first remedy: If you wish to make prayer easier and banish distractions, do something to strengthen your spirit of faith and detachment. The means suggested in the preceding chapters can also be put into practice here. As they begin to produce their effect, prayer will become easier, more fervent, less interrupted by sleep, less encumbered by distractions. This primary factor of failure is by far the principal one. Remove it, and prayer will be much easier.

A second cause of failure is partitioning — "pigeonholing." Too many people look upon prayer as an exercise of devotion completely unrelated to other good works, as divorced and isolated from the rest of their life. They spend the entire day without thinking of God. When the time comes for their half hour of prayer, they close the curtains and begin to pray. The result: their souls are vacuums. They are at sea. Busy as they have been for hours on end with something entirely different, their souls begin to act like bucking-bronchos. The change is too sudden. What happens? Distractions break through. The old enemy is back!

Prayer cannot be isolated from life. It is life. Since love must be continuous, prayer, its act, must be continuous. We must always be in the state of prayer. Prayer must permeate our whole life. Then, when we do retire to pray, we will pray spontaneously, because we were praying before we began to pray. We simply continue more freely and more intensely an act which our soul has been busy with for a long time. If we would pray at the time of prayer, we must pray always.

A third source of difficulty lies in the false ideas certain people have regarding prayer and in wrong methods of prayer.

For some souls prayer is complicated.

They cram it with ever so many diverse elements. They multiply acts of faith, love, and contrition, acts of the intellect, of the imagination, and so forth. As a result, prayer becomes an inhuman work — a sort of spiritual algebraic problem. Prayer must be a human act and not a spinning wheel or a Chinese puzzle. The simpler it is the better.

Others make prayer artificial. They feel obligated to meditate on the subject designated in the meditation book for that particular day. And so they force themselves to meditate on a specific subject, although it is diametrically opposed to their spiritual needs and to their present state of mind. Prayer must always be natural, practical, adapted to the situation and the interests of the moment.

For some it is superficial. They choose a subject, and conscientiously reel off the thread of their method of meditation, going over the different points like a school boy reciting his lesson. They draw up considerations, resolutions, and affections. While this superficial work is going on, their mind is as lazy as if it were reciting the multiplication tables. Although they think they have prayed, they have done absolutely nothing. They are no better after such a meditation than before it. Prayer must have a purpose. It must be alive and personal.

Besides these real difficulties, there are imaginary ones. Some good souls think that "things are not going night," whereas they are. We shall come back to this point a little later on.

First, let us examine very briefly how we can "always pray" (Lk. 18, 1), and what we should do in order to pray well.

The Master has told us that we "must always pray and not lose heart" (Lk. 18, 1). What does the word "always" mean? Must we recite our rosary from morning till night? Or keep our noses in a prayer-book all day long? Certainly not. Conscience would soon berate us regarding the duties of our state in life. We must pray always, but we must work too. Hence work must be made a prayer. We must eat. Eating must be a prayer. Everything must be prayer. Everything must be prayer.

Is this very difficult? First, let us redefine prayer. It is union with God. in mind, will, and heart — not only through grace whereby He dwells in us, but by deliberate movement of our faculties toward Him. Well then, how do we unite ourselves with God while we work?

As a model, we can take the humblest and most glorious person in the world, the holiest creature angel eyes have ever rested on. The home is a poor one. In the kitchen the mother is preparing dinner,

with the utmost care, conscientiously dividing her attention among the various kettles. There is nothing very elevating about that, is there? But look at her face. There is a loving smile constantly transfiguring it. Although she is going from one thing to another, her eyes are always drawn toward a certain corner of the room where she is working. Her child is there and His name is Jesus. That is where her heart is. He is the attraction of her eyes, of her motherly and saintly heart. Mary works and prays all day long. Her work does not interfere with her prayer, nor her prayer with her work. On the contrary, under His gaze and for Him she makes greater efforts. If, at the moment, she is so attentive in preparing a tiny delicacy, it is not because she is making it for herself, but for Him, her adorable and adored One. What exquisite pleasure to prepare a dessert for her Son and her God!

How beautiful and how simple this is! Who cannot imitate such a plain, yet sublime model? Picture yourself at work: while writing, arranging things, digging, baking, sewing, cooking, you can say: "My God, this is for You." Of a sudden, the humble work you were doing jumps from earth to heaven. It becomes a prayer. Everything can be sanctified in that same way, transformed into prayer. You can "always pray and not lose heart" (Lk. 18, 1). "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or do anything else, do all for the glory of God" (I Cor. 10, 31). We now clearly understand our Saviour's command to "always pray."

It is all very simple, very wonderful. Don't envy the Blessed Mother at Nazareth, nor St. Joseph, nor St. John, nor St. Magdalene. Jesus is just as near to you as He was to them. Not only is He near you, He is in you in a mysterious way, divinely active, looking at you, directly acting on your soul, giving you His divine life. Union with Him is always possible. Nazareth is ever present. You can love Him just as Mary did. The only thing necessary is to turn your thoughts toward Him.

"That's the difficulty," you might be thinking. Yes, it is a difficulty and it certainly is humiliating for us. But as you progress in faith and become more detached, you will remember to do this more often. Practice makes perfect. Acquiring the habit will be another help. If you really find it difficult to remember to do this, use some of those memory techniques suggested in the chapter on interior reform. Be humble enough to use them. Invent some of your own signs and memory-aids. Make them important. You will feel better for doing so.

