

**A Mother's Gift:  
"I want to Take Complete Possession of their Lives"**

(M. 22, 20<sup>th</sup>. October 1973)

We have entitled these meditations "A Mother's Gift", and that is a correct statement of what our Movement is. It is true that it is our gift, in the sense that we entrust ourselves entirely into the Heart of the Most Holy Trinity as Her own for the good of the Church, but then let us not forget that our consecration is itself Her gift to us:

"If you but knew, My beloved sons, the gift you have received in consecrating yourselves to My Immaculate Heart". (M.131, 29<sup>th</sup>. July 1977)

It is the one essential gift for what has been planned in Heaven in this Her Work. Not even that which is perceived as the greatest need of the Church today, the second evangelisation, can take place in a truly efficacious way without that holiness of the preacher's heart which is the fruit of the Mother living in him and working in him.

So She gives us Her Heart and teaches us Her spirit. We have begun to see the spirit which She wishes to teach us in the school of Her Heart: it lies first of all in humility or littleness of heart. To learn Her spirit is not simply a question of working to do things as She did, but rather of becoming so little that She Herself may live our life in us.

***Victims***

We then saw that we are called, in the wake of Saint Thérèse, to consecrate ourselves to Merciful Love. Our Mother wishes to mould our hearts in a thirst for souls. In this She is asking us to share in Her own motherly love for Her children in the greatest danger and need. She speaks into our hearts of Her own great sorrow at the prospect of losing many of her children, whom the devil is threatening to carry off to hell, and of Her desperate desire to save them. Can She do it? Not alone. Here again is what we saw St. Paul saying about his own

sufferings, as "making up what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ for the sake of His Body the Church". Our Mother asks how can She help and save those who are furthest away? Only by Herself forming a little army of victims who will offer themselves in this way for Her children smothered in sin, in order to obtain the grace for them to repent and return to grace. It is a serious request, and asks for a big "Yes" on the part of her children but, as we saw at the end of the last meditation, it was asked of the Little Shepherds at Fatima before it was asked of us.

It is not a question only of offering the big sufferings which enter our lives; that does not always happen. For this, again, our Mother asks littleness of us for, as we have seen, it is the little ones who knows how to appreciate the value of the little things:

"All men redeemed by My Son are also My children: they are My children in the fullest sense of the word. Even those who are far away, even the sinners, even the atheists, even those who reject God, those who fight against Him and hate Him: they are all My children. And I am a Mother to them. For many of them I am the only Mother they have, the only person who is taking care of them, Who truly loves them.. And so My Heart is continually consumed with sorrow and with a greater love for these children of mine.. I want to help them, I want to save them because I am their Mother. Because of this, I suffer for them, I suffer because they are so far from God, I suffer because they do wrong, I suffer because of all the harm they are doing to themselves. But how to help them? How to save them? I have need of much prayer, I have need of much suffering. Only through the prayer and the suffering of others, of the good and the generous, will I be able to save these children of mine. And so there is then the Movement of My Priests". (M. 21, 16th. October 1973)

It is, of course, true that every baptised soul is thereby made a sharer in the Paschal Mystery, and to form part of the offering made by Christ to the Father which is renewed at every Mass. This is particularly so with the priest, who lives and acts in the Person of Christ, Who is the Eternal Victim (with Him we are called to be *Victimae et Sacerdotes*). The priest, in seeking to live his true identity, should regard himself as in a state of offering to the Father, in Jesus, for the salvation of the world. But, if that is true of every priest, it is so all the more for a priest who lives in the Immaculate Heart of Mary. She was, during Her life on earth, at all times, always in union with the Sacred Heart of Her Son, which was offered at every moment to His Father for the

salvation of mankind, in the very reality of His being, but also in every one of the most trivial actions He performed. Possessing the Immaculate Heart, we too are invited to live that same union with Her. Indeed, She tells us that Her Heart was the altar on which He chose to offer all His sufferings to the Father.

