

**SAINT PAUL OF THE CROSS
FOUNDER OF THE PASSIONISTS**

By ALOYSIUS MCDONOUGH, C.P., D.D.

Passionist Monastery Jamaica, N. Y.
Second Printing

The SIGN Press
Union City, N; J.

Imprimi potest
CARROL RING, C.P.
Prae. Prov.

Nihil Obstat:
ARTHUR J. SCANLAN, S.T.D.,
Censor Librorum.

Imprimatur:
© FRANCIS CARDINAL SPELLMAN, D.D. *Archbishop of New York.*

June 4, 1944.

Published and Copyrighted
by
The SIGN Press
Union City, N. J.

PREFACE

"We preach Christ Crucified." This was the challenge of Saint Paul, the Apostle, to the pagan world of his day. And he preached Christ Crucified so well that he changed the face of the world.

At a later day, another disciple of Christ Crucified — Saint Paul of the Cross — threw down the same challenge to the world. To carry on his work, this Saint of the Crucified founded a Religious Order known as the Passionists, and the Passion of Christ was to be the motivating theme of their preaching. The prayerful and penitential lives of these consecrated men were patterned after the example of this great saint into whose mouth could well have been put the very words of his celebrated forerunner and namesake: "Be ye imitators of me as I am of Christ."

The world today needs the example and the preaching of Saint Paul of the Cross. A nominal Christian world has lost its salt and is without savor. The spirit of neo-paganism so presses in on all sides that, even Catholic souls are being unconsciously contaminated. Men are fast losing the sense of sin. Penance is considered old-fashioned and the idea of self-sacrifice is being lost in the welter of modern convenience and luxury.

A softened Christianity waxes eloquent over the Christ Who taught the appealing doctrine of the "Golden Mean," but forgets the Christ Who commanded everyone to "take up his cross daily and follow Me." It lauds the Christ Who narrated the parable of the Good Samaritan, but scoffs at the Christ Who clearly and emphatically said: "If your hand or your foot scandalize you, cut it off and cast it from yourself." It gazes enthralled at the Christ transfigured on Tabor, but shrinks from the spectacle of a Christ crucified on Calvary.

Yes, men of this age have forgotten Christ and Him Crucified. So they have turned and crucified others. To crucify or be crucified is the dreadful alternative that is making a shambles of a world which considered itself self-sufficient. And men will stop crucifying one another only when they begin to crucify themselves in memory of the God Who was crucified for them. The ungodly desires of mankind must be brought into subjection through Christ and His Cross.

So the life-story of Saint Paul of the Cross, presented here in a simple and readable style, will fill a wide and deep need in this present day. May the burning zeal of this great lover of Jesus Crucified kindle the hearts of men that, they may better know and more faithfully serve Christ and Him Crucified. Christ saved the world by being crucified for it. Only the bitter memory of Christ's sufferings and death can stir the world to the realization of its present awful state and save it anew.

©CUTHBERT M. O'GARA, C.P.. D.D.
Bishop of Yuanling, Hunan, China

INTRODUCTION

World War II furnishes eloquent evidence that the fruits of ungodliness are tragedy and despair. In refreshing contrast, God's faithful enjoy a supernatural optimism that stems from the reliability of their divine Leader. This optimism is adverted to daily in the sacrifice of the Mass, when we pray: "O God, Who in creating man didst exalt his nature, and yet more wonderfully didst establish it anew, grant us to have part in the Godhead of Him Who hath vouchsafed to share our manhood — Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord."

Our divine Saviour, "with Whom there is no change nor shadow of alteration," is as well disposed today as ever toward men of good-will. The re-presentation of His Sacred Passion upon the Mass altar exemplifies His unfaltering solicitude. But amid the hubbub of this world, our attention is prone to wander and our appreciation to dull. Through His saints, God recalls our attention and quickens our faith. By Saint Paul of the Cross, Calvary was emphasized as the focal point of this world, and Crucifixion Friday as the focal point of all history.

Fittingly, Paul of the Cross is entitled a "Saint of the Passion" and the modern "Apostle of the Crucified." The dominant note of his missionary preaching was "Christ Crucified, unto Jews indeed a stumbling-block and unto Gentiles foolishness, but unto them that are called, the power of God and the wisdom of God." Under the refining influence of grace, Paul attained in his physical and psychological sufferings, a rare degree of conformity with the Man of Sorrows. Thus did God fit him as a General in the Church Militant — as the Founder of the Passionists. The good accomplished by the founder of a religious community is as lasting as the duration of the community, and as far-reaching as its worldwide expansion. No wonder, then, that a founder must be outstanding even among the saints!

Although the faithful at large are not graced by the divine vocation to a religious community, all without exception can gain inspiration from the story of a saintly founder. Even Saint Gabriel, the Passionist Student, could not duplicate the life of Saint Paul of the Cross. But he so *resembled* him as to merit canonization. We, too, can "catch the spirit" that enlightens and energizes the saints. The biography of a saint generates the encouragement we need, for the true story of such a career features life on earth in reliable perspective.

Among all the saints, the uncanonized are an overwhelming majority. To become at least an uncanonized saint is the vocation of every follower of Christ Crucified. By the Vicar of Christ, Saint Paul of the Cross has been endorsed infallibly as a model worthy of our imitation.

— A. McD.

SAINT PAUL OF THE CROSS

PANORAMA

In the Year of Our Lord 1939, Expositions of Progress were featured on the Atlantic and Pacific coasts. New York and San Francisco built miniature cities to exemplify progress, to symbolize human hopes for the World of Tomorrow. Tomorrow has become today and today's world is topsy-turvy, devastated by war, frantic for peace. The prospects are not encouraging nor are they altogether discouraging, for "the heart of the Ruler is in the hand of the Lord."

Even a quick survey of history gives ample evidence that, centuries other than the twentieth have been periods of turmoil. To the people of the eighteenth century, the plight of Europe must have seemed desperate from the viewpoint of both State and Church. Nation warred upon nation. With dismaying inconsistency, political and military alliances were made and unmade. The interests of God and His Church were jeopardized then as now, by open persecution and by intrigue. But as long as the Church survives, Christian civilization will survive — therefore, Christian civilization will never perish.

