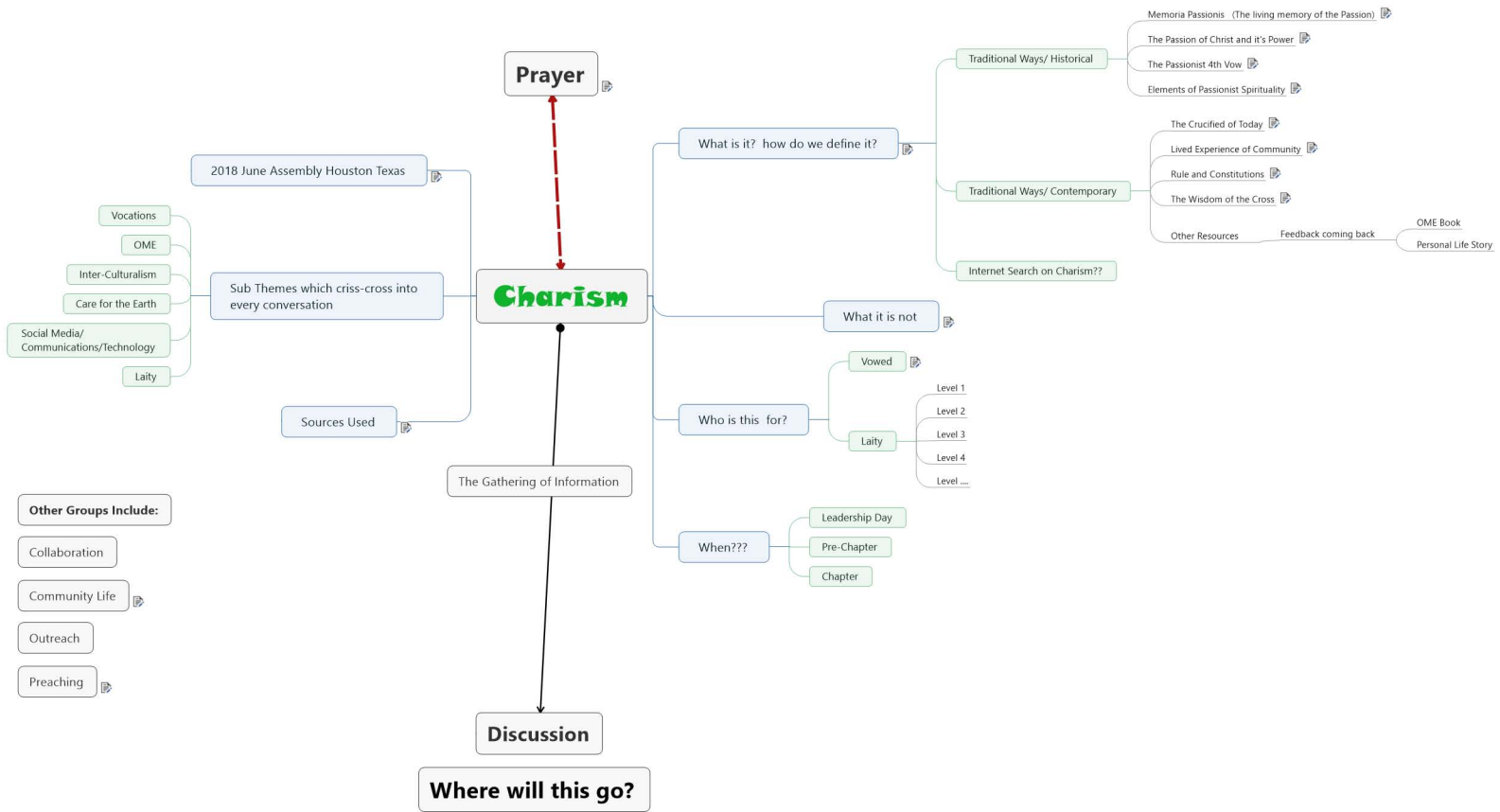


A Starting Point



Prayer

Charism

What is it? how do we define it?

What it is not

Who is this for?

When???

The Gathering of Information

Discussion

Where will this go?

2018 June Assembly Houston Texas

Sub Themes which criss-cross into every conversation

Sources Used

Vocations

OME

Inter-Culturalism

Care for the Earth

Social Media/ Communications/Technology

Laity

Other Groups Include:

Collaboration

Community Life

Outreach

Preaching

Memoria Passionis (The living memory of the Passion)

The Passion of Christ and it's Power

The Passionist 4th Vow

Elements of Passionist Spirituality

The Crucified of Today

Lived Experience of Community

Rule and Constitutions

The Wisdom of the Cross

Other Resources

Feedback coming back

OME Book

Personal Life Story

Level 1

Level 2

Level 3

Level 4

Level ...

Vowed

Laity

Leadership Day

Pre-Chapter

Chapter

Charism

See also: [Prayer](#), [Discussion](#)

1 2018 June Assembly Houston Texas

The Passionists of Hohly Cross Province

Observations, Insights and Issues Emerging or Province Visioning From the 2018 Assembly

Charism and Visioning -Because we experience that the charism as alive in us, we can not assume that necessarily takes us beyond where we are today. What does it mean to be especially for the crucified today in all aspects of ministry? This visioning process has been described as requiring prophetic and bold measures, of being cutting edge signaling a threshold change in many key aspects of how mission, ministry, charism and community are defined in the future and by whom.

2 Prayer

See also: [Charism](#)

Since one of the chief objects of our Congregation is not only to pray for ourselves, that we may be united to God by charity, but also to lead others to the same point, instructing them in the best and easiest manner possible; those members who may be considered fit for such work must endeavour during apostolic mission and other exercises, to teach the people by word of mouth to meditate on the mysteries, suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom, as from a fountain, proceeds all our good (15).

What Paul is proposing here is not the Dominican model of Contemplata aliis tradere (to contemplate and then to bring to others what you have contemplated). That is a model for preaching, but Paul is concerned about more than preaching; preaching is only part of it. What Paul is talking about is contemplating and bringing others to that same experience of contemplation, or, to put it more simply, a Passionist in Paul's mind is someone who is a person of prayer and a teacher of prayer (16).

A CONGREGATION

TO REMIND MANKIND OF THE PASSION OF CHRIST

THE MEMORY OF THE PASSION IN THE CONSTITUTIONS

Rev. Antonio M. Artola, C. P.

Memory used for meditation on the Passion

Leaving symbols aside, if we set out to analyze the abstract terminology used by the Saint to express his idea of remembering, we will easily discover that memory is related to meditation. But the Saint's conception of meditation very closely resembles that of memory, due to the concrete manner in which he sees the former. Meditation, conceived as a technique in his life and teachings, varies according to the spiritual level of the persons practicing it. Meditation according to our Founder always begins with recalling the Passion in its historical elements. At this point it is real memory, for it entails the mental recollection of past events. Once this stage is over, we immediately go to emotional aspects or to considerations of a practical nature, such as the virtues that Jesus perfectly exemplifies in his Passion. The more contemplative and advanced people can go directly from the first stage of meditation, when the Passion is recalled, to a stage of analysis. During this time, the mysteries of love and pain that are revealed in the Passion are considered and the memory is only a point of departure for contemplative elevation. It is for this reason that personal meditation of the Passion contains important elements of memory. Yet it is never identified, not even in the mental activity that is applied to the Passion.

3 Discussion

4 Where will this go?

5 The Gathering of Information

6 Other Groups Include:

Collaboration

Community Life

However, religious life in general does not exist; what does exist is communities, different communities. Nobody joins religious life; we join a community. So, while it is useful to speak in general terms, and to draw general principles or see general trends, we cannot do that at the expense of the rich diversity of forms of life which exist in the Church. Passionists have to be understood within the context of diversity.

What we find in the Passionists is the coming together of two movements: the apostolic availability of the Pii Operai joined to the ritiro form of community life. Paul establishes a community of apostolic workers; he gathers together apostolic workers who will live in the ritiro a life of prayer, penance and solitude. In this form of religious life, he brings into harmony the two renewal movements of his time. The spirit of

the community is the true apostolic spirit, but the community has a value in itself, and is not simply at the service of the Apostolate. The community's life of prayer is not shaped by the needs of the Apostolate.

