

To Love Jesus and to Make Him Loved.

# Fraternity of the Immaculate Heart of Mary

Circular for the month of July  
Year of Our Lord A.D. 2008

Dearest Brothers and Sisters of Penance in the Heart of the Immaculate, God give you peace.

It is no mystery to you my brethren, that our society is full steam ahead, 'right off the rails' as they say. As of late we see that those who are the servants of Satan are rewarded publicly for their wickedness. We see immorality and sodomy paraded with glee in our city streets, leaving us aghast and beside ourselves wondering how it could all come to this. The answer is not so complicated though, it is a lack of love that is the fundamental problem with our society. As the Saints have said it so well, "Love is not loved!" The Gentle and Sweet Hearts of Jesus and Mary are not loved and so our poor world is cast into a pit of the deepest darkness. And because the Eternal Word has said that those who were not with Him were in fact against Him, there can be really only two camps. Those around us are either with Christ or they are with the Devil.

But we are called to heroism. We are called to sanctity and sanctity is possible even for us because sanctity will come from God and not from us. We will not be sanctified because we are so great, or because we write great works, or speak with poetic tongues, or fast most of the year, or say prayers until we are blue in the face. We are not heading directly for Heaven because we raise the dead and cast out legions of demons. No, these things are all good, they are indeed very important means to the sanctification of our souls, but they are not sanctity dear brethren. These things are means to an end, and if they are done without love, they are worthless. The truth is that we are nothing in fact, and it will be God who will come in His own time to make us Saints if we really desire to be Saints. But we must love like Saints if we wish to be great Saints. St. Therese of Lisieux tells us that **"there is one ONLY THING to do here below: to love Jesus, to win souls for Him so that He may be loved."**(1)

Our Holy Father Francis did magnificent works, he did all those great things mentioned above, but those who see the greatness of Francis of Assisi only in the works that he performed miss the essence of his greatness. What is amazing and wonderful in the Seraphic Father is his capacity and hunger to love God. God Himself so rewarded the generosity of our beloved Father Francis by filling him with the Spirit of God, flooding Him with His own Merciful Love and ultimately transforming him into another Christ. In fact, in Italy the people called him 'another Christ' because Francis of Assisi was holy. He gave all, he held nothing back, but surrendered everything to the good God, and the good God gave Francis a hundredfold in return, the good God made Francis of Assisi, 'another Christ.' The admirable, wonderful and beautiful thing about St. Francis is that he realized that the good God is Love and that He loved St. Francis personally. St. Francis realized that he was incapable of loving God as much as God loved him. Try as he may, he would always be outdone by the good God every time.

It was the martyrdom of our holy Father St. Francis. He longed to return this Infinite, Incomprehensible Love which God showered upon him, and he knew he could never do it. But in trying to outdo God in generosity, as St. Bonaventure relates, St. Francis of Assisi's heart became like unto an altar all on fire with the love of God, and thus is termed for eternity, the *Seraphic Patriarch* Saint Francis of Assisi. This is what drove our Seraphic Father to do those marvelous deeds, his immense love for God.

If you have entered the Third Order of Penance and have submitted your neck to the yoke of a life in union with God under the Holy Rule of mortification and austere penitential works, it is because you have desired to become holy. You have professed publicly that you wish to learn how to love in the school of Il Poverello. You have, in essence said to God through the Superiors of the Franciscan Order, I kneel here before Thee my God, I will give Thee my body, my soul and my whole life living *in the spirit* of the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Make me a Saint, and teach me how to love in imitation of St. Francis of Assisi. God has accepted your request dear Brothers and Sisters, and now the graces to fulfill this request are yours! You may be certain that this is the Will of God for you. What a joyful realization this is for a layperson in the world, it is a grace of massive proportions!

Sanctification is not therefore a complicated and difficult thing. If we do our duty everyday, be faithful to the demands of our Holy Rule everyday, with great love, then we will certainly become saints! God will be the one to do *great things* with us if He so desires. But even if He does not make us into the kind of Saints which statues are made of, recognized Saints of the calendar that is, who cares! Our glory is in glorifying God in our state in life; and what a glorious thought that the simplest peasant working in the fields living the Rule perfectly, the elderly grandmother washing dishes, the housewife chasing after her little ones tirelessly everyday, these, if they are doing these acts with an extraordinary love of God are the holy ones of God. These are true Franciscans pleasing to the Seraphic Father, and pleasing to Our Lord. Let it not be thought that we as Franciscans can live a life without penance, no, but our penance should indeed be fueled by a spirit of deep prayer and love for the good God. A balance of mortification, penance and action must be united with recollection, prayer and union with the good God.