It is characteristic of divine strategy for God to choose "the foolish things of the world that He may confound the wise, and the weak things of the world that He may confound the strong." Northwest of Genoa, where the foothills of the northern Apennines blend with the plains of Lombardy, there is a tiny commonwealth known as Ovada. The Daneo family were inconspicuous, even in that village. In 1694, a son was born to them whose history is stranger than fiction. The day was to come when he would be ousted from the Vatican as a vagrant. But the day was to come when the Vicar of Christ would journey to visit him, and when his statue would be unveiled at Saint Peter's of Rome. Paul Daneo was destined by Providence to be a "hunter of souls" whose influence would radiate from the Eternal City to its suburbs of Europe and Africa, the Americas and the Orient.

PAUL FRANCIS

This child of grace was the second of sixteen children — a well planned family among whom goodness and happiness prevailed, despite the hardships of poverty. Paul was born on the 3rd of January and baptized on the 6th, the feast of Our Lord's Epiphany. Two patrons were chosen for him — Paul the Apostle and Francis of Assisi — both "Saints of the Passion." In retrospect, the choice seems to have been prophetic, for Paul Francis was to be a counterpart of the one in unworldliness, and of the other in missionary zeal.

In games of make-believe, youngsters often indulge their childhood' fancies. When little more than a tot, it was Paul's delight to decorate a home-made altar and to conduct "services." In this make-believe, his younger brother, John Baptist, was an eager partner. As time went on, it became obvious that their interest in things religious was more than a kindergarten phase or a mere whimsy. The partnership begun in childhood was to be life-long. Even their early make-believe was a token of reality — of a faith so influential as to leaven their inclinations and to point their ambitions.

Paul's mother was his mentor and inspiration. From all accounts, she was an ideal educator. Under her guidance, there were no problems in juvenile delinquency. By word and example, she fostered the traits that should characterize a child of God. Hence, that Paul should treasure predominantly "the things that are above," she regarded as up to date, practical, and normal.

FORESHADOWS

When Paul was about ten years old, the family left Ovada and returned to Castellazzo, their native town. At Cremolino, twelve miles away, there was a school conducted by a priest. Under his tutelage Paul spent the next five years, and from him we learn that Paul was a gratifying pupil — keenly intelligent and eagerly industrious. It is fortunate that Paul was neither dull nor lazy, because his opportunities for formal education were to be few and far between.

During these formative years as a schoolboy, Paul manifested a remarkable solicitude for the interests of God and for his soul. In sketching the history of a saint, it is of utmost importance to interpret his progress in supernatural terms. Otherwise we would think of him in a language foreign to heaven and to God. Sacramentally, all Catholics are graced and even gifted. The gifts of the Holy Spirit endow the soul with spiritual refinement — an unearthly insight and responsiveness which render grace thoroughly fertile. But if uncultivated, a gifted soul remains mediocre. Such a one may pass muster with the King of Hearts but will never be recompensed as a saint. To be satisfied with mediocrity is tragic blunder, to take it for granted as a normal condition is ascetical heresy. If our perspective be below par, we are inclined to censure the conduct of a saint as excessive, and to consider his viewpoint freakish. "The sensual man perceives not these things that are of the Spirit of God; for it is foolishness to him and he cannot understand, but we have the mind of Christ."

Paul ate and studied and slept that he might serve God the more suitably. This was the overall ambition that prompted his every thought and word and action. Whenever feasible, he gave his time and attention to God directly and exclusively — in church. Significant of his spirit is the fact that he sought no diversion. In fact, he experienced no need of it. Recreation is needed to offset the tedium of irksome obligations. But religious activities were so congenial to Paul and so tonic as to furnish him ample refreshment.

Prior to the year 1905, the daily reception of Holy Communion was a privilege enjoyed ordinarily by priests only. It was exceptional that Paul was allowed to receive the Holy Eucharist several times weekly. Later on, because of his unusual innocence, his confessor permitted even daily Communion. Lest this rare favor occasion admiration and inflate his self-esteem, Paul entertained his Divine Guest now in one church, now in another.

By means of thoughtful reading, he kept his mind and heart attuned throughout the day. Hence, he was never at a loss for incentive, and his prayers — though profoundly reverent — were spontaneous, informal chats with God. To atone for his own shortcomings and to win divine forgiveness for others, Paul underwent voluntary penance to an heroic extent. Realizing in his own youthful way that, sinners alienate themselves from God by a preference for incompatible creature comforts, he curtailed his own comforts to an essential minimum.

Upon his return to Castellazzo, Paul's enthusiastic zeal found new outlets. He taught catechism to the children. As president of the parish sodality, his influence was decisive with many companions during the critical period of their transition from boyhood to young manhood. He would exhort the wayward to amend and warn them of impending disaster. His warnings were verified in the tragic death of those who remained stubbornly unrepentant. Paul's charity to the neglected poor was manifested strikingly in his burial of the dead. Owing to the poverty of his times, this corporal work of mercy entailed the excavation of a grave and actual interment. Only a keen faith in the resurrection would impel one to volunteer for such a task!

Paul's design for living was, indeed, that of a specialist — of a follower of Christ whose conduct is thoroughly consistent with his faith and his hope. Years were to elapse before Paul

would realize fully his unique vocation, many more years were to intervene before his lifework would be accomplished, but "coming events had cast their shadows before."

CRUSADER

Early in the 18th century, wholesale dissension prevailed among the nations of Europe. The Moslems took advantage of this disunity to invade by land and sea. The Republic of Venice mobilized the vanguard of defense. Pope Clement XI contributed ships and funds, and appealed for volunteers to crusade against the enemies of Christendom.

In 1714, in response to the Papal summons, Paul joined the Christian army. He did so, not as a mere soldier of fortune, but as a spirited member of the Church Militant — sacramentally confirmed as a soldier of Christ. With other recruits, he made his way eastward toward Venice, the point of embarkation. En route, the regiment bivouacked at Cremona. While there, Paul visited a church where the Forty Hours Devotion was in progress. During his vigil in the Real Presence, God directed him to discontinue military service, and return home. Though he was unaware of the reason for this impulse, he was certain as to its source. He obtained an honorable discharge and went back to Castellazzo.

BETROTHAL AND BEQUEST

Unknown to Paul, his priest-uncle had selected for him a bride to be. For parents or other elders to decide upon marriage partners was, at that time, not uncommon. Apparently, the young lady would have made an ideal wife. And her dowry would have been a godsend to Paul's family. When she was introduced to her handsome and affable fiancé, she was impressed very favorably.