For Paul, Passionist spirituality is lived within a certain kind of community, and it is that community life which makes possible the particular ministry he proposes. In safeguarding the life of prayer, penance and solitude, he is safeguarding the possibility of the ministry which he proposes. The promotion of the memory of the Passion is made possible by the form of life which he establishes.

Outreach

Preaching

“By virtue of the specific mission that the church entrusted to us, we make our own the words of Saint Paul: ‘We preach Christ Crucified.’”

Since one of the chief objects of our Congregation is not only to pray for ourselves, that we may be united to God by charity, but also to lead others to the same point, instructing them in the best and easiest manner possible; those members who may be considered fit for such work must endeavour during apostolic mission and other exercises, to teach the people by word of mouth to meditate on the mysteries, suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom, as from a fountain, proceeds all our good (15).

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A Starting Point

7 What is it? how do we define it?

This is the center core of who we are.

It is our heart beating.

7.1 Traditional Ways/ Historical

7.1.1 Memoria Passionis (The living memory of the Passion)

i#33 Fr. Ottaviano D'Egidio, C.P. Superior General 4 March 2011

we dedicate ourselves with great energy and love is the “Memoria Passionis”. This is the constitutive element of the Congregation and reason for our existence in the Church. It is the mandate that God has given to us and to the Passionist Family by our vocation:

A CONGREGATION

TO REMIND MANKIND OF THE PASSION OF CHRIST

THE MEMORY OF THE PASSION IN THE CONSTITUTIONS

Rev. Antonio M. Artola, C. P

III. MEMORIA PASSIONIS AND PASSIONIST SPIRITUALITY

1. Biblical roots of memory

The chief peculiarity of Passionist spirituality with regard to memory is the fact that it is closely related to biblical teachings, especially in the New Testament.

In the Old Testament, memory is an extremely important concept due to the fact that the Hebrew religion is an historical religion. History looks to the past, which is why the Jewish historical mentality

was sensitive to memory, seen as the recollection and personal experience of the past and of salvific history.

2. What does memory consist in?

When we speak of memory, we refer to the human faculty, both sensitive and spiritual, which makes it possible to keep the past in a perpetually present dimension. It is the ability to store and achieve all of a human being's past experience. As time elapses the most recent recollections neither erase nor destroy the previous ones. Consequently, events are arranged according to the time in which they happened. The fact that human memory permanently registers past events collected and stored by the mind makes it possible to record them willingly. It is this human faculty to which the term memory refers. However, it can also be used to indicate the very information collected and retained by such a faculty. That is why we sometimes speak of the "memories" of a certain individual. Such memories are the combination of the events which are kept alive by memory. The word memory can also have a third meaning. It describes the very act by which, through the exercise of his will, man can retrieve an experience previously stored in his memory and give it a present dimension. It is this process that we specifically refer to when speaking of "commemorating" and, in more technical terms, "evoking."

Is there any difference between memory and recollection? At first, the two expressions seem to be synonymous. Nevertheless, it is easy to point out some important differences between the two. Memory, with its threefold meaning of faculty, object and act, is an ability common to both humans and animals. Man carries out all these actions related to the recollection of the past in a specifically human manner.

IV. THE THREE DIMENSIONS OF PASSIONIST MEMORY

Of all the memories mentioned in the Constitutions, the liturgical memory is the main and most important one. in the order of objective contents and modes of celebration. The first and most perfect of remembering the Passion is that which is celebrated in the liturgy in general, and in particular in the Eucharist when the command given by Jesus, "Do this in memory of me", is fulfilled. All other forms are aimed at the perfect celebration of this culminating memory. All the awareness of the Passion and death of Christ in preaching, personal meditation and devotional para-liturgies aim at celebrating in the most perfect and conscious form the eucharistic memory that truthfully, really and substantially reproduces the drama of Calvary. One of the great advantages of the new Constitutions is the fact that the liturgical memory is included as a peculiar form of promoting the memory of the Passion.

The second is what we might call the kerigmatic memory which has two aspects in the Congregation. The first is the announcement of the Passion of Christ to the pagans when the image of Christ on the Cross is presented to those who still do not know him (cf. Gal 3:1; 1 Cor 2:2). The other is the preaching of the Passion to believers who already know the mysteries of Redemption.

In preaching the Passion to believers the memory of the Passion is celebrated in two dimensions. As to the event itself, the kerigmatic announcement to Christians gives the Passion a present dimension, making it re-exist in the form of what has been called “the event of the Word”. As to Christians, who themselves already know the redeeming events of the Passion, the preaching brings back those memories gives new life, puts them in practice and makes them salvific. The failure to recall the forgotten mysteries of the Passion was the greatest concern for our Founder.

The third form of remembering the Passion is that which is celebrated through personal recollection. The announcement of the Passion received in kerigma matures in recollection. The preaching of the Passion which the Christian believer listens to assumes a personal dimension and operates salvifically in recollection. The active preaching of the Passionist apostle feeds on recollection and meditation, which provide him with the vital impulse to announce the Passion and witness to it.

The different ways just mentioned of celebrating the memory of the Passion imply the previous effective celebration of the Holy Spirit. For the Holy Spirit is seen as the enlightening principle of the past and stimulating force for its continuation in the present.

ACCOUNT OF 1768

EFFICACY OF THE “MEMORY” OF THE PASSION OF JESUS.

1. The most efficacious means for the conversion of sinners and for the sanctification of souls is the frequent remembrance of the Passion of Jesus Christ, from the forgetfulness of which proceed deplorable evils and disorders.

THE PERFECTION OF THE RELIGIOUS AND THE CONVERSION AND SANCTIFICATION OF THE NEIGHBOR THROUGH THE “MEMORY” OF THE PASSION OF JESUS.

3. To accomplish this end, after the year of probation the Religious add to the three customary vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, the fourth vow to promote a tender devotion to the most sorrowful Passion of the Redeemer. Since the principal ends of our Congregation are two – one that regards the perfection of the members of the Institute and the other that concerns the conversion and sanctification of the neighbor by instilling in their hearts a continual remembrance of the Crucified – the Holy Rule proposes efficacious means to attain both ends intended.

Paul Francis Spencer:

in his book, "Passion of Christ, Passion of the World", Leonardo Boff talks about the memory of the Passion in the theology of Johannes B. Metz. For Metz, the Memoria Passionis is "the dangerous, subversive memory of the humiliated and the wronged, of those who were vanquished but whose memory can stir up 'dangerous' visions, and launch new liberation movements"(13). This kind of remembering is quite different from what we find in St. Paul of the Cross. The term "Memory of the Passion" is not univocal. Nowadays, when we talk about the Memory of the Passion, we are often thinking in terms of the Passion of Christ and passion of the World, the Passion of Christ and the passion of the people. However, we must acknowledge that this kind of Memoria Passionis is not to be found in the writings of St. Paul of the Cross. We find one or two phrases which perhaps point towards it, but this is not really his kind of language. When he speaks about Memory of the Passion, he is speaking about an affective relationship with the person of Jesus in his suffering. For Paul, the Memory of the Passion is the loving and sorrowful contemplation of what Jesus, our God-made-man, has done and suffered for us. This understanding of the Memory of the Passion gives rise to what he sees as our characteristic apostolate: the promotion of the Memory of the Passion.

Perhaps it would be clearer to say that the characteristic form of ministry in the Congregation is the promotion of the memory of the Passion: bringing others to a mystical participation in the Passion of Christ, to an affective sharing in the sufferings of Jesus. In the Diary we see that this is the form Paul's own prayer took during his forty-day retreat; the community he founded was intended to promote the experience which he himself had undergone: a deep encounter with the Crucified Christ in prayer, leading to a direct, passive, and hence, mystical experience of the Passion (14).