How shall you word your prayer? In the way most helpful to you, in the way best suited. Use vocal prayers generously, if they increase your devotion. If they bog you down, drop them. Choose some readymade formula, or something your own soul might suggest. But above all, let these aspirations, these adorations, these offerings, brief, simple,

and prayer becomes the breath of the soul. the soul becomes so accustomed to them that they well up spontaneously directed heavenward continuously. Such ejaculatory prayers, repeated and fervent as they are, conform to your present state of soul, and be throughout the day, foster and renew the spirit of prayer. In the end,

are united. You are praying. Pleasing our Lover is as simple as that! thing. As soon as you start talking to Him, He is happy. You and He interest you. Talk about the weather. Sure, why not? Talk about anymoment. Tell him your joys, your troubles, the little nothings which Be practical. Speak to Jesus about the work you are doing at the

of the Imitation: "When Jesus is there, all is good." You will reach the stage where you will not be able to dispense with it. You will be happy. first. Do it. As this holy intimacy with Christ grows, it will become more and more pleasant. You will experience the truth of these words amount of courage suffices to do a hundred times what was done once. Your ship will be in full sail. It is no harder the hundredth nor the nine hundredth time than the what you are doing. A little good will is all that is needed. A minimum have to be the Little Flower to say: "Jesus is here," and then offer Him What is there to stop you from doing so simple a thing? You don't of the presence of God and of union with Him. Why don't you start? Of sovereign importance in the life of a Catholic is this exercise

natural to us. of God. There is nothing astonishing about this. Prayer is perfectly down, that your mind can rivet itself much more easily on the things are going much better, that the whirlwind of distractions is calming Now, what method of meditation will you use? This is an engross-At prayer-time, when you kneel to pray, you will notice that things

The Art of Prayer. I shall have to limit myself to a few brief indications, hoping, please requires a special treatise, so badly have writers confused the point ing question for pious souls. While basically quite simple, the answer God, to treat the matter at greater length in another book entitled

present needs. Try several, until you discover the one that was made which best suits your mentality, which best adapts itself to your practical. Once these qualities are acquired, any method of meditating for you. is good, provided it is good for you. It is up to you to choose the one I have already said that prayer must be simple, natural, and

are a guarantee of its excellence. Do you prefer the Sulpician method? Do you like the Ignatian method? Good. The fruits it has produced

> salesman and its guarantee. simplicity and seraphic love of Christ. The "Poverello" was and is its than a rigorous method which fetters rather than helps. Or there is the complicated, less organized methods are more suited to simple souls artificial and lazy formalism already pointed out. To begin with, attention and stimulate your devotion. One thing bears mentioning, Franciscan school with its old traditional method of the two virtues of Ask Cassian or St. Augustine how our forefathers prayed. Their less difficult to accommodate yourself to their methodical mental processes. these dangers are not part of the method. Perhaps you find it very If you follow these methods, see that you avoid the exertion or the Very well, then. Continue with it as long as it helps to keep your

If you are looking for a simple method, here, briefly, is how you

with Him. Then, go on talking; continue to talk to Him. First of all, become very aware of the presence of God - this is

at the time. Those are the things to talk about. When two friends meet, interests. Do the same with God. "You are my friends," (John 15, 14) they quickly find a subject for conversation. They talk about their some worry of the moment, something you are very much interested in You are praying. Ask Him to help you hold a pleasant conversation the essential thing - and then speak to Him: "Lord, I adore Thee." What about? Look into your heart; notice what rises spontaneously,

You will be meditating on your life, with God. Such a prayer will be examen, but under His watchfulness, keeping constantly in mind that essary accompanying resolutions. In other words, make a particular out how to avoid the same pitfall in the future. Then, form the neccommitted some fault. Either one is an excellent point to start with. this meditation you have been very distracted, or that you have fruitful and is the opposite to "pigeonholing." He is there. Ask Him to enlighten your mind and strengthen your will. better. In an effort to be sincere in your promise, you will try to find Quite naturally, you will ask His forgiveness and will promise to do He said. Speak to Him as a friend. For instance, your first thought might be that for hours preceding

no specific resolutions, it still is very efficacious. Love has increased; by introducing unrelated thoughts. Even if such a prayer formulates sentiment free reign as long as it lasts. Do not thwart its momentum the driving force is stronger; its effects will be apparent in your life. feeling of love comes over you. In that case, prayer is easy. Give this Or it may happen that, at the very outset of your meditation, a

But it can happen that no interesting thought or sentiment

Ask your Blessed Mother to sustain you and inspire you. Should it be aroused within you. Or think of Jesus' Eucharistic life, especially if mysteries of Christ's life, on His cruel Passion. Follow the sequence suggests nothing to you, then look elsewhere, like the mystic bee of example, you might recall that in a preceding meditation some aspect going well with you. The soul has its dull days. All is a void, and, in the easier for you to talk to her rather than to Him, do so. He who finds you are praying before the tabernacle. Graces of love radiate from it Cross, until love, compassion, contrition, and holy resolutions are of events either in the Gospel story or according to the Stations of the to be transformed into the honey of love. By preference dwell on the St. Francis de Sales going from flower to flower, seeking only thoughts the goodness of God. Return to it, and use it again. If, this time, it of the Crib touched you, or something regarding the prodigal son or suggests itself. Look for something, then, to spark your fervor. For Despite all these attempts, it may still happen that things are not practical and practiced. The best resolutions are those which can some resolutions, either general or particular ones. Let them be of duties should be an elongation of prayer. You have just made

a different flavor. The Imitation of Christ is a wonderful primer for to Him about what you are reading. The text will immediately take on that time. Read it slowly, attentively, always under His glance. Speak

something which most likely will shake off your lethargy or touch you at

take a spiritual book. Do not open it just any place, but look for void, distractions are doing a Spanish dance. In such circumstances,