It is not that that union with our Mother does not exist in priestly souls who are not formally part of the Movement, but the Movement exists to underline for us the truth of that call given to us in the words "*Behold your Mother*", of which the messages explore the depths to intensify the living of it. That gift was made to us on Calvary, the Sacrifice towards which the motherhood of Mary had accompanied Jesus throughout His life; now our Mamma's task would be to bring us, His brothers and sisters to the same offering. It can assume so many forms: the very obvious physical and mental sufferings, being put aside by our brethren in the priesthood or in religious communities because we cannot share the kind of opinions and practices which have become a daily way of life but which contradict our Faith, our concerns for the Church, concerns about souls close to us and in our families. It is everywhere. We look round our Movement and find suffering everywhere, and our Mother tells us that it must increase.

The world around us is scandalised, and tries to pretend it is not there. Even the news of great disasters, bringing so much suffering, becomes a nine-day wonder and then is smothered by empty chatter, but our Mother reminds us that here we find the sign which is to be contradicted in the life of Her Son and Her consecrated children. Far from hiding from it, She encourages us to follow Her Jesus along the way of the Cross, on the path of reparation, and to place it in Her Immaculate Heart. Here we find our place with Her in the Eucharist:

"My maternal task is also *that of offering reparation* for the great evil which is still being committed today in the world. I unite Myself with each Holy Mass which is celebrated, to offer to the Heavenly Father the precious Blood of His Son Jesus, Who is still immolating and sacrificing Himself for you on every altar on the earth. It is only His divine Blood, shed for you, that can wash away all the evil, the sin, the hatred, the impurity, the iniquity that covers the world. Thus in a spirit of maternal reparation, I unite to the Blood of Christ all the sufferings which I gather up each day, along your pathway. I unite to the Blood of Jesus the blood poured out by millions of babies still being killed in their mothers' wombs and of all

the victims of hatred, of violence and wars. I unite to the Blood of Jesus all the sufferings of the sick, especially those who are stricken with grave, humiliating and incurable maladies. I unite to the Blood of Jesus the agonies of the dying, the sufferings of the poor, the marginalised, of the little, of the exploited of the persecuted. I unite to the Blood of Jesus each suffering of the good, of consecrated persons, of the Priests. I unite to the Blood of Jesus the great cross which the Church must carry today for the salvation of all humanity". (M. 396, 31 December 1988)

All the negative things of life, to be consecrated and used by our Mother to win the grace of salvation for many. The signs which are contradicted! The Marian Movement has no special monopoly of these things, but must be specially sensitive to their value, as this forms a special part of its spirit.

### **Prayer**

"To win the battle which is approaching I want to give you a weapon: prayer. Forget everything else and form the habit of using but this weapon. The crucial times have come and there is no longer any time for certain vain and superficial things. There is no more time for useless discussions, there is no more time for chatter and projects: *this is the time for prayer!* Priests of the Movement, offer yourselves to Me *so that I Myself, in you and with you, may always pray and intercede with My Son for the salvation of the world. I have need of you and of your prayer to realise the great plan of the Triumph of My Immaculate Heart*". (M. 29, 19 December 1973)

We are, as we know, immersed in an immense, cosmic battle, in which our ancient enemy seeks to tear away from God the children He has created and redeemed. Our Mother's Work is directed to restoring Her children to the unity with God which Her Son Jesus prayed for obtained for us ("*that they may be one in us, Father*"). At its heart, that unity is sealed in *prayer* which is the medium of communication of life and love between the Blessed Trinity and ourselves. It expresses so many things, our Faith, our Love of God and our Hope placed entirely in Him. It speaks of our adoration, of our sorrow for sin, of our gratitude for all we have received and expresses also our needs and those of our brothers and sisters.