The Church is not lacking even in our age of chilling darkness to produce heroes. A stunning example of this is very close to the city of Toronto. Our North American Martyrs, were just outstanding examples of Catholic heroism. St. Jean de Brebeuf had given up his comfortable, civilized life in France to come to Canada to convert the Indians. The Iroquois tied him and St. Gabriel Lallemand to stakes and set them aflame. They cut the flesh of Brebeuf from his body before his very eyes and consumed it in front of him. They tied red hot tomahawk heads to his neck and combined this with other horrible tortures. He did not cry out. His courage was so fantastic that an Indian ate the heart of this Saint to take from it, its courage! St. Issac Jogues in the same land had been tortured for months after being captured by the Iroquois. They ate or cut off some of his fingers and beat him relentlessly. After escaping and returning to France, he returned to those who tortured him to work for their conversion. He met his glorious end with a hatchet to the skull. St. Charles Garnier after being shot by arrows and gunfire crawled to a wounded Indian to absolve him of his sins. St. Charles Garnier died in this sublime act of love.(2)

Astounding, that these Saints are just down the road from us. They gave their life and blood for Jesus Christ, and many of them on Canadian soil! They are examples of what Almighty God can do to those who want to love Him above all things. Without a doubt, as Rev. Fr. Dominic May had related in one of his sermons, these Saints were doing the ordinary things of their state everyday, for the love of God and that is what gained for them the graces to become holy Martyrs. It was surely the little things done with great love which won for them extraordinary graces from the good God.

On July 9<sup>th</sup> 1900, twenty-six heroic men gave their blood to Christ as victims of love. Six of these were *Third Order Secular Franciscan laymen*. They suffered and died as victims to the wicked sect called the Boxers in China. "All of them were taken before the tribunal of Yu Hsien, some of them being slashed with swords on the way. Yu Hsien ordered them to be killed on the spot, and an indescribable scene followed. The soldiers closed in on the prisoners, struck them with swords, wounded them right and left, cut off their arms and legs and heads. Thus died the twenty-six martyrs of Taiyuanju."(3) Heroes of Christ, glorious and heroic victims!

The Holy of Holies Herself, the Blessed Virgin Mary is the most perfect example after Christ Himself of Catholic heroism. She lived with God Himself, contemplated Him, loved Him with every fibre of Her being. She fed God, held God, spoke intimately with God. She knew the good God better than any mortal could ever know Him. He was Her All, nothing came above God in the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary. She would die a thousand deaths for Him if it was His Will. The Blessed Virgin Mary gave everything up in giving up Jesus for the love of the Father and for our souls. She sacrificed more than Herself by offering Jesus on the Cross for our souls, because She looked at Herself as nothing and Jesus as everything. Not only this, but at the word of Her Divine Son, the Blessed Virgin Mary accepted us who were the murderers and butchers of Her Jesus, as Her own children and took us in the place of Her innocent and all Holy Son. It is not possible to put into words the sacrifice of the Virgin when Our Lord said "behold thy son" because in effect He was saying to Her "from now on, take them in My place as your children good Mother!" Oh what a trade off! Wretches, criminals, betrayers in the place of God Incarnate! St. Alphonsus de Liguori showed his amazement at this trade, that is, the Divine Lamb of God, for the slime of the earth, men. The Blessed Virgin Mary is the Queen of Martyrs indeed, and the perfect model of Catholic heroism!

In closing we may wish to meditate on some words from the Testament of our holy Father Francis:

***"We ought not to be "wise according to the flesh" and prudent, but we ought rather to be simple,***

***humble, and pure. And let us hold our bodies in dishonor and contempt because through our fault we are all wretched and corrupt, foul and worms, as the Lord says by the prophet: "I am a worm and no man, the reproach of men and the outcast of the people." We should never desire to be above others, but ought rather to be servants and subject "to every human creature for God's sake." And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon all those who do these things and who shall persevere to the end, and He shall make His abode and dwelling in them, and they shall be children of the heavenly Father whose works they do, and they are the spouses, brothers and mothers of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are spouses when by the Holy Ghost the faithful soul is united to Jesus Christ. We are His brothers when we do the will of His Father who is in heaven. We are His mothers when we bear Him in our heart and in our body through pure love and a clean conscience and we bring Him forth by holy work which ought to shine as an example to others."***(4)

Your little servant in the Immaculate Heart of the Queen of Martyrs,

Br. Pio-Francis. T.O.S.F.

Br. Pio - Francis T.O.S.F.

Approved by Rev. Fr. Freddy Mery. SSPX. Director.

Freddy Mery prêtre

(1)Thoughts of St. Therese. TAN. Pg.5.

(2)<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06388b.htm>

(<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02751b.htm>

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08420b.htm>

Saints Lived Here. Booklet From Martyrs Shrine Midland Ont .J.G. Shaw

(3)Franciscan Book of Saints. Marion Habig. Pg. 498.

(4)<http://www.sacredtexts.com/chr/wosf/wosf12.htm>