We are changed by experience; we are not so easily changed by information. Facts as such will not transform my life. Nor is experience in itself sufficient to do this. We are having experiences all the time, but we are not always touched by them. When Paul of the Cross speaks of the Passion as the most overwhelming sign of God's love and when he affirms that it is meditation on the Passion which can touch the most hardened hearts, he is saying that our lives can be transformed when we are touched by an experience of the memory of the Passion of Jesus, through what he calls loving and sorrowful contemplation. Paul was totally convinced of the transforming power of meditation on the Passion; this was what he felt he had to offer people. In this context we can say that if there is for Passionists such a thing as a "principle and a foundation" (such as we find in the Ignatian exercises), it is contained in the opening chapter of the Rule. Here Paul speaks of the Memory of the Passion in relation to who we are and what we do:

the text from 1720; here, Paul writes: "you must know that the main object in wearing black, according to the special inspiration that God gave me, is to be clothed in mourning for the Passion and Death of Jesus. For this purpose, let us never forget to have always with us a constant and sorrowful remembrance of him, and so let each of the Poor of Jesus take care to instill in others meditation on the suffering of Jesus" (17). We see here the two sides of the

Memory of the Passion: firstly, that we ourselves have always with us (“let us never forget”) a constant and sorrowful remembrance of Jesus in his Passion, and secondly, as he says, that we take care to instill in others meditation on the suffering of Jesus.

The spirit which we call Passionist is not static. It grows and develops; it responds to new situations, to new needs, to new cultures. This is what we see, for example, in the life of Elizabeth Prout (Mother Mary Joseph): the ability to bring that Memory of the Passion into the situation of the poor, into the lives of those who are suffering, and to see Christ in them. In our own time this has been further developed by the Sisters of the Cross and Passion with the establishment of St. Gemma’s Hospice in Leeds. Our recent General Chapter brings us new perspectives on the Passion of Christ and on the spirituality of the Passionists. We are called to respond to the challenges of today’s world, but to do so within the context of a living tradition. We have something which has been handed down to us, and in our own life, in the unfolding of the story of our lives, it will take a little bit more shape, and we too will hand on that spirit. After 150 years, what was begun by Dominic continues in these islands. The Passionist spirit is not being remembered today as something which is long-since past. We remember the past and see ourselves as part of that living tradition, and together we seek the way to live that spirit today.

Fr. Francisco Murray, Mission and Memory of the Passion.

In the encounter of traditions and cultures we are tempted to transmit and, sometimes, to impose what belongs to our own tradition, to repeat forms and content of the Memory of the Passion that correspond to the place of we come from and the tradition we have inherited. We trans-plant methodologies and structures, not only of our Memory of the Pas- sion but also of the way we have lived consecrated life.

Mission, Memory and defense of life.

“The power of the Cross, which is the wisdom of God, gives us strength to discern and remove the causes of human suffering”

REMEMBERING THE PASSION OF CHRIST

Rev. Barnabas M. Ahern, C.P.

Every character profile of Saint Paul of the Cross emphasizes his constant, grateful remembrance of the passion of Christ. Such devotedness meant something more than frequent mental recall of the events of the first Good Friday. It also involved full awareness that the passion of Christ is a perduring reality, ever present to the faithful not only in the sufferings of his mystical body but also in its permanence and efficacy. All through the many years of his life Paul found inspiration and strength in the principle “*Crux stat dum orbis volvitur*,” while the world spins or falters along its course, the crucified Christ is always present as the saving wisdom and power of God. We may say that, for Paul, Christ on the cross was “an eternal contemporary.”

This faith-insight of Paul the Apostle illumines and gives substance to the spirituality of Saint Paul of the Cross. In his letters to those who sought spiritual counsel, he constantly urged frequent thought and grateful remembrance of the sufferings of Christ. But he always saw this devotedness as the way to grow in awareness of a deeper truth. Memory of the sacred passion makes one realize that the love and power of God, like a vast ocean, endure forever. Immersed in this sea, the Christian relives the experience of Christ’s death and resurrection. He is freed from sinful attachment to the honors and pleasures of earthly life and is united to the will of God in perfect fidelity. And with this daily dying, the Christian lives more and more the life of Christ’s resurrection. For Paul of the Cross, as for Paul the Apostle, Christ’s love, given to us by the Spirit, is the meaning of it all.

1. THE LIVING MEMORY OF THE PASSION

Rev. Stanislas Breton, C.P.

The image of the **body**, “the body of Christ”, “the mystical body”, seems closer to what we are looking for. The term “mystical” does, indeed, highlight an interior quality which the previous relationships could easily conceal from us. In any case, although the mysterious “virtue” of Christ does spread through all the members of the body, it is not so much the dynamism of this virtue which is stressed in the scene of the last judgement, than the enigmatic passion which is being continued in his members.

This gives rise to a new line of questioning. What do we mean by saying that Christ is suffering in all those who suffer? What do we mean by this “being in” through which we express the depth of an enigmatic relationship?

We could say that Christ is suffering today in all his members in a way which is authentic and universal. In saying this we would be agreeing with the thesis developed not solely in Protestant circles (cf. J. Moltmann) but also among Catholic theologians, some of whom, e.g. Fr. Galot, S.J., hold that the most important development of modern theology has been the elevation and exaltation of suffering in God himself. This transposition displays the praiseworthy desire of not identifying God and his Christ with the impassive gods of Greek mythology. However, in this form this transposition does not, in my view, answer the question it raises. This exalted suffering is wholly unrelated to human suffering as we know it, and intensifying it in God neither solves the enigma of suffering, nor does it provide us with a

means for overcoming it. Yet it would be outrageous, not to say ridiculous, to claim that Christ underwent, or is still undergoing, all human suffering as if he were in some sense the microcosm of it. It is my humble opinion that, as a man living on earth, Jesus could not experience the suffering of all mankind neither in its greatest intensity nor in its widest extent. Thus, this understanding of Christ **being in** all those who are suffering in the world would seem to me not only doomed to failure but also dangerous for it might suggest, through the divine or Christic exaltation of suffering on which it is founded, that suffering has an absolute value. This latter I reject vigorously. as a consoling mythology or mystifying ideology, since the texts about the last judgement talk about eliminating suffering not consecrating it.

Therefore, the relationship which binds the suffering Christ, i.e. who has suffered, to those who are suffering is a relationship of the universal servant to those whom he has come to serve.

Now, serving implies three things:

- 1) To take on oneself, in one's flesh and in one's mind, the cause of those whom one wishes to serve;
- 2) acceptance of this cause is a way of identifying oneself with the very being of the one being served;
- 3) this identification is a work of justice to such an extent that whatever one does to others, it is being done to God himself.

The relationship which I am trying to describe is, therefore, ultimately one for which the liberation from suffering becomes in our world, due to the effective presence of Christ, the historical manifestation of the very being of God.

7.1.2 The Passion of Christ and it's Power

the language of the Cross correctly and to understand it. I would add at once that this ability to speak and understand the language of the Cross is certainly not something to be neglected. It is a language learned and understood firstly through the New and the Old Testaments, then through the tradition of the Fathers, the liturgy (the liturgy of Holy Week), and through spiritual experience as expressed by, for example, St. Paul of the Cross. Clearly, all of this is necessary, and yet it cannot be sufficient.

I believe it is essential that there should be an attraction which precedes it, something in the nature of a magnetism or powerful appeal which draws us towards a center; in other words, a preliminary dynamic which makes, our understanding of a certain language possible, makes us competent in that language.

And it is precisely here that the power of the Cross is in the first place to be found, as the Gospel tells us: “When I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw all things to myself.”

A scandal, a paradox indeed. The true image, the icon of the Most High, is henceforth Christ crucified become foolishness and weakness, who incarnates on earth the weak and foolish God in whose image and likeness he has been made what he is.

And yet the paradox goes still further, for the “foolishness of God” is wiser than the wisdom of men, and the “weakness of God” is more powerful than men (or that of men). How can we understand this new paradox? Here we seem to be dealing with a reversal of all that is most widely accepted. For through the sign of the Cross it is a completely different idea of God which emerges, one of weakness and folly. The Greek terms used are not just surprising but scandalous, as Paul himself says. I would translate them: “what is foolishness of God or in God and what is weakness of God.” The Messiah on the Cross is, therefore, the decisive Word on God, a Word more eloquent than any discourse, which tells us less about what God is than about what God is not. Thus the two major attributes, power and wisdom, stressed by the two great religious cultures, Judaism and Hellenism, both known to Paul, seem to lose the impressive power that was attributed to them; as if God could reveal himself to us, in his Christ, only under the aspects of a nothingness, a non-being.