It was true, as Paul's uncle observed, that his nephew had manifested no definite intention of becoming a priest. None the less, Paul was determined to serve God with an undivided heart. However, he was spared any further importunity from his well intentioned uncle, by the latter's sudden death. When Paul learned that he had been named as heir, he renounced his claim and accepted only a prayer book of the Divine Office, known as a breviary. Although obliged by no vows, the virtues of chastity and poverty were already dominant factors in his life

INTERLUDE

In a spirit akin to that of the martyrs, Paul had hastened to join the Crusade. Just as promptly, in obedience to God, he had retraced his steps to the uneventful setting of Castellazzo. His family resided in the town, but on the outskirts maintained a combination farm and vineyard. There Paul resumed work, to help lighten his father's toil.

Thus the next five years were spent quietly, though not idly. As Paul's yearning to serve God intensified, his magnanimity of spirit needed the balance of humility and obedience. He accepted the advice of his confessor with childlike simplicity, as the echo of God's will. When bidden to do so by his director, he would journey twenty miles to seek further counsel.

More so now than ever before, Paul felt prompted to live in solitude, in order to minimize distraction. He and his brother, John Baptist, made use of an attic room as a cloistered chapel. There they slept upon the floor, with stones for pillows, and arose at midnight for prayer. Through the ennobling influence of divine grace, God imparted to His future apostle a

thoroughly supernatural ! education. Hence, as time went on, Paul became of one mind and heart with Christ in his attitude toward sin and its consequences and in his longing to win the allegiance of human souls to Christ Crucified, the "Mediator of God and men."

As a logical development, two things seemed indicated — -a zealous apostolate throughout the world, preceded by an unworldly preparation. At long last, in the summer of 1720, Paul was sent to the holy bishop of nearby Alessandria. This successor to the Apostles — later Archbishop of Turin — was to be Paul's mainstay in the remarkable days to come.

COMMISSIONED

During the harvest season, when returning home from church one early morning, Paul was privileged with his first vision. He saw himself garbed in a black robe and upon this garment, over the heart, was a white cross and beneath it in letters of white, the Holy Name. And a voice¹ said to him: "This is to signify how pure and spotless the heart should be, which has engraven on it the sacred Name of Jesus."

Not long afterward, this vision was repeated. On the third occasion, the robe or habit was presented to Paul by the Mother of the Man of Sorrows. To the Holy Name, a reference to the Sacred Passion of her Divine Son had been added, so that the inscription read: *Jesu Xpi Passio* — *The Passion of Jesus Christ*. In the final vision of the series, Our Lady of Sorrows herself was vested in the new habit. And the insignia was now completed — a heart-shaped badge, edged in white, surmounted by a cross of white and within the heart, three nails beneath the inscription: *Jesu Xpi Passio*. The Mother of the Crucified spoke to Paul as follows: "My child — notice that I am in mourning. It is for the Passion of my beloved Son, Jesus. Thus shalt thou be clothed, and thou shalt found a Congregation; its members shall be clothed as you see me now clothed, and they shall continually mourn for the Passion and death of my Son."

Paul submitted to the bishop a written account of his commission to found a new religious community in the Church. After mature deliberation, the bishop agreed to vest Paul in the religious uniform that had been revealed to him. The ceremony took place in the bishop's private chapel, on November 22, 1720. That Friday was the birthday of the Congregation of the Passion. However, as in any such case, the endorsement of the bishop was tentative only. Until the Holy See should approve, Paul was not permitted to wear the distinctive badge or sign of a Passionist.

RULE OF LIFE

Broadly speaking, all religious communities have in common the same end, as well as similar means for the attainment of that end. It is the purpose of every religious community to further the personal sanctification of its own members, and to advance the welfare of other souls. The accomplishment of this twofold purpose constitutes the professional career of a Religious.

Each community, however — whether it be called an Order, a Society, or a Congregation — is featured by a spirit that gives it personality, and by some predominant work. Thus a teaching community may exemplify the wisdom of Christ, another His charity toward the sick or the poor, and so on. In this way, through His priests and religious on earth, our Divine Lord continues "doing good from heaven."

The supernatural spirit of a religious community is delineated in its Rule of Life. Without a religious Rule, there would be no norm of conduct to guide its members, no basis for an esprit de corps. By the Mother of Christ, Paul had been directed to compose the Rule for a new

Congregation — a community whose distinctive characteristic would be devotion to the Sacred Passion of her Divine Son. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it now devolved upon him to plan the religious lives of generations to come. Hence, his responsibility as a legislator would be of eternal consequence. Nor would it suffice that he be a sound theorist. He must be practical and administrate myriad details of organization — both material and spiritual. Above all, he must edify, for his conduct would be a living interpretation of the Rule. Paul now understood the reason for the years of his hidden life — years providentially invested that, he might be "prepared unto every good work."

After his vestition, Paul returned to Castellazzo, to make a retreat of forty days. During this time he resided at the Church of Saint Charles — in the solitude of a storeroom under the tower. From his diary, we learn that he was victimized by subtle and specious temptations to discouragement — a diabolical conspiracy to deter him from this superhuman lifework. But he was more than compensated by heavenly consolations. Paul was visited by Our Lady, and by Our Lord Himself. He enjoyed a most heartening vision of the Church Triumphant — the Founders of other Religious Orders praying for him and his infant Congregation. Within five days he completed the first draft of the Constitutions. This Rule is a masterpiece of supernatural legislation. Though Paul had had no previous acquaintance whatever with any similar document, he affirms in the Preface: "I wish you to know that when I wrote, I did so as fast as if there had been someone dictating to me. I have written this that it may be known that it was a particular inspiration from God."

Soon afterward, the youthful Founder was joined by his first candidate — his own brother, John Baptist. Toward the close of the retreat, Paul received a strong impulse to pray for the conversion of England. At this time, the country that had been known as Mary's Dowry, was all but bereft of Catholic faith and hope. In the years to come, Paul's disciples were to implant the seed of England's "Second Spring."

IN JOURNEYING OFTEN

Upon the completion of retreat, Paul submitted his Rule to the bishop. Though well impressed, the bishop deemed it wise to take counsel. He sent Paul to one of his former confessors, now resident near Genoa. Paul traveled on foot. For forty miles, he trudged the mountains — hatless and unshod — despite the snow and ice and numbing cold of January, and the wolves that stalked his path. He would have succumbed from exhaustion, had he not been rescued by the forest rangers. During his Stay in the city, he was hooted at by grownups as well as by youngsters. Paul's intrepidity was being well tested. Indeed, his early days as a founder reflected the experience of the original Saint Paul — "in journeying often, in perils in the wilderness and in the city, in hunger and thirst and cold."