Instead of that, you can recite some prayer slowly, for example,

ever-present. Pause briefly after each one, until some thought hits you with your lips even though it does not come from your heart. It is "Jesus . . . Jesus . . . Jesus." Repeat this prayer indefinitely. Repeat it very well that I love You; Lord, help me, please." Or more simply: God, I adore you; Jesus, I love You, I want to love You . . . You know the flint rubbing the stone. Even if no spark is forthcoming, your prayer more than the others. It will furnish you with a more lengthy subject for conversation. Perhaps even that will not work. Use an ejaculatory prayer: "My

the Our Father or a psalm. Address each petition or verse to Jesus

"Really?" Yes, because God is satisfied with it. Far from getting discouraged, rest assured that everything is going well. your best. "Yes, my best . . . And after that?" That's all. That's suffcient. Here a word must be said regarding imaginary difficulties and

acts of love during that time. done your best. Moreover, it is very likely that you will make some is still good; you will have prayed very well just the same. You have Worth-while prayer does not depend on your dispositions, however we are praying the entire time. Only the good Lord would draw up your distractions." We do what we can, and even if we fall asleep, "For You, Lord." "Well, you did pray to Me for an hour, despite all thing alone suffices - good will.

seconds is the best you can do. Even ejaculatory prayers cease to run Long hours are spent without being able to recapture the thought of traction - work, conversation, meals, visitors, recreation - everything. thing is the result, not the means. A method is made for devotion and use it. It is a question of circumstances and temperaments. The important suggestions. To repeat, if you find another method more successful, continual prayer. In that way prayer and life eventually are fused. how this has its repercussions on prayer, and prayer in its turn reacts on of your meditation must be a resolution to continue your prayer. A God. During prayer-time you find it impossible to concentrate. Thirty nothing succeeds, not even the presence of God nor prayer under any not devotion for a method. half-hour has been spent — with God. Return to your daily life — with be applied immediately. And there is this point also - the conclusion form. During the day, despite all your efforts, everything is a dispray, this is the way we would pray. All that has been offered here are natural way to pray. If we had never had any instructions on how to Him. This brings you back to the point - continual prayer. You see There is a final case to be considered — namely, the time when There is nothing remarkable in what I have just said. It is the

nothing I can do . . ." Excuse me, but there still remains for you to do not end up as snores. And you are discouraged. "You see, there's through your mind. You consider yourself fortunate when they do

prayer from beginning to end. While lamenting over it, our Lord said to her: "My daughter for whom were you kneeling during that hour?" failures. This is where it is important to remember that with God one I no longer remember what saint it was who was distracted during

such a labor-contract. The reason is that He alone is perfectly reasonable and perfectly

must be a coupling between the end of the exercise and the hours

One more point. For prayer to have an impact on your life, there

wretched they may be.

sick, do we ask him to do his homework and to be extremely polite? No. God does not demand that they do. You stand before Him like a sick We pity him and take care of him. When "things are not going right," weaknesses so well! In a word, He understands us. When a child is just. He alone knows exactly what He can expect of us. He knows our

say. "Isn't that awful?" Awful? Do you realize what you are saying? He is happy. Let that suffice. A mother loves to rock her sleeping child. Him, you may not rejoice in His presence, but He rejoices in yours. Involuntary distraction does not wound Him in any way. You may feel virtue. You are not deliberately distracted. Therefore, don't be disturbed. You are in the state of grace. The Blessed Sacrament acts by its own That is just where He does not need your collaboration to act in you. child. He looks at you with infinite compassion and loves you the more. "Even at Holy Communion I am terribly distracted," you may

had a good day. Believe me, keep on. You are on the right road. easier to you. The acts amply compensate for the distractions. You have involuntary, and ten times more meritorious than those which come acts of union with God which you made are, on the contrary, quite distractions are involuntary, at least the majority of them. The three never raise your thoughts to God. Besides. think this over. All your Tomorrow it may be four. If you give up trying altogether, you will least it is three times. Your guardian angel has recorded it. Keep on. Jesus rocks you. Sleep in His arms and let Him smile on you. Today, you thought of the presence of God only three times? At

going well." "When things go wrong, they are propitious and fruit-bearing. That is the time when the wheat, hidden It will come in its own good time. Here is what you should know, in the bosom of the earth, germinates. The harvest alone remains That is when you are progressing most. These periods of trial are really beautiful surges of sensible fervor. You think you are not progressing especially meritorious. Our efforts are more efficacious than the most eestasy. We are, then, in good company. The good will we show is are periods of germination, preparing for more perfect prayer. St. Teresa spent twelve years fighting distractions before she ever had an They purify our self-love and lead us to a pure and simple faith. They normal to our life. They are necessary. They force us to greater efforts. These difficult periods which you bemoan so much are absolutely

God do the rest. it end? We shall see. Very far, farther than you think. For the moment, be satisfied with doing your best, humbly and courageously, and let And the result of all this? You will go on progressing. Where will

Translated by: Father Paul Joseph Oligny, O.F.M.