To conclude, I would therefore say that the power of the Cross takes various forms which express its influence.

- A Power of attraction

“When I am lifted up, I will draw all things to myself” (cf. what was said above).

- A Power of example

Cf. Phil. 2,1:..”Have in you that mind which was in Christ Jesus.”

- A Norm of action

“Whatever you did to the least of these my brothers, you did to me.”

- An Insight into the misfortunes of mankind, which makes us see in these least ones, the hidden “I” who dwells in them.

- A Force which inspires an activity which transforms, sustaining its dynamism and giving it a more than human motivation.

- but also A Force for detachment, for critical judgement, which invites us to a forgetfulness of self (“do not let your right hand know what your left hand is doing”), and to distancing ourselves from the work of our own hands.

5. As can be seen, this power is clearly of value to each one of us, in that it is able to draw our life together around a center which prevents us from being pulled apart. As was noted above, each one relates to the Cross in his or her own way:

by being in the cleft of the rock, as Paul of the Cross would say;

by being in it, yes, but in order truly to live there by developing a spiritual sense of what it is saying to us, through courageous reflection on a personal choice of texts which become for us so many places in which we are glad to find ourselves and to dwell, and to which we constantly return.

4. The Suffering Servant, through his “Kenotic” characteristics so clearly described in Isaiah, (without human form, enduring insults, spitting and humiliation, suffering in expiation) – “it is our sufferings and iniquities that he took upon himself” – refers almost self-evidently to the kenosis of the Word in Phil. 2:11. But it is also linked to the “little ones,” to those who are nothing, in whom the mysterious “I” of Christ dwells; and also to the foolishness/weakness of the message. The same observations apply to all the other points of the square. But I acknowledge that each one has the right to choose his or her own starting point. The fact remains, however, that this square is the place in which we are, in which we dwell, and to which we always return.

A. PASSION - RESURRECTION

1. These must be seen as essentially reciprocal.

2. The Resurrection is the fruit of the power of the Cross, just as the Cross is the foundation for the Resurrection.

3. Hence the exaltation of suffering for its own sake should be rejected, but also, by the same token, any one-sidedness which would seek to wipe out the memory of Good Friday in the glory of the Risen One, who does in fact still bear in his hands the glorified wounds of his Passion.

B. SUFFERING IN GOD

1. This is a recent problem in Catholic theology, interest in it seemingly having arisen as a result of the influence of Reformed theology.

2. The fundamental assertion, justified it seems by texts from both the Old and New Testaments, is twofold:

- In contrast to divine impossibility and immutability, a questionable heritage from Hellenism, the Judeo-Christian God, the God of Mercy, is capable of suffering and sadness, and in his very transcendence authenticates the analogy of the Passion of Christ.
 - This “Passion,” this naked suffering, is essentially linked to Agape-Love. For we cannot conceive of a love which would not in some sense be the suffering of a wound, of a limitation, for without these, that immense generosity which is creation would not be possible.
3. That is why, to the degree that the Suffering Christ is the icon, the radiance of the “divine substance,” there must be in God an analogue which is the foundation of this icon. In other words, there is in God the equivalent of Christ’s Passion and Cross.

For example, in the Father-Son relationship, there would already be, at the Trinitarian level, a mysterious separation which would call to mind the abandonment of Christ on the Cross; a kind of tearing apart which creation prolongs, and which the Spirit, as love, can only promote.

7.1.3 The Passionist 4th Vow

Stanislaus Breton.... Is there a specific Passionist Apostolate

To begin simply, I only recall what no one ignores, namely, that existence of a fourth vow which, in some way, has the value of an indicator of specification.

This indicator, it is true, can remain simply in the juridic order. It can distinguish a religious Order in the way that a flag can distinguish one nation from another. It is an indication that should not be neglected but which, in the long run, risks dozing off into the drowsiness of a signaling indicator without any real force. It isn’t enough, therefore, to invoke this social difference, real as it is, in order to reach our specific difference. I will not pass it by in silence; but I believe that is necessary to deepen it, to excavate down to the spiritual roots which give the fullness of its significance.

I am not forgetting that we are treating presently of the Passionist apostolate. But I believe that this Passionist “doing” is inseparable from our specific Passionist “being.” “To be” (*etre*) and “to do” (*agir*) are convertibles. It isn’t a question of separating them. And since this “being” and “doing” are based on the same principle, the conversion to which I alluded above demands a return to that foundation, i.e., to that which in the founder and in his founding individuality transcends time and the particular place of a foundation historically dated.

To begin simply, I only recall what no one ignores, namely, that existence of a fourth vow which, in some way, has the value of an indicator of specification.

This indicator, it is true, can remain simply in the juridic order. It can distinguish a religious Order in the way that a flag can distinguish one nation from another. It is an indication that should not be neglected but which, in the long run, risks dozing off into the drowsiness of a signaling indicator without any real force. It isn't enough, therefore, to invoke this social difference, real as it is, in order to reach our specific difference. I will not pass it by in silence; but I believe that is necessary to deepen it, to excavate down to the spiritual roots which give the fullness of its significance.

Where do we find it then? More precisely, we can use the distinction between the dominant form and the recessive form. Let me explain. In order to make things practical, I do not deny that the Franciscans and the Dominicans have among their elements a devotion to the Passion of Christ. But, for whatever importance it might have, it is not that which specifies them as a religious Order. Following that up, we can, however, say that in our Congregation the Passion of Christ has the value and function of a dominant form; and this dominant form is precisely what, for us, fulfills the role of a principle of specification.

This simple reflection puts us, I believe, on the right path. But if we content ourselves with accepting this and without pushing the concept further, we will only go away, all things considered, with a good platitude. So we ought to question ourselves about this "dominant form" and to propose the following questions about it:

a) In what does this "dominant form," in the last analysis, determine our Passionist being" (*essere, etre*) and our "doing" (*agire, agir*) ?

b) *How is it possible and feasible to actualize it in our present situation, that is, in our contemporary world?*

The obvious response, which is not as superficial as it might seem, lies in this: if the Passion and the Cross determine our "being" and our "doing," it is precisely because they have given us our name. Without them, we would no longer be Passionists. An obvious answer, as I said; and, as such, running the risk of disappointing us. To give a name (to "name") today means to put a label on, or to "style" a certain kind of initiative or activity. If the name is to be more than a simple title or an appellation controlled by Church insistence, the name that designates us should have, so to speak, a biblical value; in other words, the name should have an ontological import. I mean, it should be a call, a vocation, a task. In brief, it ought to be a value that enthuses us and which, in each of us, translates into an ought-to-be and ought-to-do.

Finally, that which determines (or specifies) us, insofar as we are Passionists, is the capacity for enthusiasm and, consequently, the degree of ought-to-be and ought-to-do that the Passion of Christ frees in us. If the same fire that consumed St. Paul of the Cross is not in us, hope is useless. In the case it would be best to inscribe over all our houses the Dante phrase: "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here."

If we apply the same formulas to the Passion and Cross of Christ, I would say that the Congregation of Passionists gushed forth from an impulse of faith, from an original enthusiasm, from an "I believe in the Cross of Christ, salvation of the world." This "I believe" foundation was that of St. Paul of the Cross. And it is from this fire, from this river of fire, that we are born. We exist today, with a true existence, to the extent that we make this origin ours, as the principle of our Passionist "being" and "doing."

The formula “I believe that the Cross of Christ is the salvation of the world” is another turn of the original fire, but already more immediately directed toward what I would gladly call the “confession of Passionist faith.”

Here is what I mean by that. As you know, the title of our Congregation defines it in reference to the Cross and to the Passion. It is an abbreviation, the syncopated formula of a confession of faith by which a religious society defines, socially, its reason for existing (*raison d’etre*) as a community within the Church. In the same way it distinguishes it from every other religious society which has a right to exist within the ecclesial community.

The third formula, which concludes the process of objectification and which I mentioned above, establishes a third level. It begins a reflection, the importance of which we will see later. For now I just want to situate it in the global economy of our Passionist “being” and “doing.” First of all, this formula or level completes the process of objectification. It does so by establishing the Cross of Christ as the object of a thematic which will be developed as much in philosophy as in theology, in Church history or in Christian art. As you can see, it is a stage beyond the second original formula. Yet it should not be disdained for that reason, even though there may be some who would surely believe that the fervor of our origins is thus separated from the severity of the original concept.