The following summer, Paul set out for Rome. At Genoa he embarked for Civitavecchia, a port about fifty miles north of the Eternal City. The winds were favorable until they stood off the massive promontory of Monte Argentario. There the ship was becalmed. It was September 8th, the feast of Our Lady's Nativity, and Paul was reminded of the invitation his Mother had voiced to him, sometime before: "Paul — come to Monte Argentario, for I am there alone." He went ashore and made a survey of this mountain that towers between mainland and sea. Famed for centuries as the solitude of hermits, it was now deserted. Later on, atop this paradise of natural beauty, Paul was to build his first monastery.

At Civitavecchia, Paul resumed his journey by land. He pressed on so eagerly that, by noon

of the next day, he glimpsed for the first time the vaulted roof of the world's Cathedral Having paid his respects at the Tomb of the Apostles, he found overnight hospitality at Holy Trinity Hostel — a shelter established by Saint Phillip Neri for penniless wayfarers. There, to Paul's embarrassment, he was waited upon by a Cardinal!

Early next day, the unknown pilgrim made his way to the Vatican. He had ventured but a few steps within the palace when he was confronted by a guard. In his simplicity, Paul stated that he sought an interview with the Holy Father. Appearances were against him and he was hustled out of doors — "Rogues like you come here day in and day out! Begone!" Paul's disappointment was keen, but he knew that if his project were in accord with God's will, all would end well. Reckoning by calendars and clocks, God seems to "hasten slowly" in the accomplishment of His purposes, but to the One Who is eternal "a thousand years are as a day."

Before leaving the city, Paul went to the Basilica of Saint Mary Major. There he renewed his hope, and at Mary's altar dedicated himself by vow to the fulfillment of her commission. It is a wonder that he survived the manifold taxation of his homeward journey. To retire to Monte Argentario for a while, as he felt inclined to do, he needed the permission of the local Ordinary as well as the approval of his own bishop. Time and again, he arrived in cities just after the departure of the bishop, who was traveling on diocesan visitation. Paul's route was tortuous and not infrequently he lost the way. As often as not, when questing for a morsel of food, he was rebuffed. At times he was forced to sleep in the shelter of doorways, or in the open fields. However, the trek was worthwhile, for permission was granted.

APPROBATION

After Paul's return to Alessandria, the bishop vested John Baptist in the Passionist habit. The brothers then made their way to Monte Argentario. There they lived the new Rule — alternating between a contemplative life in their mountain solitude and works of zeal in the towns below. They brought about many remarkable conversions among derelict souls. This fact — coupled with the edification of their own unworldly life — occasioned a providential renown. The bishop of Gaeta invited them to spend some time in his diocese and provided them with a retreat similar to Argentario. Typical of the esteem entertained for them was their assignment — though still laymen — to conduct the spiritual exercises for seminarians.

Later on, they were engaged by the saintly bishop of Troja — an uncle of Saint Alphonsus Ligouri. Bishop Cavalieri approved the new Rule so wholeheartedly that he hoped to resign as Ordinary of the diocese, and become a member of Paul's community. In 1724, he sent Paul and John Baptist to Rome, to make the Jubilee and to seek permission of the Holy Father to organize the Congregation of the Passion.

As Paul and his brother knelt in Saint Peter's, they were observed by a Monsignor Crescenzi. This prelate — later a Cardinal — was deeply impressed by their demeanor. When he learned that their undertaking was sponsored by the bishop of Troja, he arranged — through Cardinal Corradini — for the two pilgrims to meet His Holiness. The meeting took place in the church of Santa Maria Navicella, Benedict XIII listened attentively as Paul outlined his momentous petition. The Pontiff had already given the matter mature thought. He now voiced his approval and imparted his blessing to the youthful founder and his work. This approbation was only preliminary, but it was a reliable surety of ultimate success.

PRIESTHOOD

Whenever circumstances had been favorable, Paul and his brother had applied themselves to sacred studies. Their friends in the Sacred College of Cardinals now urged them to complete their education as soon as feasible. For three years, they were tutored privately by a scholarly Franciscan. On the vigil of Pentecost – June 7, 1727 — Paul and John Baptist were elevated to the holy priesthood in the Vatican Cathedral by Pope Benedict XIII. During his first Mass, Father Paul's devotion was so extraordinary that, all agreed he must have enjoyed a heavenly glimpse of the Almighty.

At the request of Cardinal Corradini, the two brothers were assigned to a new hospital, to supervise the staff and to serve as chaplains. The good accomplished there exceeded even the expectations, of His Eminence. But obviously, such a sphere was not at all conducive to the advancement of Paul's objective. So the Holy Father designated Paul and his brother as Missionaries Apostolic and permitted them to depart for Monte Argentario.

During their previous stay at the Mount, they had made use of an abandoned Augustinian monastery. But while they were absent in Rome, this solitude had been taken over by a recluse who proved to be both eccentric and disagreeable. Finding himself dispossessed, Paul accepted the setback as providential and decided, for the time being, to withdraw. However, it was soon made clear to him that God willed otherwise.

A fleet bound for Genoa was about to weigh anchor. Paul and his brother went aboard, but — to the amazement of all — while the other vessels headed for the open sea, their ship idled in the harbor, immobilized by some intangible force. Paul recognized the intervention, of God and went, ashore, whereupon the ship sailed without hindrance.

HERMIT AND APOSTLE

Having explored the mountain-side, Paul discovered another hermitage. It took hard work and ingenuity to recondition the living quarters and chapel. At first, only a few aspirants sought admission to the new community, and fewer still persevered. But this handful of students for the priesthood and lay-brothers, together with Father Paul and Father John Baptist, were the nucleus of thousands to come.

By word and example, Father Paul imbued his disciples with the wisdom that makes for sane living in a deranged world; he stimulated a buoyancy of spirit guaranteed by the sacred promises of Christ; he enkindled a love for the God Who needs only to be known well, to be served enthusiastically. In this "School of Christ Crucified," the honor of God and man's eternal destiny were maintained in correct focus as a commonweal. Living under the same roof with God in Person, the religious deepened their realization that, He resides in the Tabernacle in order the more effectively to gain residence in the ciborium of the human heart. The holy sacrifice of the Mass was cherished inasmuch as thereby our Divine Lord continues to do for us of today what He began to do on the original Holy Thursday and Good Friday. The Sacred Passion of Christ was meditated upon so searchingly that, it became the leaven of their spirituality — their own "predominant passion." Thus the founder gave to the sons whom he fathered, a philosophy of life. Modern ideologies have spawned the Fascist, the Nazi, and the Communist. So too, just as tellingly, the supernatural education imparted by the saintly Father Paul engendered Christ-like men. Consequently, his missionaries were themselves so convinced and impressed that, they were eloquently persuasive in their appeal to thoughtless and indifferent souls.