## Crosses Over Nagasaki: VII

Father Gerard Huber, O.F.M

#### The Irritated Tiger

spirits," as a Japanese historian describes him. introspective; in short, he was "a man who combined in himelf six excessively gay and pleasure-seeking, then again deeply melancholy and kind and amiable one moment, frightening and disconcerting the next; glory. Liberal and large-hearted, yet inconstant and inconsiderate; burns himself out before he can pass on to his son the brightness of his the darkness of obscurity, runs his course with terrifying speed, and figures in Japanese history. Like a meteor, he suddenly flashes out of Without doubt, Toyotomi Hideyoshi is one of the most heroic

the homage of these humble ambassadors of Christ. by a glittering host of nobles and warriors. Thus solemnly he received Taikosama sat enthroned in remote splendor and majesty, surrounded and fifteen scholastics. In the huge reception hall of his castle, the who appeared before Hideyoshi accompanied by four lay brothers for the first time This was the Jesuit missionary, Father Caspar Coelho, work peacefully. On May 4, 1585, Hideyoshi received a Christian priest justified their joyous hope that under his rule they would be able to toward Christianity. His first contact with Christian missionaries are to a large extent responsible for his constantly shifting attitude Those baffling, contradictory elements in Hideyoshi's character

men and have sent them to us. Only the best artisans in the country are guests: "From all parts of the country the daimyo have chosen these in the century. With childish boastfulness Hideyoshi explained to his five thousand laborers were always at work, the most skilled craftsmen working here." to become the largest and most beautiful building in all Japan. Some where his new eastle was then being built. According to his plans it was luxury that surrounded him, and then took them on a tour of Osaka personally through his private chambers, showing them the dazzling and gay, he conversed familiarly with his guests. Then he led them ago no one hardly dared breathe, underwent a complete change. Affable lavishly entertained. Here Hideyoshi, in whose presence a few minutes his companions were conducted to another room where they were After the elaborate ceremonial of the audience, Father Coelho and

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uncontrolled spread of Christianity in Japan. His friendly attitude

Apparently, however, the Taikosama never really favored the

of the foreign missionaries. This hope, however, was frustrated by the to have all Christian churches destroyed. command to have the missionaries deported within twenty days and ment and brought it to a flaming rage. The consequence was his sudden with an almost diabolical passion, worked on Hideyoshi's disappont same evening, the bonze-physician, Jakuin, who hated Christianity refusal of the Portuguese captain to take his ship to Hakata. On the

hoped to obtain both the arms and the ships through the mediation Portuguese. Moreover, he was in need of large troopships. He had firearms, which had been brought to Japan for the first time by the planning the Korean campaign and needed war material, particularly first originated from practical considerations. At that time he was

of the bonzes, and openly defended Christian doctrine in the presence a church and a monastery for them, protected them against the attacks contained in a letter dated October 25, 1595: "At the beginning of the of one instance of Hideyoshi's public statements on Christianity. It is of his notables. The Jesuit, Father Frois, has left us a detailed account the Franciscans with his benevolence, gave them every liberty, built

since no one could be sure what they really intended, being traitors different from yours. I have often associated with these priests and "No; what you say is not true. You are in error. My opinion is very and revolutionists in disguise. Hideyoshi shook his head and said: and the barbarian priests permanently banished from the country, that the Christian heresy should be wiped out as soon as possible in Nagoya. One of the daimyo, a notorious hothead, made the remark from all over the country for a council of war. The meeting was held Korean campaign," he wrote, "the Taikosama gathered the daimyo

religion spreads too widely in this country, Shintoism and Buddhism gradually the daimyo and their wives and children also began to believe classes accepted the new religion, which fact concerned me little. But will perish. This is what I dreaded. In the beginning only the lower and reject their teachings with contempt. If therefore the Christian in it. Then I was gravely concerned and forbade it." lands. Those people despise our deities and the Hotoke of our religion The Christian religion, together with its priests, comes from foreign

this religion and banished its priests had an entirely different basis there is nothing of evil in it. The reason why I had previously prohibited have observed their religion, also. Though it is unreasonably strict

These words of Hideyoshi reveal the deeper reason for his

The missionaries are spies for their king; after the priests come the

religion it was good, but it would efface the stamp that Shintoism and destructively invade the existing inner structure of the state. As a Buddhism had given the country. Therefore it was a danger to rejection of Christianity. It was for him a foreign religion which would

religion, they would create an entirely new power group within the

the great ones of the empire, the daimyo and nobles, professed this it, since for them there was no question of right or authority. But if

Japanese culture and to the Japanese state. The masses could accept

recently brought to terms and consolidated into a unified whole. ruling caste, that proud and restive class that Hideyoshi had so

to the old cults that made but few and relatively easy demands on austere laws of Christianity, while the others, who like himself, clung precisely the best among the nobles who were now bowing under the very ancient nobility-but also by learning and culture. And it was him not only by the privilege of descent-in many cases from the He felt only too keenly that his feudal princes were all superior to

Six years later the drama was re-enacted. Hideyoshi overwhelmed

above whom there should be no power in all Japan, obedience to strict refused Christianity because it had the boldness to demand of him,

continual reproach to their self-indulgent way of living. Thus Hideyoshi

human nature, rejected and even hated Christianity, seeing it as a

considers that he had three hundred concubines in the castle of Osaka me, unacceptable." His attitude is more clearly understandable when one laws and moral norms. "A good religion," he once remarked, "but for

Had he possessed more stability and self-control, had he not been the Hideyoshi was unquestionably a man of high intellectual stature.

hours of moody irritability, on days of morbid melancholia when to arouse him against the Christians. Always in critical moments, in in Japan. Thus he watched his master's changing moods for opportunities ends he desired. His desire at the moment was to destroy Christianity to play on the weaknesses of his master's character to gain whatever Jakuin, the evil genius Hideyoshi was so helpless to resist, knew how have been a persecution of Christianity in Japan. But the clever toy of his own swiftly changing passions, perhaps there would never religion; it will make us foreigners to ourselves." And the most is a danger to the state, which you have unified under your sovereignty with great power and wisdom." And again: "Christianity is a foreign Jakuin was at his side whispering the maddening refrains:: "Christianity Hideyoshi distrusted everyone and bordered close to despair, the sly

terrifying thought of all-Christian priests are spies: "The spread of Christianity is equivalent to a spiritual conquest by a foreign power.