*Briefly, it is necessary that the Word of the Cross is verified in our activities on behalf of justice in the world. This means concretely: it isn’t enough that the Word of the Cross is true, to use the phrase, in se; there is also a need that we “do” this truth (*veritatem facientes in caritate*), making it a power in changing the world; and the world will believe our deeds more easily than our words. More exactly, the need is to have our words take on a more efficacious dimension that would make them more credible or “viable,” as the Americans say. Our “Word” needs to become more operative by means of our generosity.*

7.1.4 Elements of Passionist Spirituality

Paul Francis Spencer:

The idea of a distinctive Passionist Spirituality is really quite a recent one. If we look back just to the 1950s, we find there were articles being written where people were raising the question, “Is there such a thing as Passionist Spirituality?”

It seems to me that one of the strongest characteristics of being a Passionist today is that you spend a great amount of your time asking “What is a Passionist?” It often seems to be part of our experience that we don’t really know what we are, and so we are continually asking what makes a Passionist, and what does it mean to be a Passionist. Yet somehow or other, when we look at one another we seem to recognize that there is a similarity, that there is something which makes us one body or one institute. What, then, is this thing that today we call Passionist Spirituality? What are its characteristics? The classic answer to this question is that Passionist Spirituality is about **prayer, penance and solitude**

The aim of these values was to create a certain environment. We notice that prayer, penance and solitude are more concerned with what we are than what we do. They are more on the level of being than activity. These values try to create a certain environment, to establish a form of life. When we talk about life forms and environment, the word which comes into our mind today, of course, is ecology. So perhaps we have to practice some kind of ecology in relation to these values from our past.

We can say, then, that Passionist Spirituality is a spirituality rooted in the experience of St. Paul of the Cross, which teaches a particular way of relating to the Passion of Christ, and in which community life is not subordinate to apostolic availability; that's my working definition.

Paul Franci goes into more depth on this topic on pg 6.

I think that we would all readily admit that the Passionists have founder's charism, where the experience of the founding person becomes normative.

For the Passionists, it was quite different: there was a rule before there was a community. This is very significant. We actually had a text, a rule of life, before there were any companions. There was only one man, who had a Rule, which he had written. It would be very naive to think that this rule was a fully-formed legislative text; it was what we would call today an inspirational text, in which Paul proposed a way of life based upon his experience. The founding experiences of Paul of the Cross are what shaped the form of the Rule, and that form which follows exactly the sequence of his own experience, has come down to us even in this century (9). In order to understand the content of the Rule, and also the way the chapters are arranged, we must recognize that Paul follows the sequence of the experiences which he himself had. Do you remember how the old Rule begins? After the introductory chapter, the first thing it speaks of is where the houses of this least Congregation are to be founded. What a strange thing to do: to begin by talking about geography! It's really quite amazing that he got it past the canonists. Yet, if we look at the Preface to the Rule, we find that the first experience Paul had, his first sense of being drawn to something different, was as he walked along the coast, the Riviera. He saw a little church and a hermitage on a hill, and he felt drawn to live there. That was his first inspiration, the beginning of his being drawn to something different, and the beginnings of our Congregation. And so, Paul's first "foundation" experience becomes the first section of the Rule, "On where the houses of this least Congregation are to be founded."

The Preface to the Rule is where we find the form of the Rule in its embryonic stage, because there Paul describes the founding experiences. It is a little document of five or six pages, largely ignored by scholars. Yet we would have to say that more than in the diary, which was written for the bishop, it is in the Preface to the Rule that Paul hands over to his community an account of the experiences which brought the community into existence (what we might call the "pre-Castellazzo" experience). He gives a detailed account of the different experiences he went through, and then, as he draws the Preface to a conclusion, he says, "after this, God infused in my soul in a lasting manner the form of the Holy Rule to be observed by the poor of Jesus and by me, his least and lowest servant."

A Specific Way Of Remembering The Passion

The second point in our definition is that Passionist Spirituality teaches a particular way of relating to the Passion of Christ. This implies, of course, that there are different ways of relating to the Passion of Christ and, in fact, as we look back on the history of Christian spirituality we see that there is a wonderful diversity of ways of relating to the Passion (10). We can divide these into three main groups, corresponding to three different types of spirituality. Those of you who are familiar with the enneagram will know that one of the things we find there is the notion of the three centers of activity in the person: head, heart and “gut”. Many types of spiritual anthropology say the same thing, though they may express it in different words. We can recognize three main kinds of mysticism, corresponding to the three centers in the human person. So we have mysticism of the intellect, which is speculative in character, mysticism of the heart, which is the affective kind of mysticism, and mysticism of the will, which is practical, or apostolic mysticism properly so called.

For Paul of the Cross, the context of the memory of the Passion is that of effectivity. Hence the phrase which we use at the end of our little meditations on the missions, and which sometimes we used to write at the top of our notepaper, “May the Passion of Christ be always in our hearts” – not may the Passion of Christ be in our head, but may the Passion of Christ be always in our heart. That tells us something about the kind of memory of the Passion Paul of the Cross was concerned with.

One difficulty here is that you cannot make a person have an experience, just as you cannot make anyone feel anything (“you can lead a horse to water, but you can’t make it drink”). What you can do, however, is promote the experience. That’s what you do during a retreat. When people come to a retreat house, you don’t make them feel anything, but you set up the environment which promotes a certain experience, the experience which you are hoping they will be able to enter into during the time they are there. In that sense, you cannot give the memory of the Passion to someone else; all you can do is set up an environment which will help you to promote this experience of the memory of the Passion of Christ.

For Paul, Passionist spirituality is lived within a certain kind of community, and it is that community life which makes possible the particular ministry he proposes. In safeguarding the life of prayer, penance and solitude, he is safeguarding the possibility of the ministry which he proposes. The promotion of the memory of the Passion is made possible by the form of life which he establishes.

[Lettere di San Paolo della Croce, a cura di Amedeo della Madre del Buon Pastore, Roma, Istituto Pio X, 1924, vol. III, 417-420.](#)

7.2 Traditional Ways/ Contemporary

7.2.1 The Crucified of Today

Fr. Joe Moons, The Crucified of Today

The charism has not only to be explained, but lived in community and expressed in mission. The “Crucified of Today” needs to be self-evident in the community and the formator. What is the relationship of the community’s mission to the poor? Part of the answer is in awareness and exposure of the candidates to the social teachings of the Church—the relationship of “the preferential option for the poor” and our charism to serve with love the “Crucified of Today.”

There is a graced relationship of our charism and the poor. For the charism to be able to foster the graced inspiration that is necessary to move a candidate forward it must have visible association with the “Crucified of Today” in the life of the community, but especially in the formator. If the mission is not clear here or lacking in integrity, the commitment on the part of the candidate may waver, or even decrease in as much that he may leave the community, because of what is lacking in the community, not the candidate.

7.2.2 Lived Experience of Community

For Paul, Passionist spirituality is lived within a certain kind of community, and it is that community life which makes possible the particular ministry he proposes. In safeguarding the life of prayer, penance and solitude, he is safeguarding the possibility of the ministry which he proposes. The promotion of the memory of the Passion is made possible by the form of life which he establishes.

7.2.3 Rule and Constitutions

1. THE MEMORY OF THE PASSION IN THE CONSTITUTIONS

Very Rev. Eugene Delaney, C.P.

Introduction

The Constitutions clearly and concisely enunciate the Passionist charism. Its fundamental element is to keep alive the memory of the Passion of Jesus. The principal texts are found in Chapter 1, numbers 5 and 6:

“We seek the unity of our lives and our apostolate in the Passion of Jesus” (Const. 5).

“We express, our participation in the Passion by a special vow....Through this vow we bind ourselves to keep alive the memory of the Passion of Christ. By word and deed we strive to foster awareness of its meaning and value....

“By this vow our Congregation takes her place in the Church so as to dedicate herself fully to its mission. “In the light of this, we seek to incorporate this vow into our daily lives by living the evangelical counsels.