Father Paul and his priest-companions were in demand not only locally, but throughout all Italy. Though they preached in cathedral cities and to select audiences, Paul fostered a preference for the most abandoned souls, found usually in the most neglected places. Even outlaws respected him, and ventured from their hideouts in the forest to insure him safe conduct.

Christ Crucified was the motif of Father Paul's discourses. Indelibly, he impressed upon his listeners a sense of personal responsibility for the inhuman suffering and tragic death of our Divine Savior. He charged them as did Saint Peter in the first sermon ever preached upon the Sacred Passion: "By the hands of wicked men, *you* have crucified and slain Him!" At the same time, he emphasized the atonement of the God-Man as a demonstration of God's attitude of mercy. Saint Vincent — a Passionist bishop and contemporary of Father Paul — has testified: "His method of conducting souls to God was full of tenderness and compassion. He avoided the gravity that would repel, and cultivated an affability that would win souls to God. Hence, sinners were encouraged to go to him." The counsel given by Father Paul to his missionaries is representative of his spirit: "Let mercy always be uppermost. If I were younger, I should go through the world and preach nothing but the mercy of God." No wonder, then, that his confessional was thronged. At times, he went so far as to shoulder the brunt of penance incurred by lifelong sinners. Father Paul was not satisfied with a momentary response to the appeal of the Crucified. At a stratagem distinctive of the new Congregation, he taught the people how to meditate daily upon the events of the Holiest Week this world has ever known. Thus he made them self-reliant — so to speak — in recourse to the Sacred Passion of Christ as a motive for fidelity to God.

Manifestly, Paul's apostolic work was gratifying to his Divine Master, for He gifted His coadjutor with miraculous powers. To prophesy, to discern secrets of conscience, and to heal the sick became normal events in the career of Father Paul. On one occasion, when the vineyards for miles around were on the verge of ruin, the people begged his intercession. No sooner had he blessed the countryside than the tempest loosed its fury. The vines swayed under a cyclonic wind, hail stripped the foliage, but the precious grapes were intact. Another time, he saved a crew of fishermen from bankruptcy. For months there had been no catch: the nets were frayed beyond repair. Father Paul knelt upon the shore and prayed with them. Then he blessed the boats with his crucifix and told them to put out to sea. The results reminded all of the very first miracle of this kind: "At Your word I will let down the net. And when they had done this, they enclosed a very great multitude of fishes." Fittingly, we might summarize the record of Father Paul's missionary labor in the words applied by Saint Mark to the original Apostles: "Going forth, they preached everywhere: the Lord working withal and confirming the word with signs that followed."

MILITARY CHAPLAIN

During his own lifetime, Father Paul was to count twelve Houses of the new Congregation. Among these foundations the first was that of Monte Argentario. However, before the day of its completion he would have to cope with disheartening obstacles.

In 1733 — much the same as in our own day — the map of Europe was in process of being revamped. In the vicinity of the Mount, the territory that sloped inland from the sea was garrisoned by the Austrians. The Spaniards threatened to invade, as did their ally — the French. Thousands of soldiers overcrowded the nearby forts. Pestilence developed among the civilian and military populations. Until stricken himself, and exhausted beyond further effort, Paul

ministered to the sick and the dying.

In January of 1734, the opposing forces locked in combat. By assault and by siege, the Spaniards took most of the Austrian defenses. For the duration of hostilities and with superhuman stamina, Father Paul served as a volunteer chaplain. While on one of his emergency errands, he was arrested by a reconnaissance patrol. Under suspicion as a spy, he was brought to the Spanish commandant. The latter was a devout Catholic and recognized in Paul a man of God whose loyalties were supra-national. They became the best of friends and Paul was allowed to go and come as he willed. He seemed indifferent to personal danger, though often exposed to rifle fire and artillery barrage. This friend of all foes became the hero of the campaign.

The last fort but one was reduced when a shell exploded the arsenal. Orbetello alone held out. Since both armies were victimized by malaria, the Spanish commander decided to expedite the enemy's inevitable surrender. He ordered a bombardment of garrison and town alike, and prepared to ravage the adjacent countryside. Father Paul begged the General to reconsider, but the plea seemed in vain. At the last moment, however, the General gave in to the chaplain's importunity. "Father Paul," he said, "I do this solely for you!" The orders were countermanded, and thus Paul averted the shelling of a defenseless town and its civilian population.

Father Paul had assured the commander that he would not regret his decision, and within a few days the fort did capitulate. Having bade farewell to the Austrian troops, for whom he had preached a mission during the siege, Paul continued his ministry among the army of occupation. In the near future, he was to be amply rewarded, for his military friends were grateful and proved to be providentially helpful in the advancement of his plans.

ORIGINAL MONASTERY

In the construction of his first monastery, it took years of patient perseverance for the young founder to triumph over a conspiracy of circumstances. It was especially important that this original foundation be planned wisely and in harmony with the Rule. It would be the model of all later establishments.

With a treasury of only thirty cents, Father Paul depended entirely upon the charity of the faithful. Legal red tape had to be unraveled in connection with deeds to the land. At first there was a wave of enthusiasm on the part of the townspeople. They hauled materials up the steep ascent and began to build. But their interest proved to be only effervescent and progress bogged down. Rumors began to circulate to the effect that, this newfangled Community did not enjoy ratification of the Holy See. If that were true, then the project would be bound to peter out. Because of Father Paul's heroic self-sacrifice during the epidemic, there was a revival of cooperation, but finally progress came to a standstill altogether, because of the impending war. A priority on all materials was declared in favor of military needs.

Upon the restoration of peace, the Spanish commandant exerted his influence in behalf of the struggling community. He prevailed upon the civil authorities to endorse the enterprise. He then sent Father Paul to the King of Naples — at that time, a Spaniard who graciously donated a purse of gold as a building fund. In the meantime; His Holiness settled in favor of the new community, a litigation involving property claims. Construction work began anew and before long the monastic walls were outlined against the sky.