This, with the consecration of our sufferings, is offered to us by our Mother as one of the principal weapons we possess in the battle. They

are the weapons of the poor, as they express our poverty, need and helplessness before God. As our Mother says:

"My richness is therefore only that of the little and the poor: humility, trust, abandonment, hope". (M. 109, 8th. September 1976)

In this we find truth, for in the battle in which we are engaged, we may truly say that, as a fighting force, we are absolutely nothing! We are an army doomed to defeat, ranged against the terrible and insuperable power of a fallen archangel and his followers. Perhaps one of the most grievous maladies of today is the arrogance and pride with which sinful habits are treated in so casual a manner by many, assuming that humanity is in control of its own situation. It is not. We only have to look around us to see the terrible mortal danger in which souls have placed themselves so widely in an expansion of sin which is worldwide. It is not a question of sinful acts but of whole attitudes. Not for nothing is the "fear of the Lord" one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In the face of this, we are so very small, each one of us affected in at least some way by the atmosphere around us, that we necessarily feel our helplessness, and perhaps God has permitted us to come to this most dangerous point, in order that we should, at last, come to humbly recognise our weakness and the need to turn to Him for help. One remembers the last words of the ninth station of the 'Via Crucis' at the Colosseum last year, in which the present Holy Father led us to reflect that, in these days, all that we can do is turn to God in shame and repeat the prayer of the Mass "Kyrie Eleison".

Our Mother leads us to prayer. She reminds us of our traditional duty of prayer as priests: the breviary, our meditation, our daily Mass (offered well and lived). But then She offers us in a particularly insistent way, Her Rosary. It is despised for its simplicity by some, but cherished by Her little ones, and its purpose is to fix our eyes and our hearts on Jesus and His mysteries: as we have said, to unite ourselves to the Heart of God. This is what makes the Rosary so powerful: that it takes us into that union for which Jesus prayed and which stands at the heart of the life of Grace: ("*that they may be one in us, Father, as You are in Me and I in You*"). The Eucharist and the Holy Rosary have this in common, that they exist to unite us to the Heart of the Lord.

And then She gives us the cenacles, a gift for the Marian Movement itself. The great scope of this gift is breathtaking, and its realisation in a short period of time could not have been anticipated in human terms.

A "net of love", of prayer, consecrated suffering and consecration to the Immaculate Heart enveloping the whole world! It feels so hard sometimes to stir up an enthusiasm for prayer in even a small part of our parishes, but the whole world! But it has happened, and we should rejoice and engage our energy to spread that net. Its virtue does not consist in numbers, but in one thing to which we have referred and which our Mother repeats in the passage we read a moment ago:

*"Priests of My Movement, offer yourselves to Me so that I Myself, in you and with you, may always pray and intercede with My Son for the salvation of the world. I have need of you and of your prayer to realise the great plan of the Triumph of My Immaculate Heart".* (M. 29, 19th. December 1973)

It is what we were discussing earlier in the meditations. Our Mother comes to the aid of the poverty of Her little ones and lends Her own strength, grace and power to their need in their prayer. But this has to be recognised and desired, with humility and gratitude. It is what we saw at the beginning of these meditations:

"Offer yourselves to Me so that I Myself, in you and with you, may always pray and intercede with My Son for the salvation of the world. I have need of your prayer to realise the great plan of the Triumph of My Immaculate Heart".

The prayer of the soul consecrated to our Mother flows from that partnership of life of which we spoke, so that our prayer, small as it is, acquires a power so much greater than its own, because it becomes the prayer of Mary Herself. The net of Love thus becomes a net of the presence of our Mother, embracing and warming a world which has gone cold. *Vita, dulcedo et spes nostra ...*

Our Mother tells us that Her priests have a special obligation to *purity*: "Above all, my Priests will have to be pure, very pure! (that is, in mind and heart and body) I Myself will cover them with My immaculate mantle and I will make them new men, Priests who are upright and spotless". (M. 21, 16th. October 1973)

Again, purity is an obligation of every priest, but in a special way for the souls of Mother's priests. We remind ourselves of what we said in the beginning: that we are, as it were, channels of grace for the Church, but that those channels can become blocked by sin, so as to impede the arrival of grace into the Church. Hence the need for great purity, especially as we are called to be our Mother's channels, both for the grace She obtains for the Church and for Her prayer on behalf of the

Church. There is so much need of souls abandoned totally to the will of God, Who will, by that very fact, become channels, through which divine Grace can flow freely into the Body of the Church. That is what our Mother became (St. Bernard referred to Her as the "Aquaduct", like a channel through which water passes), and it is Her design to help Her consecrated children be the same in Her.