soldiers to complete the conquest of our nation." With these and similar whisperings, Hideyoshi, like an irritated tiger, was goaded on to attack his victim. Although he had refused to listen to Jakuin's accusations in the beginning, he began to waver in his attitude as his physical health declined. Fear and distrust grew in his tortured heart. "As long as I am alive," he confessed to Jakuin, "there will be no danger. But I must safeguard the rights of my son and heir. I must provide for his safety in due time." This thought became an obsession with the sick man, and Jakuin made use of it to the full.

overthrow your sovereign power and to destroy our religion and our either take a firm stand against these foreigners or you may be sure enough before; this time he merely put it into the mouth of a Spaniard. "My lord," he pleaded with Hideyoshi, "it is time for you civilization. It is equivalent to enslaving ourselves to Spain." Japan will meet the same fate as New Spain, Peru, and the Philippines. sufficient proof. It is ready for an attack and was bold enough even to empire. If other proofs are lacking, the presence of this ship alone is overwhelmed with honors and benefits are the worst enemies of your soldiers of the king of Spain. This was an elaboration conceived by To leave them at liberty any longer is equivalent to allowing them to These priests are spies, these so-called heralds of the Lord of Heaven. land on the coast of Urado. What more proof do you need? You must to tear off the veil that covers your eyes. These priests whom you have Jakuin; nor was it a new idea. He had made the same statement often the Franciscan missionaries were spies sent to clear the way for pilot of the San Felipe no doubt meant to intimidate the Japanese, it is affair to Hideyoshi, with a few thoughtful embellishments. While the ship and her passengers and cargo suffered harm. Jakuin reported the governor of Osaka and to threaten him with the power of Spain if the beyond belief that he or anyone else on the ship would have said that de Sanda, displayed the map of the Spanish empire to impress the by the piratical trick of the daimyo of Tosa, the ship's pilot, Francesco of Urado, it proved a wonderful stroke of luck for Jakuin. Angered When the Spanish galleon San Felipe was stranded in the harbor

The skillful repetition of these arguments at length shattered the trust Hideyoshi had up to then placed in the Franciscan missionaries. He ended by believing the whispers. Broken and worn by disease and depressed by the terrible disasters that had just befallen the country, Hideyoshi, with a final heroic gesture, once more hurled terror into the hearts of the Japanese people. He gave an order that has made his name more famous in history than all his military campaigns and

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political achievements. To this fame, however, clings innocent blood the blood of the holy Protomartyrs of Japan.

#### The List of the Four Thousand

Hideyoshi's benevolence, would never have thought that any change in his attitude could have come about so suddenly. The report of the impending persecution left them bewildered and at first incredulous. They themselves had left their native country and everything dear to them in this world for love of God and their fellow-men. They were quite ready for any sacrifice, even the supreme sacrifice of their lives. But they were grieved at the thought that the Church which they loved above all earthly things should have made such wonderful progress in Japan only to face destruction now at the command of a sick man. With confidence in God, however, they awaited coming events, knowing that they had fulfilled their duty to the best of their ability. Everything done for love of God and man is lifted out of the sphere of the transitory it. This conviction gave them peace and courage.

reason!" The Christians thought from this that he did not fully undernonsense? Why should I go to Nagasaki now? Give me one good in exasperation, he said to them: "Why do you keep talking such much as they tried to persuade him, the more firmly he refused. Finally, and houses of the Jesuits and Franciscans. They pleaded with him to leave the district at once, for he was in great personal danger. But as warned him that the shogun had ordered guards to watch the churches returning to the mission house, he met a group of Christians who morning of December 8 he made a few calls in the city. As he was the house of the Jesuits in that city to spend the night. On the accompanied the bishop to Osaka, and from the harbor had gone to ordered the governors of Osaka and Kyoto to guard the houses of the missionaries and to make a list of their names. Father Organtino had leaving behind. The day following the bishop's departure, Hideyoshi of December 7, not without deep anxiety over the missionaries he was return to his official residence. He left the harbor of Osaka the evening to sail from Osaka, he hastened to make use of this opportunity to Nagasaki, his episcopal city, was necessary, and since a ship was about the city. Believing that when danger threatened, his presence in his return to Nagasaki when the news of the coming persecution reached Sacrament of Confirmation to the new Christians, was preparing for Bishop Martinez, who was just then in Kyoto and had given the

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and also Father Organtino, arrived; but neither lives here permanently. They live in Kyoto. They are here only as guests." Last night the official interpreter of the shogun, Father Rodriguez, But at present only the Japanese Jesuit, Brother Paul Miki, lives here. "This house is my property. I have lent it to the priests for their use.

a respectful bow and wrote only the name of Brother Paul Miki. Then he left with his soldiers. The officer, who knew the knight personally, thanked him with