Negative indifference had been overcome, but positive hostility smoldered among a certain element in the neighborhood. In the dark of night, a gang of malcontents tried to demolish the new edifice. Such animosity must have been diabolical in origin, for the Archangel Michael

appeared in heavenly splendor and clad as for battle. He hovered over the new House of God and — needless to say — the saboteurs were terrified and routed.

September 14th is the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. On that day, in 1737 the first Passionist Monastery was dedicated, under the title of Our Lady of the Presentation. Despite so many vicissitudes, Father Paul had responded to the summons of i God's Mother. No longer would she be "alone on Monte Argentario."

MONASTIC LIFE

Now that Father Paul's community was in a normal setting, the new Rule could be exemplified ideally. Their saints-manship consisted of missionary activity together with a unique blend of monastic life. The spirit of the cloister is one of poverty and penance, of solitude and prayer. A Passionist monastery is often referred to as a "retreat," because of the constant observance of spiritual exercises. Thus, the religious enjoy ample opportunity to foster their own sanctification and at the same time to vitalize their work for other souls. Time and energy are well invested. With eternal destinies at stake, occasional or superficial attention would be inadequate. The professional religious, prompted by an unearthly thrift, is dedicated to a career of all-out endeavor.

A fundamental stratagem of morality was emphasized by Divine Wisdom Incarnate, when He declared: "Where your treasure is, there is your heart also." Neither God nor man can rely upon a divided heart. The human soul is freed for unhampered devotion to things heavenly in ratio to its detachment from things earthly. Hence, a refined morality can be cultivated best of all within a cloistered mind and heart.

As a capable founder, Paul so planned that obstacles to a holy life would be either eliminated or at least reduced to a minimum. His monasteries were to be located in comparative seclusion. A well balanced schedule precludes idleness and maps out a day of worthwhile activity. Definite periods are assigned for recreation and repose, for work and prayer. The lay-brothers care for the material maintenance of the House,, while the priests and students engage in study.

When the Holy See endorses a Religious Rule with solemn finality, it is infallibly certain that a Rule so approved is conducive to sanctity. Saint Gabriel, the Passionist Student, merited canonization for six years of fidelity to the Rule of Paul of the Cross. However, this infallible approbation is granted only after many years of test and observation. In 1737, the Congregation of the Passion enjoyed only a preliminary recognition, and for this reason the members were not committed to the Rule by vow. Permission to take vows and to wear the badge distinctive of a Passionist religious was accorded in 1741.

The vows made by a religious community are those of poverty, chastity, and obedience — "a threefold cord not easily broken." Thereby the religious pledges himself to the service of God as solemnly as can be, and unreservedly until death. Thus he checkmates the fickleness to which human nature is so prone, for the vows bespeak a stability of purpose essential for perseverance. Because of this consecration, every thought and word and action becomes an act of religion. And because of God's own recognition of this tribute, the worth of even the least accomplishment is transmuted. To the vows customary to all religious, the Passionist adds a fourth — to promote devotion to Christ Crucified. The watchword of each monastery is: "May the Passion of Christ be ever in our hearts!"

The religious' room or cell is equipped with the utmost simplicity. Pillows and bed are of

straw — the bed supported by planks and horses of wood. Abstinence from meat is observed on every Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, as well as throughout Advent and Lent. The black habit or robe of the Passionist is girdled by a leather belt, and ancient sandals are worn in place of modern shoes. The heart-shaped insignia is worn over the heart, on the habit and on the winter cloak. Usually, the religious discontinues the use of his family and baptismal names and adopts a new one, together with a religious title. Father Paul himself retained his baptismal name, but added as a title "of the Cross."

The Divine Office is chanted at designated hours, beginning at midnight. Hence, the monastery chapel is known as the choir. In the early morning, while participating in the holy sacrifice of the Mass, the religious have an opportunity for meditation and thoughtful prayer. Toward evening, another hour is set apart for the same purpose — especially for prayerful meditation on the Sacred Passion of Christ. It is no exaggeration to say that every day in the cloister is a day of retreat.

APOSTOLIC ACTIVITY

Through His delegates in the Church Militant, our Divine Savior continues to teach us, to rule and to sanctify. The everlasting benefits of His precious Blood are transfused to us by means of arteries known as the sacraments. In this way especially, we have access to His grace — the divine vitamin of the human soul. Together with the administration of the sacraments, a most important duty of the priest is to echo God's word. "How shall they hear without a preacher?" This apostolate is so influential that, prior to His three hours Upon the cross of atonement, our Divine Lord spent three years in educating us.

In His Rule, Father Paul of the Cross reveals his Christ-like solicitude for the salvation of souls. There is ample outlet for the pent-up zeal of his disciples, and at the same time the ministry of his priests is made available to the diocesan clergy. Among many activities, parochial missions predominate, together with retreats to other religious communities and for the clergy.

It is a traditional feature of the Passionist mission that sermons be preached from a platform. On this platform, alongside the missionary, is an impressive image of the Crucified. A parochial mission involves strenuous work and if need be, continues for several weeks. Discourses are preached morning and evening. The sacrament of repentance is administered throughout long hours, early and late. To this day, the method of Paul of the Cross is adhered to faithfully — a renewal in the hearts of the faithful of a grateful remembrance of our Divine Redeemer's Passion unto death. Gratifying results verify the wisdom of Paul's conviction: "I see more and more that the most efficacious means for converting the obdurate sinner is the Passion of Jesus Christ, preached according to the method which the Divine Goodness has approved."

Father Paul made provision in each monastery for clergy and laymen to make private retreats within the cloister. In the United States, retreat houses adjoin several of the monasteries. Thus it is feasible to conduct retreats for organized groups. The apostolate of the written word is carried on throughout the world by means of national, Catholic magazines — such as *The Sign*. When summoned by the Holy Father, the religious are available for missionary work in pagan countries. During wartime emergency, they function as military chaplains, as did their intrepid founder, Paul of the Cross.

RATIFICATION

In 1741, Father Paul was called to Rome by the Supreme Pontiff. His Rule was given to a Papal committee for scrutiny, with a view to further endorsement. Only one examiner voiced disapproval, but his opposition was vigorous. He alleged that this new Rule was too strict — ideal but not practicable. He persisted in his attitude until he was stricken ill. Humanly speaking, his ailment was unaccountable. Realizing this, he revised his decision on Father Paul's undertaking and at once he recovered. The recommendation made to the Holy Father became unanimously in favor of the young Congregation.