“Then, as we relive the memory of the Passion of Christ today, our communities become a leaven of salvation in the Church and in the world” (Const. 6).

In accord with these statements, Chapter 6 establishes the memory of the Passion as the constitutive element of the Congregation:

“Whether clerics or brothers, all of us share the same Passionist vocation, and are called to live in community as equal sons of the same Father. Together we strive to keep alive in our minds and hearts the memory of the Passion, each according to his particular role of service in the Church and in the Congregation. In our continual efforts to follow Jesus Crucified, we are supported and guided by our Constitutions” (Const. 100).

In Chapter 4 the topic receives special emphasis and its present relevance is highlighted:

“By virtue of the specific mission that the Church entrusts to us, we make our own the words of Saint Paul: ‘We preach Christ Crucified,’ of whom we proclaim: ‘He is risen’” (Const: 64).

“We Passionists make the Paschal Mystery the centre of our lives.

“This entails a loving commitment to follow Jesus Crucified, and a generous resolve to proclaim His Passion and death with faith and love. His passion and death are no mere historical events. They are ever-present realities to people in the world today, ‘ crucified as they are by injustice, by lack of a deep respect for human life, and by a hungry yearning for peace, truth, and the fulness of human existence” (Const. 65).

In Chapter 5; which treats of formation, we find it mentioned, though not developed:

“Instruction on the whole range of the mystery of Christ’s Passion and the spirituality of our Founder and our Congregation must be included in the plan of formation for all our religious” (Const. 86).

These references are sufficient to orient ourselves to the topic and locate it within the Constitutions. These clear and precise references adequately demonstrate the centrality of the memory of the Passion in Passionist life and apostolate.

In order to appreciate more deeply the meaning of the memory of the Passion in our Congregation, we offer some reflections based on three core questions:

1. The content of the memory: What do we recall?
2. The modality of the memory: How do we recall?
3. The finality of the memory: Why do we recall?

II. THE MODALITY OF THE MEMORY

How do we, as Passionists, recall the Passion of Jesus? This question is important because the authentic meaning of the cross is maintained or made meaningless in the way we remember.

In the Constitutions we read: “We seek the unity of our lives and our apostolate in the Passion of Jesus” (Const. 5).

This indicates that we keep alive the memory of the Passion by our lifestyle and apostolic work. We shall reflect on these.

Our Life

Passionist life is principally expressed in the personal and communitarian living of the evangelical counsels. It is through them that we try to keep alive the memory of Jesus Crucified (Const. 6), and to contact Christ “both individually and as a community...at a deep level of his Paschal Mystery” (Const. 9).

This will be so to the degree that we succeed in manifesting the scandal, the contradiction and the Paschal meaning of the cross through poverty, chastity and obedience.

a. The Vows: Memory of the Scandal of the Cross

Because we are accustomed to a terminology of “perfection” by which we express the theology of religious life, it may seem to clash in saying that through the vows the religious is identified with the suffering servant “despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, before whom men hid their faces” (Is 53:3). But for the follower of Jesus Crucified, this is the first meaning of the vows he has professed. They are the concrete manner of incarnating himself thoroughly, as Jesus did, in the world of sin, in the turning about of history.

To bear the misery of the world in his person, to make it his all, is far from what certain attempts at renewal propose as “personal fulfillment.”

The celibate offers his heart. He draws to it the pain of solitude and of failure to communicate with which so many of his brothers must live. In his heart, he shares the frustration of so many failed marriages, the humiliation of women who are used and abused. It is the painful experience of the evil through which the Master walked, and which made him so sensitive to persons like the Magdalen.

The poor person offers his life in order to absorb the penury, the insignificance and the marginalization which affects large numbers of people, even whole communities. He assumes it as a scandal, as something which ought not to be. But he enters into that world freely. He descends to the lesser-world of poverty, because that is the place where Jesus, whom he follows, was incarnated.

The obedient person accepts the condition of a slave, not in the figurative sense, but in the real sense of the slavery under which many sectors of humanity suffer. He offers his own personal history as the locus of the sorrowful experience of knowing the restriction of any possibility of choosing for himself. He is in

fraternal solidarity with those who always have their legitimate aspirations deferred and have no voice in the ordering of their society.

The religious is a man of a lesser-world. That is the environment to which he has been invited by the Master who said to him: “If you want to be my disciple, take up the cross, deny yourself, and follow me” (Mk 8:34).

The gesture made by Paul of the Cross in kissing the wound of the poor man who crossed his path one day is a deeply incarnational one, truly prophetic and an eloquent testimony. The religious is one who kisses the wounds of the world, the hurts of history every day. He does so not because he approves of them, but because it is the place where God has become incarnate and where he reveals his wisdom and power.

b. The Vows: Memory of Contradiction

To assume for oneself is not to give approval. Through religious vows we take on ourselves the world of sin, but without approving of the sin in the world. The religious life is a critique of the world; it is a life which denounces evil in all of its forms. It is opposition to idolatries, to the great idolatries which tend to displace God from the core of history. The celibate is an existential prophet against the idolatry of sex which dehumanizes and ruptures interpersonal communion. The poor man offers himself as a witness to the true value of the goods of this world. He contradicts a society in which the unjust distribution of riches is one of the principal sources of division, hatred, and suffering (Const. 12). The obedient person takes on the mission of halting in his life the idolatry of power which brings into being the mighty and the oppressed.

c. The Vows: A Memory of Paschal Meaning

“Baptism immerses us in the flood of divine power welling up from the death and resurrection of Jesus, and consecrates us as members of the people of God. “This consecration we reaffirm, and resolve to live a fuller life through our religious profession, faithful to these Constitutions” (Const. 7).

If the vows are not lived with the dynamism of the Pasch, they are not in accord with the evangelical counsels. If the world's sin is not turned into a "new wine" in the heart of the religious, the vows are not constituting a remembrance of the Passion of Jesus.

The Paschal meaning of the cross is genuinely recalled when the religious overcomes in his life all the experience of the evil which he draws to himself. A religious who is bitter, resentful, self-sufficient or pretentious can never be a memory of the Passion.

If the vows are not expressions of the passage from death to life, they contain no significant message for the crucified of this world. They would then be more a manifestation of the cross of history, "but not of the cross which Jesus took on himself. Our living of the vows ought to be a witnessing to the defeat of the cross and a testimony that the power of God is greater than the power of the cross (2 Cor 4:7-18).

The Apostolate

The Passionist keeps alive the memory of the Passion by his life, particularly when his vows are understood and lived in the Paschal dynamism of the death and resurrection of Jesus. However, that memory is actualized through his apostolate. Both avenues are intimately entwined: "If the message of the Cross has not first penetrated our own lives, we ought not presume to proclaim it to others" (Const. 9).

That which we announce is the same as what we are trying to live. Therefore, if we actually achieve incorporation into our life of the scandal, the contradiction and the Paschal meaning of the Lord's cross, they will emerge as the content of our preaching and they will shape our identity as apostles.

There are three appropriate guidelines for our Passionist apostolate, if it is to be an activity for truly keeping alive the memory of the Passion.

What do we intend to do by keeping alive the memory of the Passion of Jesus? What we attempt is to celebrate the Pasch within the Passion of the world and to actuate the Kingdom in the dark situations of our history. We do not attempt to step out of this world, nor to extricate people from their present realities. Rather, we seek to free all from the evil one (Jn 17:15). Our efforts are oriented to transforming the world of malediction into a world of benediction. "The power of the Cross, which is the wisdom of God, gives us strength to discern and remove the causes of human suffering" (Const. 3).

Encouraged by the experience of the People of God, we are committed to the great march toward the Promised Land. We understand that the Promise made to Abraham and to his descendants will definitely come about in heaven, but only on condition that it be lived out in the heart of present history.

Our life is a leaven in the dough of the present life. This is the dough we want to be transformed into the bread of fraternity, broken for the great banquet of humanity, from which no one is excluded. We are people of a lesser-world because it is there that we have been sent. But we are also people of an Utopia because we follow the Crucified-one who has risen.

Our message is not exhausted by concrete historical events, since it is part of the total and definitive Pasch. However, we can also simply say that our message does not ignore temporal realities, because the Pasch is lived on the cross of the world which Jesus took on himself.