God in himself and in others. This saintly youth is one of the most could not reach by personal contact, and also books for the newly he wrote a number of apologetical and ascetical tracts for those he the faith through his preaching was very great. In addition to preaching, belief and of his glowing eloquence. The number of those who found unbelief, no one could withstand the persuasive power of his own firm or when he described the ugliness of vice and the peril of deliberate and deep knowledge, the truth and beauty of the doctrines of Christ, stood preaching amidst the people, pointing out with youthful ardor him in public debate had to face the shame of utter defeat. When he and skillful in defense of the faith. Many a bonze who tried to meet and modesty, sincere and grave in his speech and conduct, eloquent charged with the office of catechist. He was a man of great humility bation, he pronounced his vows and at the age of twenty-one was Society of Jesus as a lay brother. After completing the time of proearthly riches and honors. He left his father's house and entered the took part in the campaign of Satsuma and met death on the battle of the year, when he had just reached the age of twenty, his father progress not only in learning but also in virtue and piety. In the spring and piety of the boy and sent him to the Jesuit school in Azuchiyama. missionary in his native town. The missionary noticed the intelligence beautiful fruits Christianity brought forth in Japan. Modern Catholic Miki worked with tireless zeal for the unfolding of the kingdom of In penance and personal holiness, by example, word, and writing, Paul baptized to strengthen and deepen their understanding of the faith. father dearly. For the first time he felt intensely the folly of seeking field. This made a deep impression on the youth, who had loved his At the age of five he received baptism together with his parents. At There Paul studied with great intelligence and made remarkable the age of eleven he became an acolyte, serving Mass for the He was the son of a samurai from Tokushima in the province of Awa. had heard much about this eloquent and zealous teacher of Christianity. Paul Miki was not unknown in Osaka. Christians and pagans both

understood Father Organtino's intentions, they could only weep silently. God and not to give in to unreasonable sorrow." When the Christians for me. As for you, I ask you to resign yourselves to the holy will of I will return to Kyoto tomorrow and there wait for whatever is in store may become ever more firm and strong. And since this is my intention. I will offer my death to God that the faith of the Christians in Japan Him, then I will gladly seal my confession of faith with my blood. And twenty years for our holy faith. If God gives me the grace to die for I have travelled to reach Japan, and have labored here for more than world . . . as merely a handful of dust. Over many thousands of miles highest good, I regard as no better than any of the other goods of this for the glory of God. This earthly life, that so many people hold as the my will, I shall certainly not leave Kyoto. I shall gladly offer my body I long to be counted among the favorites of the Lord. If it depends on friend's distress, and shook his head slowly. "No," he said, "I am not region at once!" But the aged Father Organtino only smiled at his know that. Please, if you hope to save your life you must leave this If you stay in Kyoto, or anywhere in this neighborhood, you will surely all missionaries in Kyoto arrested and punished—perhaps put to death? earnestly. "Father, don't you know that the shogun is going to have noble stepped directly in front of the old priest and addressed him They had no words with which to answer the old priest. leaving. I am very willing to give my life as a sacrifice for the faith. be crushed under the rolling rock. The danger is very great; we all stand the danger of the situation and tried to clarify it. A Christian

said with a smile, "but I'm sure it will not be necessary to go to Kyoto us; then we can meet death together." for that purpose. We can just as well wait here for the shogun to arrest his hand on his shoulder. "I am also willing to become a martyr," he group. In the ensuing silence, he stepped up to his confrere and placed While Father Organtino was talking, Father Rodriguez joined the

by the Christians, went off in high spirits to the mission house. The two priests shook hands in agreement, and then, accompanied

and surrounded them. An officer, holding a large writing block and this house. If you refuse to cooperate, it will only injure your cause." missionaries living here. Tell me truthfully how many men live in I am here by command of the shogun to list the names of the brush, stepped in front of them and said: "People, listen calmly to me. the Jesuit mission. Suddenly the soldiers of the governor appeared Meanwhile, a large group of Christians had gathered in front of

knight. Andrew Ogasabara, who had received baptism only six months A tall and dignified man of about sixty came forward. It was the

youth in Japan has done well in choosing Paul Miki as patron and

persuade him to hide in a remote place in the country, for the city was he, too, would be arrested. His youngest son, especially, tried to saved from death, had hardly returned home when some Christian saved Fathers Organtino and Rodriguez from being registered and thus no longer safe. But the old knight refused to hear of any such plan. friends came to him and urged him to flee from the city, since no doubt The knight, Andrew Ogasabara, who by his courageous answer had

His life for us!" much greater is the honor to die for God, Whose Son has first given "If it is a great honor to give one's life for one's sovereign, how

"But the young man would not give in so easily, and tried to appeal to the old warrior's heart. "Father," he replied, "if you die for God, it will be without combat or resistance."

"What? I, die without resistance?"

honorable combat." "Yes, father; you will be slaughtered like a coward, not slain in

certainly it will be counted as dying for God." "Come, let us go to the priests. When the soldiers show up to arrest them, we will put up a fight. And if we fall in this struggle, then with two swords in his belt. Grasping his son by the elbow, he urged: his room. When he reappeared, he was clothed in his best garments The old warrior pondered in silence for a time, then retired to

to safety in the country. To save life is also a virtue." protected as far as possible. Listen to my counsel; take me with you deliberately seek death; that cannot be the will of God. Life must be "But, father," the youth objected, "a Christian is not allowed to

and I do not owe an account to anyone. I would rather have myself hewn to pieces than to save myself and let evil befall the priests of honor I could hope for." the Lord. And if I should die for the faith, it would be the highest life? I am not a coward. Neither shall I flee. Here I stand to the end persuade me to do such a thing? Why should I seek to prolong my To this the proud old man replied angrily: "Do you dare try to

a reliquary; a third, a crucifix. Andrew Ogasabara stared at the young finery. One of her maids had a rosary about her neck; another had her most splendid gown, adorning herself with her most costly the room of his daughter-in-law. She was busily engaged in putting on excitement, almost as if out of his mind. By accident he burst into woman in surprise and wonderment. With that the old knight began to run about the house in great

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"What are you doing?" he asked. "What does all this mean?"