Benedict XIV then granted to the Rule its first documentary approbation. He did so in a spirit of marked cordiality, and observed: "It seems that this Congregation of the Passion — the last to come into the Church — should have been the first." He meant thereby that the Sacred Passion of Christ is the most important stratagem in all divine Providence, for it is God's own method of human salvation. Father Paul and his companions were now recognized as professional religious. At Monte Argentario, after a ten-day retreat, they dedicated themselves to their lifework by vow, and began to wear the Passionist insignia.

The benefit of Papal sanction was soon manifested. Once the community enjoyed the formal ratification of the Holy See, they prospered. Numerous candidates sought admission. Father Paul was invited to found monasteries in many dioceses. No longer did he have to contend with enemies or depend on fair-weather friends. From the next Pontiff, Clement XIII, Paul received a temporary House at Rome. This Pope also designated a Father Thomas as the first Passionist bishop.

When Clement died, Paul of the Cross repeated a prediction he had made three years before — the next successor to Saint Peter would be Cardinal Ganganelli. In 1769, his Eminence became Pope Clement XIV. Paul had been absent from Rome when he received word of the election. He went to the Holy City to pay his respects to the new Pontiff. Clement sent his own carriage for the founder whom he so deeply revered. Within a few months, His Holiness issued a decree in favor of the Congregation of the Passion, which climaxed all previous charters. Thereby the community and its rule were ratified in perpetuity. Abundant privileges were granted to the Passionists, and to all souls for whom they were destined to labor. Usually, a Cardinal Protector is assigned to each religious community, to represent its interests at Rome. But in the instance of the Congregation of the Passion, His Holiness reserved this function to himself and his successors. On the vigil of Our Lady's Assumption, Clement XIV signed the eventful document and sent his confessor to convey the news to Father Paul. On the feast-day, the venerable founder — now aged seventy-five — made his way to the Basilica of Saint Mary Major. In a spirit of unearthly joy, he prayed his gratitude — at the very shrine where, a half century before — he had vowed his cooperation with the Mother of the Mail of Sorrows.

That same year — the first of his pontificate — the Holy Father declared a Jubilee, and requested Father Paul of the Cross to conduct a mission in one of the principal churches of Rome. The veteran apostle was so feeble he had to be carried to the platform. But an opportunity to plead the cause of his Divine Master transformed him. Papal guards kept order among the throngs within and without the church, as Father Paul spoke with the eloquence of one on the threshold of eternity.

In 1773, Paul and his religious family received from Clement XIV the ancient church and monastery of Saints John and Paul. In making this gift, the Holy Father adverted to the correspondence in names between the two brothers martyred by Julian the Apostate, and the two Passionist brothers — John Baptist and Paul. This edifice became the motherhouse of the Passionist Congregation. It crowns the Celian Hill, across the road from the Coliseum.

Seminarians and Cardinals alike frequent the gardens — among the most spacious in all Rome — to enjoy their quiet grandeur and a panoramic view of the city. Hundreds of clergy have made retreats there, preparatory to ordination and consecration.

DEATH

Father Paul was now in the twilight of his earthly career. His final accomplishment was a masterstroke of supernatural procedure in the furtherance of devotion to Christ's Passion. For many years, he had cherished the hope of founding a community of nuns devoted to the Crucified. Providential circumstances made it clear to him that such was God's will. At long last, his plan fructified. In 1772, with the blessing and financial support of Clement XIV, the first convent was established at Corneto. Father Paul had authored the Constitutions — an adaptation of the original Passionist Rule. His nuns wear the same habit, pledge the same vows and maintain an absolute cloister. Thus the apostolic activity of the Passionist missionary is complemented in a prayerful way, by the self-renunciation of souls whose life is "hid with Christ in God."

For almost eighty-two years, Paul of the Cross had lived a life of such hardship and strenuous work that he must have been sustained superhumanly. When Pius VI was elected Pope in 1774, the aging founder was bedridden. His Holiness came to Saints John and Paul, for a farewell visit. On that occasion, Father Paul declared: "Your Holiness will have a long and glorious pontificate, but it will be replete with calamities and you will be obliged to leave Rome!" The prediction was to be fulfilled with tragic accuracy.

During his last days on earth, the venerable patient edified all by his resignation and cheerfulness, despite manifold suffering. Referring to his impending death, he said: "I die most readily, to fulfill the divine will. I put all my hopes in the Passion of Jesus Christ and in the sorrows of our Blessed Lady." The recommendations that he made to his disciples as their Founder and General were taken down in writing and treasured. He exhorted the Superiors: "Win the heart and form the character." And he counselled all: "Before everything else, love one another. I exhort all to preserve the spirit of prayer, of solitude, of poverty. If this be done, the Congregation will shine before God and men."

Toward the very end, when unable to speak, he did his feeble best to emphasize devotion to Christ Crucified, by distributing crucifixes to his visitors. Having been fortified by the sacraments of the dying, he whispered his last words: "Read for me the Passion of Our Lord." His wish was addressed to Father Vincent, later a bishop and now among the Saints. In the gospel record of Saint John, the history of the Passion is prefaced by Our Lord's prayer for His disciples. Father Vincent' read: "Lifting up His eyes to heaven, Jesus said: Father, the hour is come: Glorify Your Son, that Your Son may glorify You." At these words, the heart of this man of God ceased beating time with the clocks of men. The body of Paul of the Cross lay inanimate, for his soul had "returned to God Who gave it." It was the 18th of October, in the Year of Our Lord 1775. Later developments were to certify the prompt and cordial welcome accorded by his Risen Savior to this "good and faithful servant."

CANONIZATION

Toward the close of the eighteenth century, Europe underwent one of its worst upheavals — the French Revolution, the invasion of the Papal States by Bonaparte and the abduction of Pius VI, who died in exile. His successor — Pius VII — was likewise penalized by Napoleon, for re-

fusing to render to Caesar the things that are God's. During this reign of terror, the clergy were dispersed and religious were ousted from their monasteries. When the Holy Father was restored to the Eternal City, he faced an enormous task of reconstruction. The first community that he reinstated was the Congregation of the Passion. It was urgent that the religious spirit of the faithful be normalized, and for this purpose he designated a corps of select missionaries. Among them was the Passionist bishop, Vincent Strambi.

On his tour of the Papal States, the bishop was accompanied by a young man who aspired to the priesthood. His name was Count John Ferretti. He was so impressed by the Passionist who, later on, was to give his life for Pope Leo XII that, he applied for admission to the Congregation. However, the General of the Passionists advised Count Ferretti to become a diocesan priest. "How unsearchable are His ways!" Divine Providence had singled out John Ferretti as a Vicar of Christ! As Pope Pius IX, he was to canonize the Founder of the Passionists.