Supremely, our prayer as priests lies in *the Sacred Liturgy*, in which we pray in the name of the Church. Our Mother, speaking of this, says: "As each day passes, I want you to be ever closer to My Heart: far from human vicissitudes and the events which so convulse the world and disturb My Church, so that you will remain with Me alone. I want you with Me in prayer. These precious moments are so important and grave that they demand much, very much prayer on the part of My Priests. The prayer of My priests is necessary for the salvation of the world". (M. 47, 20th. May 1974)

Let us note here that the obligation of prayer is said by our Mother to be of particular importance in a priest. He lives and acts in the Person of Christ, and is a channel of His grace. To say otherwise would reduce the priest and, with him, the Person of Christ living in him in the Church, to the level of a functionary. Our Mother goes on, in the same message: "Holy Mass must be celebrated well, and it must be *lived* by My Priests. The Liturgy of the Hours must for them be a summons to consecrate every moment of their day to Me. (These are the great prayers of the Church entrusted to us to be offered in its name). The Rosary should be a time of conversation with Me: Oh they must speak to Me and listen to Me, because I speak softly to them, as a mother does to her little children. But even every action of their day can become a prayer. And this happens when they let the Spirit within them – Who still laments with ineffable groanings – cry out invoking God as Father. Seek the Father, cry out to the Father, yearn for the Father for yourselves and for all My children. The sufferings of your day will dispose you to be ready to enter into continuous prayer. Moments are approaching which are so serious that you cannot possibly imagine them. And so I want to prepare you so that at the opportune moment you will all be ready. This is why I call you to *prayer*". (M. 47, 20th. May 1974)

These words have a special importance, I believe, for our Marian Movement of Priests. They are not primarily concerned to tell us to recite certain prayers, but to lead us to understand the "atmosphere" in which our Mother's priests are invited to live. From specific forms of prayer (the Breviary, the Rosary, our time of meditation), the picture

passes on to a life of continuous prayer (not many prayers, but *prayerfulness*). This embraces even the spirit of our activity, and takes us back to the fact that we are invited to do all things in partnership with our Mother, for Her to place our lives in the Heart of Her Son, as Her very own offerings, giving Him, as She says, "a joy which others cannot give Him", precisely because we give Him His Mother in all things.

Looking at this "atmosphere" into which our Mother wishes to introduce us, we understand that She wishes Her priests, set in the middle of many apostolates throughout the world, to become true contemplatives, not because of special experiences but as those who live with Her in God.

### *A Help to the Church*

The Marian Movement of Priests exists for the Church. It exists at its centre, indeed our Mother tells us that in it She is forming "the new heart of the new Church". In other words, the spirit which She is teaching to the hearts of Her consecrated children, is the spirit of true renewal, the spirit of the Church's future. Poor and little as we are, we must accept Her intention simply, and live our consecration as deeply as we can, so that She may be free to transform us to Her desires.

In the Introduction to our Book, we are told that:

*"the MMP is a help, which the Heavenly Mother is offering to the Church today, so that it may be aware of Her motherly presence, be consoled in the midst of great sufferings, and feel itself to be always surrounded by the love and prayer of so many of its children. With the MMP, Our Lady wishes to offer the Church a strong help for overcoming the painful crisis of the purification which it is living through in these times"*.