the time has come for all Christians to die for their faith. We are preparing for that hour by adorning ourselves as if going to a royal With gentle composure his daughter-in-law answered: "My father,

and said, almost with embarrassment: "I also must prepare myself for the royal festival." dream, he threw his swords to the floor, took his rosary in his hands For a while he stood thoroughly silent. Then, as if awakening from a calmness of his daughter-in-law seemed to be quieting his excitement. "As if going to a festival," the old knight repeated slowly. The holy

punishment as his "negligent" father. the more thoroughly out of fear that he might meet the same clever trick, since he thought that the son would fulfill the commission of the Kyoto garrison, who was to check it and deliver it to the missionaries. He was to show this list to Ishida Mitsunari, commander the names of all persons who had any close association with the Christian of all the Franciscans and Jesuits who lived in Kyoto and to write down friars. Now he ordered Uehyoe, the son of Hasegawa, to make a list was looking for an excuse to cover his previous indulgence toward the had been a most thorough and conscientious informer; but Hideyoshi about their activities. This charge was ridiculously false, for Hasegawa give this order to the son of his disgraced courtier? It was indeed a Taikosama that he might add the death sentence. Why did Hideyoshi guarded the Franciscans and for having given him incomplete reports Hideyoshi had already punished his courtier, Hasegawa, for not having Meanwhile, in Kyoto, too, events were following their course.

contained a total of about four thousand names. whose profession of Christianity was not yet publicly known. The list followed the names of many more nobles and persons of high position, to abjure Christianity during the persecution of 1587. Then there deprived of all honors and property because of his courageous refusal of angry indignation. Heading the list was the name of the famous of, but when he delivered his list to Ishida he met with an outburst general and daimyo, Takayama Ukon, whom Hideyoshi had already Uehyoe began his work with all the thoroughness one could think

now embracing Christianity were killed, who would be left? I know for certain that this is not the will of the Taikosama. And if you write Christians in Japan. Think reasonably. If all the thousands who are down the names of those who are not yet known to be Christians, what Ishida demanded. "Certainly he does not want the death of all "Don't you understand the will of Taikosama in this matter?"

good can come of that? Isn't it madness and irresponsibility to put at the head of the list the name of a man like Takayama Ukon? Ten years ago he felt the anger of the Taikosama on accont of his Christian faith and only narrowly escaped death then. What would happen now?"

Ishida was no Christian himself, but was favorably disposed toward the doctrines of Christianity and counted among his dearest friends many zealous believers. He destroyed Uehyoe's list and ordered him to make up another one, less comprehensive this time. He also told the young man to omit the names of the Jesuit priests, since they were Portuguese from India and did not fall under the terms of the proscription. The flourishing trade between Japan and Portugal was not to be interrupted by any arbitrary act.

Uchyoe made a second list which contained one hundred and sixty names. This also was rejected, as well as a third containing only forty-seven names. Finally, from among the forty-seven, Ishida himself chose twelve which he ordered Uchoye to write down. They were six Spanish Franciscans, their Japanese servants and closest co-workers, and three Japanese lay brothers of the Society of Jesus. Thus the list of four thousand was reduced to twelve—yet it was with a heavy heart that Ishida submitted the list to Hideyoshi.

(To be continued)

Transl. by Sr. M. Frances, S.M.I.C.

Sr. M. Hildemar, S.M.I.C.

#### PASCHALTIDE

Come, let us go into the new Light, Pouring like mighty rivers From five fountains lately pierced; Drink of His triumph Spreading abroad like sunrise, Singing His canticle, "Only Death is dead!"

Come, let us be pierced
By the pure, new Life
Streaming from sanctuary
Of a lance-cleft Heart!

Sister M. Josephine, F. SS. S.

## ST. FRANCIS AND NATURE

Father Winfrid Herbst, S.D.S.

These reflections are presented in the fond hope that our love for Nature may grow with our growth, leading us ever onward and upward until we repose in peace at the feet of Nature's God.

On fancy's swift wings let us journey to Paradise, as it was at creation's dawn. We there behold our Great Progenitor, the first of mortals, a perfect man. — How rarely do we think of the consummate perfection of Adam before the fall! — We see him surrounded by the animate gracefulness of the animal kingdom, by the noble grandeur of the mineral kingdom. Nature, in its three grand divisions, encircles him, nestles confidingly at his feet. All things are subject to the will of this one man, even as all things are the objects of his love, even as he is the center of their affections, their king. The lamb and the lion frolic before him and crave his approving smile. But Adam sinned. Man fell. Nature's three kingdoms turned against him and against each other. There followed the depredation of ferocious beasts, the thorns and the thistles, the horrors of the earthquake.

Once again we let fancy wing her swift way over land and sea. We journey to a barren spot in Palestine in the days when the Divine Savior walked among men, and they knew it not. It is Christ's forty days' fast in the desert. And he is with the beasts. "Eratque cum bestiis," Holy Writ tells us. We see how those beasts trustfully gather round Him; how, with eyes full of mute animal sympathy, they look upon the Divine Face, now so pale and haggard from long fasting and prayer. The sinless God-Man is the second Adam. And Nature is at His feet, too. Yes; Nature, revolting at sin, ceases to be in revolt where Innocence Itself appears.