Father Ferretti never wavered in his predilection for the religious family of Paul of the Cross. When appointed Archbishop of Spoleto, he made his retreat prior to consecration, at Saints John and Paul. In 1853, as Pius IX, he beatified Paul of the Cross. On this occasion, he visited the new chapel dedicated to Blessed Paul, and enriched the altar by a gift of columns of rare alabaster. Shortly after the canonization of the Passionist Founder, His Holiness dined with the community. He was a frequent visitor to Saints John and Paul, where his confessor — Father Pius — resided. In 1876, he appointed the sons of Paul of the Cross in charge of the Holy Stairs. This shrine in the City of Rome was the last place visited by His Holiness, as he was about to become the "Prisoner of the Vatican." For the Students of the Congregation, he built a House of Studies alongside the 'shrine, and bequeathed to it a library of over four thousand volumes.

During his career on earth, Father Paul of the Cross had been so unselfish in the service of Christ Crucified that, the Almighty deigned to share with him His own miraculous power. That this favor continued after Paul's death is occasion for joy, though not for surprise, for God is consistently "wonderful in His saints." The miracles requisite for canonization were officially attested, and in the Vatican chapel where Father Paul had been ordained a priest, Pius IX authorized his elevation to the altar as a saint.

The red-letter day was June 29, 1867 — the feast of Saints Peter and Paul, and the eighteen-hundredth anniversary of their martyrdom. The event was outstanding, even in the history of God's Kingdom on earth. The title of *Saint* was awarded infallibly to twenty-five heroic souls. Five hundred bishops graced the occasion, as well as twenty-five thousand priests and an uncounted legion of the laity. American Passionists too, were among the many who thanked God, that day, for Saint Paul of the Cross. And some few there were, that day, who were constrained to admit, in the words of Wisdom: "We fools esteemed their life madness, and their end without honor. Behold how they are numbered among the children of God, and their lot is among the saints!"

EPILOGUE

Especially to a sainted founder, the words of Saint John are appropriate: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord. From henceforth now they may rest from their labors; for their works follow them." The heavenly gratification of Saint Paul of the Cross is attributable, in due measure, to the phenomenal success of the work that he inaugurated on earth. His Congregation has prospered and now extends to every continent throughout the world. His especial prayers in behalf of England have proven efficacious. Father Dominic — a Passionist whose canonization

is now pending — received Cardinal Newman into the Church. In *Lass and Gain*, the illustrious convert pays glowing tribute to Dominic and to Paul of the Cross. From England and Ireland, his sons were missioned to Australia, and from Belgium to the Congo. From the United States, the Congregation of the Passion has branched out to South America, Germany, China, and Japan.

April 28th has been designated the feast-day of Saint Paul of the Cross. His interest in us of the Church Militant continues undiminished, as his grateful clients the world over realize. After death, it was discovered that upon the heart of this "Saint of the Passion," there had been engraven, in miniature, an impress of the various instruments which had afflicted our Divine Savior during His redemptive Passion unto death. Through His Vicar on earth, the "Mediator of God and men" has exalted this "Apostle of the Crucified," in order to encourage us. And the workaday recommendation to us, of which the life of Saint Paul of the Cross is eloquent, can be crystallized in these words: So to plan and live our lives, as to become secure and happy as "saints of the Passion."

**PRAYER
TO
SAINT PAUL OF THE CROSS**

O glorious Saint Paul, who on earth was a mirror of innocence, and a pattern of penance! O hero of sanctity, chosen by God to meditate day and night on the most bitter Passion of His only-begotten Son, and to spread devotion to it through the world, by your words, by your example, and by means of your Institute! O apostle, powerful in work and word, who didst spend your life in bringing back to the foot of the crucifix the misguided souls of so many sinners, look graciously from heaven, I beseech you, on my soul likewise, and hear my prayers.

Obtain for me such love for my suffering Jesus that, meditating on Him continually, I may make His sorrows mine. Let me see in the deep wounds of my Savior the malice of my sins; and let me gain from them as from fountains of salvation, the grace to weep over them bitterly, and an efficacious resolution to imitate you in your penance, if I have not followed you in your innocence. Obtain for me likewise, O Saint Paul, the grace which particularly and earnestly I ask, prostrate at your feet. . . .

Obtain, moreover, for the Holy Church, our Mother, victory over her enemies; for sinners, their conversion; for heretics — and especially for England, for which thou didst pray so much — a return to the Catholic faith. Finally, intercede for me with God that I may have a holy death, so that I may come to enjoy Him, with you, in heaven, for all eternity. Amen.

(Add the Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory be to the Father, once each, to gain an indulgence of one year. for each recitation of above prayer.)

PRAYER TO SAINT GABRIEL

O angelic youth, Saint Gabriel, who by your ardent love of Jesus Crucified, and your tender compassion for the Sorrowful Mother, did render yourself on earth a mirror of innocence and a pattern of every virtue; to you we fly full of confidence, imploring your aid. Ah! behold how many evils afflict us, how many dangers surround us, and how on every side snares are laid for youth, especially to make them lose their faith and morals.

You who did always lead a life of faith, and even amidst the temptations of the world did

preserve yourself pure and undamaged, do you now cast "upon us a compassionate look and help us. The graces you continually grant to the faithful who invoke you are so many that we cannot and will not doubt the power of your intercession.

Hence, comforted by this hope, we beseech you, Saint Gabriel, to obtain for us the special grace we earnestly implore, for the greater glory of God, and the advantage of our souls. Finally, obtain for us from Jesus Crucified and our Sorrowful Mother Mary resignation and peace, so that living continually as good Christians in all the adversities of the present life, we may one day be happy with you in our heavenly home. Amen.

(Indulgence of 300 days.)

PRAYER FOR GUIDANCE IN CHOICE OF A STATE OF LIFE

O my God — You Who are the God of Wisdom and of Counsel, You Who read in my heart the sincere will to please You alone, and to govern myself with regard to my choice of a state of life, entirely in conformity with Your most holy desires, grant me by the intercession of the most Blessed Virgin, my Mother, and of my holy patrons, the grace to know what state I ought to choose, and when known to embrace it, so that in it I may be able to seek and increase Your glory, work out my salvation, and merit that heavenly reward which You hast promised to those who do Your holy Will. Amen.

(Indulgence of 300 days once a day.)