This service of the Church lies at the heart of our spirit, and in particular to our second commitment, that of unity with and love for the Pope and the hierarchy united with him, prayer for him and his intentions and obedience to his magisterium. He is prayed for at every cenacle held around the world and, if the prayer offered seems small and short, it becomes enormous when one thinks of the huge number of cenacles every day.

And this is so necessary today when, as has just been said, the Church is going through a painful and radical purification. The Marian Movement of Priests places at the service of the Church an army of souls abandoned to the will of God, to help the work of the Church take root in souls.

### *In the Battle*

We have referred to the battle in which the Church is engaged, and of which we are very conscious. It is a battle for the truth of God, and last year we suggested that the present Holy Father was given to us by the Holy Spirit as one whose life had been spent in exploring that Truth and defending it. It is a need which we see around us every day. That battle has been raging for a long time now, and we have had to take our stand against things we see around us which are wrong. The Holy Father, as also John Paul II before him, speaks of the need for a second evangelisation, but we cannot fail to be aware of a great difficulty. The forces of the demon attacking the Church seem to have the upper hand (our Mother says that Her adversary is shrieking of his victory), to be very articulate and sometimes we have the impression that a very large number would not wish to listen to even the best new evangelisation. Where are we? Perhaps God is permitting things to go to the bottom for at least one reason: that we should learn with great humility that we do not have the answers to all the problems, that even our best and most intelligent efforts are nothing if they remain at the human level. We must become humble, little, seeking mercy, to seek the help which only God can give in the battle in order to overcome the superior force of the fallen archangel. Our Mother says:

*"It is not your pastoral plans and your discussions, it is not the human means in which you place your trust and so much security, but it is only Jesus in the Eucharist Who will give the entire Church the strength for a complete renewal which will bring it to be poor, evangelical, chaste, stripped of all the supports in which it trusts, holy beautiful, without stain or spot, in imitation of your Heavenly Mother"*. (M.330, 8th August 1986)

This is the spirit which our Mother is forming in Her Movement, as these reflections have tried to show, It is the spirit of the new Church, and adoring Church, in which there will be nothing left of ourselves. When we speak of the battle, and recognise that it is already in progress, we also remember, as we reflected last year, that there is a further stage to come, in which our Mother tells us that She will place Herself at our head, prepared for battle. It is not clear, however, just what the nature of that confrontation with the enemy will be. Certainly, it will be a battle for Truth, as we have said, for the recovery of souls through the Divine Mercy, of which the Movement is a great instrument. Perhaps, however, it will be a battle for the nature of the

Church of the future. Against the pride, arrogance and evil of the enemy, will be set the spirit of the Immaculate Heart, carried by Her consecrated sons, to wrest from him the gains he is so sure of having made in these years. It is essential that, when our Mother calls, we shall be living that spirit to the full. That is, in fact, the stage of the battle at which we have already arrived. It is perhaps the most difficult: that of waiting, since we do not know when we shall be called or to what. But this does not mean that we are inactive. This is a spiritual battle, and our task is now to live Mother's spirit to the full, praying and suffering in the spirit of Her little and poor ones, seeking only to be and to do from moment to moment, for the Church in its sufferings and for the recovery of souls. It is a time for one thing more, and that is *reparation*.

"Pray and make reparation ... (...) Pray to obtain the great gift of the Second Pentecost, implored and awaited by you.

It will be the Holy Spirit Who will give to the world His full and perfect testimony to Jesus".  
(M. 586, 31st. December 1996)

From this, it becomes clear why it simply does not matter that we may lack physical strength or intellectual prowess; it will not matter that we may be regarded as the least important priests in the world, with no titles of honour or positions of prestige. What will matter is that we truly belong to Her Who is the littlest of all God's servants, yet Who is Herself terrible to Her enemies as an army in battle array.

For us what matters is to be sure of Mary!

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MSM  
INTERNATIONAL SPIRITUAL EXERCICES  
Collevalenza - Santuario dell'Amore Misericordioso  
25 Juni-1 July 2006