A third time we must give fancy a moment's freedom. And she flies away to Italy's sunny clime, back to the time when the glorious thirteenth century was still young, back to St. Francis of Assisi. We find the loving and lovable saint in a wood in bloom, seated upon a moss-covered rock beside a babbling brooklet. Massive trees overshadow him; flowers bloom around. Birds are perched upon his shoulders and upon his arms; with him they are merrily singing the praises of God. Rabbits nestle at his feet and timidly pat the hem of his humble robe; a squirrel mischievously looks up into his face; a lamb places its wooly head upon his knee, begging for a caress;

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just behind him a deer is awaiting its turn to be gently spoken to and to be blessed. Two Franciscan friars stand at a distance and gaze with happy awe upon the scene. What are they thinking? "Behold man's primal innocence and his consequent primal domination over Nature." Perhaps, too, they are thinking:

"Nature wears the color of the spirit: Sweetly to her worshipper she sings: All the glow, the grace she doth inherit Round her trusting child she fondly flings."

Three pictures have we seen. Their lesson is not far to seek. You have learnt it already. Man, regaining that holiness, that perfection which Adam possessed before the fall, regains the mastery over and the affection of otherwise estranged Nature. St. Francis has demonstrated this truth. We rejoice in its demonstration.

Of Nature's many lovers, St. Francis has ever seemed to us to have been the most ardent. And why? Because in Nature he saw Nature's God. Father Ryan, the "Poet Priest of the South," says of Nature.

"Men bask beneath the smile, but oft forget The loving Face that very smile conceals."

It was not so with St. Francis. Full well did he know that "The Changeable is but the broidered robe

Enwrapped about the great Unchangeable."

How often did not the cry, go forth from his soul:

"Yea! Nature is God's shadow, and how bright Must that Face be which such a shadow casts?"

Yes, St. Francis was Nature's tender devotee because in every hill and dale, even in every desert sod, in everything and everywhere he saw the stamp of God.

How did he show his love? By a truly marvelous tenderness and heartfelt sympathy for all God's creatures. He called them his brothers and sisters. He would not voluntarily have injured even a worm. We know how often he saved animals from death. And we have heard the beautiful legend about St. Francis and the wolf (a legend which I believe to be a fact): how the wolf was the terror of the neighborhood; how the people came to St. Francis for help; how he called the wolf to him and told him he must steal no more; how, in gentle tones, he said to the lean, ever-hungry robber: "Brother Wolf, it is my will that you should be at peace with the people here. Now, I know it is hunger which forces you to do all these wicked things. Promise me never to steal again, if you are properly fed." Brother Wolf nodded assent; and, when St. Francis held out his hand to seal the compact, he placed his paw therein.

ST. FRANCIS AND NATURI

For two years the wolf regularly came to the city every day and got a good, honest meal. When he died all hearts were sad—sad because they had lost a unique remembrance of a loving saint.

Everything in Nature obeyed Francis, because everything loved him as he loved it. Swallows once disturbed him by their twittering while he was preaching. He gently bade them to be silent: not another sound did they make. Birds would sing the divine praises with him until he bade them stop. In fact, all kinds of brothers and sisters—but we know all these little details.

"All things that are, both great and small,
One glorious Author formed them all."

This St. Francis knew. And his love for that glorious Author purified his soul with a purity so radiant that its beams attracted Nature to him. Nature came, saw once again creation's king, saw him worthy of submission and—submitted.

Well might we, too, in imitation of St. Francis, remember that even

"On every herb o'er which we tread Are written words which, rightly read Will lead us from earth's fragrant sod To hope, and holiness, and God,"

Or that, as Longfellow says,

"Wondrous truths, and manifold as wondrous God hath written in the stars above;
But no less in the bright flowerets under us
Stands the revelation of His love."

### BOOK REVIEWS

THE CORDELIER RITUAL. Urban Wagner, O.F.M. Conv. Chaska, Minnesota: Assumption Seminary. 1958, pp. 44.

This is a little pamphlet explaining the history, purpose, and ritual of the Archconfraternity of the Cord of Saint Francis. Although anyone can join the Archconfraternity, Cordeliers are usually very young people—in this country boys and girls in the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. For those who are interested in enriching the spiritual activities of pre-teen and early teen-age groups, the Archconfraternity offers much of value. Designed to appeal to children, it helps them to develop their spiritual life and also to know their vocation.

G.A.S.

THE VOICE OF YOUR FATHER. Martin Wolter, O.F.M. Chicago: The Franciscan Herald Press, 1959. Pp. xvi-400.

Many years ago, in his now well-known book, THE FRANCISCAN MESSAGE TO THE WORLD, Father Agostino Gemelli, Q.F.M., wrote: "Now, properly to grasp Franciscan spirituality, two things are necessary; first to acquire that supernatural viewpoint from which Saint Francis statted out, and secondly, to meditate on his writings." This is the purpose of the present book—to enable us to meditate on the writings of Saint Francis and thus to acquire his spiritual point of view. Briefly, the book is a compilation of selected words of Saint Francis, including many that are merely attributed to him, followed by a brief, one-page meditation or consideration composed by the present author. The meditations are nicely arranged to coincide with the liturgical seasons, and are simply presented in a popular arranged to coincide with the liturgical seasons, and are simply presented in a popular and appealing style. Though intended for religious, secular tertiaries will also find it helpful. The book is attractively made up in handy breviary format. S.M.F.

POOR LITTLE MILLIONAIRES. Sister M. Rosamond, O.S.F. New York. Pageant Press, Inc., 1959. Pp. 67. \$2.50.

Sister Rosamond, writing with a light touch and gay good humor, presents a few samplings of convent life taken from unusual areas. She begins with an amusing account of her community's \$3,000,000 fund-raising project, includes a description of a journey to an educational conference in Chicago, a habit-modelling sequence, and a few other random pictures of life and times of a teaching Sister. The book makes pleasant, if not profound reading.

S.M.F.

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by Philotheus Boehner, O.F.M. Second edition 1959 189 pp. \$2.00

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