A CONGREGATION

TO REMIND MANKIND OF THE PASSION OF CHRIST

THE MEMORY OF THE PASSION IN THE CONSTITUTIONS

Rev. Antonio M. Artola, C. P.

“Do this in memory of me” (Lk 22:19)

“Remember Jesus Christ the Lord” (2 Tim. 2:8)

To remember is to re-live. To re-live is to re-create. He who remembers gives new life to that which in the past was once part of the present. Since every revival occurs in a spirit that is different from those who initially experienced the events, reviving is recreating the past in the spiritual space of our personal present.

To remember the Passion is to give a new current dimension to Christ on the cross, who is thus once again brought to exist within us. Offering Christ on the cross the possibility to come alive once again in one's own historical and temporal life means being a witness to the Passion in a wonderful way.

I. THE MEMORY OF THE PASSION — BACKBONE OF THE CONSTITUTIONS

The theme of the Memory of the Passion is the principle animating the new Constitutions. It is explicitly present in the four most important chapters: Fundamentals, Apostolate, Formation and Constitution. The rest of the teachings and norms all revolve around these four chapters. Let us briefly point out the characteristics of each of these main parts.

1. The Memory of the Passion in the Fundamentals of our Life (n. 6)

Together with the formula of profession (n. 96), n. 6 is the most important regarding the characterization of the Congregation from the vow of the Passion. The number is full of ideas. The text makes reference to the participation in the Passion considered by certain experts to be the biblical and theological approach most suitable for understanding the spirituality of the Passion (1). As for the vow of the Passion, its object revolves around memory as seen in the kerigmatic, apostolic, witnessing and inter-congregational dimensions, as well as in terms of past experience. There are two references to memory. In the Regulations, the chapter is completed by concrete applications in study, meditation and preaching.

2. The Memory of the Passion in the Apostolate (n. 62)

Number 6 already referred to the apostolate as being integrated in the vow of memory. The third paragraph of n. 62 introduces a new concept worthy of special attention. It is the celebration of the memory. It is known that in liturgical terminology the expression “celebrating the memory” signifies celebrating the Eucharist. During the celebration of every Mass, we say in the different Eucharistic prayers: “in memory of his death and resurrection...we thank you for counting us worthy to stand in your presence and serve you” (II). “calling to mind the death your Son endured for our salvation,” (III). “Father, we now celebrate this memorial of our redemption” (IV).

In compliance with this duty imposed by the Constitutions, the Congregation as such is committed to implementing the mandate of Christ during the Last Supper: “Do this in memory of me” (Lk 22:19). Thanks to this new focus on the Passionist apostolate, the Eucharistic celebration is converted into a specific act of the liturgical memory of the Passion.

3. The Memory of the Passion in Formation (n. 96)

The chapter regarding formation is yet another privileged site in which reference is made to the Memory of the Passion. In n. 45 of the Regulations all formation is aimed at keeping alive the memory of the Passion in the Church. The most important aspect of this chapter in the Constitutions is the fact that it includes the formula of profession. It is stated that formation is the crucial moment for the Memory of the Passion. If the candidates to Passionist life receive adequate formation, if profession is made in full awareness of its significance, if the commitment to the Passion is lived in faith, then the principles proclaimed by the Fundamentals shall be lived up to.

It should be emphasized that for the first time in the history of the Congregation, our peculiar vow is formulated from the Memory of the Passion. The vow has a two-fold objective: that of continuously remembering (personal dimension), and that of promoting the memory (apostolic dimension).

QUESTIONS

1. The Scandal of the Cross

Jesus ate with sinners. He was in solidarity with them. This scandalized the pharisees. Religious life presents an image of an uncontaminated life which looks, as though from above, onto a reality of sin that envelopes the world. Which image is the real one? What ought to be a Passionist's reaction?

2. The Contradiction of the Cross

Jesus was in solidarity with sinners, but not an accomplice to sin. He was clearly opposed to sin. What distinguishes our presence in the world: complicity or a prophetic spirit?

3. The Paschal Meaning of the Cross

Jesus opened paths. He created a new reality. Is our action generating a process of liberation? Does it point to new possibilities? Does it accompany the initiatives which are begun?

7.2.4 *The Wisdom of the Cross*

Stanislaus Breton....

Next, this theoretical area of study centered on the Cross should be spelled-out and organized in a methodical way.

I would distinguish an area which I would call – just to hurry things along and for want of a better term – the **esthetic** section; then, the **theological-philosophical** section; and finally, a section I would put under the title of **ecumenical**.

c) The **esthetics** of the cross have to do with all the artistic or literary works referring to the suffering of Christ. And here we have to distinguish. The first job is to collect such items. This would become a collection which would permit easy access to the major works treating in some way of the “Good Friday Spell” which we spoke of earlier. But this isn’t enough. Each one of us, according to our own preferences, should then choose from this abundant and so widely available material, whatever can nourish and further our Passionist sensibility. Because, and I insist on this, none of us can live in a world becoming ever more prosaic without a minimum of poetry. So each of us, by a principle of personal selection, ought to select from among the sacred texts in literature or the arts, music or painting, whatever seems most capable of stimulating his fervor and revealing to him another aspect of the multiform grace of the suffering Christ.

d) Because it is more well known, I will not insist on the necessity of **theological** and **philosophical** reflection under the Cross.

Today, more than in the past, we have the means not only of informing ourselves, but, what is rarer, the means of forming ourselves. This means to have, under a staurological **theologoumenon**, a personal mind-set which would be not just a literary conceit, but a coefficient of originality that could enrich the common patrimony of the Congregation.

*e) Lastly, I referred to an **ecumenical** section of “Passiological” studies. In saying this, I mean all that in the Cross of Christ which allows Christians of different confessions to join together in a common and essential thought. But I am also thinking, by reason of my personal experience, of all those who do not pertain, whether near or far, to our christian community. I have the naivete to believe that the Cross of*

Christ can still speak to people of the East and the West, and that they are not as insensible as might be thought to that divine and human fascination that emanates from the Cross. Here I'm touching an area of reflection that I'm aware is not open to all of us. Nonetheless, it seemed right to me to make at least a modest allusion to it.

2. THE MEMORY OF THE PASSION IN THE CONSTITUTIONS

Very Rev. Eugene Delaney, C.P.

a. The Scandal of the Cross

From the very beginning there has been a risk of watering-down the cross of Christ, emptying it of its scandalous aspect. The cross has rooted itself in Christian consciousness as a “sign of benediction”, but it has not equally penetrated as a “sign of malediction” or curse (Dt 21:23; Gal 3:13).

What does Jesus accept in taking on the cross? Does he accept something good, desired by the Father, or, in accord with the will of the Father, does he accept something bad in order to destroy?

The meaning of the cross was that of a curse which was weighing on the world from the first sin. The acceptance of the cross by Jesus is the very same option he selected in his incarnation. In his incarnation he did not opt to enter into a world of blessing, but rather into the world where evil was entrenched. He shed the world created by the Word of Blessing (Gn 1-2; Jn 1), and entered into the world which man had made a malediction. He became a slave and humbled himself unto the cross (Phil 2:5-11).

Jesus became the “suffering servant” (Is 53). His was not a visit to the world of sin, but an incarnation into it. He assumed sin, he made it his own, he appropriated it. He did not hesitate to face it, nor did he turn his face from it. In this he was obedient unto death. His acceptance of the cross was the most profound way he could enter into the world of sin. He was not accepting something good, but something bad. The cross was the symbol of all that was evil. The good was his acceptance to enter into this world to destroy the dominance of evil, for it was the will of the Father, “Who so loved the world that he surrendered his own Son” (Jn 3:16).

Two positions which are eminently important for pastoral activity flow from remembering the scandal of the cross: not accepting the cross as something good and directly willed by God, but as something bad which ought to be combated; and, in solidarity with all the crucified, the choice to enter into and remain in the world of malediction, knowing that it is there that the wisdom and power of God are manifested (1 Cor 1:1-24).

b. The Contradiction

Jesus enters into the world as a “sign of contradiction” (Lk 2:34). His heart was filled with the Father’s love for all people. His spirit was filled with complete opposition to sin and its consequences. He assumes the world and human history with all its decadence, but he does not accept it. He decisively confronts the risky duty of changing everything. In the synagogue at Nazareth he makes his own the prophecy of Isaiah 61 (Lk 4:6-21), thus defining his mission to the world.

The life of the Lord is a continual struggle against evil in all its forms. He combats sin in the heart of the sinner. He expels demons where he finds them at work. He cures the illnesses of persons who are blind, deaf, and leprosy. He denounces the formalism and the hypocrisy of the religion of his day. He breaks the chains of oppression and captivity.

He assumes and he combats. These two positions are inseparable in the life of Jesus, they always appear clearly in the Gospel. It is not done without effort and suffering, for he experiences the conflict with evil in his own heart. He was assailed by a dual temptation: by the temptation of not accepting the world as it is, dreaming a possibility of building a new world beyond the old; and by the temptation of “accommodating himself to the framework of the old man.”

The choice the Lord makes is clear. The new world ought to flow out of the old, but, at the same time, out of opposition to the old world. Light will break into the shadows. Life will show itself in death. However, this will never be the result of a peaceful co-existence, but through a systematic opposition instead.

This is the sense in which Jesus takes on the cross. He takes it up and struggles with it until he has taken from it all its potential for destruction. Jesus conquered the cross, despoiling it of its death-dealing power. In death’s very destruction the power of God is manifested (Eph 2:14-16).

Remembering the cross as contradiction, as opposition, is to place man upright in the face of all the manifestations of evil. This is entirely contrary to a passive and resigned posture. It means to awaken a critical and liberating attitude and to invite persons to take up the way of the cross courageously and with a challenging attitude (Lk 9:51).

c. The Paschal Meaning

The most important and determinative content of the memory of the Passion is contained in the Paschal meaning of the death of the Lord. We want to state this emphatically: the Pasch is not an event which occurs after death. It is experienced in the heart of dying. The manifestation comes later on the third day. The reality of the Pasch, however, is simultaneous with death. Jesus is definitively rooted into life at the same moment that he dies.

Not every cross is a Paschal Cross. The defeated cross is Paschal. The Pasch supposes the Exodus of Egypt and the journeying toward the new Land. The cross is a Paschal one when the Crucified does not let himself be obliterated by it, nor permits it entrance into his heart as a bearer of malediction. It is a Paschal Cross when the Crucified uses it to outline the new world, and to profile the attitudes of the new man. That is what did not occur with the bad thief, yet it is exactly what happened with the good thief. This is what the world definitively received as possible for it through the majestic manner of the dying of Jesus of Nazareth.

There are some deaths that do not kill and there are some lives that do not die. This is what Christians proclaim in the life and death of Jesus. Our hope is in his life and death. There is surely a new world coming. There is a renewal and strengthening of that hope each time human history sees someone overtaken by the evil of the cross for having fought against it on the side of the world of blessing.

The Passion is forgotten when its Paschal meaning is left in the shadows; when the spirituality of the cross does not set Christians on the way to the Exodus and to the conquest over all forms of evil in the world; when the contemplation of the cross leads Christians to settle themselves in the structures of Egypt, while expecting a new kind of Pasch in the future as a recompense for their humble submission in the near present.

The Passion of Jesus is not remembered when the Pasch is considered as a later event. On the other hand, the Passion of Jesus is truly remembered as the supreme outpouring of his liberating energy, unleashing to the maximum the Paschal vitality it contains, when we recall it as the ultimate assault which the forces of evil used in trying to destroy Jesus.

7.2.5 Other Resources

Feedback coming back

OME Book

Personal Life Story

7.3 Internet Search on Charism??

8 What it is not

Passionist Spirituality is the unfolding of the gift which was given to the Church in Paul of the Cross, and is rooted in his own life experience. It involves the memory of the Passion, understood in a particular way as the loving and sorrowful remembrance of the sufferings of Jesus. It is not enough to say that a

Passionist is someone who relates to the Passion of Christ. That's a Christian. A Passionist relates to the Passion of Christ in a particular way, which is a way of effectivity. Nor is it not enough simply to say that Passionist Spirituality is about that kind of Memory of the Passion. According to Paul of the Cross, the promotion of the Memory of the Passion is only possible within the context of a certain type of community, an environment in which this memory can grow. A contemporary writer (27) has defined spirituality as "prayer elevated to a lifestyle"; for Passionists, that seems to me as good a definition as you will find.

9 Who is this for?

9.1 Vowed

Paul Francis Spencer

Next year, it will be twenty years since I entered the Congregation, but I still feel like a beginner and I realize that there are hundreds of years of Passionist spirituality just sitting looking at me. So, what can I say? Where are the sources of Passionist Spirituality? They are sitting in front of me. That is the first answer to such a question, because, as Theodore said in his homily this morning, a Spirituality is a living tradition; it is not something that we find in books. Indeed, our own experience coming into the Congregation was very much like what Paul speaks about to the Corinthians when he says, "What I received from the Lord, I in turn hand it on to you" (1 Cor 11:23). For us, Passionist Spirituality has been something which was handed on, which we were given; this is symbolized for us in the presentation of the Rule and Constitutions during the rite of profession.

for the most part we learned Passionist Spirituality from watching Passionists and listening to them, (usually very amusing stories, we would have to admit). hearing their story.

9.2 Laity

- (1) Level 1**
- (2) Level 2**
- (3) Level 3**
- (4) Level 4**
- (5) Level**

10 When???

10.1.1 Leadership Day

10.1.2 Pre-Chapter

10.1.3 Chapter

11 Sources Used

STUDIES IN PASSIONIST HISTORY AND SPIRITUALITY

Found on the Passionist Website at <https://passionist.org/studies-in-passionist-history-and-spirituality/>

1. ST. PAUL OF THE CROSS, THE CONGREGATION OF THE PASSION - WHAT IT IS AND WHAT IT WANTS TO DO **Completed**

Prepared by Fabiano Giorgini, CP

3. THE PRESENCE OF THE PASSION OF JESUS IN THE STRUCTURE AND APOSTOLATE OF THE PASSIONIST CONGREGATION

Antonio Maria Artola, CP

5. THE MYSTIQUE OF THE PASSION

Flavio di Bernardo, CP **Completed**

6. THE PASSIONIST CONGREGATION AND ITS CHARISM

Stanislaus Breton, CP **First 2/3 Finished**

7. THE SPIRITUALITY OF ST. PAUL OF THE CROSS AND OUR PASSIONIST SPIRITUALITY AS SYMBOLIZED IN THE FOURTH VOW

Costante Brovotto, CP **Do this as well**

11. PASSIONIST AND THE PRESENT DAY THEOLOGY OF THE CROSS

Jose Ramon Zubizarreta, CP **Completed**

19. PASTORAL ASPECTS OF THE MEMORIA PASSIONIS

20. THE MEMORIA PASSIONIS IN THE CONSTITUTIONS **Completed**

Remembering the Passion of Christ

Barnabas Ahern, CP

The Memory of the Passion in the Constitutions

Antonio M. Artola, CP

The Living Memory of the Passion

Stanislas Breton, CP

The Memory of the Passion in the Constitutions

Eugene Delaney, CP

26. THE WISDOM OF THE CROSS

Costante Broveto, CP **Completed**

28. THE PASSION OF CHRIST AND ITS POWER

Stanislas Breton, CP **Completed**

29. ELEMENTS OF PASSIONIST SPIRITUALITY

Paul Francis Spencer, CP **Completed**

30. THE ROLE OF SYMBOL IN PASSIONIST SPIRITUALITY

Paul Francis Spencer, CP **Go through this one.**

33. REFLECTIONS ON THE OCCASION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE APPROBATION OF THE CONSTITUTIONS

Circular Letter to the Congregation and Passionist Family

Superior General Ottaviano D'Eglio, CP **Go through this one.**

Mission and Memory of the Passion

Francisco José Murray **Completed**

The Charism and the “Crucified of Today”

Joe Moons **Completed**

12 Sub Themes which criss-cross into every conversation

(1) Vocations

(2) OME

(3) Inter-Culturalism

(4) Care for the Earth

(5) Social Media/ Communications/Technology

(6) Laity